Budget has pluses and minuses



On The Hill With **Garth Turner**

It's been a little more than a week since the Wilson budget, and we've all had some time to digest the thing.

To be frank with you, there are parts of this budget that I like, and parts that I don't like. Certainly, as you know, I stand 100 per cent behind the national effort to reduce the deficit, slow the growth in the debt and stop selling out our kids' future.

So, the government spending cuts (\$1.5 billion this year and another \$2.1 billion in 1990) are just what should have happened. I we're wrong to subsidize every rider on VIA trains by \$40 in "lucrative" Windsor-Quebec corridor and damn near \$200 on the Transcontinental train. So VIA subsidy cutbacks suit me fine.

So does a cut in the budget of the CBC, along with a \$2 million slash in the tax money which is paid to the National Action Committee on the Status of Women - a lobby group.

I support the changes in Unemployment Insurance, which will see more money put into retraining programs, and less into paying people not to work. Sure, we need a plan - but it should never encourage unemployment.

And, as mentioned here before, I think a shift in taxation from income (which you can't avoid) to consumption (which partly you can) makes sense - for taxpayers and for the feds.

What don' I like?

I don't like higher taxes, although I know why Wilson increased them. And I have to agree with some of the people who came to the Budget Breakfast I had in Georgetown last Friday morning the government should depend more on cuts, than on taxes, for further whacks at the deficit.

And I agree as well that politicians owe it to the people to find every dollar of government waste; then end the abuse.

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As Chairman of the House of Commons committee which oversees a lot of the spending directly affecting government operations, I will be doing exactly that. My committee is now going over the spending estimates which were released a week ago - getting an explanation why, for example, the National Capital Commission is spending \$25,000 to survey the shrubs at Stornaway, where the Opposition leader lives. (The NCC wasted another \$25,000 looking at the shrubs around 24 Sussex Drive, where the Prime Minister lives).

Canadians will play ball on this plan to slow the debt, but only if the system's fair, and tax dollars are not flushed away by those who think they don't have to account for their actions.

Well, they do.

And that includes the politicians themselves who come up with these budgets that so affect our everyday lives.

Your message to me in the wake of this event has been clear - tell Ottawa to cut spending. Forget the wails of the special interest groups. Don't penalize people for working hard. Make the system fairer. Don't ask for more money while other money is being wasted. Tell us what the feds are doing, and why.

Thanks to all those who wrote me over the past 10 days, who called my riding office, and who came out to the breakfast to offer comments and suggestions.

It is only with invaluable input from you that I can take this clear message back to government. And, believe me, I will.

The finishing touches have just been made to something I call "A Citizen's Guide to a better Environment." It's a 36-page booklet I've written on ways we can all - as individuals and families and communities - work towards this goal.

The Guide is at the printer's now, and I hope to have a copy sent to every home in the riding by the time Environment Day - June 5 rolls around.

When you let it, please let me know what you think, and share with me any ideas you have on the

The project, by the way, isn't ending here. Material from the booklet will be combined with much more, as I write a new book on the environment, to be published in January.

I hope you buy a copy - because all the profits that flow to me will be donated to help reduce the federal deficit.

It strikes me the two issues are vastly related. They both impact on our country's future. They cause problems which may be irreversible. And, with the people's will, they can certainly be solved.

Thank you for your guidance, and stay in touch.

OPP caution motorcyclists

Motorcyclists take to the road in' record numbers each spring, and all too often, an enjoyable activity turns to tragedy.

In 1987-88, on highways patrolled by the Ontario Provincial Police, 112 motorcyclists and passengers were killed.

The most common contributing factor in fatal motorcycle accidents is loss of control at high speed, which accounted for 52 per cent of the deaths in 1987-88. Other major causes of fatal accidents are alcohol consumption and failure to yield.

"Basically, motorcycle operators face the same situations as car drivers, except they are driving a two-wheel vehicle as op-



Sun 11am-5pm Thurs-Fri 9am-9pm Mon Wed 9am 6pm Saturday 9am 6pm posed to a four-wheel one. With this type of vehicle, there is less margin for error," said S/Sgt. Bob Lyon, Ontario Provincial Police traffic and marine section.

Motorcyclists are often involved in accidents because they are not seen by other drivers.

