

Leader's
2005 ANNUAL REPORT
to Party Membership



by John Tory, Leader

September, 2005

Dear Party Member,

This is the first of what I plan to be an annual report from myself to our party membership on the progress we are all making as the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party. My first year as leader has been one of excitement and renewal and has laid a strong foundation for the two years ahead as we build towards the election in 2007.

Over the past year, I have travelled to 101 of Ontario's 103 ridings, and I am saddened to see first-hand the cynicism the McGuinty Liberals have engendered with their incompetence and broken promises. At the same time, I am heartened to meet so many able and eager riding officials, volunteers and potential candidates who are working hard to make the McGuinty regime a bad memory a little over two years from now.

Strengthening our Finances

When I took on the leadership of the party, I acknowledged that one of our biggest challenges would be getting our almost \$10-million debt under control. Thanks to a little prodding and a lot of hard work, I am proud to say that our obligation will be reduced to under \$5 million by the end of this year, and we are on track to eliminating it entirely by 2007. While this is definitely good news, a tough challenge remains, and much work lies ahead in preparing for the election.

The highlight of the fundraising calendar was our Leader's Dinner in Toronto on May 10, attended by more than 2,000 people. The previous year's attendance by comparison was 800. Thanks to everyone involved in the dinner. Many thanks as well to those of you who responded to our special debt-reduction appeal, to all our donors, fundraisers and the hard-working folks at the PC Ontario Fund.

But our central finances are only part of the equation. Our ridings must also have their individual war chests stocked and, to that end, many of the 56 fundraisers I have attended this past year have been at the riding level. The next big effort on the fundraising horizon is our York Region Leader's Dinner on November 23. I know that the dinner's organizers will make it a big success.

Representing Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey

In February I was nominated as the PC candidate for Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey, a riding previously represented in whole or part by the likes of Ernie Eves, David Tilson, Jack Johnson and William Davis, all of whom have served a great, diverse riding with distinction. Shortly after the Premier called the by-election for March 17th and after a vigorous campaign I had earned the support of 15,633 voters, or 56% of the vote.

*PC Party debt in
September 2004:
\$9.2 million*

*Projected debt for
2005 year-end: less
than \$5 million*

*Projected debt by
2007: zero*

Building the Plan for '07

After three different budget “plans” and fifty-plus broken promises from the McGuinty Liberals, voters will be reluctant to believe anything the Liberals put forward in Campaign '07. They will, however, be paying keen attention to the plans and policies the PC party puts forward – plans and policies that we will fulfil as a government.

Putting together a plan for government is not done overnight, and it's not done without the involvement of our party membership. That's why we launched the party's policy process at our Annual General Meeting in Ottawa this February. The Ideas Sessions at the AGM were very successful in helping us begin the policy development process and laid the groundwork for the policy work that will take place over the next two years. We must craft policy that will give the people of Ontario confidence that we will do what we say we will, with responsibility, accountability and balance unlike the McGuinty Liberal government.

Under the able direction of Deputy Leader Elizabeth Witmer and 3rd Vice-President John Matheson, the policy process is moving forward. To date, 33 meetings have taken place or been organized. In total, 54 ridings will have been involved in the policy process, by hosting or taking part in a policy meeting.

I encourage all of you to engage in this grassroots process if you have not done so already. If you require more information about how to become involved please e-mail policy.ideas@ontariopc.net or send a fax to 416-861-9593. The next milestone in our policy development process will be our policy convention in Niagara Falls, February 17-19, 2006. I hope to see you there.

I don't want to leave the policy discussion behind without mentioning our task forces on gridlock, violence affecting youth and our Skilled Immigrant Task Force. Gridlock is just one of many issues on which Dalton McGuinty has over-promised and under-delivered. Our Gridlock task force team, comprised of MPPs John O'Toole, Tim Hudak, Jim Wilson, and Julia Munro, will be holding town hall meetings and collecting ideas on how to address this issue. In June, I hosted a summit (after the Premier had rebuffed my suggestion that he do so), which brought together parents, youth, law enforcement, educators and victims' groups to discuss violence affecting youth and develop strategies to address this growing problem. Later this fall, we'll be issuing a report from our Skilled Immigrant Task Force.

I also have to commend Norm Miller for his work with our “Northern Caucus,” a group of 24 individuals from across the north that Norm assembled to provide on-the-ground information and advise us on northern issues.

*Launched the
Gridlock Task Force*

*Commissioned the
Skilled Immigrant
Report*

*Number of events
attended: 321*

*Number of
fundraising events
attended: 56*

Building the Party and Base

The Ontario PC Party today bears little resemblance to the party whose leadership I sought just one year ago. After the leadership, the next step in our renewal was the election of a new executive at the Annual General Meeting held in Ottawa this past February. Due to our financial situation, I have asked the executive to assume some very heavy responsibilities that are traditionally carried out by salaried staff. Happily, President Blair McCreadie and his executive are rising to the challenge. Their hard work is appreciated by all and proves that they are up to the challenges ahead.

