

# Municipal Affairs Minister McKeough Defends Market Value Elections For Mayor And 3 Councillors

(Continued from Page 1)

Mr. McKeough also pointed out that assessment on some 10,000 properties in York County and Mississauga have been reviewed this year. He is as interested as you are in the decision of the county courts on assessment appeals will be. He hopes that during 1970 assessment will set down sufficiently so we can have enough confidence in it to draft legislation for tax reform in Peel and York. To stabilize the assessment, court decisions and reassessment where necessary will be needed," he said.

"What does the assessor use as a yardstick?" another Richmond Hill ratepayer asked. He wanted to know if the cash down payment and mortgage interest rates were taken into consideration. "You're assuming I'm going to sell my place," he charged. "Let me know how you feel," answered the Minister. "We are already on record as being against it," the same ratepayer added.

"I have lived on Crestwood Road in Vaughan Township for 18 years," stated Larry Price. "Are we going to have our taxes raised, like it or lump it? Or will we have to move out of the area?" "I don't know where you would move in the Province of Ontario and not be faced with rising taxes," countered the Minister, who suggested Mr. Price go to the township office to find out where his taxes are going. "They will be glad to show you where taxes go. The Board of Education will also provide you with this information."

"Real estate taxes in Ontario provides \$800,000,000 annually for education. To this province adds more than \$800,000,000, an enormous and staggering amount of money. If the cost of education was removed from real estate it would add about 20 points to the retail sales tax or double the personal income tax," Mr. McKeough stated.

"Previously, I have asked a question and to which I still do not have an answer," Tony Reale of Crestwood Road, Vaughan Township, told the Minister, "is what is the provincial government prepared to do for the hardship cases? We have people in Vaughan Township who just cannot afford to pay this year's taxes."

"That was the purpose of the legislation passed by the province. Our concern is to get the assessment settled down to be convinced it is equitable. The courts will help. Those who believe their assessments are too high should appeal them," was the Minister's answer.

"Would some of the solution be for the municipality to have access to the records," asked Richmond Hill Councillor Lois Hancey. "A lot of problems can be understood by having the assessment explained," Mr. McKeough agreed. "But the municipality has not the right to check the records on the municipality's behalf. I have been advised that all I may see is the totals," continued the councillor.

"We hope in the years ahead the municipalities, particularly the treasurers, will keep an eye on the assessments. We would hope the municipalities would go further and take a look at individual assessments by a spot check — probably 100 properties. I hope the municipalities will appeal some assessors. I will welcome the municipalities keeping the assessors on their toes," was the Minister's reply.

"The municipalities are interested in knowing if there are inequalities besides those brought to our attention," Mrs. Hancey stated. The assessment rolls will be returned to the municipalities on September 30, the Minister noted. "It's a matter of priorities. We can't do it all at once. The basic job of the assessment department this year is to answer questions from individuals."

When Richmond Hill Ward 1 Councillor Eric George stated

that assessment on market value was actually asking people to pay tax on unrealized capital gains and asked "Do you still feel market value is reasonable?" Mr. McKeough replied that the yardstick really doesn't matter "provided all houses are assessed on the same basis". Mr. McKeough disagreed and felt that "maybe every three years" would be the rule.

Ron Ross, who organized the people on Rumble Avenue, Richmond Hill, in protest against increased assessment, wanted to know why the town council has rejected Bill 142 (the Municipal Act).

It was then Mayor Lazenby stated his personal stand that people who have been over-taxed in the past and now have a reduction because of re-assessment should not be asked to give relief to those who have been undertaxed in the past. "I could go along with the assessment act, so everybody in town will pay a portion of the relief offered some taxpayers," he admitted.

Mr. McKeough also stated that he hoped to stretch the recess between the date of receiving assessment notices and the final date for appeal to give people more time to investigate the protests of ratepayers.

Questioning Mr. McKeough on reassessment, Harold Sanderson of Richmond Hill asked if the assessors used the same market value (1967) for residence and industries. "We have been told over the years

that we must have industrial assessment to equalize taxation. But that is not true anymore," he said.

