

Hon. John McKay, P.C., M.P.

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance

Scarborough Guildwood Report Autumn 2005



OUR GOVERNMENT'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE 2004-2005 SESSION

In my Spring mailing, I outlined some of the major components of Budget 2005. At that time it was still under consideration in the House. It has now been passed in the Senate and has received Royal Assent. In my role in Finance, it was my responsibility to see that every stage of the Budget process was handled well. A good deal of my time was spent on this task, especially given the complexity of a House of Commons widely divided in its goals and policies. We proved that minority government can work, but only with willingness to listen to the views of other parties and make room for them, without compromising our own basic principles. While the Budget occupied the headlines and much of our debate, it was not the only item on our agenda. The business of Parliament includes a very wide jurisdiction. Here are just a few of the other areas in which action was taken, including some Budget items not mentioned in my Spring mailing:



THE ECONOMY We have continued to maintain strong growth in the Canadian economy by building on more than a decade of good government, including eight consecutive balanced budgets, \$61.4 billion off the debt and more than \$100 billion in tax cuts. The national unemployment rate is 6.7 per cent (June 2005), compared to 11.2 per cent in November 1993. The Canada-U.S. rate gap has narrowed from almost 5 percentage points in 1996 to 1.6 percentage points today. In 2004, we had the fastest growth in exports in more than seven years and Canadian real GDP advanced at an annual rate of 4.3% in the second quarter. Between January 2003 and January 2005, 500,000 new jobs were created, nearly all of which were full-time. As well, government program spending to GDP ratio is 12%, compared to the late 80s/early 90s, when it averaged over 16%. These are not just numbers; they represent our individual and collective ability to raise our families in security and prosperity.

HEALTH CARE In addition to our \$41.3-billion agreement with the provinces and territories, and the Budget's \$805 million over five years in new direct federal health investments, we have appointed the first Chief Public Health Officer to head Canada's new Public Health Agency.




VETERANS The new Veterans Charter represents the most comprehensive modernization of programs and services for Canada's veterans since Second World War and Korean War veterans were helped to successfully complete their transition to civilian life.

SUPREME COURT APPOINTMENTS We have appointed two new Justices to the Supreme Court of Canada, bringing the number of women on Canada's top court to four out of nine judges. In addition, we introduced a more transparent approach to appointments with greater involvement of parliamentarians in the nomination process.




EDUCATION A new Canada Learning Bond will help lower-income families save for post-secondary education, and the ceiling has been increased for student loans.

ENVIRONMENT Budget 2005 commits more than \$5 billion in investments over the next five years to clean our air, land and water, preserve our environment and address climate change. We also released Project Green: Moving Forward on Climate Change. The plan includes more than \$2 billion in tax and production incentives to increase the development of renewable power sources such as wind, small hydro and solar energy. We have committed to clean up the approximately 3,800 federal contaminated sites over the next decade. Budget 2005 also includes almost \$900 million over five years to protect our natural environment, including the Great Lakes, Canada's oceans and national parks. As well, in May 2005, we passed legislation to forcefully protect Canada's marine environments from polluters by increasing fines to up to \$1 million under the Migratory Bird Convention Act.



Brochures outlining many of the matters dealt with in the last Parliamentary session are listed on page four of this publication. Others are available in my Constituency Office.

PUBLIC PREVIEW OF THE NEW WATERFRONT TRAIL

Ever since I was first elected to the House of Commons in 1997, I have been involved in efforts to make the Scarborough waterfront a place for people. From the initial meeting of the Toronto Waterfront Rejuvenation Project in August of that year, it has been my goal to see the extension of the work from its original eastern boundary at the Don River all the way to the Rouge.



I am seen here at the public preview with (left to right) Dick O'Brien, Chair of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), David Miller, Mayor of Toronto, and Gay Cowbourne, Councillor for Ward 44.

The section from Highland Creek to Chesterton Shores and on to the Rouge is well under way, and we will eventually see it join the trail along the Pickering shoreline. We are now focusing on extending the trail west past the foot of the Bluffs at Guildwood to Bellamy Road. The whole rejuvenation of Toronto's shoreline is a \$16 million project, funded by all three levels of government. The federal share is one-third of this amount, or 5.33 million dollars.

At the public preview of the new waterfront trail, my long commitment to the inclusion of the Scarborough portion of the lakeshore was acknowledged. It has taken many letters, phone calls and every other pressure I could bring to bear, but I am happy to say that it has finally come to fruition.



Natalie Affolter (Toronto Region Conservation) and Bob Loptson get ready for the BBQ that was part of the John McKay Clean-Up and Highland Creek Watershed Celebration in June. Thanks go to Dip Habib, the East Scarborough Storefront volunteers, the Scarborough Arts Council, the Friends of Highland Creek, StandUP Scarborough, the City of Toronto and the many generous sponsors who participated in the day. Information about gardens and water, games and an interpretive hike, door prizes and a reptile display, all made an interesting and fun-filled event.

