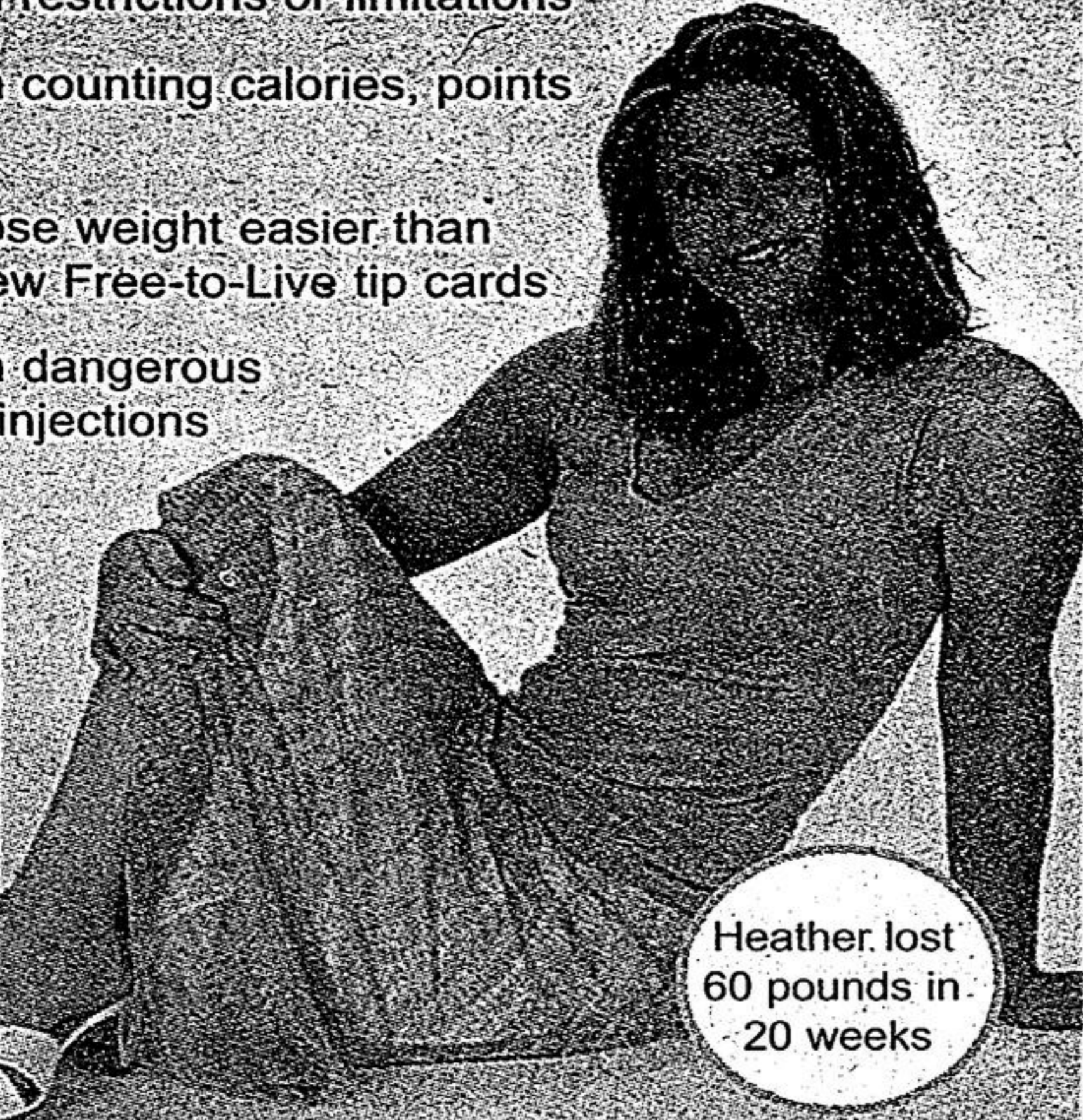


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Tories can deliver hope, finance critic says

BY CHRIS TRABER AND JOAN RANSBERRY
 Staff Writers

Conservative finance critic Monte Solberg didn't mince words during a GTA visit, which included York Region. "The Liberal government is complacent, tired and corrupt," the Medicine Hat MP said.

Accompanied by 10 party faithful, including York-Simcoe MP Peter Van Loan and Markham Conservative candidate Joe Li, Mr. Solberg dropped into the Markham Economist & Sun newsroom Monday as part of a pre-election campaign mission.

"Canadians are looking for new hope and new direction," Mr. Solberg said. "Over the next few months, we want to speak to Canadians about our vision and the policies we believe can build a better country."

While the finance critic didn't outline specific details about the Conservatives plan to tackle issues, Mr. Solberg said the party will stand up for improved health, tax relief, child care and transportation.

The finance critic took shots at the nation's health care system, particularly growing wait times.

"One of the best countries in the world has its people waiting weeks and months for medical attention," Mr. Solberg said. "That is not acceptable. What we need are standards. Canadians are interested in results and this government has to be accountable."

The government of the day would be well advised to consult experts, Mr. Solberg stressed.



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

During a visit to York Monday, Conservative finance critic Monte Solberg said the party will stand up for improved health, tax relief, child care and transportation.

"Go to the medical establishment and have them tell us how long a wait time is acceptable, said the former Alberta radio executive. "Then hold the government accountable for that."

The wait queues could also be whittled if private sector medical services were incorporated into the public health care strategy, Mr. Solberg contends.

"We need to be open minded," he said. "If we used resources wisely, taxpayers would get proper worth. For example, in Alberta more and more hip replacement surgeries are being done by private sector clinics, often with several thousand dollars in savings."

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