"That is part of the reason why there was a shift," replied the Minister. "The price of housing lots rose dramatically. A plant built in 1968 at the cost of a million dollars would not find a willing buyer today at that price. A house built on a lot in 1958 for \$20,000 would bring \$30,000 on the market today." ("\$40,000, a voice from the audience corrected.)

"That sir, is part of the real problem," continued Mr. McKeough. "The assessors realize it and court cases strongly indicate it. In Canada the tax on real estate is the biggest revenue producer for government and less money has been spent on proving its veracity than on any other field of taxation."

Other questioners dealt with personal assessment problems. All were invited to check their assessments in the County of York Assessment Offices in Newmarket and if not satisfied to enter an appeal to be heard by the Courts of Revision.

At least two ratepayers suggested that residential taxes should be deductible for income tax purposes. Mr. McKeough agreed pointing out that this was one of the suggestions in the Province of Ontario's brief on Federal Finance Minister Edgar Benson's White Paper on Taxation.

Mr. Stifel urged his audience not to be taken in by "political wheedling and dealing and other phony promises to get your vote."

He felt it was unjust that costs of regional government would be added to local taxes. "The federal and provincial governments should be responsible for putting in sewers, roads, etc. as taxpayers cannot afford any more taxes."

**REGIONAL COUNCILLORS**

Acclamations to a seat on the regional council (as well as on the nine member local municipal council) were given to Gordon Rowe and Donald Plaxton. Two other nominees withdrew their names.

The greatest surprise of the evening was when the town's present Deputy reeve Ivan Mansbridge, believed to be a strong contender for a seat on the regional council, announced that he would not be running. Mr. Mansbridge gave as his reason that he would not be able to give the time to the job it will require.

The other nominee who withdrew was Louis Wainwright of Pemberton Crescent in the Richvale area, the only person to be nominated for two positions. Mr. Wainwright was acclamated to the municipal council seat in Ward 6.

Mr. Plaxton is the incumbent reeve of the present Town of Richmond Hill and lives on Sugar Maple Lane. Mr. Rowe is at present a councillor in the township of King. He lives at Oak Ridges.

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Contesting the Ward 1 seat on the municipal council will be Eric George of North Taylor Mills Drive and Andy Chateauvert of Zelda Crescent.

Mr. George won the seat on the present council last December in a four-man contest, with Mr. Chateauvert being his closest competitor.

Mr. George reported some success in achieving a program of what he hoped to accomplish in 1970. The first was starting a program to install storm sewers, curbs and sidewalks where needed throughout the town. This work is underway on Neal Drive at present and a start on a similar program for North Taylor Mills Drive has been made. Mr. George pointed out he has also introduced motions for sidewalks on Centre Street and Crosby Avenue. "All require a little more pushing and funds will be found. Funds can always be found for something that is needed," he claimed.

Mr. Chateauvert, who has served for four years on the parks and recreation committee, made up of unpaid volunteers, reported he had attended council meetings regularly for the past two years. He stated he had accepted the responsibilities of his committee duties and has striven to set a good example to the youth of the community during his eight years residence in Richmond Hill. He has also been interested in the mercantile ball league, has been an assistant hockey coach and active in the swimming club. He also has had an active part in the redevelopment of Skopik Park, including installation of lights and correcting a drainage problem at Crosby Park, work in Bradstock and Cedar Parks, on the redevelopment of the Mill Pond Park and has supported the efforts to get a roof on the swimming pool.

"I oppose any salary increase for council at this time," he stated. "I intend to work for improvement of local roads installation of storm sewers and curbs and sidewalks as funds become available."

The present Ward 2 Councillor Dave Schiller and Ward 3 Councillor Lois Hancey received acclamations to these seats on the municipal council of the new town. Present Vaughan Township Councillor Lou Wainwright also was acclamated to the Ward 6 council seat. Mr. Wainwright had been involved in a traffic accident on his way to the nomination meeting and was given the privilege of speaking after the mayoralty candidates so that he might seek medical aid.