When you think of how many of our party's best organizers, candidates and leaders (including myself) got their start in youth politics, you realize how important it is that we cultivate and recruit young progressive conservatives at our colleges and universities. This fall I have visited the campuses of Laurier University and the University of Toronto to help in our recruitment efforts, and look forward to visiting several more.

In one of my "Upfront with John Tory" newsletters last fall, I said that meeting with our local riding leaders is the right thing to do as we lay the groundwork for victory in 2007. In keeping with that promise, I will again be attending various regional Presidents' Councils this fall. These councils are important opportunities for training and policy discussion and I look forward to attending.

I also promised that I would travel the province and reach out to attract new support to our party. In many of the 101 ridings I have visited I have done just that. I have attended events such as the Toronto Greek community's WWII commemorative parade, a dinner honouring Portuguese scholarship winners, and Ukrainian Christmas services. I have also attended events with the Sikh and Cambodian communities and met with members of the ethnic media to discuss our outreach efforts.

Earlier this year we launched a series of ethnic roundtables, which so far have consulted the Chinese and South Asian communities. This July my wife Barbara Hackett and I attended an intensive French course to help in our efforts to reach out to the many Franco-Ontarians around the province.

AGM Heats Up a Capital February

Anyone who maintains that nothing good can happen in Ottawa in February couldn't have been there for our party's 2005 Annual General Meeting. With over 1,000 enthusiastic Conservatives in attendance, it was the most upbeat party gathering in recent years. MPPs, riding executives and volunteers from across the province came together to swap ideas, elect a new executive, and launch our policy process. We left the convention united, motivated and looking forward.

A Strong and Capable Caucus Team

Through observing Queen's Park before and after the leadership, I knew that we had a strong caucus, but since entering the Legislature as the Member for Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey in March, I have gained a new appreciation for the talent and experience possessed by our Members. I cannot commend each of them individually here, but they have done a tremendous job in serving their constituents, holding the Liberals to account, setting a higher standard of behaviour in the Legislature, and helping me acclimatize to life as a full-time politician. You may have heard that two of our members, Jim Flaherty and John Baird, will be moving on to the federal arena. We wish them well, and will be giving them all the help we can in the federal election expected next year.

Holding the Liberals to Account

Though one might argue that the McGuinty Liberals have been their own best critics, nonetheless our caucus scored some impressive wins in exposing their incompetence and weak leadership, while highlighting our own strengths.

A good example is the Liberals' so-called greenbelt plan, originally announced almost three years ago in the Liberal election platform. Earlier this year our caucus successfully demonstrated that the Liberals' greenbelt was in fact a "greenbotch" based on politics, not environmental science, with many inclusions and exclusions based on sloppy research or the influence of developers. What's worse, it failed to address infrastructure issues or the legitimate concerns of farmers and municipalities. Thanks to the work of MPP Tim Hudak and our caucus, the Liberals were pressured into adding several sensitive areas to the protected greenbelt.

Earlier this year, the Liberals introduced the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund to replace the Community Reinvestment Fund. Though the government touted it as a boon to municipalities, our caucus revealed that in fact the program cuts \$47 million in funding to 207 municipalities across the province, including Niagara Falls, Peterborough, Windsor, Sudbury and Thunder Bay.

Other successes include convincing the Liberals that their flawed adoption legislation was not ready for passage due to its lack of adequate protection of privacy rights, and getting the government to endorse a motion to make the Ministry of Agriculture a lead ministry and provide much-needed assistance to farmers.

The gun violence plaguing Toronto this summer has shocked all of Canada. It has also shone an even harsher light on the McGuinty Liberals' shortcomings. Neither the Premier nor the Attorney General issued even one news release about the violence, perhaps hoping no one would notice that the government has done nothing to fulfil its campaign promise of an additional 1,000 police officers throughout Ontario.

*Hosted the Violence
Affecting Youth
Summit - June 2005*

Over the summer, I met with numerous community leaders about crime, visited affected neighbourhoods, hosted community meetings and initiated a Summit on Violence Affecting Youth that will report shortly. I have repeatedly called for urgent action from Dalton McGuinty to address the escalating gun violence, including developing a coordinated and effective youth strategy to prevent crime.

Her Majesty's Loyal and Respectful Opposition

To their impressive record of promise-breaking, the McGuinty Liberals have added incompetence, and misplaced priorities. They finally admitted that their ill-considered promise to prematurely shut down Ontario's coal-fired power plants was just that, yet Ontario still faces several years of power supply uncertainty. Their promise to hire 1,000 new police officers for Ontario municipalities is two years old, yet not one new officer has been hired: an unfulfilled promise that became particularly glaring during a summer of gun violence in Toronto.

While they bungle or ignore the important issues, they expend inordinate amounts of time and energy on things such as pit bulls, sushi and the Ontario logo. After nearly two years, it is clear that Dalton McGuinty is providing weak leadership, incompetent management and his word can no longer be relied upon.

