

# Tough talk for MP on GST

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Myers voiced concerns about the added paper work the GST will burden her small business with as well as the transition cost to convert her present system.

And Mr. Attewell agrees the new tax system will pose a problem for smaller businesses but advises owners to "pressure the province" into helping reduce paperwork and says Canada "is blessed with a real problem of having three levels of government."

Bill Naylor, of Stouffville who also spoke during the question answer period, says "anyone making under \$25,000 a year shouldn't pay any sales tax" and questions whether the \$750 credits are enough.

"People earning \$20,000 or \$30,000 a year enjoy minimum life quality and I think you're taxing money they would need to buy food with. You'll end up with more people on welfare which will defeat the whole purpose of the GST," he says.

Graham Hoade, owner of The Earl of Whitchurch English-style pub on Main St. says he has some concerns on how the GST will affect his restaurant business but says, "if they push it through we'll just have to live with it."

Mr. Attewell told the audience the country's deficit has now reached \$321 billion, costing Canadians \$80 million a day in interest.

"It's a tragic thing to go through this 15-year deficit but

it's just ballooning. The whole deficit is accountable because of the monstrous size debt that is gobbling up interest," he warns.

The Tories say the current manufacturer's tax (FST) which generates \$18 billion a year "has serious flaws" because only 75,000 companies are included and more than 20,000 "special arrangements" deprive the country of revenue.

The replacement of such a complex and "old" system would "introduce fairness into the system"

Although he admits there are places for improvement — such as taxing "junk food" and not basic groceries — Mr. Attewell predicts the tax will reduce the deficit and will have no adverse affect, in terms of life quality, for lower income Canadians and seniors.

"A credit of \$750 will be sent to families (earning less than \$30,000) in four installments before the system is in place and by the year 2011 payments to seniors will double."

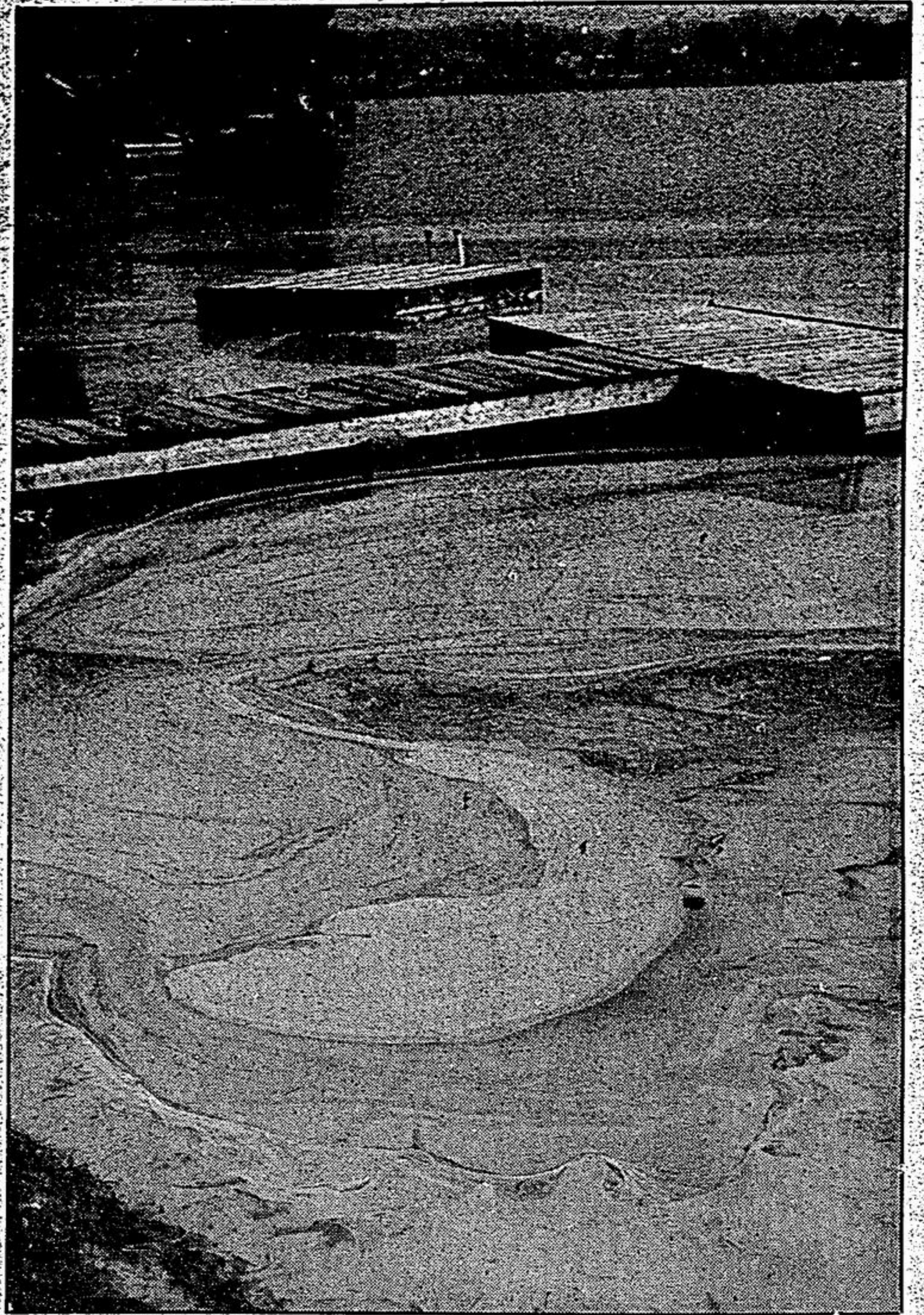
The GST will operate on a spend more — pay more format.

