

Paul Bigg
Scraperhall

MPP back from Africa

Zambian trip makes Gregory appreciate home



MORRIS LAMONT/THE TIMES

Bud Gregory and souvenirs

By RICH MURZIN
Times staff writer

The main thing Mississauga East MPP Bud Gregory learned this month is "we are awful damned fortunate living in Canada."

Mr. Gregory returned to his riding last week after spending a month in Lusaka, Zambia as part of the Canadian contingent at the annual worldwide meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. He was accompanied by his 17-year-old daughter Martine.

Mr. Gregory was intrigued by Zambia, which he called "virtually a dictatorship leaning to the left." The country is ruled

by President Kenneth Kaunda, who appoints a cabinet elected prime minister to head up the country's one-party parliament.

"Believe it or not, they can make a hell of a case for one-party systems," Mr. Gregory said. "Of course if you look at their argument closely, it doesn't hold water."

He said he saw troops in towns outside Lusaka, a hangover from recent border wars with neighboring Kenya. On excursions to local

hunting camps, Mr. Gregory's party was guarded by a soldier armed with an automatic rifle. He witnessed the removal of mines from the Zambesi River which are taking their toll on a few fishermen and numerous hippos and elephants.

Mr. Gregory delivered a speech to the delegates on off-shore mining and its effect on Ontario's mineral markets.

Little of consequence was decided at the meeting, Gregory said.

He described the diplomatic mission in admittedly political terms as "an interesting exchange of views."

During the final days of his stay, Mr. Gregory was invited to Somalian farm, fishing and refugee camps. The United States and Canada are supplying grain to the impoverished nation which is at war with Ethiopia.

"Another thing I learned was that it's easy to communicate with people who live in different con-

ditions than you're used to," Mr. Gregory said.

"It's quite easy to find common interests. The morality of these people is basically the same as ours. Their politicians really want to help their people."

"I also found out representatives from the provincial and federal governments can get along quite well when they go away together. We worked well together to get our ideas across."

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GREGORY, Bud