

# Leader's visit here means a lot to local industry

Opposition leader Joe Clark had an air of sincerity about him last week when he visited Brampton and Georgetown, showing genuine interest in the unique accomplishments of Varian Canada Incorporated and meeting news media officials, ostensibly to gain their insights.

As leader of the federal progressive Conservative party, Mr. Clark's luncheon discussion with newsmen was rather predictable, a combination of well-researched opinions and arguments — offered to editors and publishers concerned about the mail strike, the economy and regional issues like the VIA Rail closures — and a couple of classic politicians' promises to "look into" stated problems.

As a leader of the federal Opposition and chief critic of the Liberal government, Mr. Clark was dynamic and convincing, repeatedly underlining the popular vision of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau as a Louis XIV-type aristocrat who's more concerned about maintaining power than furthering the common causes.

Most alarming were Mr. Clark's explanations of the difficulties facing the Opposition parties when they try to initiate positive change in parliamentary procedure or government policy. The distressing fact is that Mr. Trudeau's Liberal Cabinet can veto an act of Parliament under present Canadian law. This, clearly, is not the stuff on which a democracy is built.

The way Mr. Clark describes it — and the record seems to bear him out —

Prime Minister Trudeau has spent much of the past 13 years deliberately but inscrutably widening the gap between government and the people, almost to the point where the Liberals in Ottawa are beyond our control.

If we accept and acknowledge that the Trudeau government is moving in the wrong direction politically, can we view the Clark Conservatives as a worthwhile alternative when election time rolls around again? Certainly, the party's policies regarding each current issue must be considered as a whole, but we see the interest shown locally last week as a favorable characteristic of Clark the leader and of the party itself.

Mr. Clark's tour of Varian last week was another in a series of substantial tributes paid the River Drive firm over the past few years. Just last year, NASA awarded Varian and several of its technicians for their contributions to the American space program. Twenty-six years in Georgetown has made the firm not only a major local employer but an industry of which we can be proud and in which we can share our pride with other Canadians.

Whether the Conservative leader learned anything last week that will shape his party's policies is hard to say, although it's safe to assume that if he learned nothing new, his previous beliefs were confirmed. The fact that he did take a concerned interest, however, means a lot to companies like Varian, just as it means a lot to the rest of us here in Halton Hills.



'VARIAN-TERESTING'

Federal Opposition leader Joe Clark's visit to Georgetown's Varian plant last week proved enlightening for himself and for the people who had a chance to chat with him, including the editors and publishers of a number of Brampton-Georgetown newspapers. His concern for the

nation's problems appear genuine. At the same time, however, he expressed some anxiety about the current Liberal administration's attempts to curtail parliamentary discussion, and therefore, the democratic rights of the people.

## Of news-starved journalists and other Montebello trivia



### Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod

Judging by the surfeit of Summit information that blew around Ottawa in recent days, it's almost frightening to think what the rest of the world may have learned about us during the three days Ottawa dominated the screens.

You see, there were more than 2,000 journalists in town for the Summit, most of them covering briefings by officials who had been briefed by other officials, who hadn't even been in on the Summit talks. And since these diluted briefings were fairly scattered events, the journalists had to kill time in other ways. And when you turn 2,000 time-killers loose, the results can be devastating.

At any given time of the day, one could walk into the media centre in Ottawa — it was located a convenient 70 kilometres from the actual conference site — and hear the unmerciful chatter of 300 typewriters, churning out material for breathless readers around the world. And since not even members of official delegations seemed to agree on what actually happened in the talks, we can only assume that the thundering typewriters were spewing out other assorted trivia.

The army of journalists certainly couldn't get enough raw material from those TV cameras that kept sweeping the well-trimmed lawns of Chateau Montebello where the Summiters held their talks, emerging from time to time for a "photo opportunity." Apart from an occasional argument over the color of a necktie, there wasn't much stimulation offered there.

Yet, hundreds of reporters sat around, their eyes glued to these TV screens. And that's about as close as most would come to the visiting leaders, apart from the closing news conference where, oddly enough, journalists weren't allowed to ask questions.

But in the meantime, the typewriters had to be used for something. And if the visiting reporters were as conscientious as their Canadian counterparts in digging up trivia, then the world must be gagging on incidental information about us.

