

Stong says PCs failed primary job

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"The fact is that the provincial government has failed to spend much of the federal money made available for housing or the Provincial funds it has budgeted," he says.

The province also refuses to reform municipal finance to make it possible for municipalities to service additional housing, Stong declares.

The price of a building lot in York Centre has jumped from \$8,000 in 1968 to \$30,000 or more in 1975, he continues.

Construction costs have increased very little, but gross cost of low cost housing has gone from \$22,000 in 1968 to over \$50,000 in 1975. High land costs are responsible for the major escalation in the price of housing.

The province has 100,000 acres in land banks. This acreage, if serviced, would provide sites for the 400,000 families who need housing, says Stong.

"Costs, taxes and bureaucracy are out of control in regional government municipalities."

In York, he says, municipal spending increased by 51 percent in the first year of regional government while taxes increased 19 percent in the first two years.

The government's excuse for not acting is that new cities are needed to accommodate the increase in population in the next two decades.

This would be immensely expensive, says Stong, as all basic services have to be installed from scratch.

In other areas with regional forms of government — Ottawa-Carlton, Niagara, Muskoka — cost increases at an equally alarming rate.

Stong concludes, "It is obvious from this experiment the people of Ontario can no longer afford a government which is so insensitive to the people it governs."

"Throughout Ontario there are hundreds of communities with basic services in place that would welcome growth if present financial disincentives to expansion were removed," he says.

"Adding to services already in place is less expensive than starting from scratch," he continues.

"The simple fact is, the high cost of housing has resulted from greater demand than supply, and this situation has arisen through the provincial government's policy of banking land instead of servicing available land."

Regionalization expensive

Regional government is another concept Ontario cannot afford, Stong maintains.

Education crisis

In education, he says, the Davis government has created an attitude of confusion, frustration, pessimism and crisis. Concern for its effectiveness, lack of standards and skyrocketing costs exist everywhere in Ontario.

Forced on a large part of the province in the name of efficiency and effectiveness, it has brought little more than higher taxes, rising costs and more bureaucracy.

"When costs exceed tax increases, the Ontario government has had to make emergency grants to offset what would otherwise be massive tax increases."

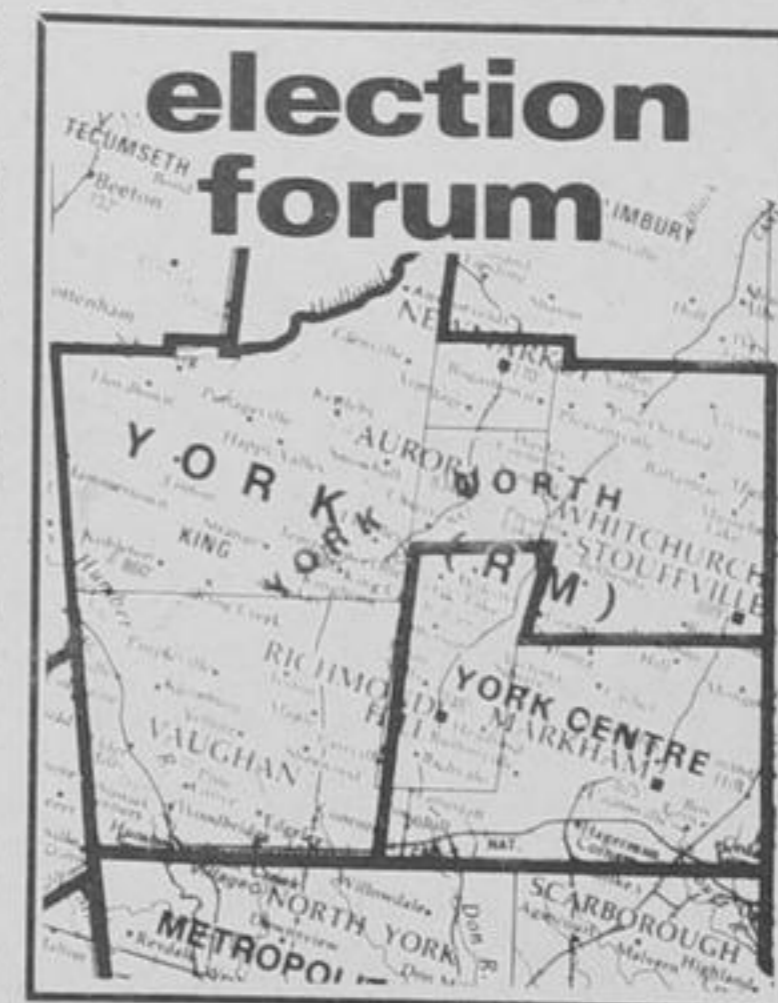
"This process of 'bailing out' regional governments means that all of Ontario is footing the bill for Davis' experiment in local government," says Stong.

