

OPINION

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Ugly politics

No matter how you feel about Garth Turner, the recent attempt— by a faction of Conservative party members who oppose same-sex marriage— to oust the outspoken Halton MP exposes a disturbingly ugly side of Canadian politics.

Like an episode of *Survivor*, some party members Turner described as members of the “righteous right” were apparently prepared to cut him loose despite the fact he had delivered the Conservative Party of Canada a much-needed seat in Ottawa last January.

Last week came news from Turner that a move was afoot to challenge his party's candidacy for the local riding next month. Fortunately for him, the leading candidate to oppose him has since publicly stated that there isn't enough time to mount a successful challenge.

Exactly seven months ago today Turner helped the Conservatives defeat Liberal incumbent Gary Carr in a tight race. It's indeed possible that Turner's name recognition and past experience in Ottawa was the determining factor in his nomination by the riding association in 2005. So what has changed?

Turner suspects that his stance on the current law regarding same-sex marriage is at the core of the attempted overthrow from within his own party.

Prior to last January's election, he publicly stated his support of a traditional definition of marriage, adding that he could not see overturning the recent legalization of same-sex marriage without “a very good reason.”

Harper's pre-election promise to overturn same-sex marriage by putting it to another vote may explain why Turner is suddenly considered expendable by those who most want to put an end to same-sex marriage.

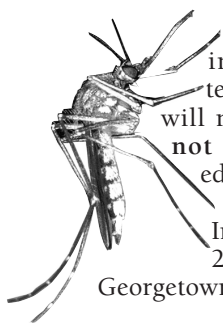
Turner's position on same-sex marriage is likely not the only thing that's been eating away at some party faithful as he's created controversy for his party by opposing Harper's ban of the media from military funeral services for Canadian soldiers killed in Afghanistan and, more recently, criticized the use of taxpayers' money to rescue dual-citizenship Canadians from Lebanon. He has been consistent in speaking his mind— even when it goes against the party line.

Still, Turner was the Tories' candidate of choice and received 44 per cent support from riding voters.

Although the MP accurately predicted his approach would, at times, not be popular within his own party, it's unlikely even he could have seen a challenge coming so soon.

Something bugging you?

Send us a letter!



Letters to the editor must include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited for content and/or length.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Resident disgusted by MPAC survey

Dear editor,
Recently my husband and I received a letter in the mail, informing us that the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation does not have information on file confirming that we are Canadian citizens.

I am totally disgusted, devastated and hurt that they would ever ask us this question.

How did the MPAC choose which citizens to ask?

I have lived in Esquesing Township, Halton County, and now

Halton Hills for more than 59 years. I have voted since being eligible, was born in Canada, am an employed person, worked on the voter's ballots and am a community supporter.

Why did letters not go to all residents of Halton Hills, or were the letters only meant to insult a certain few individuals?

I contacted the MPAC and they confirmed that we are both Canadian citizens. Our conversation took about five minutes.

I also understand that this survey

is costing the taxpayers approximately \$5 million. What a waste of time and money that could be put to much better use in our community and society.

Dianne Taylor, Norval

Victims of house fire appreciate support

Dear editor,
We would like to thank our family, friends and neighbours for their support as we face the long and difficult challenge of rebuilding our lives after the loss of our home of 30 years on July 21.

Special thanks to the team of Halton Hills firefighters and volunteers who risked their lives to control what could have become an even more devastating situation. Also, thank you to Halton Hills fire specialist Bruno Martina and Halton Hills 11 Division Constable Maureen Andrew who caringly supported us while overseeing our damaged property.

We will continue to take each stage one step at a time over the busy year ahead, knowing that at the end of the day Halton Hills still remains the place we continue to call our home.

Don, Pat, Jen and Phil Stocks,
Georgetown

Town staff thanked for service

(This letter was originally sent to Town of Halton Hills Director of Recreation and Parks Terry Alyman and Town Clerk Karen Landry. A copy was made available for publication.)

Dear Terry and Karen,

This past week, I received excellent service from three of your staff, and I wanted to write and express my admiration for the customer driven culture that you have cultivated at the Town.

First, I dealt with Cindy in recreation, who helped me register my son for a summer camp. She was efficient, friendly and made several suggestions such as holding a spot for me while I checked availability of another camp. I had to make a last minute change and she did so cheerfully and assured me that it was no problem to fix it.

A few days later, I contacted Barb

Anger at the recreation department to solicit her advice about a special event in September that I am helping to arrange (A “Welcoming Diversity” March). Barb gave me lots of sound advice, patiently answered my questions and told me that she was looking forward to helping me make it happen.

I dropped into the Town offices this afternoon to get my Special Events package. The staff person at the clerk's department was busy servicing another customer. I bet I wasn't there 10 seconds, when another staff member sitting at a desk jumped up to serve me.

Wow!

Congratulations on your efforts to train your staff to treat taxpayers as valued customers. Well done!

Lois Fraser,
Georgetown

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