Trip to southeast Asia shows Canadian people and foreign aid dollars at work

This summer I travelled with the Minister of Foreign Affairs to a conference of his counterparts in the southern Asia region. Such countries as Vietnam, Singapore, Laos, the Philippines, Myanmar and others in the area were represented.

While in this part of the world, I also went to the People's Democratic Republic of Lao. Canada is working there with 16 other countries, under the auspices of the United Nations Development Program, to clear UXO - Unexploded Ordnances - from this tiny country.

More than 2 million tonnes of ordnance was dropped on Laos during the Indo-China war (1964-73) and 30% is still 'live'. This gives Laos the distinction of being the world's most heavily bombed nation. Two-thirds of Laos is affected by UXO. Most accidents happen in rice-fields, villages and forests. Accidents involving children have increased substantially in recent years, as desperately poor families try to clear fields for farming. In just the six months from January to June of this year, there were 124 casualties in the areas being assisted (not the whole country). 60% were boys and girls under 18 years old. Anti-personnel bomblets, 'bombies', are the worst problems. Unlike landmines, they are designed to kill rather than injure.

2 Laos is one of the poorest countries



On the left in this photo is the Canadian Ambassador to Thailand, Denis Comeau, with two Canadians living and working in Vientiane. The project is a Canada Fund site where compost is made from vegetable waste from local markets.

in the world. It has been at peace for 25 years, but UXO is still one of the major barriers to development. Since 1995, the Government of Canada has contributed US\$1,027,580 to the effort to rid the fields of bombies and increase the land available for food production. Over half a million items of UXO have so far been destroyed, and more than 4,000 hectares of land have been cleared. Working with CUSO and other NGOs, CIDA is showing once again that Canada is ready to share in making a decent life possible in nations too poor to lift themselves out of poverty. I was proud to be a Canadian when I saw our aid at work.

Briefly

MILESTONES

Congratulations to **Florence Addison**, who celebrated her hundredth birthday in June. For **Koppel Valentine**, **Chin Su Liu**, **Doris Pearce** and **Evelyn Dann**, 2005 marks ninety years.

Florence & George Todd, **Lydia & Alan Martin**, **Muriel & Louis Rasmussen**, **Violet & William Bailey** and **Joan & Robert Stainthorpe** have been married for sixty years, while **Sally & Joseph Benedetto**, **Bev & Robbie Rhodes**, **Sheila & Jim Dickinson** and **Mary & Jim Cusack** are among the many residents of Scarborough who are remembering their wedding day back in 1955.

SERVING IN AFGHANISTAN

My niece, **Kristie McKay**, is among the young Canadian soldiers who serve this country in our efforts to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan. Corporal McKay is an Army driver and office worker in a volatile part of the world.

NEW COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Congratulations to the **Cedar Ridge Community Association** and co-chairs, **Wayne Gratton** and **Alonzo Bartley**.

GUILDWOOD VOLUNTEER

She wouldn't want anyone to "make a fuss" over her, but Livingston Road resident **Cristel McGregor** has the sincere admiration of her friends as she very quietly assists sick and elderly neighbours through difficult times. Cristel's work is being honoured with a Volunteer of the Year Award.

MILLENNIUM SCHOLARSHIPS

Kruti S. Patel, **Sri S. Ananthalingum** and **Niroshan Sriskandarajah** have been awarded millennium excellence awards for the 2004-2005 academic year. They are among 929 students across Canada who have been named as laureates this year.

CANADA'S ROLE IN SUDAN

The persistent marginalization of remote areas has embroiled Sudan in civil conflicts almost since its independence from Britain in 1956. Canada has been helping to address the root causes of the north-south differences for over twenty years.

We believe that this is key to resolving the humanitarian and human rights crises in other areas of the country, most recently in the Western Darfur region. Over the past summer, it was estimated that 10,000 people died there every month in genocidal attacks on villages. Our approach to Sudan crises is carried out:

- ♦ through Foreign Affairs, which actively supports both the north-south peace talks in Kenya and the Darfur peace talks in Nigeria;
- ♦ through the Canadian International Development Agency, which provides funding for urgently needed humanitarian assistance, support for peacebuilding efforts and protection for those affected by the conflict. Since October 2000, Canada has committed almost \$200 million in aid to the United Nations and non-governmental agencies working in Darfur and other areas in Sudan; and
- ♦ through the Department of National Defence, using Canadian Forces personnel to provide expertise in the military planning process for an African Union-led military operation in the Darfur region.

We first appointed a Special Envoy for Peace in Sudan in 1999. Our current envoy is Senator Mobina Jaffer, who was the speaker at the Women's Liberal Association breakfast here two years ago.

