

# REPORTS FROM OUR MPs



**MP John McDermid**  
(PC - Brampton-Georgetown)

Parliament has been very active over the last few months. While energy, high interest rates, Constitutional matters and the lack of economic direction have been the focus of House debates and questioning, other legislation has been introduced and studied.

The Young Offenders Act, Bill C-61, would repeal the outdated Juvenile Delinquents Act. The philosophy of the bill

is that young people should be held more responsible for their actions in contrast to the current philosophy of the existing legislation which sees the young offender as a misguided child in need of direction.

The minimum age of responsibility has been raised from the current seven years to 12 years; children under 12 will be dealt with under provincial law. The maximum age under the bill will be under 18 but

this may be varied by the federal government to under 16 or 17 years at the request of a province.

The Access to Information and Privacy Act has passed through second reading in the House and is currently being studied in the standing committee on justice and legal affairs.

Bill C-12, an Act respecting Bankruptcy and Insolvency, has also come before the House. The proposed new law would consolidate existing federal insolvency laws into one statute. With bankruptcies in the farm, business and personal sectors on the increase, it is essential that legislation be passed to make sure wage-earners and creditors are dealt with more fairly.

Second reading has also commenced on the Act to Amend the Canada Elections Act. This bill would shorten the election period from 60 to 47 days for both general and by-elections by eliminating the requirement that preliminary lists of electors be sent to

electors. Instead, preliminary lists would be reproduced in smaller numbers and notices of enumeration would be sent to electors.

Bill C-63, an Act to Amend the Public Service Superannuation Act and the Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act in respect to the Early Retirement of Air Traffic Controllers received first reading April 23. This bill provides for earlier retirement of air traffic controllers and increased pension contributions.

An act to amend the Adult Occupational Training Act (No. 2) was introduced May 29. The substance of this bill is to provide laid-off workers who enter an apprenticeship program added incentives.

The above are just a few examples of areas that have been covered during the present sitting of Parliament. Should anyone be interested in copies of these or any other bills currently under study, simply contact my constituency office. Comments on areas of interest are always appreciated.

## MEMORIALS

In memory of Daisy Hunter, who passed away June 20, 1979.  
— Ina and Harold Thompson 344024m

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— Ann, Frank & Family

Hunter, Daisy — In loving memory of a dear mother and grandmother who passed away June 20, 1979. A little tribute, small and tender, Just to say we still remember.  
— Jean, Morris and Sharon

## CARDS OF THANKS

I would like to thank my friends, neighbours, Georgetown Fireflies, and staff and employees of Twin Windows for the cards, gifts, flowers, visits and transportation provided during my recent illness. Thanks to the nurses and staff on Ward B and to Dr. Hodkinson, Hobart and Browning. It was deeply appreciated.  
— Mel Holdahl 344124c0f

I would like to thank my relatives, friends, & neighbours for flowers, gifts & cards received, while I was a patient in the Toronto General Hospital, also your visits & enquiries, which were much appreciated.  
— Kay Wilson

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## Otto Jelinek, MP (PC - Halton)

**INTEREST RATES AND THE ECONOMY**  
"Because of the harmful effects of high interest rates on consumers, businesses, and the entire economy, there should be an urgent study by the Finance Committee, where the Governor of the Bank (of Canada) would come and the Minister of Finance."

"Mr. Minister, I want to point out to you that your high interest rate policy will slow down the economy, it will mean a loss of thousands of jobs; it will mean increases in the cost of living. It will probably bring the housing and construction industry to a halt, with thousands of jobs being lost in these sectors."

Believe it or not...these statements were made, not by members of the Progressive Conservative party during the past weeks, as we witnessed the Bank of Canada's prime rates climb to almost 20 per cent. Rather, they were made in October, 1979, by Herb Gray, now Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, then the opposition's finance critic. They were made when our party was in office, and funds to purchase a home or to finance a business were still available at 14 per cent or less.



Yet today, with interest rates pushing home ownership out of the reach of many, and forcing others to default on mortgages that must be refinanced at twice the monthly expense anticipated five years ago, this same Minister, and his colleagues, having again formed the government, and being in a position to implement policies that would reflect this past wisdom, have turned their backs on the concerns and hardships being endured by both the private individual and the small corporation and business. They have

refused to respond to this crisis.