The federal finance committee — made up of eight Conservative, four Liberal and two NDP representatives — will "closet ourselves" in Quebec to "come up with a draft" (based on the many concerns) for Ottawa Friday.

The 14-member crew has gone from community to community across the country for six weeks to give Canadians a chance to voice concerns — which are recorded — to prepare for the Nov. 28 deadline.

"(Michael Wilson's — finance minister) draft legislation is underway now (for the GST)."

The federal government has spent \$10 million "selling" the GST to Canadians, as Susan Myers pointed out, but Mr. Attewell admits the negative response could lead to an early election.



A swirl of algae is seen along the shore of Musselman's Lake. Local resident Mary Ressenger said this past summer was the worst she's seen in six years for lake pollution. She says the problem is so bad she won't allow her children near the water.

## Hydro upgrading in town

Ontario Hydro will be "undertaking a voltage conversion program" in Whitchurch-Stouffville due to an increase in the number of customers and electrical growth in the area, the Newmarket office informed council in writing.

The hydro company wrote a letter to the town stating the program is "necessary" to maintain an acceptable level of service security for customers.

Ontario Hydro will assist property owners with upgrading their primary lines and will provide all labor costs and minor equipment costs (like insulators and pole top material) that will range from \$250 to \$2,000 (depending on age and length of private lines).

However, the customer will have to pay for the new material and will be given credit for the residual value of existing poles and conductors. Old poles remain property of the customers for whatever "scrap value" they are worth.

Ontario Hydro is advising council to take advantage of this "opportunity time" to upgrade lines while the company is offering to pay 100 per cent labor.

The issue was to be brought up at council in committee last night.

## Staff theft on rise store owners told

TRACY KIBBLE  
Staff Reporter

There is a growing number of "sophisticated" thieves out there — some of whom are employees — ready to milk merchants out of hard-earned profits, according to a loss prevention expert from Miracle Food Mart.

Bonnie Greswell, manager of the loss prevention department for the large food chain, said people are stealing more today than they did five or 10 years ago and employers have to set rules to deter employees from stealing.

