

Halton candidates launch election campaigns

Incumbent, hopefuls ready to get their parties' message out

By HOWARD MOZEL

Special to The Champion

As a former hockey player, Halton Liberal incumbent MP Gary Carr says he's no stranger to the cold, although he'd prefer to have a warm-weather campaign just as he's enjoyed several times before in his long political career.

Unfortunately, he said, the ambitions of the three Opposition leaders have made that impossible — flying in the face of the 70 per cent of voters who would have preferred to wait until the second Gomery report is released.

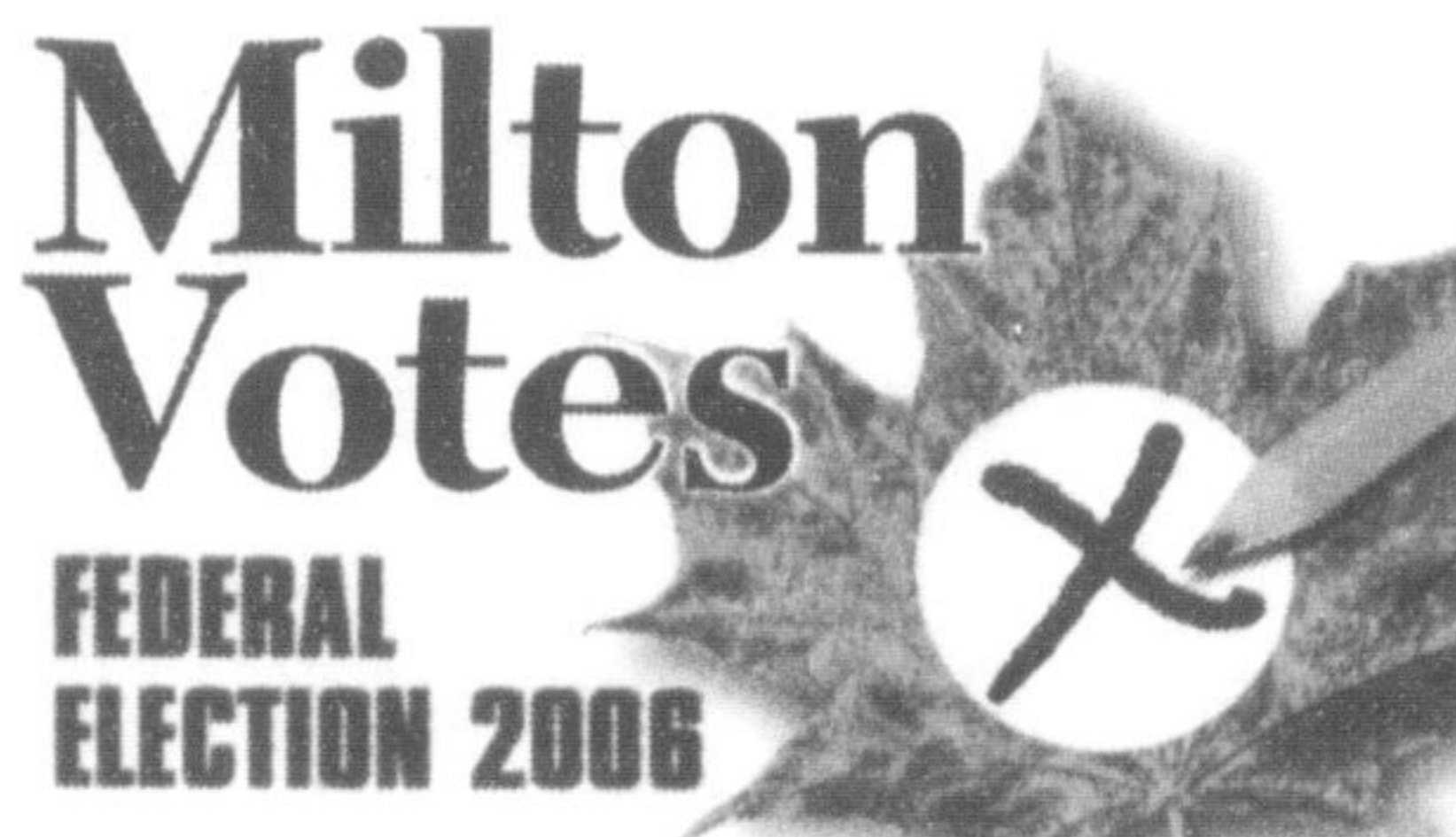
"They have never tried to make this minority Parliament work," said Mr. Carr, who expects his competitors to feel the heat from voters when they go door knocking. "Instead, they have pursued their own personal agenda. Their own political interests are more important."

