

# Baker: what Ottawa is going to hear

Below is the text of the statement made yesterday by Ray Baker concerning the current efforts of the towns of Midland and Penetanguishene to qualify for a federal program, ILAP, that would encourage the creation of jobs here.

The Midland-Penetanguishene area has suffered its worst economic setback in decades with the closing of RCA Inc., in Midland four days ago.

A loss of 550 jobs, plus related workers in the service industries being directly affected on a higher than one to one ratio, makes this worse.

This is a long term economic blow in a recessionary period when the area is reeling from layoffs in construction, automotive parts, textiles, and the service sector.

The towns of Midland and Penetanguishene are preparing a joint brief for presentation to Edward Lumley, Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Regional Economic Expansion, Ottawa.

It will be hand carried by a delegation headed by the two Mayors: Mayor Al Roach of Midland and Mayor Ron Bellisle of Penetanguishene.

The brief will be an urgent request for designation of the two towns to ILAP status (Industrial Labour Adjustment Program).

This program would provide, among other things, interest-free loans of up to 50 per cent of capital costs to industry for expansion, for restructuring and new product develop-

ment. This program also assists in locating new industry in the area.

Through our ILAP Committee, I have been elected spokesman for the following bodies: both town councils, both Chambers of Commerce, Industrial Commissions, and the Labour Council.

Today I will give you some details of the brief and its timing.

Feb. 1, 1983, is our

deadline for having the brief ready. Its presentation will be as soon as humanly possible after that date. Ottawa is aware that we are going.

Its contents will be as follows:

It will show that plant after plant has closed its doors, from Bausch and Lomb to Motorola, and most recently RCA Inc. in Midland, which from a high of 1,200 employees is down to a

maintenance crew. Between them thousands of workers with viable skills are unemployed.

It will show the large number of smaller companies which have gone into receivership, have quietly folded up, or are running with a reduced work force. But these are paper statistics. It will try and show the economic impact in human terms: the army of unemployed; the ones

on UIC benefits; the ones who, having exhausted these benefits, are now seeking welfare or are currently on some form of social service.

There is also a hidden sector, perhaps the silent majority, who have moved in with friends or relatives on a survival basis and do not appear on the welfare records.

It will show real estate closures versus

the huge listings up for sale, the homes given up and the bankruptcies, the lack of housing starts.

In a nutshell, all the human misery that goes along with unemployment, from the closed down car dealerships to corner stores, from the hard pressed Salvation Army help to the overworked case workers with welfare.

On the positive side, it

will show a labour force in this area, ready, willing and able.

The industrial potential and diversification in the form of land and buildings. Of fully serviced industrial lots, well situated to service Ontario with goods, instantly available. Above all, it will show two town councils, chamber of commerce, industrial commissions and a labour council waiting to help industry, trade and commerce.

In the worst economic depression to hit this area since the 1930s, it will show that two municipalities have mayors who have taken up the challenge of a three-year stint and are saying to Ottawa, "We are ready to go, but we need help, and we need it fast!"

## Retired women teachers meet at end of 1982 at Baptist Church

The Retired Women Teachers of Ontario (O.A.S.W.I.), Midland-Penetanguishene Branch, held its last 1982 meeting in the parlour of Calvary Baptist Church. Twenty-two members and one guest were present.

Esther Addison, the president presided. After Phyllis Benson gave thanks to God for the many good things we enjoy from day to day, we enjoyed a delicious smorgasbord with Marjorie Gendron and Irene Marchand as hostesses.

The meeting followed when Ann Le Pan told us

**\$200 draw winner**

The winner of the \$200 grand prize in the Midland Business Improvement Area Christmas draw contest is Faye Dollimount of King Street, Midland.

of the recent W.T.F. banquet to which, we were invited.

Reports from the secretary, Violet Lidstone, the treasurer Olive Cleaver; good will, Muriel Dane were heard.

Frances Bell (a most talented pianist) led us in singing Christmas Carols.

Violet Lidstone read a moving story of a Czechoslovakian family's first Christmas in Canada among strangers and strange customs.

Gifts were brought to be given where needed in hospitals and nursing homes. We also enjoyed an exchange of gifts among ourselves.

The next meeting is in March and it is then we remember with donations of money and educational supplies, the needy schools in the Underprivileged countries around the world.

Note: If you don't know what to do with paper, erasers, rulers or any good school supplies-excluding books—the Overseas Book

Centre is always glad of support. Just get in touch with any O.A.S.W.T. member.

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