Another contest for a council seat will take place in Ward 4 (the west side of Yonge Street), where the incumbent Councillor Shaun Beggs will be opposed by Robert Thompson.

"I have worked nine months for you and have enjoyed every minute of it," Mr. Beggs, who lives on Leisure Lane, stated.

"There are 80,000 properties in the County of York," Mr. McKeough pointed out. "Regardless of who did the assessment I would not suggest that assessment on all is correct. I have no doubt some are too high and some are too low. That's what the Courts of Revision are for — to correct these errors. Some of the differences in York County (and there are worse differences elsewhere) indicate how far off the mark our assessments have been."

"Why is it that assessment appeals have not been heard by county judges," asked Donald Deacon, M.L.A., York Centre. Mr. McKeough admitted there had been a holdup, "but I am informed that they met in Richmond Hill today, and will be meeting in Woodbridge tomorrow. The hearings are underway," reported the Minister.

Mr. Deacon also thought "It is only right to apply a factor to meet the shift from industrial to residential taxpayers. This shift lowers the burden on those used to paying it, have been accepting it and have the right to deduct it when paying income tax."

Mr. McKeough agreed but pointed out that in Markham Township there are large blocks of land held by developers at low assessment. "The shift in Markham in many instances was onto residential unoccupied land. Simply correcting the 25% shift from industry to residences would have helped, but wouldn't have corrected the basic fault. I don't want to vulcanize the tax system in this province."

"When asked why funds weren't supplied at the provincial level to ease the burden on municipal taxpayers, Mr. McKeough countered with the question, "Why should a taxpayer in Chinguacousy or Ajax pick up part of your tax, any more than you should pick up part of their tax?"

Another questioner wanted to know why the province selected Peel and York Counties as the guinea pigs for reassessment on market value. In reply the Minister pointed out that the province did not make the selection. "It was the county councils who made the decision," he stated.

"Wouldn't it be more equitable to roll back the assessment until the whole province is reassessed?" asked another ratepayer. "It would be to those people whose taxes have been increased," agreed Mr. McKeough. "My particular township has not been reassessed, but from my knowledge I am paying up to twice as much in municipal taxes on my residence as I should."

A resident of Vaughan Township, who will be in the new Town of Richmond Hill after January 1, asked if the 1:1 ratio of increase he had experienced was the norm. "Assessment was related to market value in 1967. In the opinion of the assessor your property was worth \$31,000. There is nothing magic about the market value, but we have been told it is understandable. Most of us have some idea of what our property is worth," was the Minister's reply.

## Bill Masters, Peter Rossi Seek Markham's South Thornhill Seat

There were two further entrants in South Thornhill Ward 1 for the October 5 municipal election.

They are Peter Rossi of 16 Almond Avenue and Councillor William Masters of 7400 Bayview Avenue.

Ward 1 encompasses the area from Yonge Street to the Highway 404 right-of-way near Leslie Street and from Steeles Avenue East to John Street.

Mr. Rossi's efforts in the community cover a period of about 10 years and have been widely diversified.

He was a member of the former township public school area board and was chairman of the TSA 1 Continuing Committee under the York County Board of Education.

Mr. Rossi has also been a member of the North Thornhill Community Centre Board and the 2nd Thornhill Scout and Cub Group Committee.

He is a past president of the Thornhill Area Recreation Committee, which, among other things, is responsible for the operation of the Thornhill Swimming Pool. He has been a manager and coach in the Thornhill Church Hockey League.

A founder and past president of the Grandview Highland Community Association, Mr. Rossi also served as director of Markham Township's pilot summer school project at Henderson School.

Mr. Rossi served as director of after-school activities at Henderson School. He is past president of the Grandview Ratepayers' Association and the Henderson Avenue Home and School Association.

He and his wife Doreen have three children, Chris at Thornhill Secondary School, Paul at Woodland Senior School, and Kevin at Henderson Avenue School.

