

Blenkarn's finances questioned



Paul Szabo

By JOHN STEWART
Times staff writer

The Commissioner of Canada Elections is making inquiries into the election expenses return of Mississauga South MP Don Blenkarn as a result of correspondence from defeated Liberal candidate Paul Szabo.

Szabo wrote Commissioner J.O. Gorman in Ottawa July 22 because of "a number of matters... which cannot be readily explained and which may warrant further investigation." He included a 25-page report which indicated several areas where Blenkarn's expense statement should be reviewed.

Szabo, a chartered accountant, lost the Feb. 18 election to Blenkarn by 403 votes.

"Based on the items mentioned in this report, it could be estimated that Mr. Blenkarn's election expenses possibly have been understated by at least \$7,000," Szabo's letter concluded.

Blenkarn's election expenses statement showed expenditures \$2,745 below the allowable limit of \$30,694.

The major expense questioned by Szabo was election signs. He estimated Blenkarn's expense statement should have showed an additional \$2,900 for masonite signs. New

signs appeared during the last two weeks of the campaign, Szabo said.

Gerald Duggan, official agent for Blenkarn, says no new masonite signs were purchased for the campaign. He says Szabo's contention that the commercial value of signs reused from previous elections was underestimated is "the only thing in all of his complaints that he could have an argument about."

Duggan says it is difficult to assess the value of a used sign.

"I'm surprised that he'd (Szabo) sink to such depths," Duggan says.

The law offices of Blenkarn, Roche, Kerr on Lakeshore Road and of Blenkarn's constituency office in Port Credit were not used for election purposes as Szabo indicated, Duggan says.

Two constituency office workers, Ann Meredith and Joan Williamson, who worked in the campaign were laid off from their jobs. The constituency office was closed during the campaign.

Blenkarn says some of the allegations are humorous. Szabo questioned why the cost of office furniture for Blenkarn's campaign office at Cliffway Plaza wasn't included in his statement. The truth of the matter is that

most of it's junk you couldn't give away," say Blenkarn.

Szabo's report suggested Blenkarn had underestimated the cost of office supplies, photographs, his headquarters' sign, headquarters' decorations, furnishings, rent, and the cost of food for scrutineers.

Duggan says food for workers was not paid for and says it is not considered an election expense in any event. Other costs listed were true charges, he says.

The request for information on the expenses was made by him personally, Szabo said, although he discussed it with the Mississauga South Liberal executive before submitting it.

"I hope Mr. Blenkarn and Mr. Duggan realize this is not an attack," said Szabo.

Szabo said he did not intend his questions of clarification to be made public. The Mississauga Times did not obtain the correspondence from Szabo.

Commissioner Gorman says the report is being treated as one of the few complaints his department receives. The matter is being investigated by his office. The RCMP could be called on to do investigation as well. A report is expected by mid-September at the earliest.



Don Blenkarn

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A \$2 ticket from the deep fry could get you out of the deep freeze this winter.

Fritterfest Lottery tickets go on sale this week and prizes include three trips to the south courtesy of SkyLark Holidays.

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The fourth grand prize is \$1,200, to be used towards residential property taxes.

As well as the main prizes there are about 25 second prizes valued between \$75 and \$100. Included are season tickets to Cyclos Theatre Company, dinner tickets,

a framed watercolor by Fay Sproule and Toronto Blue Jays passes for September.

Tickets are available at most local shopping malls in Mississauga and Etobicoke including Square One, Sheridan Mall and Sherway Gardens. Tickets are \$2 each or three for \$5.

The grand prize draw will be held Saturday, Sept. 27, at Port Credit Memorial Park between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.

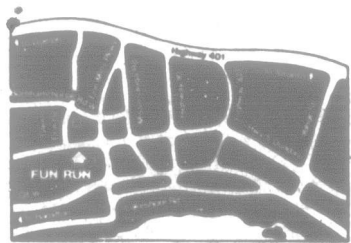
Fritterfest, Mississauga's annual community festival, will run from Sept. 26 to 28.

IS RUNNING MORE FUN IN ERIN MILLS OR DOES IT JUST SEEM THAT WAY?

The Cadillac Fairview Corporation, in conjunction with the Mississauga Track & Field Club and the Mississauga Recreation and Parks Department are presenting:

The Second Annual Erin Mills "Fun Run"

Saturday, September 6 at 10:00 a.m.,
South Common Park, southeast corner of Glen Erin Drive and Burnhamthorpe Road.



The Fun Run is open to everyone including businesses and school teams. There are 18 different categories for entrants of all ages and running abilities.

- 2-1/2 Kilometer route - 10:00 a.m.
- 5 Kilometer route - 11:00 a.m.
- 10 Kilometer route - 12:00 noon

Trophies will be presented to the winners of each category by Mayor Hazel McCallion, ribbons for all entrants, and free "Fun Run" T-shirts to the first 200 entrants registered before August 22, 1980.

Entry Fee: \$4.00 per person
\$2.00 for each additional family member
Post Entry Fee: \$5.00 per person
\$3.00 for each additional family member
School Team: \$10.00 for school teams of 3
Organizations: \$10.00 for teams of 3

All entries must be received by August 22, 1980. Post entries on the day of the Run will take place at South Common Park, up to 1/2 hour before the start of each event.

All proceeds will go to the Mississauga Track & Field Club. For further information and entry forms, call the Erin Mills Information Centre at 828-5920.

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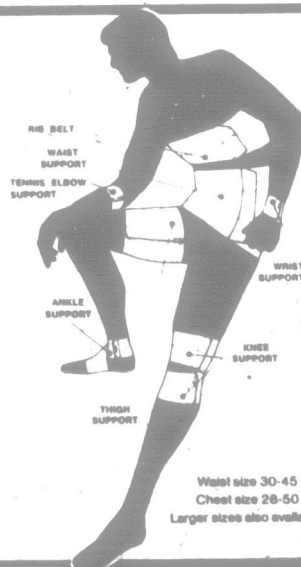
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