While the McGuinty Liberals continue to give us plenty to criticize, I am happy to report that our caucus has brought about a significant and constructive change to the Legislature: a drastic reduction in the heckling and barracking that diminished the image of our Parliament and all of us as public servants. Though the government caucus initially ridiculed our attempts, they have started to make some tiny efforts to respond to us, and more importantly to the public that expects better. A quieter, more decorous Legislature will reflect better on us all.

Looking Ahead

The Legislature will be sitting again before too long and four by-elections lay ahead. The first one in Scarborough-Rouge River will be a tough challenge for us, being the riding formerly held by Liberal Alvin Curling.

There is significant work ahead this year in the areas of recruitment, fundraising, policy and candidate search. I know that many of you have been working hard and I thank you for your efforts. We need everyone to maintain that level of commitment if we are to give Ontarians the better government they deserve in just 24 months from now.

Sincerely,



John Tory

Number of policy meetings held since February: 33

Number of ridings visited since becoming Leader: 101 (out of 103)



Ontario's Official Opposition - Critic Portfolios

Tory, MPP, John
Witmer, MPP, Elizabeth
Arnott, MPP, Ted
Baird, MPP, John
Barrett, MPP, Toby
Chudleigh, MPP, Ted
Dunlop, MPP, Garfield
Flaherty, MPP, Jim
Hardeman, MPP, Ernie
Hudak, MPP, Tim
Jackson, MPP, Cam

Klees, MPP, Frank
Martiniuk, MPP, Gerry
Miller, MPP, Norm
Munro, MPP, Julia
Munro, MPP, Bill
O'Toole, MPP, John
Ouellette, MPP, Jerry
Runciman, MPP, Bob
Scott, MPP, Laurie
Sterling, MPP, Norm
Tascona, MPP, Joe
Wilson, MPP, Jim
Yakubuski, MPP, John

Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey
 Kitchener-Waterloo
 Waterloo-Wellington
 Nepean-Carleton
 Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant
 Halton
 Simcoe North
 Whitby-Ajax
 Oxford
 Erie-Lincoln
 Burlington
 Seniors; Long-Term Care
 Oak Ridges
 Cambridge
 Parry Sound-Muskoka
 York North
 Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound
 Durham
 Oshawa
 Leeds-Grenville
 Haliburton-Victoria-Brock
 Lanark-Carleton
 Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford
 Simcoe-Grey
 Renfren-Nipissing-Pembroke

Leader of the Official Opposition
 Deputy Leader, Caucus Chair; Health; Women's Issues
 Tourism
 Intergovernmental Affairs; Francophone Affairs
 Agriculture & Food
 Deputy Whip; Economic Development & Trade
 Community Safety & Correctional Services
 Public Infrastructure Renewal
 Municipal Affairs & Housing
 Finance
 Training, Colleges & Universities; Research & Innovation;
 Education; Citizenship & Immigration
 Community & Social Services
 Chief Whip; Natural Resources; Aboriginal Affairs
 Children & Youth Services; Culture
 Rural Affairs
 Deputy Whip; Transportation
 Northern Development & Mines
 House Leader; Attorney General
 Environment
 Health Promotion; Democratic Renewal
 Government Services
 Deputy House Leader; Labour
 Energy

Ontario PC Party Executive

Blair McCreadie
Rueben Devlin
Ken Zeise
Janet Carwardine
John Matheson
Brett Bell
Sara Mintz
Michael Wilson
Jeff Graham
Karma MacGregor
Paul Braczek
Janet Browes
Vic Gupta
Judy Bobka
Marlene Hogarth
Rob Stark
Jennifer Yee
Ryan Sydor
Dianne Lawson
Michelle Leger
Justin Van Dette
Terry Barlow
Leslie Morrison
Brendan McLaughlin

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 Past-President
 1st Vice-President (Organization)
 2nd Vice-President (Nominations, Constitution and Rules)
 3rd Vice-President (Policy)
 4th Vice-President (Communications, Municipal Outreach and Conference Management)
 5th Vice-President (Training and Development)
 6th Vice-President (Membership)
 7th Vice-President (Recruitment and Outreach)
 8th Vice-President (Volunteers and Co-Chair, Awards)
 9th Vice-President (Technology and Youth Development)
 Secretary
 Treasurer (Chair, Finance Committee)
 Eastern Region Vice-President (Co-Chair, Awards)
 Northwestern Region Vice-President
 Northeastern Region Vice-President
 Southwestern Region Vice-President
 South Central Region Vice-President
 GTA West Region Vice-President
 GTA East Region Vice-President
 Toronto Region Vice-President
 Central Region Vice-President
 Ontario PC Youth Association, President
 Ontario PC Campus Association, President

Gridlock Task Force

(www.gridlocked.ca)

John O'Toole, MPP
 Jim Wilson, MPP

Tim Hudak, MPP
 Julia Munro, MPP

