



UPFRONT

with **Mike Wallace, MP**



A Publication of Mike Wallace, Member of Parliament for Burlington

Fall 2006

Welcome to the second edition of my “Report From Your Member of Parliament”

I have been very busy over the last few months in Ottawa and in Burlington and I would now like to take some time to highlight some of the actions of our minority government and some of my activity as your Member of Parliament. In addition, a lot has happened in the world since my last newsletter and I want to speak frankly to you about the ongoing crisis in the Middle East.

Our First Session of Legislative Activity

1. A Throne Speech that was passed by the minority Parliament
2. Introduction and passing of the Accountability Act. An act to clean up corruption and restore accountability of our federal institutions.
3. A federal budget that was passed by the House of Commons. The budget includes the reduction of GST to 6% and the \$1200 child care credit for families with children under 6 years old.
4. Strengthened our criminal justice system by removing conditional sentences and house arrest for serious and violent crimes.
5. Increased the minimum penalties for offenses involving firearms.
6. Amended the Citizenship Act to allow Canadian parents with foreign adopted children to have their children become Canadian citizens quicker.
7. Introduced fixed election dates for future federal elections.

8. Introduced eight year maximum terms for Senators.
9. Introduced legislation to crackdown on street racing.
10. Introduced financial relief for the Agricultural sector.
11. Debated and voted on a two year extension of our mission in Afghanistan.
12. Introduced legislation for the formal policy and legal framework for the Public Health Agency of Canada.

We have also dealt with other Bills, opposition party motions, and Private Members Bills (including the introduction of my Bill, C-279). It has been a very productive 1st session and I am very proud that our Conservative Government has been delivering on our election commitments.

For me personally, I have been actively pursuing a number of items and here is a sample of some of that work.

I have worked hard as Chairman of the Canadian Parliamentary Steel Caucus to re-establish its role and to assist our local and national steel industry in Ottawa.

I have been assisting the City of Burlington in their application to secure federal funding for the King Road underpass. In addition, I have been promoting the Burlington Performing Arts Centre project in Ottawa and meeting with various Ministers.

I have surveyed the riding on the issue of reopening the same sex marriage debate. A vote will take place



Mike's team from L-R: Tom, Dorothy, Nicole, Mike, Andrea and Jon

on this issue in the fall, and I will be publishing the results of my survey on www.mikewallace.ca

I have also been lobbying CN on noise problems in Aldershot.

I have a private members bill to be debated in late September that will connect the DNA database of missing persons to other databases to allow us to identify missing persons easier and faster from morgues and crime scenes. This legislation will bring closure to families who are suffering from not knowing the whereabouts of missing family members.

Finally, my staff and I have worked with and helped hundreds of constituents at our offices in Burlington and Ottawa. I am very pleased with the work of my staff as they also had a steep learning curve as new employees in my offices. Through newsletters, newspaper columns, the web site and now my show on TVCogeco, we are working hard to keep in touch with you, listen to your concerns and deal with your issues.

Middle East Crisis

As I am writing this article the UN agreed-upon cease fire has just been begun. We are hopeful that this will be successful in beginning the process of bringing a long-term peaceful and stable resolution to the crisis. Our government is very supportive of this U.N. resolution.

Prime Minister Harper has been calling for a sustainable cease-fire from the beginning of this crisis. Canada lead the discussions at the G-8 Summit which resulted in a resolution calling for the return of the kidnapped Israeli soldiers and a cease-fire. In addition, we put forward the following resolution at the Foreign Affairs Committee this summer:

" That the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs calls on the government of Canada to urge an immediate cease fire that is sustainable by all parties across the Lebanese/Israeli border as expressed by the Blue line."

Some facts to keep in mind.

- The conflict was not between the Lebanese government and Israel but between Israel and the extremist terrorist group Hezbollah.

- Hezbollah is listed in Canada as a terrorist organization which makes it a criminal offense to associate with, or support their efforts in Canada.
- Hezbollah provoked the conflict by going into Israel and killing and kidnapping soldiers.
- Hezbollah was to be disarmed and removed by the Lebanese government as per a U.N. resolution and this did not occur.
- Hezbollah imbed themselves within the civilian population and used civilian locations to launch their attacks on Israel.
- Hezbollah's stated goal is the elimination of Israel.
- Canada supported the creation of the State of Israel and supports its democratic government's right to defend itself.