The government has a number of options as to how to deal with the current economic problems:

During its short period in office, The Progressive Conservative Party went on to meet the challenge by introducing a budget that would have returned purchasing power to the lower and middle income earners. We were prepared to implement a small business policy that would meet the real needs of the vital sector of our economy. We reduced government spending and provided incentive to business and individuals. We proposed energy tax rebates to lower and middle income families, an employment tax credit and a mortgage and property tax reduction.

Just over one year ago the Liberal party platform during the election campaign was based on lower inflation, lower gasoline prices and lower interest rates. After the Liberals received their mandate, presumably to pursue those policies, they instead subjected Canadians to over one year of debate on the Constitution. They virtually ignored the blatant signals of real economic difficulties.

During this one-year period of inaction on the economy, gasoline prices increased by 60 cents per gallon and inflation climbed from around 10 per cent to nearly 13 per cent. The biggest culprit damaging the small business sector in Canada has been interest rates, which have now skyrocketed to nearly 20 per cent prime rate. That means small business pays well over that. At the same time, people are losing their homes, business bankruptcies are on the increase and farmers are being forced from the land. Our small firms are independently owned and do not have the resources to draw on for investment purposes. To finance investment they must borrow heavily from banks and lending institutions. But, at a 20 per cent interest rate such activity is almost prohibited. Those that do, primarily to

refinance loans that have now come due, or to cover ever increasing operating expenses, face interest payment double that of the original loan. This added cost, inevitably, creates further inflationary pressure as increases will in turn be passed on to the consumer. The other option, and one that is being exercised more and more frequently is, of course...bankruptcy.

This same scenario has been repeated over and over and over again by homeowners who must push for higher wages, by businesses that in making investment decisions must count on continued inflation to ensure acceptable profit margins, by private individuals who have not changed their spending habits because prices will only go up. In fact, the percentage of business failures has risen in the first three months of 1981 alone by almost 30 per cent.

The Minister of Finance says that high interest rates will reduce inflation. That is hogwash. The higher the interest rates, the more a businessman has to spend to finance his company. He will pass along the cost of that increase in his product to the consumer, the consumer will have to pay that much more and that feeds inflation. Economists do not often agree on anything, but they do agree that high interest rates feed inflation.

Government spending is the main reason for domestically caused inflation. Government spending continues to rise. There is no question about that. Last year this government spent an estimated \$67.6 billion. Projected costs of services to government increased again this year by \$4.7 billion. The Liberal government is spending at the rate of \$129,000 per minute, 24 hours a day. It is the inability, ineffectiveness and obvious non-urgency of the Liberal administration which are causing the problems in our economy.

The Liberal government's treatment for inflation has, indeed, proven to be worse than the disease itself.

## MP seeks energy tax rebate on fuel

Halton MP Otto Jelinek, the Progressive Conservative party's spokesman for corporate affairs, last week called upon the government to immediately introduce an Energy Tax Rebate Program to assist low and middle income earners.

Mr. Jelinek stated in the House of Commons that "Canadians are now contributing a total of 56 cents to the federal coffers for every gallon of gasoline they consume".

"Since the last election, the price of gasoline has risen by 59 cents per gallon, to a total of \$1.66 per gallon in Ontario alone, despite the Liberals'

rather empty commitment to the people of Canada. Therefore, it is imperative that this measure be taken immediately to offset the effects that these energy price increases are having on those who can least afford it."

The federal government's share of total petroleum revenues, per gallon of gasoline, sold at the pumps in Halton, is 33.7 per cent. "In view of these figures", Mr. Jelinek said, "there is no justification for not following through with such a rebate policy...short, of course, of indifference."

## About the Hills

**'Welcome aboard' McDermid says**

In a formal statement last week, Brampton-Georgetown MP John McDermid officially welcomed the decision by William Nelson Ltd. to relocate its dairy operation in Georgetown with a new \$13 million plant that will employ 200 workers by 1982. Wishing the company "many years of prosperity" in their new location, Mr. McDermid noted that the planned 110,000 square foot plant will have the capacity to produce 150 million litres of milk products annually.

## An end to measles?

Halton region appears ready to endorse a program aimed at eradicating measles in the area. Last week, the health and social services committee supported a resolution drafted by the Society of Medical Officers of Health in Ontario calling on the provincial government to impose compulsory immunization in schools. Similar programs in the U.S., regional health officer Dr. Peter Cole pointed out in a recent letter, have been extremely successful in combatting and "dramatically" cutting down on outbreaks of the disease. In endorsing the medical officer's position, the committee urged that the government act at the "earliest possible date" to begin the vaccination program. Regional council is expected to vote on the committee's proposal this (Wednesday) afternoon.

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