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The Tory

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M.P. Garth Turner

September 20, 2006

Halton - Milton: One day after being voted out of the Tory caucus, Milton's Maverick [M.P. Garth Turner](#) struck back, defending his controversial style of representation vowing to continue to serve his constituents first before any party doctrine.

Giving his first press conference as an independent in his crowded downtown Milton constituency office, Halton M.P. Garth Turner spoke of his political future; "Whatever I decide to do, its not simply to get re-elected, that's not the goal. The goal is to be what I am, what I was sent to Ottawa to be, and that is to be the best possible M.P. I can be."

Admittedly, Garth felt sandbagged by the Ontario Tory caucus meeting where his removal from caucus was initiated then later confirmed and certified by the national Tory caucus. Turner felt it was unwarranted indicating perhaps it was a preemptive strike to effectively silence the Tory Party's most vocal proponent and sometimes critic of the government's [Green Plan](#) draft which was, coincidentally, released by the Tory's the day after the Tory's expunged Garth from the caucus.

When asked about how he felt about the decision to ouster him from the party; "I did not leave my party, my party left me" responded the M.P..

Much of the controversy surrounding Turner centers on his open communication policy and his transparent informative style of representing his constituents. The Maverick M.P. hosts an [interactive website](#) from Ottawa, embracing popular forms of modern media, including; [daily Blogging](#) and live [MPtv video feeds](#) from Ottawa. The site also host other [interactive features](#) which keep him accessible and in direct contact with his constituents at their convenience. Jack Layton has been a familiar guest on his shows, certainly raising the ire of the PM. The open transparency in M.P.'s 'Daily Blog' is what was mentioned by the Tory's as the reason behind his caucus's reprisal.

When asked if he felt Blogging was a threat to government, Garth responded; "I'm the only party member that seems to be embracing this new technology". He went on to include; "the internet has opened up a situation in which there's a movement that's a new "democratization of politics or the internet-ization of politics and it is something that leaders, parties and political establishments are going to have to learn to deal with, because the internet is showing (governments) that the people want in", at which point the crowd which had assembled in support for the M.P., broke out into an applause.

Turner confirmed at the press event, instead of the ruling government's -- decision process -- being guided by our country's elected members of parliament, the Tory caucus has been run from the top down. The ex-Tory M.P. went on to suggest - this isn't just a form of Media control, it's more importantly a disciplinary act that'll be used to set an example to curb any future party member dissent.

The M.P. felt; he and other M.P.'s should have the right as elected members' of government to express and publish an opinion, particularly when those opinions and views oppose government policy. Debate and opposition is the basic foundation and fundamental

element of democracy. Turner made reference to his personal experiences of the lack of democracy from within the Tory caucus and how members have consistently been "Whipped" to vote a certain way on issues adding; there has not been a free vote from within the Tory caucus on any major issue since the Tory's were elected. Turner told the press there were occasions where he had been warned repeatedly that his Blogging violated the confidentiality of the Tory caucus meetings and was pressured to edit and remove material from his Blog, which he claims; were posted merely to keep his constituents informed of the policy of his government.

What does the future hold for this Maverick Milton M.P.? Some Green Party leaders believe his green views can be better expressed and realised through a Green Party association. The only thing we can say for sure about independent M.P. Turner's future is; the Tory's "Whip" will never strike him again.

News video highlights of the news event:

Garth's comments on;

[Blogging](#) (1.3MB)

[Support from within the Tory party](#) (2.7MB)

[How he hopes his style of politicing will be vindicated in the next election.](#) (1.2MB)

[Listen to the entire audio transcript of the press conference event](#) (4MB)

CBC comments:

Fritz Rutger

Acton

A tale of two MP's

Garth Turner, experience, intelligence, business savvy, outspoken for his constituents- gets blackballed by his party for listening too and advocating for the people who voted him in.

Micheal Chong- little experience, unaccessable, hardly seen since election day, staunch defender of Harper policy, even if it conflicts with the needs of his constituents- gets a minister posting and a pat on the back.

Thanks Garth, you made it much easier to explain to my children what a real politician is...a man loyal to his voters first and foremost!

Posted October 19, 2006 08:32 AM

[CBC news video report.](#)

Letter to The Halton Herald Editor:

Oct. 19, 2006 8:39pm

In a country where freedom of speech is the cornerstone of democracy it makes me sad and angry that an MP has less rights of freedom of speech than Canadians in general.

I wish more MP's would sit as independents if they find themselves censored. It is time for a Royal Enquiry on Freedom of Speech and the abuse of the Information Act, and the manner in which MP's are controlled or motivated to toe the party line.

Seeing what happened to MP Garth Turner is certainly defining an unusual type of democracy, as I happen to hold Mr Turner in high regard for his work representing constituents whom I happen to know in his riding.

This certainly smacks of an insiders club of certain MP's who were duly elected to represent us in Ottawa and if true, they need to be exposed and unseated as quickly as possible.

Regards,

Eric Jelinski M. Eng. P. Eng.