On the flip-side, Mr. Carr said his experience meeting voters

since the summer has been positive, especially since "the economy has never been better."

That, he maintained, is a direct result of Prime Minister Paul Martin's management which, among other benefits, has seen the unemployment rate fall.

As a result — winter election or not — this campaign allows his party to go to the people with its record, which Mr. Carr said he's very proud of. After all, he said the Martin government kept its promises made in the last election including money for healthcare, providing gasoline tax revenue to cities, job creation and substan-



tial financing for a flex manufacturing plant at Ford in Oakville.

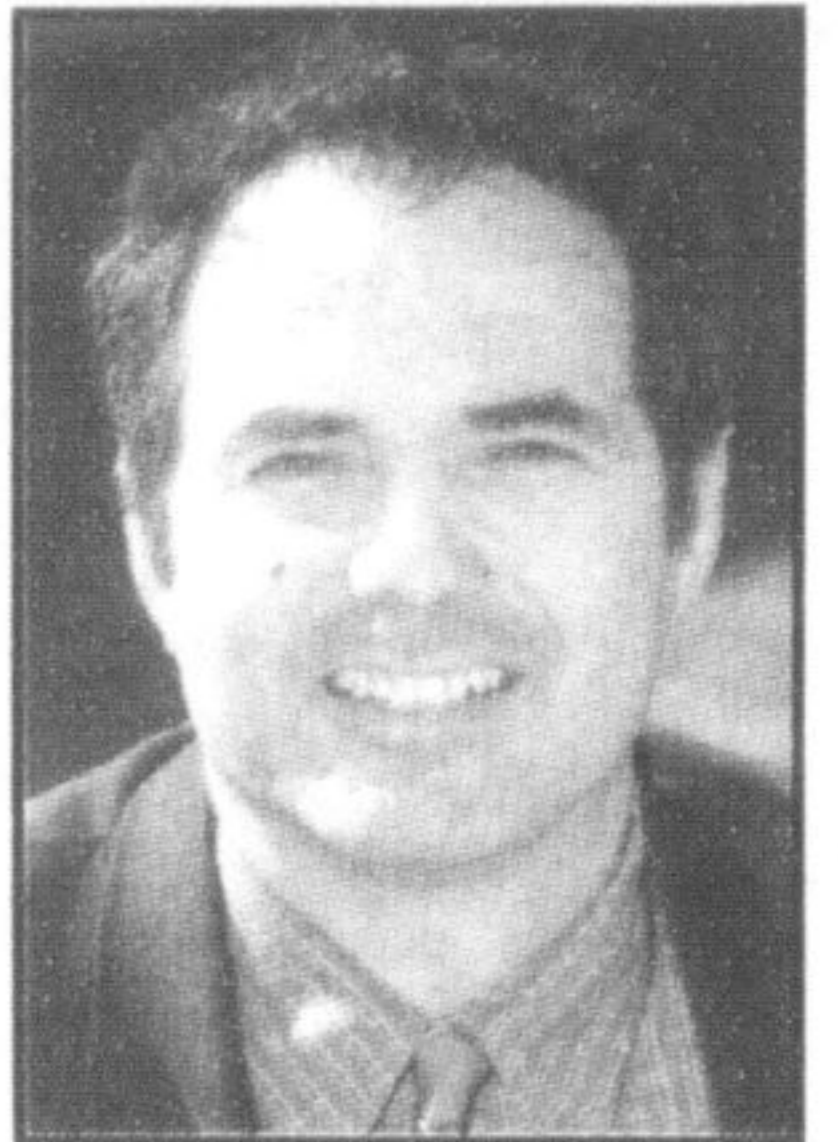
"We've done what we said we would do," he said.

