

The man behind our mayor Dobkin

By TONY FITZ-GERALD

You can call him a professional student but you can't call him stupid.

Gordon Watt, Mississauga's executive assistant has been called many unpleasant names since being offered the position by Mayor Dr. Martin Dobkin.

Mississauga's executive assistant spent six years of hard work before becoming a doctor then another three years before finally joining the legal profession as a lawyer.

"That was nine years of school," said the articulate executive assistant. "I got to a certain point towards the end where I didn't think I could take anymore school. The years in medical school were great. They were hard but I enjoyed it."

He said he looked at law school as a business, a chore but looks back at medical school with pleasure.

Comments floating around city hall had Mayor Dobkin patronizing his friends by offering the executive assistant position to his longtime friend.

"I first met the mayor in 1960 at Queen's University in medical school," Dr. Watt recalled. "Then we interned together at Montreal General. After that we lost contact. I went to Queensway Hospital and heard he was here but we never met."

Then one night before the municipal election Dr. Watt attended a medical-legal convention at the Port Credit Yacht Club.

"The mayor and I talked about things in general and he never told me he was going to run for mayor," Dr. Watt said. "I went and got married and when I came back from my honeymoon he was mayor."

On his return he learned that his former medical student companion was the new mayor.

"The mayor asked me if I wanted the job and I had to appear before council," he said. "It wasn't actually a council meeting it was the organization committee. I had to stand up and give a general description of what my duties would be. They didn't think there was a need for the job."

When he finally assumed his duties he said it took only six minutes to get his feet wet in the field of politics.

"I accepted the position because it was interesting and a challenge," he said. "The

people you meet make it interesting and politicians are real characters."

Dr. Watt is the first to admit that his two professional careers are not related to politics with the possible exception of psychiatry.

"The other two took schooling," he said. "Politics is just common sense."

Mayor Dobkin's executive assistant said that if the mayor did both jobs as well as he has executed his short term as mayor he would have ended up in the Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital.

"The mayor has the authority," stated Dr. Watt. "I am just his aid. I am more or less his personal secretary and I assist in writing speeches, answering some calls and doing research."

Although he has been directly affiliated with the City of Mississauga a short time, he has some goals and objectives he would like to see accomplished.

One of Dr. Watt's interests is a waterfront parkland with plenty of open space for recreation.

"It is very important to get land in the Credit River Valley and the shores of Lake Ontario," he said.

The second priority for Dr. Watt is a City Centre for all of Mississauga. He says that without a city centre for Mississauga the city would become a series of suburbs like Los Angeles.

"I don't know whether I will see any of them completed during my term but I hope they will be done," he said.

Dr. Watt's interesting and sometimes tedious job takes him from meeting to meeting so he has to keep up on all happenings in the city.

"The one thing I have found since working here is that it tends to be a rumor mill," he said. "Some of the councillors will come in and say they heard such and such and a check will show it is completely false."

Although many of the councillors were dubious of Dr. Watt last year, almost all have changed their tune and are pleased with his work.

"I think he has fit in very well not only with councillors but also with members of staff," said Mayor Dobkin. "There have been no adverse comments made about him yet."

Meanwhile Dr. Watt is going about his work covering the five-page job description intelligently as the man behind the mayor.



Dr. Gordon Watt, Mississauga's executive assistant shows Mayor Dr. Martin Dobkin an important piece of information. Dr. Watt, as the executive assistant, counsels the Mayor and is the man behind the city's leader.