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# Blenkarn still the man for Mississauga South

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By JOHN STEWART  
Staff Reporter



It was only eight years ago that MP Don Blenkarn had to fend off a serious challenge to his right to represent his party in Mississauga South, even though he was the sitting member.

But on Thursday night, Blenkarn's bid for the Tory nomination wasn't only uncontested, it resembled a love-in for the burly Port Credit lawyer whose reputation as a maverick has suddenly turned into a major political asset.

About 300 people showed up at the nomination meeting at the Mississauga Senior Citizens' Centre to shower Blenkarn with affection.

**DON  
BLENKARN**

Guest speaker Frank Oberle, the federal Minister of Science and Technology joked about Blenkarn's reputation for candor by saying, "Some people sometimes say Don is outspoken, but I'd like to know by whom."

In announcing a fundraising dinner June 6 at which Finance Minister Michael Wilson will be guest speaker, Dick Clewes who introduced Oberle, remarked that "at great expense a referee is being imported from Las Vegas" while Blenkarn and Wilson debate whether Toronto should be an international banking centre. Blenkarn has earned a reputation as chairman of the Commons finance committee for criticizing several of Wilson's initiatives.

Blenkarn's public criticisms of his own party's initiatives have received such coverage in the media that CBC had to be given a 24-hour licence for an all-news service so the rest of the government could get some air time, joked Oberle.

Former Mississauga mayor Ron Searle was the first of 10 people to nominate or second Blenkarn's bid for re-election. He said the public often claims it wants representatives with the courage to speak the truth rather than saying what is calculated to get them re-elected. "We're lucky here, we have someone with that courage," Searle said.

In his own speech, Blenkarn said people should remember what life was like before the Conservatives were elected with an overwhelming majority in September 1984. He said his party had created foreign investment in Canada, returned prosperity to Ontario and Quebec, attacked the deficit, got rid of the ill-conceived National Energy Policy, and created 1,250,000 jobs even though "people snickered" at the promise of "jobs, jobs, jobs."

The MP in 1972-74 and from 1979 to the present also made one of his famous controversial statements, declaring the current Conservative regime is "perhaps the best government this country has had in this century."