

Danson Tells Hill Trade Board Independence Needs Effort

By HAL BLAINE
 "If we (Canadians) want to survive more independently, we have to get up off our backs and put our energies into those areas we want to control," Barney Danson, MP York North told a special general meeting of the Richmond Hill Chamber of Commerce April 26, at the Summit Golf and Country Club.

Danson said the way to get busy is to concentrate on financing and developing our own small Canadian businesses while assuring native financing to keep growing enterprises from being lost to foreign owners.

He said control means different things in different sectors and sometimes at different times.

Danson said the message he got during U.S. President Nixon's recent Ottawa visit from the Americans on the matter of their heavy influence on Canada was, "Do what you want or must for God sakes, but you aren't an underdeveloped nation. You're big boys now. You have the resources, ability, educational levels and infrastructures to make things the way you want them. Go ahead... and good luck. Get off our back!"

WE CAN'T "COP OUT"
 "While that is something of an oversimplification," said the York North MP, "it is in large measure true... but it isn't all that easy. We have to either cut ourselves off from reality, accept continuing external influence, or join the productive competitive world as it is. We can't have all the good and none of the bad, although there is a happier medium which is possible, acceptable and can assure to a reasonable extent that we can function distinctively as Canadians. What we can't do is simply 'cop out'... or cry. We have a challenge and we have an opportunity!"

MP Danson said government bureaucracy isn't the kind of machinery to be used to foster Canadian owned control because its too restrictive, timid and lengthy in procedure.

"This isn't necessarily government's fault. It is the very nature of bureaucracy. An official who takes so many chances or puts his faith in more than enough of the fast talking rogues we all know exist, will soon find himself lacking over."

GOVERNMENT INCENTIVES
 "It is this sort of thing that convinces me government should make incentives available, set reasonable guidelines and then turn it over to responsible private sector 'pros' to do."

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do. Governments cannot and shouldn't try to make business judgments—it is neither fair to the officials nor efficient," said the local MP.

"Private sector management professionals should be retained on contract to make the judgments within the guidelines. They have a greater instinct for the marketplace and the good ones are more likely to make less banker-like decisions. Private management can also do the necessary guiding and hand-holding sometimes necessary to best exploit the development of a company. I'm convinced that this would be more effective and, in the long run, less costly," said Danson.

CHANGE SPEECH TOPIC
 The topic of Danson's speech by prior arrangement was to have been the government's plans for changes in the Competition Act. But he said he abandoned this topic when he talked with the minister and found a new government statement on this legislation was immediately pending. The new statement was still secret and it wouldn't have been any use going over the old material when it was going to be substantially changed, he said.

Danson went into some further detail on what he thinks should be done to promote Canadian-owned small business.

Under the supervision of private sector management professionals, said the York North MP, "I would like to see either a more open Industrial Development Bank policy or, perhaps better, a system of government guaranteed loans from banks, based on the recommendation of the management consultants. Again, I wouldn't want to hear anyone crowding about low cost ratio—because for every 10 successes you're going to have to expect 90 failures or stand-offs. The important thing is the net result and the introduction of dynamic innovation and skilled management into Canadian enterprise... and with a fighting chance of success."

DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
 A Toronto businessman whose firm makes plastics production equipment, Danson was talking to 30 Richmond Hill businessmen and businesswomen. He went on to deal with the Canadian Development Corporation, which he said can play a very effective role in more mature company situations.

"These are the businesses at their adolescent stage, with good products or track records, but which might have reached the limit of their management skills or financial resources. These are the companies particularly ripe for takeover."

"The CDC can't get involved in the operation and management of companies in this size range, unless there is something very special about them. We are, however, seeing a new breed of cat on the scene in Canada—the venture capital companies. Something like a combination of management consultants, merchant bankers and mutual funds. They are generally skilled, aggressive and seasoned."

"They are often backed by major investors, large companies looking for diversification and the growing pools of investment capital which we haven't really sensed yet, looking for opportunities as a result

of the requirement under the tax reform legislation that 90% of pension funds must be invested in Canadian equities," said Danson.

"Some, but certainly not all, of these groups are vultures looking for either spectacular growth situations or highly profitable situations where the owner has made it and wants out. The CDC could take equity positions in these groups to give them greater scope to take risks and to have at least some leverage to keep them on a Canadian-oriented self interested course."