Having stated the facts it is still very regrettable and sad that the crisis escalated to such a level that so many civilians lost their lives. I am personally thankful to see the end of the bombing and I am hopeful that the ceasefire be successful.

Finally, one of the most frequently asked questions: Why was Canada not following its longstanding neutral position in Middle East affairs?

This is simply a misleading question. I think the following editorial by Quentin Casey of the National Post sets out the truth.

Opposition politicians and several media reports have repeatedly charged in recent days that the Stephen Harper government's pro-Israeli stance has pushed Canada away from its traditional neutral position on foreign affairs, damaging the country's reputation as a broker of peace.

Interim Liberal leader Bill Graham, for example, said the Prime Minister has made a "great error" by taking a position on the Middle East crisis that could detract from Ottawa's ability to mediate future conflicts, while Bloc Quebecois leader Gilles Duceppe said Mr. Harper has "destroyed 50 years of Canadian diplomacy."

But experts who track Canada's foreign policy in the region say they are in need of a history lesson -- Canada has rarely been neutral in its approach to conflict there.

"If you backtrack on [our] record, it clearly illustrates that it is anything but neutral," said Frank Harvey, a political scientist and director of foreign policy studies at Dalhousie University in Halifax.

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How Government Works: Private Members Bills

"If the private member is to count for anything, there must be a relationship between what the private member and the institution of Parliament can do and what the electorate thinks or expects can be done." -*Third Report of the Special Committee on the Reform of the House (McGrath Committee), June 1985*

"Private Members" are generally defined as Members of the House of Commons who are not part of the Ministry.

A private Member's bill is the text of a legislative initiative sponsored by a private Member. Based on private Members' own ideas and drafted with the aid of legislative counsel, such bills are brought forward by the sponsoring Member. Like government bills, private Members' bills become statutes once they receive Royal Assent. Private Members' bills may not create, increase or extend taxes.

On the day the Member chooses to introduce the bill, he or she rises during the Routine Proceedings and the Speaker announces the title of the bill and the

motion for leave to introduce it. The Member sponsoring the bill is then permitted to give a brief explanation of its purpose, without engaging in debate. The motion for first reading is then deemed carried, without debate.

When a private Member's bill is agreed to at second reading, it is referred to a committee for study. Proceedings in a committee considering a private Member's public bill are subject to the same rules and practices that apply to all public bills.

When a committee reports a private Member's bill back to the House, the order for consideration of the report stage is placed at the bottom of the Order of Precedence. Two hours, on separate sitting days are allotted for combined report stage and third reading consideration.

When a recorded vote is taken on an item of Private Members' Business, the vote of the Member sponsoring the bill or motion is recorded first, if he or she is present. This is followed by the votes of the other Members on the same side of the House, and then the Members on the other side of the House.

Next Issue: ??

Private Members Bill C-279

An Act to Amend the DNA Identification Act (establishment of indexes) was introduced by Mike Wallace, MP and given first reading on May 12, 2006.

There are over 7,000 missing persons in Canada who have been missing for over one year. There are currently 15,000 samples of unidentified DNA recovered from crime scenes across the country currently stored in the RCMP's National DNA Data Bank (NDDB) in Ottawa, as well as hundreds of unidentified DNA from "Jane and John Does" in Canada's morgues.

Due to restrictions in the DNA Identification Act, it is not possible to match DNA from the thousands of missing persons with samples from the NDDB crime scene index or from Jane and John Does.

Given the need for a DNA Databank and the widespread support from Canadians, law enforcement professionals and provincial governments, and considering its inexpensive nature, a DNA Database for missing persons (housed within the NDDB) should be created as soon as possible. Mike's bill seeks to do that.

Bill C-279 amends the DNA Identification Act to provide for the establishment of a human remains index and a missing persons index to help law enforcement agencies search for and identify persons reported missing.

The Bill was originally introduced by MP Gary Lunn (now the Minister of Natural Resources) but he couldn't drum up the support needed to get it passed into law. One of the main setbacks was concern about legal issues that needed to be looked into. Many of those issues have since been resolved.

William Davidson, a professor at Simon Fraser University and a member of the DNA Data Bank Advisory Committee, said the caveats for the use of the proposed indices can easily be put into place.

"Canada is the DNA leader," he said. "It is known for pushing technology and how it handles the DNA data bank. Bill C-279 is the next logical step."

Davidson added that creating a missing persons index could be done with the click of a button because the existing data bank is already programmed to be compatible with a missing persons index.