A diploma, he says, has become meaningless to students, employers and universities. Universities are finding new students inadequately prepared and are having to offer remedial reading, writing and mathematics.

Stong is critical, also, of education spending. While school board spending has increased only 38 percent between 1969 and 1973, the ministry of education administration cost climbed 222 percent.

While Davis imposed controls on other levels, the ministry of education has run wild," he says.

In 1969 the government passed a law requiring local school boards to receive cabinet approval for their budgets.



panion, and Prime Minister Trudeau have said if the people of Ontario do not want the airport at Pickering, the airport will not be built.

In selecting this site, says Stong, the province had committed the people of Ontario to a debt of \$200,000,000.

Insensitive government

Buttonville Airport is another example of the blatant insensitivity of the Davis government to the wishes of the people, says Stong.

This was very obvious in the Municipal Board's decision to over-ride the wishes of the people of Richmond Hill and Markham who opposed extension of the runways at Buttonville.

"The Municipal Board is a body appointed by the Davis government," says Stong.

"This powerful body has over-ruled the wishes of the people in the towns of Richmond Hill and Markham as expressed through their duly elected representatives."

Ontario cannot afford this autocratic approach to government, and the people want to be listened to," he declares.

Yonge through Thornhill

Another point at issue is the Yonge Street corridor, says Stong.

The plan to widen Yonge Street through Thornhill and Richmond Hill has been deferred, not stopped, he declares. Land is still being expropriated along the route.

"If this concept is permitted to continue, then the communities of Thornhill and Richmond Hill will be effectively turned into larger dormitory communities creating greater traffic jams while public transit declines."

He concludes Ontario can no longer afford a government of "experimental failures".

It must be replaced, says Stong, with a Liberal Government which will be more sensitive to the problems of the people and more energetic in achieving the solution to those problems.

Letters

Markham, Vaughan TTC riders to subsidize Hill

A recent edition of The Liberal commented on the proposed single zone, cash-only fare system for the Yonge Street bus operated by the Toronto Transit Commission north of Steeles Avenue in York Region. To their editorial credit, the paper presented the proposal quite objectively.

Unbelievably, it was reported Vaughan council had approved the recommendation by the transit coordinators for Vaughan, Richmond Hill and Markham.

To properly analyze the impact of this recommendation on the present transit riders, it is necessary to consider each of the present zones individually.

For the existing Zone 3, the effect will be to double the present fare structure from 12½ cents per trip to 25 cents. For riders travelling through Zones 3 and 4, there is no change at all.

Riders travelling through Zones 3, 4 and 5 will effectively have their costs reduced by one third (37½ cents vs. 25 cents).

Since the majority of Vaughan residents utilizing this transit service will be travelling only through Zones 3 and 4, I fail to see how they benefit from their council's decision in this matter.

The loss of revenue from the new fare system was reported to be only \$4 per day if the number of riders does not change.

I believe it unlikely the "optimum conditions" will continue and instead, I strongly suspect some of the Zone 3 riders will be paying the 50 cents each day to the Borough of North York parking lot at Finch Avenue rather than to the TTC.

What will be potential loss of revenue then?

The principle of a fare structure, based on distance travelled, is well founded in this and most other countries.

Closer to home, it provides the basis for the fare structure on the GO Transit system.

It is difficult to think "regionally" about this proposal when the most obvious result is the subsidizing of Richmond Hill transit riders by those from Vaughan and Markham.

I see nothing in the new "exact fare" system being adopted by the TTC in Metro Toronto on September 15 which requires any change whatsoever in the present North Yonge fare structure.

I hope Markham council will consider the matter carefully and so avoid what must be considered a hasty decision by Vaughan.

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24 Thorny Brae Dr.,
Thornhill, Ont.

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