Yes, an Ottawa restaurant did come up with a "summit sandwich" containing seven ingredients. And, yes, American TV anchorman Dan Rather did eat in one of those trendy little Ottawa restaurants. And, yes, Helmut Schmidt's wife did chat with children at a hospital.

We learned about the construction of the roof at the National Arts Centre, so we would feel confident it would hold the visiting dignitaries. We found out what was on every menu, not only at Chateau Montebello, but at the media centre. We were told about what the journalists did in their spare time, where they shopped, where they ate, what souvenirs they bought.

TRADE VIEWS  
Journalists interviewed each other

as well. A Japanese reporter thought the people of Ottawa were "very disciplined," a remark that must have impressed the readers of Helsinki. An Italian thought Ottawa's sidewalks were surprisingly safe — which wasn't really surprising since half the police in Canada were standing on them. And British journalists couldn't get over the fact that Chateau Montebello was the largest log building in the world.

That was a real gem of information, especially since pictures of the building included Mounties on horseback. It was duly noted that the exposed ends of the logs were repainted for the occasion.

One cocktail waitress offered me the information that she had been asked by reporters from three countries about the tipping habits of the guests. It was, all after, an economic summit.

It really was a strange three days in and around Ottawa. There were times, as you watched hundreds of people staring morosely at a motionless television screen, that it reminded you of those expeditions to the moon — when we waited around for an astronaut to emerge from the lunar vehicle. Other times, Ottawa looked like a great convention centre, with none of the delegates knowing where to register.

And at all times, it appeared as though we could have saved \$10 million if Prime Minister Trudeau had organized a closed-circuit TV hookup and held the conference that way.

Trouble with that is that school children in Japan then would never know that President Reagan's favorite brand of jellybeans can actually be purchased in downtown Ottawa at \$5.29 a pound.

## Candidate mill churning for NDP Feb. convention



### Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau Of The Herald  
Summer's nearly over, the New Democratic Party leadership is to be decided at a convention next February, and most of those interested are still dipping their toes at the water's edge.

It is one thing to run for the leadership of the Progressive Conservatives, when you know winning automatically makes you premier.

Even seeking the Liberal leadership would be a different matter right now, should Stuart Smith step down this August as some say he will. The Grits are the clear second-choice party in Ontario today.

But running to succeed Michael Cassidy as NDP Leader is another matter entirely.

Whoever replaces him has a long, hard, grind ahead just to bring the party back to those head-swimming days of 1975 when the NDP was Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, with buttons to prove it. The party finished second in the election with 38 seats, and 28 per cent of the official vote.

Today it is a distant third, with 21 per cent of the vote, and just 21 seats, many held solely because of the sitting member's personal talents.

TWO VIEWS  
Thus, part of the agonizing among potential successors to Cassidy. Only a masochist wants to start climbing near

the bottom of a tall and forbidding hill when the usual helpers are dispirited.

On the other hand re-building a party in one's own image is a worthwhile challenge; being party leader itself is heady stuff; and inside every politician's ego there lurks the belief he or she can be the best premier the province ever had.

The big name in the gossip mill at present is the federal NDP's finance critic at Ottawa, Bob Rae, who has good TV presence and is widely acceptable among party members of different persuasion.

Rae appears to have two problems, however.

First is whether he really wants the job, or whether he might prefer to stay around Ottawa in the hopes of succeeding Ed Broadbent as federal NDP Leader.

Second, and somewhat serious, is his lack of a seat in the Ontario legislature. There has been no indication by sitting members in "safe" NDP seats that they will gladly step aside and give him the means to enter the Assembly if he won.

Interestingly, Rae is known to

have had lunch recently with Scarborough West MPP Richard Johnston, who is probably the front-running leadership candidate if Rae decides not to join the fray — or maybe even if he does.

Johnston has a pleasant personality, good political sense, and a long association with former NDP Leader Stephen Lewis that can only be useful background for him if he were to become leader.

On the other hand, he knows just how time-consuming and family-destroying the leadership job can be, and he is just recently married.

Ottawa MPP Mike Brough ran third in the contest won by Cassidy three years ago, and might try his luck one more time. But against Johnston or Rae (as of now, anyway) a Brough victory would be considered an upset, although not impossible.

An even longer shot, but still with a chance, is the very intellectual MPP Jim Foules, who might attract the party Left-wing.