BILLIONS INTO ECONOMY
 "It might seem an anachronism, but one of the greater incentives to business in Canada and the programs to which businessmen are most vocal in their opposition are welfare programs and unemployment insurance, plus those policies which keep middle income taxes high, such as tax cuts for lower income groups and old age pensions. These are pouring billions of dollars into the economy."

"The initial benefits go to those who need them most, and for whom it is immediately disposable income. It goes primarily for food, clothing and shelter and finds its way right into the marketplace—allowing that marketplace to react at its freest and best. This is pretty evident by the current strength of business, in spite of unacceptably high levels of unemployment," said Danson.

"These programs are far from perfect and this is a concern in both government and the private sector. I'm sure they can and must be improved, but in the meantime, they are enabling many more of us to move into the middle and upper middle income brackets so we can legitimately scream about our high taxes."

"There are, of course, exceptions, particularly in the case of those on fixed incomes, but I never have claimed our government is perfect. All I claim is that it's not nearly as bad as others claim, that there's tremendous room for improvement, that we are improving, and that I, in my dispassionate non-political, unprejudiced view, don't see any others on the national scene who I believe could do better," said the Liberal MP and Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau.

NO U.S. PLOT
 "No sensible person believes that there is any co-ordinated devious scheme or plot on the part of the U.S. to take over the Canadian economy, or our culture, or to infringe upon our sovereignty. The influence is as a result of thousands of individual management decisions to function most effectively in the economy as it is and within the ground rules where they exist or the open market where there are no constraints."

"A simple but major management decision to build the Maverick in St. Thomas and the marketing success of this car had immense effect on Canada's economy, but temporarily distorts the balance under the Automotive Trade Agreement and our total trade balance for one year or possibly two."

"The clean float of our dollar and its current level as a result of our trade successes and other factors can and does affect our competitiveness in export markets in the following year... and no more so than in our automotive trade and its parts suppliers."

THESE ARE THE REALITIES
 "The decision of Canadians to switch their TV dials to Archie Bunker, Get Smart, Laugh-In or Sesame Street, rather than Jalna or the Tommy Hunter Show, our individual eagerness to pick up Time, Life Look or Vogue, rather than Macleans, Saturday Night or Chatelaine—these affect the cultural influences—these are the realities."

"Not President Nixon, nor his predecessor, nor those who will follow him, make these decisions or appreciably influence them," York North MP Danson told the Richmond Hill Chamber of Commerce.

"There are areas where U.S. government decisions do affect us, however, and they tend to eliminate our freedom of choice," he said.

"There will always be competitive, as well as co-operative issues. The choice of the Alaska pipeline and ocean tanker route, as opposed to a Mackenzie Valley pipeline for example. But these are not done to consciously restrict us, even though that might be their consequence."

"A more hopeful example is that of pollution in the Great Lakes system where we have reached agreement on a major program to co-operate in cleaning up this waterway, which so much affects both of us and the quality of our existence," said Danson.

EASY DAYS OVER
 "My impression, from the official talks and speeches and personal conversations with members of the American group (during Nixon's visit to Ottawa) was, in a sense, a reaffirmation of what we already should have known and as former Prime Minister Pearson has already said. The days of easy and automatic relations between our two countries are over. That does not mean they are not friendly. Indeed being able to say this face to face is evidence of the friendship which Mr. Trudeau said is negotiable," said York North MP Danson.

"For those in business, the federal government has many programs to assist people engaged in innovation, in export and those who can establish or expand operations in depressed areas. The Industrial Development Bank, though limited by its terms of reference, is doing an increasingly aggressive and effective job—though I would much prefer to see its role expanded and its success based on an acceptably high loss ratio, rather than profitability. In this way, it can be more supportive, less restrictive and take some of the chances necessary to really get our smaller businesses moving."

"So many of our programs are directed to our more resource and industries, many or most of which are foreign owned. All big companies were small at one time and most small companies are Canadian owned."

"Individually, they don't have much clout, but in aggregate, they are a major part of our economy and with the greatest potential for home grown innovative and profitable growth... and let's not think that

profit is a bad word, for it is only with profit that we can measure our efficiency and have the funds available for further development and self-sufficiency."

"It is ill gained or excessive profits which are evil. In our less dependent development, the real evil will be lack of profits."

NEW FEDERAL PROGRAMS
 "With this in mind, the Federal Government has recently introduced two new programs which, while modest, are significant. The main problem with small business is lack of adequate management skills and lack of working and expansion capital. These programs begin to approach the management problem," said MP Danson.