Mr. Carr went on to say that he's particularly proud of Mr. Martin's handling of the sponsorship scandal by ensuring that an investigation was launched and charges were brought.

"He didn't sweep it under the rug," he said.

Mr. Carr was a Tory MPP from 1990 through 2003 (serving as speaker of the house for the last four years) before jumping to federal politics as a Liberal, winning the Halton seat in the 2004 election.

Mr. Carr can be reached at his campaign office at (905) 467-8683.



Liberal
Gary Carr

Turner started early

Halton Conservative candidate Garth Turner said last Tuesday morning that he's "relieved" the campaign is finally underway and that the deadline has been set for Canadians to decide on their next government. Mr. Turner has been a Tory candidate since April and said he has been actively campaigning since May.

"I'm pleased to have got a lot of work done before the winter," he said, explaining this includes establishing a campaign office (86 Main St.), organizing hundreds of volunteers, putting up signs and getting literature printed. "That's a huge amount of work."

Integral to his efforts has been meeting people, and to that end Mr. Turner said he has knocked on 7,000 doors in the riding — 600 this past weekend alone — so he's in a good position to gauge the mood out there.

No one, he said, is complaining about the timing of the Christmas campaign. In fact, the people he's spoken to are ready and willing to use the power they possess for change.

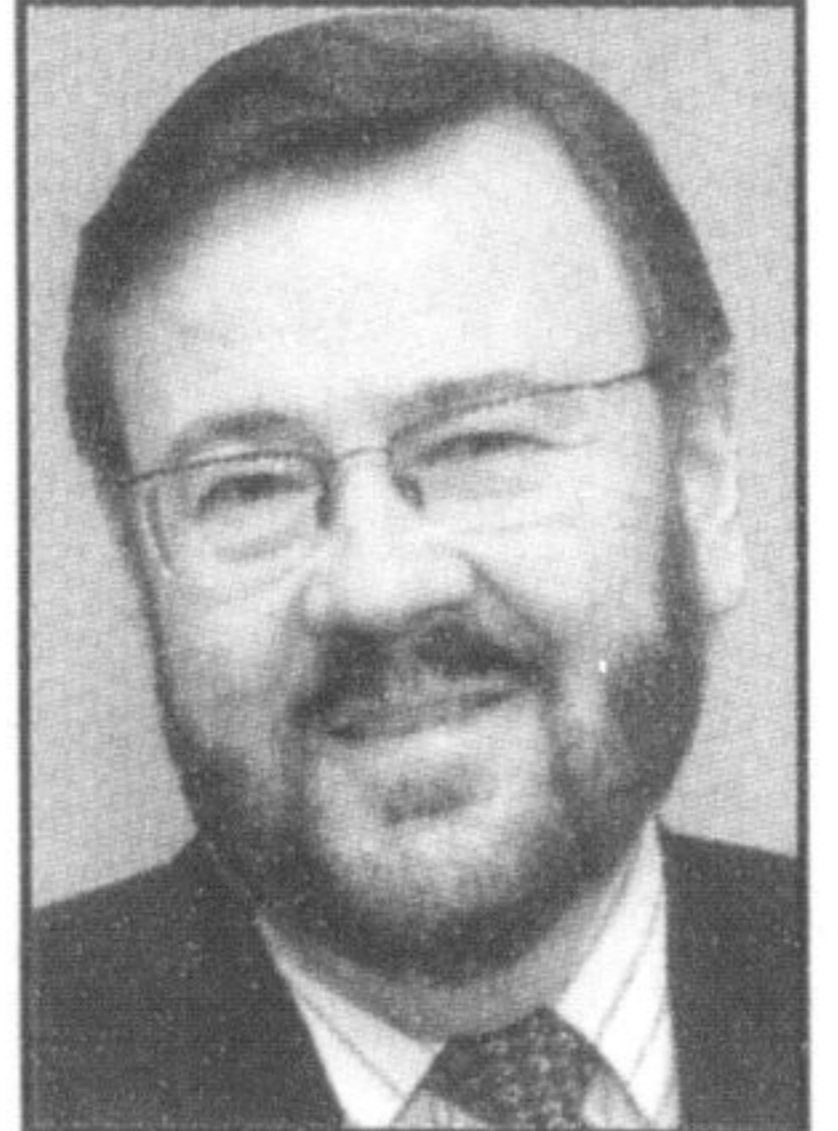
"There is a fair appetite for a vote," said Mr. Turner, an author, broadcaster, columnist, speaker, entrepreneur and member of parliament for the former riding of Halton-Peel from 1988 to 1993. (He went on to vie for the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party, then served as federal Minister of National Revenue.)