By September we should be familiar with the recall of names who've decided to take the plunge.



### STAFF COMMENT

By Chris Aagaard

## Comparing notes

There was a curt message to American air traffic controllers from US transportation secretary Drew Lewis Sunday night: If they walk out on strike (which they inevitably did Monday morning) then President Ronald Reagan's administration will "come down with the full force of the Justice Department".

By contrast, the Canadian government's message to striking inside postal workers was something akin to "Come fishing, see you in a couple of months."

Every aspect of the current mail stoppage stinks, and judging by letters to the editor in Toronto's daily papers, Canadians are steadfastly refusing to take sides. While slamming the unmitigated avarice of the posties with one hand, most of us have been hurling upper cuts at the government's lack of action with the other.

On principal nobody really likes to legislate workers back to the job even if they are needed to perform a vital public service. In Canada, the right to strike among members of the public service is just that: a right granted by an Act of Parliament. The Americans recognize no such justification, but even the Reagan administration has expressed regret that it may be forced to use the law to get the air traffic controllers to return to the towers.

Nevertheless, the US government's tough position—the determination not to negotiate at all until the controllers return to work—indicates a greater concern not only for the welfare of the travelling public, but for that country's entire economy.

Or, on the other hand, goes on holiday. Epitomizing its arrogance, its "laissez-faire" attitude to the country's economic doldrums, were postmaster general Andre Ouellet's infuriating

remarks last weekend that the current postal strike couldn't possibly have a detrimental effect on numerous types of small businesses.

Whether or not you agree with the system, it's a fact that our economic standards are too closely attuned to the financial flagging in the rest of the world to sustain Mr. Ouellet's sentiments for any length of time. How we are perceived by the global neighborhood is reflected in the condition of our collar and lately that has slumped to Depression-era lows.

Regardless of one's political persuasion, surely nobody can hide behind ideology and declare such an encompassing strike, as is the current postal dispute, right on the basis of principle. There is nothing emancipating about the strike, nothing socialist or even Marxist about it. There is no lofty advocacy from the already well-paid members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers to share the wealth. It's a big union, making big, selfish demands and it's as nasty and unwelcomed as big government bureaucracy and big industry.

All over the world men and women have died for the right to strike and unionize to protect themselves from the unjust wage and working standards imposed by short-sighted, profit-motivated employers. The pendulum appears to have swung 180 degrees. The rights of others are being impinged upon by the postal strike and it's well beyond high time the government stepped in to police the situation.

During this period of economic strife, there's very little room for people who stand on principle, right or left-wing. But there's plenty of space for those who want to chart a strong and perhaps more independent economic course for the country to follow.

There's still time to register your kids for summer programs at the Georgetown and District YM-YWCA. The Terra Cotta Day Camp is held at the Credit Valley Conservation Authority's Terra Cotta conservation area and is open to youngsters from five to 12 years old. Kids two and a half to five years of age may participate in the Kinder Camp. "Summer Adventure Tours" are also available to boys and girls between six and 14 years of age and run from Aug. 24 to 28. Early registration is encouraged. Call 877-4183 or visit the Y's office at 80 Mountainview Road South (St. Andrew's United Church).

Register now for Y programs

### POETS' CORNER

## Time Will Tell

We are the ones that lives today  
Inflation prices make folks go grey  
Are they always going to stay?  
Cold winter comes but goes away.  
It is an age that man must face  
Planes they fly a very fast pace.  
Man can go to the moon.  
We get TV pictures and a tune.  
Cruel wars are a ceaseless pain  
To win their way, a bloody stain  
People gamble, cheat and stride  
Drugs and alcohol, life's not real.

Large salaries, they initiate the rich  
Puts working families in a striking  
pitch  
Higher wages, then prices soar  
Actually, you gain no more.  
Taxes taken from your pay  
Money needed, spent in a worthless  
way  
Our economy is in distress  
Hoping new governments will refresh  
Foreign goods, in a limited trade

Will bring manufacturers out of the  
shade.  
All the homes, that people buy.  
The reason is they are priced too high  
Man will be forced to live in a shack  
That will bring our senses back  
Inflation then will stop.  
Big salaries end in a flop.  
Vacant farms shall grow again.  
No one will have a hunger pain.  
—By Albert Brooks  
RR3 Acton