Bill C-279 comes up for second reading in the House of Commons on September 22nd. For more information please visit www.parl.gc.ca/legisinfo/ or visit www.lindseyslaw.com.

Statements by Mike in the House of Commons

On Afghanistan

"Freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights are the core values of our troops and aid workers who are courageously and diligently working to bring opportunity, democracy and peace to the people of Afghanistan. I would like to offer my personal condolences to the families and friends of our fallen soldiers. Their brave and heroic commitment to our country and to the principles and values that guided their desire to serve will always be honoured. Their sacrifice will never be forgotten."

On the Arts

"Mr. Speaker, I am an avid supporter of the arts in my own community. I am on the board of directors of the Sound of Music Festival, which is the largest outdoor music festival in Ontario. I have been working for a number of years to bring a performing arts centre to the city of Burlington and continue to do so. I have also been on the board of directors of the Burlington Art Centre."

On our relationship with the United States

"Burlington is situated between Canada's leading steel manufacturers, Dofasco and Stelco in Hamilton, and Ford Canada in Oakville. My community is home to thousands of workers who make their livelihoods from these leading companies that represent the foundation of Canada's manufacturing economy. Burlington is also home to a large number of small and medium size businesses that are either suppliers or customers in these vital manufacturing sectors. The relationship that Canada has with the United States is key to the long term growth of these industries and businesses. Our neighbours to the south can either be our best customer or our toughest competitor. The decision is ours."

On International Day of the Family

"Today many Canadian families open their hearts to adopt a child. Some adopt children from overseas. Foreign adopted children should not have to wait so long to become Canadian citizens. Our Conservative government has committed to making the citizenship process easier for children adopted abroad by Canadians. Today, on International Day of Families, this government is standing up for one of our most precious resources, Canadian families."

On Municipal Infrastructure

"As an individual coming from the municipal world I have a good understanding of the infrastructure



Mike speaks in the House of Commons often. You can see video of Mike speaking or listen to podcasts of his remarks by visiting www.mikewallace.ca

needs and demands of the urban area which I represent and parts of the GTA. I made a commitment to my constituents to bring those needs and desires to caucus and to the House so that other members without these experiences will understand what we need to keep our economy moving. Infrastructure is the basis for economic development and economic growth which adds wealth to this country. It also will enable us to provide the social services that we are so proud of in my community."

On Bill C-5

"In my previous job as a regional councillor in the region of Halton I experienced first-hand the vital role public health plays in the lives of my constituents. I appreciate its importance and firmly believe the Government of Canada has a role in gathering information, providing advice and responding to emergencies in public health. The past outbreak of SARS and in my area the introduction of the West Nile virus have been two important public health issues in my riding. Public health officials have played a key role in informing the public on the risks and actions that people need to take to protect themselves. Our Public Health Agency can play a vital role in preparing and preventing such an outbreak in all parts of Canada. A planned and coordinated effort will help prevent a Canadian public health crisis in the future and our Canadian Public Health Agency should be at the forefront of this effort."

Community Group Profile



Two of our community's core values - business and lifestyle - merge with the alliance of six business organizations to form Team Burlington. The result is a singular strategy to enhance Burlington's economic prospects through a unique partnership found nowhere else in Ontario.

Burlington has brought the major city economic development organizations together to form a dynamic team that is focused on the creation of a progressive and dynamic city with a unique approach for business development services. Called "Team Burlington" partners include; the City of Burlington, Burlington Chamber of Commerce, Burlington Economic Development Corporation, Burlington Downtown Business Association, Tourism Burlington and the Aldershot Business Community.

The goal of Team Burlington is to maximize the effectiveness of economic growth initiatives within



the community by projecting one clear, consistent image.

Since its inception in 2001, Team Burlington has undertaken a number of successful initiatives, including developing a common brand image that captures the characteristics of what Burlington has to offer, launching and privatizing of a Burlington Magazine called INBurlington and moving five of the partners into one location to enhance economies of scale and promote communications.

In April the Team organized a Business Summit & Tradeshow that brought together local business experts and over three hundred delegates to discover Burlington's "home field advantage".

Although all six members of the team have distinct mandates and achievements, the Team Burlington model has received recognition across the province. The synergy of this partnership continues to stimulate business revitalization and growth. Team Burlington partners are committed to the goal of promoting Burlington as a progressive, modern city that is ripe for investment and a great place to live.