Mr. Turner said Halton residents aren't "consumed with Gomery," but are instead a lot more concerned about economic issues. These range from higher mortgage rates to desperately-needed tax relief. Healthcare also crops up, he continued, but voters are more concerned about access to care — as evidenced by waiting times — and not the quality of the care itself.

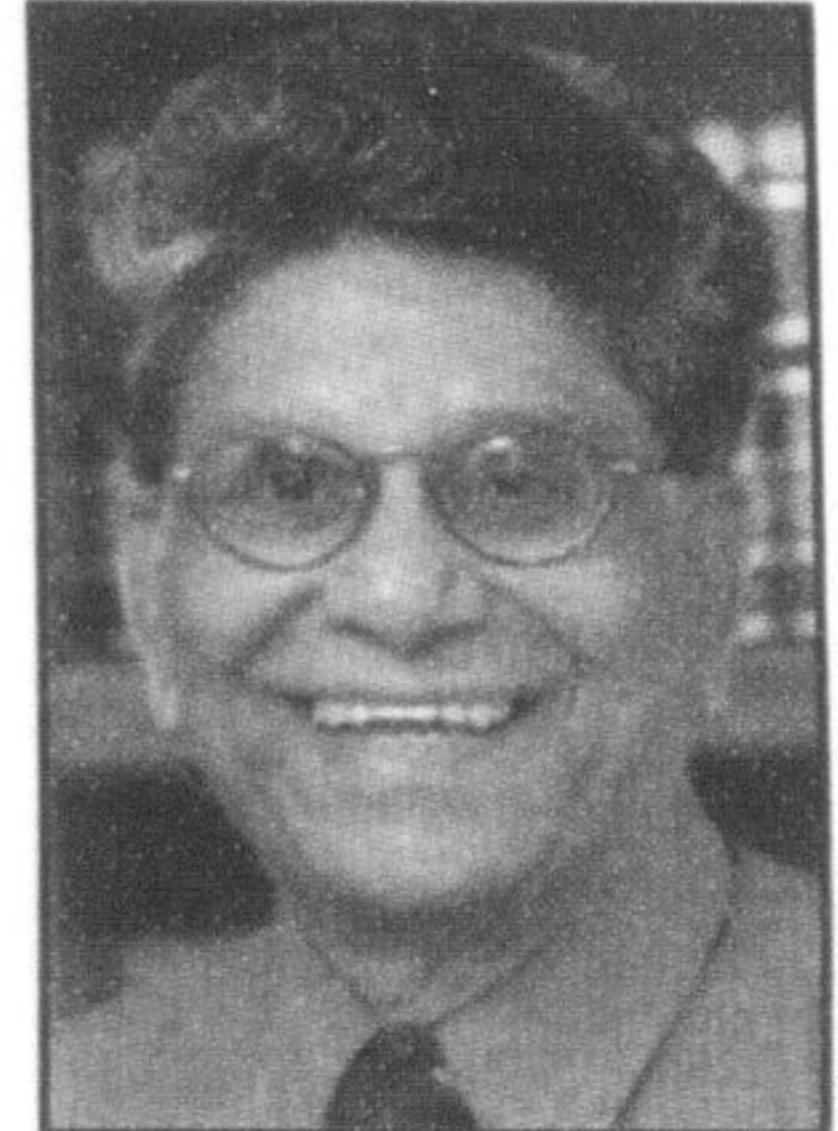
As for waging a campaign in the winter, Mr. Turner admits this poses a challenge given the physical limitations imposed by the weather, especially since outdoor rallies and other such events are out of the question. Renting halls and similar venues will simply make his efforts more expensive. The only good thing, he laughed, is that all candidates face identical hurdles.

"It's a level playing field," he said.

