

MR. OGNIBENE: Hi, I'm Tom Ognibene and I'm running for Mayor of the City of New York.

Many of you may not have heard of me because you're busy concentrating on the major candidates for this political office, but I'll be on the line on November 8th on the Conservative Party line, Row D.

I've been a life-long New Yorker, born in New York in 1943. I grew up on the streets of New York and was educated in our fine public schools. I married in New York to Margaret Bowman, a schoolteacher from Queens County and the only time that I've ever spent outside of the City of New York were the three years where I volunteered for military duty and served with the Fifth Battalion 33rd Armor from 1967 to 1970.

When I returned in 1970, I wanted to have a better life for myself and my two children and I enrolled in law school. I worked full time at the New York Telephone Company, went to law school at night. I was proud of being an attorney and being part of the growth of New York City.

Sometime around the late '70s and early '80s I became concerned about the direction that New York City was taking. I saw the growth of crime at a rapid rate in

our city. I saw the growth in our welfare rolls. I saw the drug epidemic that had infested almost every neighborhood of our community and I thought that ought to be change. The administrations that were in power at that time simply said, well, many of these problems are intractable; New York City is ungovernable and we can't change it. I thought we could.

In 1991 I decided to run for the City Council of the City of New York in one of the 51 new Council districts that had just been created. I was very conservative; a Republican with a conservative bent. I was pro-life, I was opposed to gay marriage. I believed that you had to reduce taxes, particularly property taxes. I believed that you had to fight crime aggressively.

People told me that these were not the kinds of philosophies that sold in the City of New York, but I ran and I won and I served from 1991 to 1993 and I was reelected. And I fought hard for the election of our great Mayor, Rudy Giuliani, because I felt that he could really change this city, and he did. He came in, he didn't believe this city was ungovernable. He went after crime right away and fought crime with very aggressive undercover and anticrime measures and he reduced it to

levels that we hadn't seen in over 40 years.

He reduced the welfare rolls by over 600,000, he reduced the burden of taxes on our city and he attacked education, making sure that our kids got a proper education in the schools, one that would prepare them for the future.

I left office in 2001 as a result of term limits, but I expected that the new administration would carry forward the same policies and practices that had been so successful in the '90s under the Giuliani administration.

Unfortunately, that administration went in the wrong direction. They began by raising taxes, because they didn't do the thing that that administration had promised, and that was reduce the financial burden on the City of New York.

Our budget grew by over \$9 billion in the first three years, three times the rate of inflation. Property taxes skyrocketed by 50 percent. Crime was claimed to be reduced, but if you ask the police on patrol in each district, they told you that the statistics were manipulated to reduce felonies to misdemeanors to give the impression that crime was down.

Our children were force fed education in the third and fourth grade so that they could do a few points better on a test, but it denied them the creativity and the knowledge that learning is in your power, that learning is something that you acquire so that you can teach yourself in the future, that learning is something that you acquire that makes you a better person because you can then self-teach yourself. This isn't what we're doing and so we're sacrificing a generation of kids by giving them scripted education that isn't going to work.

I think we need a new administration and that's why I'm running for Mayor of the City of New York, and that's why I'm here to ask for your vote on the Conservative Party line, Row D, on November 8th.