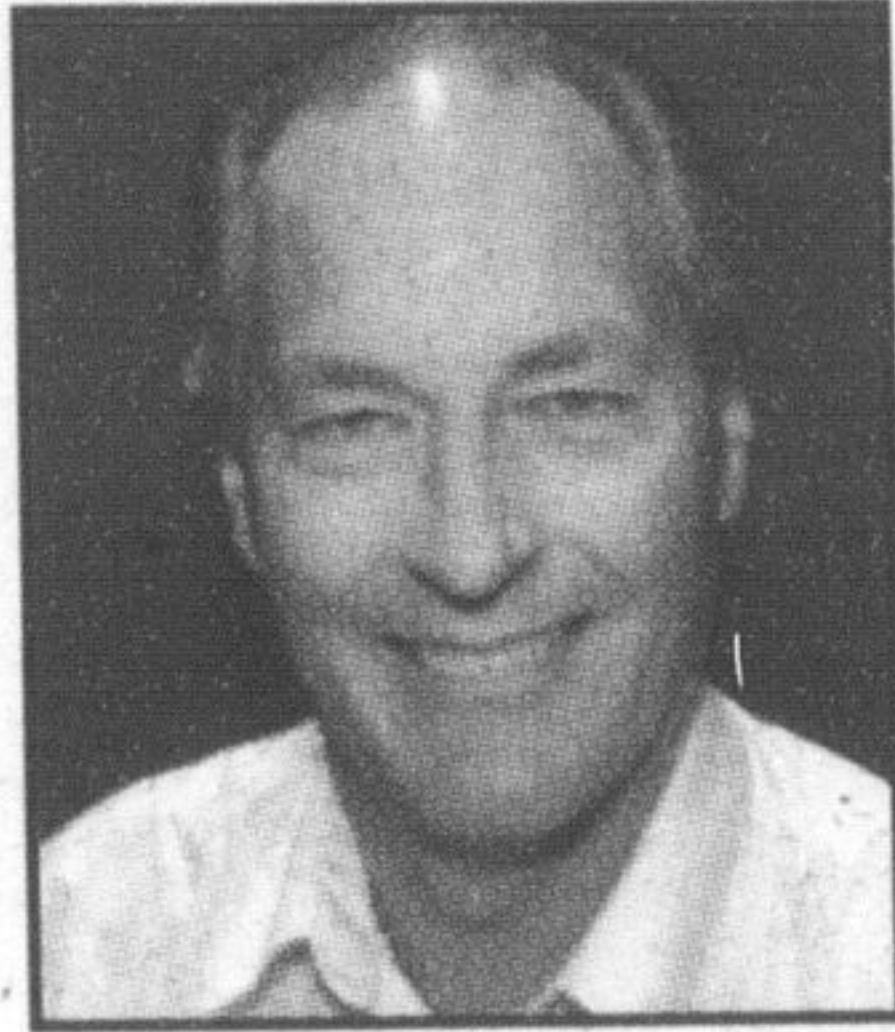


Chudleigh says he'll continue to work hard for community

By JASON MISNER
The Champion

Wearing a light blue dress shirt with no tie, and dark blue pants — blue of course is the signature colour of the Progressive Conservative party — incumbent Tory Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh looks at ease while smack dab in the middle of running in a tough election.



Ted Chudleigh

Sitting at a table in the cool basement of his campaign office on Charles Street surrounded by many maps highlighting polling areas in the riding, Mr. Chudleigh discusses the promises he will hustle to make happen for the Halton riding he's represented since 1995.

Voters will go to the polls October 2 and it's been a bit of a rough ride for Mr. Chudleigh's boss. Premier Ernie Eves has been criticized about name-calling and shrugging off poll results that show the Tories trail the Liberals.

Mr. Chudleigh said his responsibility is to focus on the job at hand and that's working hard to win his third consecutive seat in Halton.

"Meeting people, shaking hands, getting their concerns, understanding their fears, their hopes and dreams is a very important part of the election process," he said.

That includes, he said, knocking on the doors of homes, chatting with people at plazas and coffee shops and personally handing out

party brochures at the GO Train station in the morning when the sun has barely risen.

"It's farmer's blood you know. I get up early," Mr. Chudleigh chuckled, referring to his agricultural roots.

Health care and education are key issues for Halton in this riding, he said.

The riding is certainly a large one, a 870-square-km area that consists of Milton, Halton Hills and northern portions of Burlington and Oakville.

He said he pushed hard to get his government to commit \$75 million into the expansion of Milton District Hospital. An expansion of the hospital, he said, is crucial as more families continue to move in to Milton and the surrounding area.

"We're making sure the hospital can handle the kind of growth Milton and the area is undergoing," he said.

That also means there's a need for more doctors, also a priority for him in this election. He said Milton has gained eight new physicians in the last year or so and Mr. Chudleigh said he will strive to bring more to town.

"One of the ways we're doing that is fast-tracking (accreditation) of foreign-trained doctors," he said. "We're not talking about reducing the standards. We're talking about streamlining the process. It's very important to make that distinction. We're also working to increase the number of students in medical schools."

Education is important to a community that's burgeoning with younger families, and making sure their schooling isn't interrupted by teacher strikes is key, Mr. Chudleigh said.

"I think a lot of teachers will agree that teaching is an essential service and that our children, our students shouldn't be put into situations with student interruption every year," he said. "That's not helping kids prepare for the educationally-intensive 21st century."

A hot-potato issue in Halton is the mid-peninsula highway. It's proposed to run from north Burlington at the Niagara Escarpment to Fort Erie. The City of Burlington and Halton Region have launched lawsuits over it.

Mr. Chudleigh said protection of the escarpment is paramount. That's why he said he worked diligently to get an option on the books that could see the highway bypass the escarpment altogether.

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