Councillor Masters was born in Toronto. He has lived in Markham since 1947, first at Elgin Street for 15 years, and then at his present home on Bayview.

He is a partner with his brother in a store and office equipment business in Toronto. His former decision not to seek election

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for Bill 143 which will spread the cost of such relief over the whole tax-paying community, rather than recouping it from "those who evidently have been paying more than their just share in the past" by limiting the decrease in taxation caused by reassessment to \$50 (under Bill 142).

The mayor's only opponent, John Stifel, is well-known in Vaughan Township, where a couple of years ago he waged a strong campaign against the township's practice of cutting weeds on his property and then charging him for the work.

"In the last 10 years I have seen taxes steadily rising, progressing from bad to worse," Mr. Stifel stated. "Back in 1957 a politician proposing an increase in taxes was immediately out. Rents remained low and public housing and subsidized rents were not required. Everyone was housed at their own level and property owners did not go bankrupt paying taxes. Tenants were then enfranchised to dilute the property owners power and taxes have ridden a balloon ever since, filled by politicians' hot air."

Mr. Stifel urged his audience not to be taken in by "political wheedling and dealing and other phony promises to get your vote."

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## Local NDP Meet Second Leadership Candidate

(Continued from Page 1)

65% of the secondary industry of the nation," said leadership candidate Pitman.

On the question of the possible frightening off of foreign investment if Ontario had an NDP government, Mr. Pitman referred to the book "Silent Surrender" by Levitt, in which he said the author noted that 80% of the U.S. capital invested in Ontario in the last 20 years has been retained earning from existing investment.

"In fact, investment capital has been going out of the country, rather than coming in," said the Trent University history professor.

He said one of the difficulties about the foreign investment question and about finding out what is actually happening, stems from the fact that the records of many companies are in computers outside the country, and Canadians can't get the information.

"One of our difficulties today is the fact that decisions are being made elsewhere than where people work, and sometimes even outside the country," he said.

Mr. Pitman cited an example he was familiar with in Peterboro, where a firm was approached regarding pollution. The head office of the company was somewhere else in Canada, and the decision was made there that nothing could be done about the problem.

"This loss of responsible local decision making power makes us less human. And the bright young people feeling that they will never have the power to make decisions of consequence, leave and go elsewhere," he said.

Commenting on education, teacher Pitman said education must not be left only to the schools.

"Education goes on from age five to age 95, and many people are better trained to make a better contribution in activities outside the schools," he said.

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Born in Toronto, M.L.A. Pitman is the only son of Ernest Pitman, a clerk in the assessment department at Toronto. His mother was the former Elsie Kendrick.

Raised in the Bloor-Dundas district, he attended Keele Street Public School and Humberdale Collegiate.

After school he worked at a series of jobs. He clerked in a grocery store, cleaned floors in a school, and supervised playgrounds.

As soon as he was old enough, he drove a truck. He later worked on a production line at a tire plant.

He earned his way through the University of Toronto, graduating in 1952 with honors in history.

He played hockey and baseball and one year won the Canadian Intercollegiate Wrestling Championship.

In his graduation year he married Ida Collinge, a friend since childhood. They had attended the same school, sung in the same choir, and shared an interest in music.

After a year at the Ontario College of Education to qualify as a high school teacher, Mr. Pitman went back to Toronto University for his MA Degree. His thesis dealt with the history of Canada West . . . pre-Confederation Ontario.

While he studied he taught at Bathurst Heights Collegiate in North York. In 1956 he moved to Peterboro to become head of the history department at Kenner Collegiate.

A supporter of the CCF since his teens, his first campaign experience was putting up signs in High Park to help Bill Temple topple Tory leader George Drew in 1948.

At university, influential teacher and his own reading made Walter a socialist.

"For me, it was always a rational thing. The ideas just made sense," he says.

Invited to be the New Party's candidate in Peterboro in a 1960 bye-election, he was victorious in the year before the party formally became the NDP. He turned the last CCF vote in the riding from 1,300 into a New Party total of 13,500.