Beyond its borders Team Burlington is revered as one of the reasons that the community is seen as "leading edge". The Team has been recognized by the American Planning Association as a best practice and the one-stop-shop image for investors projects a business community that is cohesive and successful.

For further information email teamburlington@burlington.ca

If you belong to a local not-for-profit organization doing great things in our community, or know of a group that you feel should be highlighted here, please get in touch with us.

The Mike Wallace Show on TVCogeco this Spring

The first episode of Upfront with Mike Wallace on TVCogeco is now on air! Episode One features the Burlington Waterfront Development Project and includes interviews with Ian Ross, Director of the Burlington Art Centre, Marg MacVinnie, project manager and Mayor Rob MacIsaac. Check your local listings for broadcast times and stay tuned for future episodes. If you have show ideas or comments, please send them to Jon. W. Watson, co-producer of the show at wallamo@parl.gc.ca



Middle East Crisis

Continued from Page 1

"I'm not quite sure how critics are defining this situation as in opposition to Canada's tradition."

Indeed, he said he would be hard-pressed to find incidents in which Canada played a neutral card in the Middle East. Meanwhile, other experts provide numerous examples where Canada took a distinct stance, such as the Suez crisis which earned Lester B. Pearson, then-secretary of state for external affairs, the 1957 Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts in the conflict.

David Bercuson, director of the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary, points to the Six-Day War in 1967 as another example of Canada's lack of neutrality. In June of that year, Israel defeated an alliance of Egypt, Jordan and Syria while occupying Sinai, the old city of Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Golan Heights.

"Canada strongly supported Israel in that war," Mr. Bercuson said, adding the support continued in the 1970s and through Israel's battles with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

"Our track record hasn't been historically neutral; it's basically the last [Liberal] government that shifted Canada's position from a moderately pro-Israeli stance to a sort of 'We don't want to take sides' stance. The Mulroney government didn't do that and preceding Liberal governments didn't do it, either.

"This neutral phenomenon is really a product of the last 12 years."

A recent poll conducted by the Strategic Counsel showed nearly 50% of Canadians disagree with Mr. Harper's support of Israel on the conflict.

Close to 80% of respondents said Canada should be neutral. Mr. Bercuson said floating above the fray and not taking a side has hurt our credibility in the past.

"We have no influence at all when we are neutral," he said. "We've lost a considerable amount of influence, and it's only under this government that we're beginning to regain it.... We are beginning to be listened to again."

As far as our track record in the region goes, Canadians have a skewed perception, he added. "I think Canadians are as uninformed about [this] as they are about the Canadian peacekeeping role ... [They think] we don't take sides, we put on blue helmets and we go make nice, nice," he said.

Mr. Harvey dismissed the notion of Middle East neutrality altogether.

"What would neutrality look like?" he said. "You either support a set of policies that are clearly in opposition to one side or support a set of policies that oppose the objectives of the other.... There's no such thing [as neutrality] in the Middle East."

The positions taken by our government are positions which we believe are principled and not based on polls. I believe that when properly understood, the position of Canada's government is exactly the position of the majority of Canadians. If you have questions or comments, please get in touch with my office. I want to know what you think.

Celebrating a special occasion?

Commemorate the event with a certificate.

From the Queen

For 100th birthday (and over).

A photocopy of the birth certificate is required.

For 60th Wedding Anniversary (and over).

A photocopy of the wedding certificate is required.

In order to receive the message in time, please request it at least 8 weeks in advance.

From the Governor General

For 90th birthdays (and over)

For 50th wedding anniversary (and over)

From Prime Minister Stephen Harper

Congratulatory letters are available for 25, 30, 35, 40, 45th wedding anniversaries.

Congratulatory letters are available for 65th and 75th birthdays.

Congratulatory certificates are available for 50th anniversaries (and over).

Congratulatory certificates are available for 75th birthdays (and over).

Special messages are also available upon request.

From Mike Wallace, MP

Congratulatory certificates are available for birthdays, wedding anniversaries and other special events.

Requests for messages, letters and certificated should be directed to our constituency office.

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Tax Cuts

GST Cut

Effective July 1st, 2006, GST was reduced to 6%, one of the largest tax cuts in Canada's history. Finance Canada estimates the reduction in the GST will save Canadian taxpayers \$4.5 billion a year, which means more money in the pockets of every Canadian.