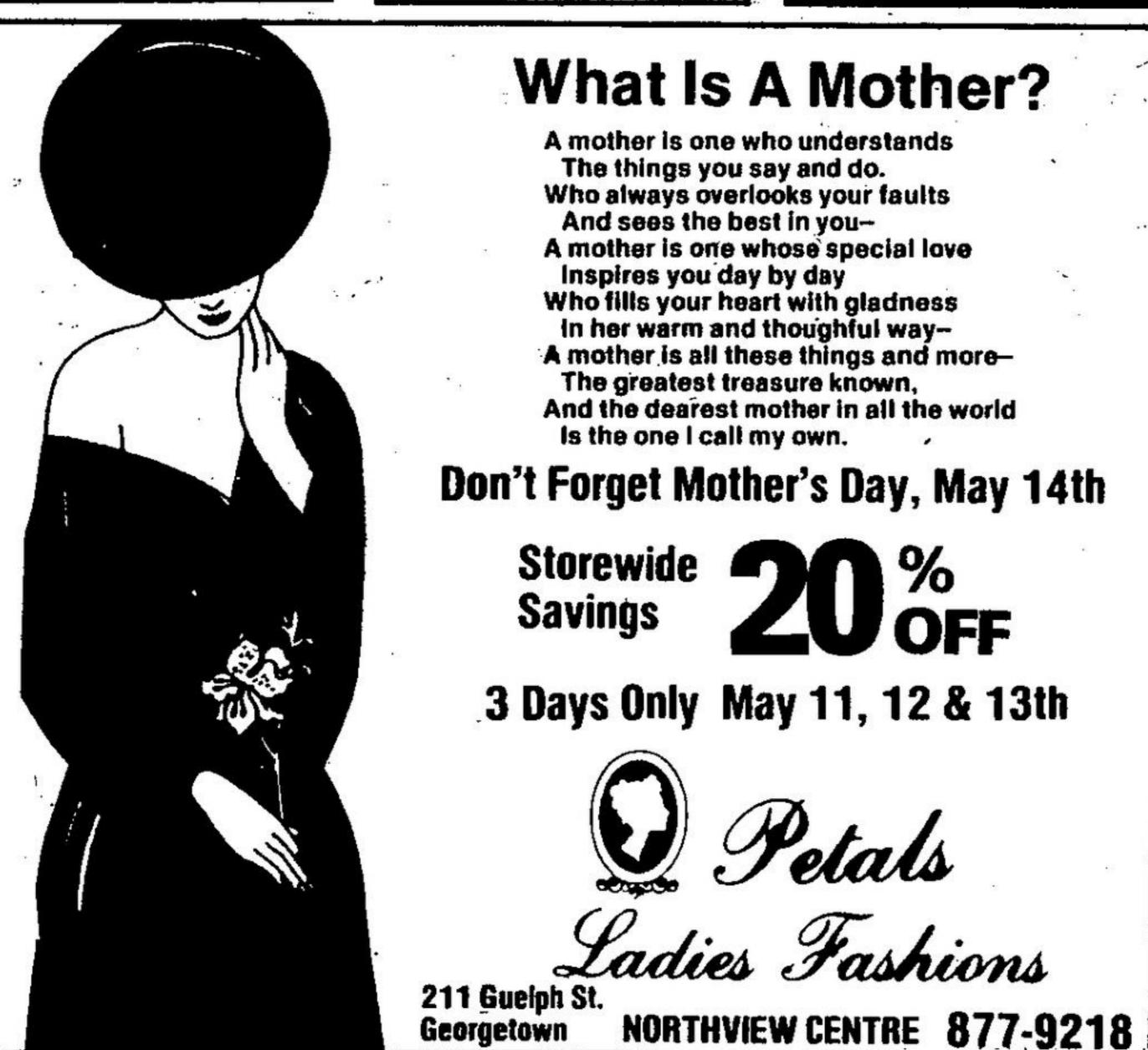
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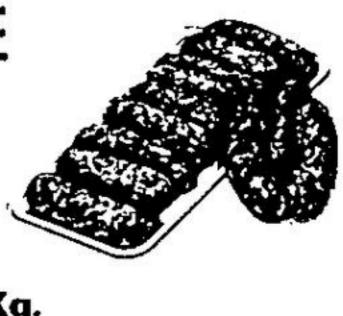


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