Prime Minister Paul Martin has been a pivotal player in our efforts, using his contacts with President George Bush, Prime Minister Tony Blair and President Jacques Chirac to organize international support. He has also been a major factor in mobilizing the efforts of President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, and U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan to co-operate with the five-nation African Union military force.

In May of this year Prime Minister Martin announced the creation of a special advisory team to coordinate Canada's efforts to help resolve the Darfur crisis. They are the Prime Minister's Personal Representative for Africa Ambassador Robert Fowler, Senator Jaffer and Senator Roméo Dallaire.

In July, representatives from the Sudanese government, the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army and the Justice and Equality Movement signed a Declaration of Principles for the Resolution of the Sudanese Conflict in Darfur at the Darfur peace negotiations in Nigeria, signalling a positive breakthrough in the talks.

Later in July, Senator Jaffer represented Canada at the inauguration ceremony in Khartoum of Sudan's transitional Government of National Unity, a key milestone in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The sudden death of First Vice-President Dr. John Garang de Mabior in July did not bring widespread upheaval, as had been feared. This is a sign that peace might have a chance.

We urge all parties to resolve their conflicts peacefully, with respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, bringing to justice those guilty of serious



violations, including rape and violence against women. Canada supports African efforts to find a solution to this African crisis. In fact, our financial support to the African Union peacekeeping operation in Darfur is greater than that of any other nation.



*Young people visiting Ottawa don't usually get to spend an hour alone with the Prime Minister. I noticed Jonathan Laski, Ben Fine, Alexandra Zalucky and Josh Fisher, Ontario university members of **Students Taking Action Now: Darfur (STAND)**, on Parliament Hill, and arranged for them to have an open and honest conversation with Paul Martin. The students later wrote to tell me that the visit had shown them "an inspirational side of politics that is often not represented on the news".*

Cross-border Sales of Prescription Drugs

The Government of Canada has introduced a federal strategy to address pressures resulting from cross-border drug sales.

The Canadian Medical Association and Canadian Pharmacists Association have called on the government to take action to effectively monitor and address threats to Canada's drug supply. Proposed U.S. legalization of bulk importation could result in a change to the cross-border market, expanding the volume of Canadian drugs flowing to the U.S. Internet pharmacies have also fostered unethical prescribing practices in Canada which, if continued, would have a detrimental effect on Canada's

overall health framework.

SOME OF THE NEW INITIATIVES INCLUDE:

- ♦ establishing a drug supply network in Health Canada. The network will provide Health Canada with more comprehensive data on Canada's prescription drug supply.
 - ♦ strengthening the protection of Canada's drug supply by prohibiting the export of Canadian drugs as necessary.
 - ♦ strengthening existing federal regulations to require an established patient-practitioner relationship.
- Two recent polls show that Canadians support government action before the U.S. passes legislation to legalize bulk importation.

**FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
GRANTS TO LOCAL
ORGANIZATIONS**

A \$22,500 grant to **Arising Women**, a small but vital resource for women who have suffered spousal abuse, will assist the organization to offer its free services. For more information, call 416.281.6662.

Another useful community resource, the **Progress Career Planning Centre**, has been granted \$495,000 in ongoing funding for the next year. The Centre is a link for people seeking employment. Call 416.439.2275 to find out how this Centre can assist you.



The annual Guildwood Day parade was held on a warm June morning, with mounted policemen, a fire engine, music, paraders in decorated tricycles and bikes, and proud parents taking pictures. I am shown here with Councillor David Soknacki and two young friends. The parade was just part of a full day of celebration.

On the same day, the Curran Hall Annual Picnic brought neighbours to another party. The tug-of-war was a big attraction for the children, while parents relaxed in the sunshine and enjoyed each others' company, with picnic dishes from several cultures.

IRAQI CITIZENS IN CANADA IN HISTORIC VOTE

On a cold winter day early this year I was given a unique privilege. With my colleague Yasmin Ratsani (MP for Don Valley East), I acted as an observer at a polling station in Scarborough for elections to the Transitional National Assembly in Iraq. Elections Canada trained the personnel and organized the voting procedure in a transparent and legitimate manner, with great respect for language and cultural sensitivities. This was the first opportunity for many expatriate Iraqis to vote in a free election.

2005 - The Year of the Veteran

On November 11 we will gather to honour the men and women who gave their lives in the service of Canada during the wars of the last century. We will hear once again the haunting words used by the Royal Canadian Legion on such occasions. They are part of a longer poem called *For The Fallen*, written in 1914 by Laurence Binyon. We reproduce part of the poem here as our tribute to those who died. Everyone who has lost a son or daughter to war can identify with its words.

For The Fallen

They shall not grow old, as we who are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land

they are known
As the stars are known to the night;
As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;
As the stars that are starry
in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

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