Greswell was the guest speaker at the Chamber of Commerce breakfast meeting at the Meadowbrook Golf and Country Club Wednesday to discuss the ever-increasing problem of in-house theft.

"If you want (embezzlement) to stop you have to lay charges," she advised attending local merchants.

Greswell's department was responsible for apprehending 159 internal thefts at Miracle last year, totalling nearly \$18,000, and nabbing 960 customers with nearly \$28,000 in stolen goods.

However, she says it is difficult to tell if the figures are accurate because, although most profit is lost through cash, sometimes the crime can be covered up through paper work.

"It doesn't seem to matter how much money (employees) make and it doesn't exclude any customers either. I've caught priests, jail guards, police officers, and lawyers (stealing)," she said.

Some of the employees Miracle has apprehended, fired and prosecuted are 20- or 30-year employees, she said.

She advised local merchants to establish "a set of rules" with employees to deter stealing. "You have to let people know exactly what is expected of them and what they are to expect."

She suggested that a periodic employee parcel check be performed as "routine" to ensure anything leaving the store is accompanied by a receipt.

"But don't ever do a parcel check on customers," she warned.

Greswell was asked what motivates employees to steal and she answered, "for the money."

She cited one example of a cashier who taped universal product code "bar stripes" that identify product and price through the scanner, to the underside of her wrist. When a "friend" was checking through, the cashier would scan the 59-cent code taped to her wrist instead of the actual price.

But the loss prevention department randomly checks register tapes and notes any recurring amounts.

"I don't care why people steal and I don't care if it's one dollar or \$30. I don't want confessions. I just want them out of Miracle Food Mart. We really have to do our homework and really dig."

"(Employee embezzlement) can cut into your profits by one or two per cent — which is considered acceptable. At Miracle 0.2 per cent is acceptable."

## Century Mill looking to move

Stouffville's Century Mill is selling all its retail inventory but will be "keeping on with the industrial part" of the trade until the land is either sold or leased, according to Treasurer Dave Nokes.

"The land is too valuable to run a little retail store," he said of the business located on Stouffville Rd. east of Kennedy Rd.

Nokes said the frontage and the store area are small and the land is "more suited" to an industrial operation.

The retail outlet has been open for six years. Any inventory not sold will be shipped to the mill's larger Gravenhurst location.

"This has been a gradual evolution from a strictly industrial yard to retail," he said.

The company will continue to sell pallet skids and industrial-grade lumber until the land is sold and at that time Century Mill will look for another location.

"We will look for a second location somewhere down the line. If the land is sold we will look faster."

### Ring a bell?

A ring in a case was found Friday at the rear of the IGA store in Stouffville.

The owner of the ring can claim it at The Tribune office, 54 Main St. W. Stouffville.

## Musselman's Lake slime disgusts local mother

TRACY KIBBLE  
Staff Reporter

If Musselman's Lake "gets any worse" a Windsor Dr. resident says she and her family will have to move from the lake they have resided at for six years.

Mrs. Mary Ressenger, a mother and nurse at a West Hill hospital, says she will not allow her two young children to swim in the lake any more and that this year is the worst ever for pollution.

"We used to swim in that lake (six years ago). I wouldn't touch it now. This is the worst I've ever seen it," she says.

Ressenger says when she looks out her window there is sludge "all along the shoreline."

"It's not like dark green slime, but a lime green color like somebody dumped oil into the lake. There is a dark blue, green and white film on top. You can't even stick your foot into it."

The young mother of two says she and her husband hopped in a canoe and paddled around the lake one day and in places she says "we could smell fecal matter. It's got to be sewage."

Ressenger told The Tribune her well is not contaminated and she is not totally against the water proposal.

"If they want to bring in water fine. But they will have to bring in sewage first."

Ressenger says the lake is deteriorating progressively and the problem is "bad for tourism."

"I think sewage is the main concern here."

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