He was the New Party's first member at Ottawa and became very involved in national party activities. But he lost by 500 votes in the 1962 election and again in 1963. He was co-chairman of the NDP founding convention in 1961.

It was at this time that Mr. Pitman went back to his teaching career and came to Southern York

## Local NDP Meet Second Leadership Candidate

County, serving in supervisory positions and as a master teacher for the then York Central School Board, comprised of Richmond Hill, Markham and Vaughan Township, and Woodbridge.

In 1965 he was appointed Associate Registrar and Lecturer in History at the new Trent University in Peterboro. In two years he established the university's extension and school liaison program. He then was appointed Associate Professor of History.

For four years he has been host of his own television program on CHEX-TV, a CBC affiliate in Peterboro. He was an originator and one-year host on the CBC national youth program "It's Debatable."

At the same time he was active in the 12,000 member Ontario Education Association, and became president in 1966.

In 1967 he captured the Peterboro provincial legislature seat for the NDP, with an increase in votes second only to the party's Dr. Morton Shulman.

Chairman of the NDP provincial caucus, Mr. Pitman has been NDP spokesman for the two biggest spending government departments, education and university affairs.

He relaxes at the piano keyboard and gets his exercise running two miles every day he has time. He enjoys camping and sail canoeing.

Walter and Ida Pitman have four children, Wade aged 16, Cynthia Lynne aged 15, Mark 12, Anne 9.

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## NOTICE

To the municipal electors of the

### AREA MUNICIPALITY OF THE TOWN OF VAUGHAN

for the year 1970

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Ontario Regulations 342/70, that the following named persons are candidates qualified to be elected to the offices indicated:

<b>For Local Councillor (5 to be elected)</b>	<b>For the Combined Office of Regional and Local Councillor</b>
Fred Armstrong	Albert D. Hollingshead
Fred Dobson	Albert H. Rutherford
David Keith Fraser	
John Gilbert	
Robert Dalton McArthur	
Gordon Risk	

— To Serve a Term of Two Years —

— POLLING DAY —

The proceedings for filling said offices will be held on Monday, 5th day of October, 1970, from ten o'clock in the forenoon until seven o'clock in the afternoon and no longer.

The location of the polling places for each polling subdivision will be as follows —

- 101 Crestwood Road; 2, and 4, Thornhill Public School; 3, Presbyterian Church, Centre Street, Thornhill; 5, and 6, Langstaff Public School; 19, Church of Christ, Concord; 20, Concord Public School; 21, and 22, Municipal Office, Maple; 23, E. Burns' house, Jane Street; 25, J. A. Gibson Public School; 26, Maple Public Library; 27, R. Cooper's house, Teston; 28, Woodbridge High School; 29, and 30, Pine Grove Public School; 31, St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, 7th Concession Road; 32, Hoover Motel, No. 27 Highway, Woodbridge; 33, Twin Elms Motel, No. 27 Highway, Kleinburg; 34, and 35, Kleinburg Public Library; 36, E. Miller's house, Nashville; W1, Lions Hall, Clarence Street, Woodbridge; W2, Orange Hall, 10 Wallace Street, Woodbridge.

— ADVANCE POLL —

An advance poll for the purpose of receiving the votes of voters of the Town of Vaughan who expect to be absent from the Town, or expect to be confined in hospital or for religious reasons, are prevented from voting on the day fixed for polling, will be held at the

Municipal Buildings, Richmond Street, Maple for Polling Subdivisions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26 & 27.

Municipal Buildings, Pine Street, Woodbridge for Polling Subdivisions 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, W1 & W2 on

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2nd, 1970 FROM TEN O'CLOCK P.M. and SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3rd, 1970 FROM TEN O'CLOCK A.M. TO FIVE O'CLOCK P.M.

Every person offering himself as a voter at the Advance Poll before being allowed to vote, shall be required by the Deputy-Returning Officer to make one of the foregoing declarations.

All persons interested are hereby required to take notice and govern themselves accordingly.

F. G. JACKMAN, Returning Officer.