

# Stevens Attacks Cost Of Housing, Food

Inflation, particularly as it is affecting food prices and housing costs, is one of the most serious problems confronting Canadians today, says Sinclair Stevens, MP, York Simcoe.

Skyrocketing Canadian food prices have now overtaken price levels in American cities, yet average Canadian earnings are still nearly 20 percent lower than comparable American earnings, says Stevens in a press release received this week.

In a survey he conducted during the last week of August, prices for fifteen items on a shopping list were compared in the cities of Ottawa, Toronto, Buffalo, New York, Chicago, Cleveland and his own riding of York Simcoe.

**OTTAWA HIGHEST**  
It was found that the 15 items could be bought most cheaply in Buffalo, where they cost \$14.38, and they were the most expensive in Ottawa where a shopper paid \$14.91 for the same items.

Prices in the other centres were: York Simcoe \$14.70; New York \$14.56; Chicago \$14.52; Toronto \$14.51 and Cleveland \$14.83.

The items on the list were "Special K" cereal, three quarts of two percent milk, one pound of sirloin steak, one pound of chicken breast, one dozen grade A eggs, one pound Maxwell House coffee, two 19 ounce tins Libby's pork and beans, two 10 ounce tins Campbell tomato soup, ten pound bag granulated sugar, six ten ounce tins of Coke, one 48 ounce tin apple juice, one pound loin pork chops, one pound ham centre cut, eight slice package of Kraft American or Canadian cheese and a 12 ounce jar of honey.

"In November, 1970, the month before Mr. (Prime Minister Pierre) Trudeau said inflation in Canada was licked, the articles could be purchased in my riding for \$9.97," said Stevens. "In 33 months there has been a 47 percent increase. This catapulting of food prices but not earnings has resulted in the average Canadian, and especially the low income Canadian, having a still wider gap between his standard of living and that of his cousin in the U.S."

**INCOME LAGS**  
The average per capita income of a citizen in Canada in 1972 was \$3,750; in the United States it was \$4,488, said Stevens. "Contrary to the Canadian Government statements, the U.S. Government has in the '70's contained inflation better than Canada."

Since December, 1970, said Stevens, the Canadian Consumer Price Index has risen 60 percent faster than the American, and the food index has jumped 25 percent faster.

According to the International Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development, says Stevens, food costs rose more sharply in Canada than in seven other industrialized countries in the 12 month period ending in June. The OECD Report put Canada's consumer price index for food in June, 1972, at 105.4, and a year later it was 120.5.

In the area of housing, said Stevens, the Newmarket Registry Office showed the average value of real estate transactions was almost \$10,000 higher in July 1973 than in the same month a year ago. The Newmarket office is where most York-Simcoe deals are recorded, and this year they were 35 percent higher at \$37,170 compared to an average of \$27,223 last year.

**REAL ESTATE UP**  
"The \$9,947 difference is only part of the ultimate impact from such a rise in prices," Stevens reports. "Higher real estate values mean higher mortgages and, unfortunately, in the past year interest rates have risen from nine percent to the current ten percent."

As a result, declares the MP, when interest is calculated on the cash invested and on the mortgage assumed,

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Brian J. Ward, Secretary, York Regional Board of Commissioners of Police, Box 87, 240 Prospect St., NEWMARKET, Ont.

says, "The consumer price index for July, 1973, rose 9 percent from the month previous, and 7.7 percent from this time one year ago. The wholesale price index rose 1.8 percent in June from the month previous and 19 percent from the same month last year."

But these are national figures, he continues. They do not reflect inflation in any particular area, nor do they show the ultimate permanent impact of rising prices especially in the housing field.

**WORST IN 50 YEARS**  
"Canada is experiencing its worst inflation in 50 years, and while there is some ground faster than other nations such as the U.S.A.," says Stevens. "International Monetary Fund figures just released show that Canada had 50 percent more inflation in the calendar year 1972 than the U.S.A. in spite of the fact the U.S.A. was waging a costly war in Viet Nam. In the year ending last June our rate of inflation was 8.1 percent compared with an American rate of 5.9 percent."

The Canadian Government must act to contain this virulent type of inflation, says Stevens. "Their hesitation in doing so comes from

three factors. First, there is a reluctance on the part of the government and civil servants to admit that they have been contributing to inflation through unwise government action and inaction.

**FEAR LESS OF NDP SUPPORT**

"Second, effective government intervention would likely include wage controls in addition to price and dividend control. This has not been welcomed by the NDP, and the government has not wanted to lose NDP support in the House.

"Third and perhaps most importantly, inflation is being felt most severely in areas of the country where there is least unemployment. While national unemployment in July was 5.2 percent of the work force, it was 9.5 percent in Newfoundland and 7 percent in Quebec compared to 3.7 in Ontario and the Prairie Provinces.

"Over 70 percent of the Liberal members come from Quebec, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Northern Ontario, which also has relatively higher unemployment," states Stevens, "so it is natural that the government members are more concerned with the high level of unemployment in

their areas than by inflation which is generally below the national average in their ridings. Curbs to control inflation might worsen their unemployment situation."

**TEMPORARY MEASURES**

As a result, he concludes, there is no concerted attack by the government on rising prices. They simply try temporary measures to relieve acute situations, such as the banning of the export of beef and pork to the U.S.A., but they have no overall approach. Meanwhile regions most affected by inflation and least by unemployment are not being heard from.

"The government is still fighting unemployment, which is partially regionalized at this time, without realizing that their action and inaction is firing inflation, particularly in other regions.

"Their approach is costing the country dearly. One region's medicine is another's poison," Stevens concludes.

**PEPPERLAW**: A zoning by-law for the Duclou Point area is in the final stages of preparation, according to George Armitage. The by-law being drafted by York Region's Area Services Branch is designed to provide stability for the area until the township's official plan is completed.

## New Truck For The Hill

Richmond Hill Chrysler Dodge Ltd. was the sole and successful tenderer on a half ton cab and chassis for the Richmond Hill Council works department in the amount of \$3,199.07.

Tenders were called at the same time for a staff car but none were received, it was reported to council September 10, when the truck tender was accepted. Included in the tender was an allowance for a trade-in of a half ton cab and chassis.

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