"One program covers the costs of non-profit management training programs for business. The second provides management consulting services on a partially subsidized basis through both the private and public sectors. This latter is on a pilot basis to begin with and, in my view, too 'Mickey Mouse' in concept to have any major immediate impact, but it is a beginning."

"This is something I've been at work on for three years and I am really glad to see some progress," said Danson.

"What is sometimes not appreciated in government is that the smaller businessman is usually tied down running the shop, sometimes doing or supervising his own engineering, acting as sales manager, or often the sole or most effective salesman, administering his plant and office, riding herd on receivables, precariously balancing payables and keeping his bank managers off of his back... (and his wife too, who can't really understand why he has to work a 60 or 80 hour week)."

"He doesn't have the time or energy to go through the lengthy procedure required to take advantage of the programs offered. Frequently, after taking much time and effort, he is offered a plan that is so restrictive that he has to turn it down," said Danson.

Presiding at the Chamber of Commerce meeting was President Chris Hart of Ziebart Auto Truck Rustproofing, 59 Newkirk Road. There was a short business session to pass two changes in the chamber bylaws.

With the dinner over, Past President Stuart Casement of Stuart's Studio Photography, 30A Yonge Street South, introduced guest speaker Danson.

Thanking the speaker was Tom Porter of Porter Fine Printing, 43 Yonge Street North.

GEORGINA ISLAND: No provision has been made to evacuate seriously ill residents of this island Indian Reservation during spring breakup when it is sometimes isolated for a week at a time.

AURORA: An Opportunity for Youth Program application to operate a mobile day camp for children has been approved by the federal government. A second application by a group from this town for funds to run a commuter train service was rejected.

Neighborhood Notes
 Misses Hazel Johnson and Susan Johnson have returned from a two week holiday in Florida.

Paul Crowder of Richmond Hill holidayed with his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Eade.

Max Hazel spent Sunday with his son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Derek Hazel, and family of Kingston.

Douglas Johnson has completed his studies at the University of Toronto where he majored in music.

Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Campey and Stephen were Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Cuest of Trenton.

Mrs. George Duncan of Dundalk visited this week with her nieces, Mrs. Allan Doner and Mrs. Charles Milsted.

Mrs. Ken Baker and infant son, Bradley, have arrived home from York Central Hospital, Richmond Hill.

Seems when a car goes out of control on Don Mills Road, a good target for attack is mail boxes. Three mail boxes and posts were demolished during the early hours of Saturday morning in front of Rev. Alvin Winger's home. The two occupants of the car were hospitalized.

Miss Heather Christilaw has undergone further surgery in Wellesley Hospital, Toronto. Her room number is 408. Her mother Mrs. Tom Christilaw of Blind River (the former Mrs. Lions).

The Lions held their regular meeting in the community hall Tuesday evening of last week.

Plans were made for the community day June 17. Further particulars at a later date.

Church News
 Christian Family Sunday is this weekend. Sunday school will be held at 10 am and the program will be in keeping with the day.

At the 11:30 am church service, the Sacrament of Baptism will be administered. Everyone welcome.

The May meeting of the UCW will be held in the Sunday school room May 17 at 8 pm. All the ladies in the community are invited to attend.

Neighborhood Notes
 Special birthday greetings to Mrs. Ross Nichols, formerly of Victoria Square now a resident of Union Villa, Unionville, who on May 12 will celebrate her 88th birthday. Congratulations Mrs. Nichols!

A speedy recovery is wished for Mrs. John McCague who underwent an acute appendectomy in the York Central Hospital, Richmond Hill last week.

Birthday greetings to Miss Patricia Ottaway, May 12 and to Susanne Hibbard, May 13. Sympathy is extended to Mr. and Mrs. Terry Besley and family in the passing of Terry's mother, Mrs. Russell Besley.

Gormley Neighborhood Notes

CORRESPONDENT: MRS. CHAS. MILSTED - PHONE 887-5445

Ruth Gooding of Gormley is Gospel Four, the Ambassadors' singing 10 days in Toronto to and the Harmonaire Quartettes, and promises to be a really splendid musical evening.

Heise Hill Senior Women's Sewing Circle met all day Tuesday at the home of Misses Mary and Adeline Reaman.

About 40 young people from Ontario Brethren in Christ Churches attended the Senior Youth Retreat at Heise Hill Church over the weekend. Bishop Ernest Swalm of Duntroon and Dr. Orval Butcher of Lemon Grove, California, were guest speakers during the retreat.

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