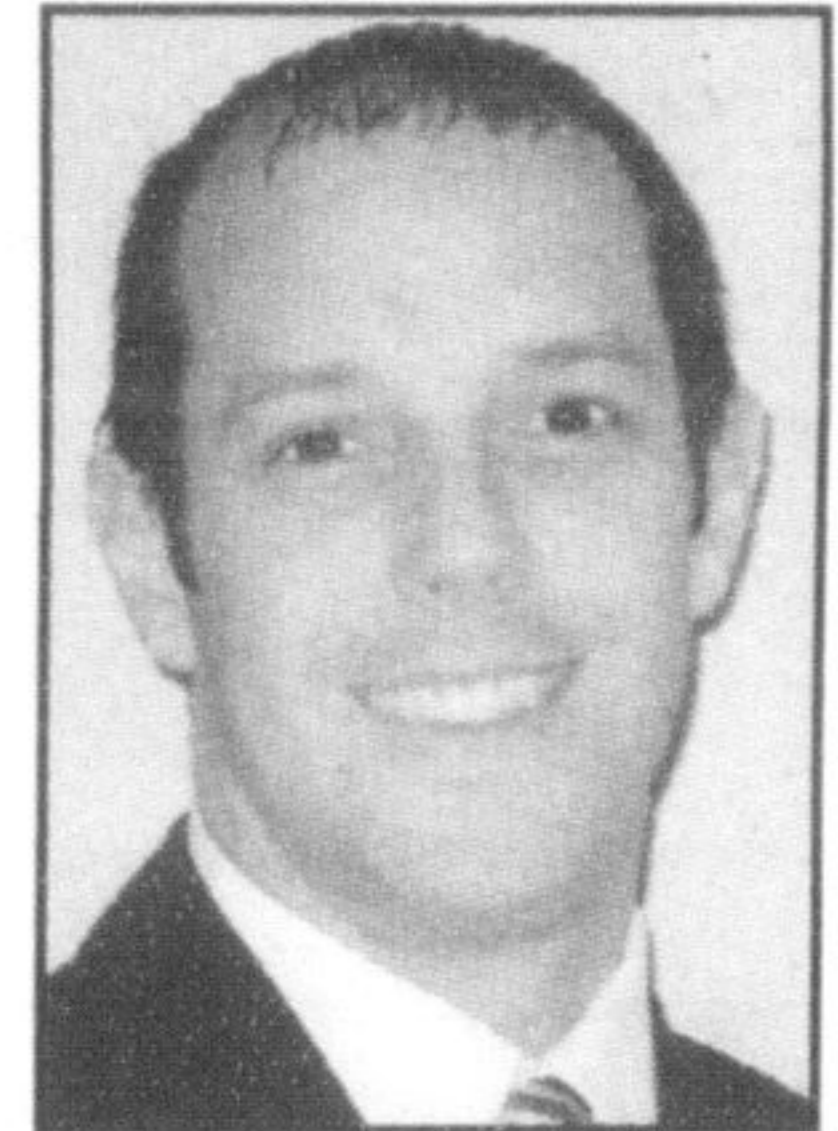
Mr. Turner can be reached at (905) 330-8581.



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NDP
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Green Party about more than just environment, says candidate

Halton Green Party candidate, Milton chiropractor Dr. Kyle Grice, isn't pleased about the timing of this election but now that it's here, there's nothing to do but get out and campaign.

Although he admitted that getting the public to understand that the Green Party is about much more than the environment will be an up-hill climb, Mr. Grice remains enthusiastic and is happy he put his name forward for nomination.

"The Green Party's values are also my personal values so it will be easy for me to represent them," said the married father of one son, with another child on the way.

Active in the Green Party since the last election (when the party fielded candidates in all 308 ridings from coast to coast), Mr. Grice was picked to run just this past November 8. Because of that, he hasn't had a chance to go door-to-door yet, but has been gauging the mood of the electorate, which he said probably won't think seriously about the election until the New Year.

"I don't think the timing helps anyone," said Mr. Grice, who's a chiropractor in Toronto along with his father and sister.

That said, those to whom he has spoken appear receptive to the Green message, especially since many people are ready for real

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