

**OTTAWA REPORT**

By Sinclair Stevens  
MP-York-Simcoe

## PCs want to get on with business of the House

The debate on the Speech from the Throne continues. It is likely there will be a final, quite predictable, vote ending the debate tonight.

We in the Progressive Conservative caucus have attempted to adjourn this debate so that the government may bring in their pending legislation without delay. With unemployment and inflation worsening, we believe it is urgent that steps be taken to help right the economy immediately. The government in consort with the NDP appears to be in no rush. So they have allowed eight days of needless debate to consume precious time in Parliament.

When the government indicated they would not adjourn the debate, Mr. Stanfield indicated that at least the debate could be adjourned to allow the government to put legislation through to assist old age pensioners. This motion was defeated on Tuesday last week when the government, with the assistance again of NDP Members of Parliament, defeated the PC motion. This move was a surprise to the PC caucus, who fully expected the government, and certainly the NDP members, to willingly help old age pensioners as quickly as possible.

To vote for such an adjournment would not have brought down the government. Such a vote to adjourn a debate would not have been a vote of no confidence in the government.

David Lewis, leader of the NDP, may have dropped a secret the following day when he indicated that there was no purpose in adjourning the debate because the government didn't have old age pension legislation ready any way. But that is odd. In the Throne Speech it was stated: "Certain immediate steps will be taken by the government" . . . including legislation . . . to improve the economic situation of old age pensioners."

It is unfortunate that our senior citizens are being put in this position with respect to pensions. To date they have had only nominal increases and in my opinion, a sizeable increase is long overdue to allow the recipients to better cope with Canada's runaway inflation.

The inflation trends in Canada were highlighted last Friday when the Consumer Price Index rose another point. The government has proposed setting up a committee of Parliament to enquire into rising food price trends in Canada. This may or may not be helpful. I feel it is unfortunate, however, that the government is highlighting the increase in food prices and yet it is not proposing that the same committee review the rise in shelter costs which is a larger component in our Consumer Price Index, than food. Shelter in the last month jumped 1.2 points and is up almost 10 points over last year. With this in mind, on Friday I asked the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs if he would consider amending his motion to establish the Food Price Committee so that it may also enquire into rising shelter costs. The Minister said he would consider my suggestion.

I have now had an opportunity to review the full Toronto Commuter Rail study submitted by Dr. Soberman to the Minister of Transport. The report runs

for some 174 pages. Up until late last week I had only had an opportunity to review the press release from the Department of Transport which referred to the Soberman report and reproduced certain pages from it. The press release seems to have distorted the full report with respect to a proposed service through to Newmarket and Barrie. For example, the press release stated that data from Dr. Soberman's work was used by the ministry to predict the likely level of patronage on the demonstration service between Toronto and Barrie. The release then stated: "The passenger usage on the service validates previous forecasts used in Dr. Soberman's report."

But in the full report it is stated, "Patronage estimates were also obtained for the CN Newmarket subdivision as far as Newmarket . . . but they have not been included here . . . Furthermore, cost estimates were not obtained on the Newmarket and Uxbridge subdivision and consequently the potential of these lines with respect to supply and demand could not be assessed in relation to other lines considered."

In general the study has chosen to review only four potential commuter runs in the Toronto area out of the eight possible services. Of the four possible new services, Dr. Soberman has indicated that the Richmond Hill line would have the lowest capital cost—approximately \$7.1 million—and could be instituted at the earliest date.

In the Department of Transport news release, it is interesting to note that they refer to the predicted losses on the experimental Toronto to Barrie service of some \$6 per person for each trip, and yet in the Soberman report it is stated: "New commuter rail service can be provided at an operating deficit ranging from 26 cents to 84 cents per trip."

One would expect the department would have found it odd that the CN should claim there was a loss of \$6 per person per trip on the experimental run while Dr. Soberman says such service can be provided for about 4 per cent to 14 per cent of that amount.

I intend, and the PC caucus intends, to press the government strongly on urban transportation generally and particularly with respect to a service into our area.

It has been proposed by the Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario to change the boundaries of York-Simcoe Riding. There are maps and descriptions of these changes available at my office or at most of the newspaper offices in the riding. If you are interested in reviewing the proposed changes, I would recommend that you drop into my office or a newspaper office and see the proposal first hand.

Should you wish to make representations on the changes you must write to the head of the Commission by Friday, at the latest, indicating the nature of your representation or that you wish to be heard at the subsequent hearings. Any representation should be addressed to: Brian S. McCool, Secretary, Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario, Room 326, 241 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5B 2C3.

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### Pretty Markham Miss

Run-offs were required, Saturday, to select a contingent of Unionville skaters for competition in an inter-club meet, Centennial Arena, Feb. 4. One of the participants was a pretty Markham Miss 12-year-old Joanne Warne, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Warne, 69 Lincoln Green Drive.

— Jim Thomas



For insurance call:

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### TOWNSHIP OF PICKERING

### 1973 TAXES

The 1973 Interim Taxes are due on the following dates:

1st instalment — January 31, 1973  
2nd instalment — March 27, 1973  
3rd instalment — April 25, 1973

A discount of 1% will be allowed on the total interim bill if paid on or before January 31, 1973.

If there is a default of payment on the first instalment by the due date of January 31, 1973, the total interim tax will become due and payable.

C. E. Ettinger, R.I.A.  
Treasurer-Collector,  
Township of Pickering