The greatest savings will be for those individuals purchasing large ticket items such as a new home or car. For example, purchasing a \$200,000 home in Burlington after the tax reduction will save a homebuyer \$2000. Similarly, the purchase of a \$25,000 car will mean a savings of \$250. While the savings on the purchase of products and services will mean pennies in your pocket each transaction, the accumulation over the course of the year will account for hundreds of dollars in savings.

Public Transit Tax Credit

The tax credit will apply to all transit passes, whether annual, monthly or weekly, and also to other fare payment options (e.g., multi-ride passes, bulk ticket purchases).

Transit passes purchased after July 1st, 2006 are eligible for a non-refundable 15.25 per cent federal tax credit. The following table provides an example of potential tax savings, based on the cost of a monthly pass.

Transit System	Non-refundable Tax Credit	
	2006	2007
Burlington Transit – Bus Pass	\$64.97	\$129.93
GO Transit – Burlington to Union Station	\$226.00	\$452.01

Remember to save your receipts from ticket purchases and then submit them when filing yearly tax returns.

Children's Sports Tax Credit

As another measure to support Canadian families, the government has proposed a tax credit for up to \$500 to cover registration fees for children's sports. The tax credit is proposed to come into force on January 1, 2007. It will apply to fees paid for an eligible program of physical activity for children under 16 years of age.

Information pertaining to which physical fitness programs are eligible for the tax credit is still pending. On July 31, 2006, the Honourable Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance announced the appointment of a panel of health and physical-fitness experts to advise on the programs that should qualify. This definition will need to take into account the many activities Canadian children pursue, while ensuring that eligible programs meaningfully contribute to children's physical fitness.

You should save receipts obtained for registration payments made and wait for further information available sometime in the fall. Visit www.mikewallace.ca to access the Canada Revenue Agency and check for updates on our site.

Universal Child Care Benefit (UCCB)

In the 2006 Budget we announced the Universal Child Care Benefit (UCCB) which will provide all families with \$1,200 per year for each child under 6, beginning July 1, 2006.

If you are currently receiving the Canada Child Tax Benefit, you will automatically receive the UCCB beginning July 2006.

If you have NEVER applied for the Canada Child Tax Benefit, you must apply for the UCCB by completing the Canada Child Tax Benefit application form. This form can be found by visiting the Canada Revenue website at www.cra.gc.ca, or clicking on the childcare button on our website.

Visit Parliament Hill this Fall



Trips to Parliament Hill are a popular and educational event for school groups and individuals from across Canada. Depending on your itinerary and the calendar

of the House of Commons, your visit to Parliament Hill could include watching Question Period from the gallery, touring Centre Block and personally meeting with Mike.

Please contact our office in Ottawa to make the necessary arrangements at (613) 995 0881.

School groups are welcomed and encouraged!

From Mike's Mailbox

Q: I am planning a trip outside of Canada and don't have my passport yet. How long does it take to get one?

A: The processing times in Canada for properly completed passport applications are 4 weeks by mail (20 working days) or 2 weeks (10 working days) when you visit a Passport Canada service location.

The processing times exclude mailing time. The time to process an application is dependent on the completeness of the application and whether the applicant meets all identity and security requirements. Application forms are available at your local post office or my office, suite 209 Burlington Mall.

For further information, please feel free to call the constituency office at 905-639-5757.

Calendars

Several residents of Burlington have let us know that the previous member for Burlington distributed a calendar with September incorrectly dated. Please take note if you are using that particular calendar, that August and September are repeated. A new annual Mike Wallace calendar is in the works and will be distributed to all residents of Burlington. If you have a great photo of Burlington that you feel represents a particular month or season, please send it to the editor!

Contact Mike for inquiries and advocacy on:

- Canada Pension Plan
- Disability Pensions

- Employment Insurance
- Employment Programs
- Government Programs
- Guaranteed Income Supplement
- Immigration
- Maternity & Parental Leave
- Old Age Security
- Passports
- Revenue Canada

Learn about Parliament – Visit www.parl.gc.ca

Check out this link for useful information and teaching resources about the Parliament of Canada. Learn about the functions of the House of Commons and Senate, Bills, and Committee Business. Find out about the current Ministry, Parliamentary Secretaries and Members of Parliament. Access research reports on a wide variety of issues through the Virtual Library. If you are planning a visit to Ottawa, there is information available on touring Parliament and special events held throughout the year.

Please share your thoughts and concerns with Mike on issues that are important to you.

What do you think is the most serious issue facing Canada today?

What do you think is the most serious issue facing Burlington today?

Please list your top 5 issues so that we can continue to work hard on your behalf.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

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