

Questionnaire for communication

By John Roberts, M.P.
(York-Simcoe)

My recent questionnaire has prompted some people to ask why I send out information letters, and (for that matter) why I write these columns. Do I find the answers to my questionnaires helpful? Or are they just a gimmick?

The short answer is that I think it is very important for an M.P. to communicate with his constituents. Parliament has recognized this by allowing members of the Commons to send four free mailings a year on a house by house basis to his constituents - I use these mailings for my newsletter.

While I have never used this privilege to its fullest extent, I do believe that the newsletter mailings and questionnaires are important. Like these newspaper columns, they help keep the citizens of the area informed of what, in my view, are the important developments in Ottawa. The questionnaires also give me a "feedback" on what people are thinking.

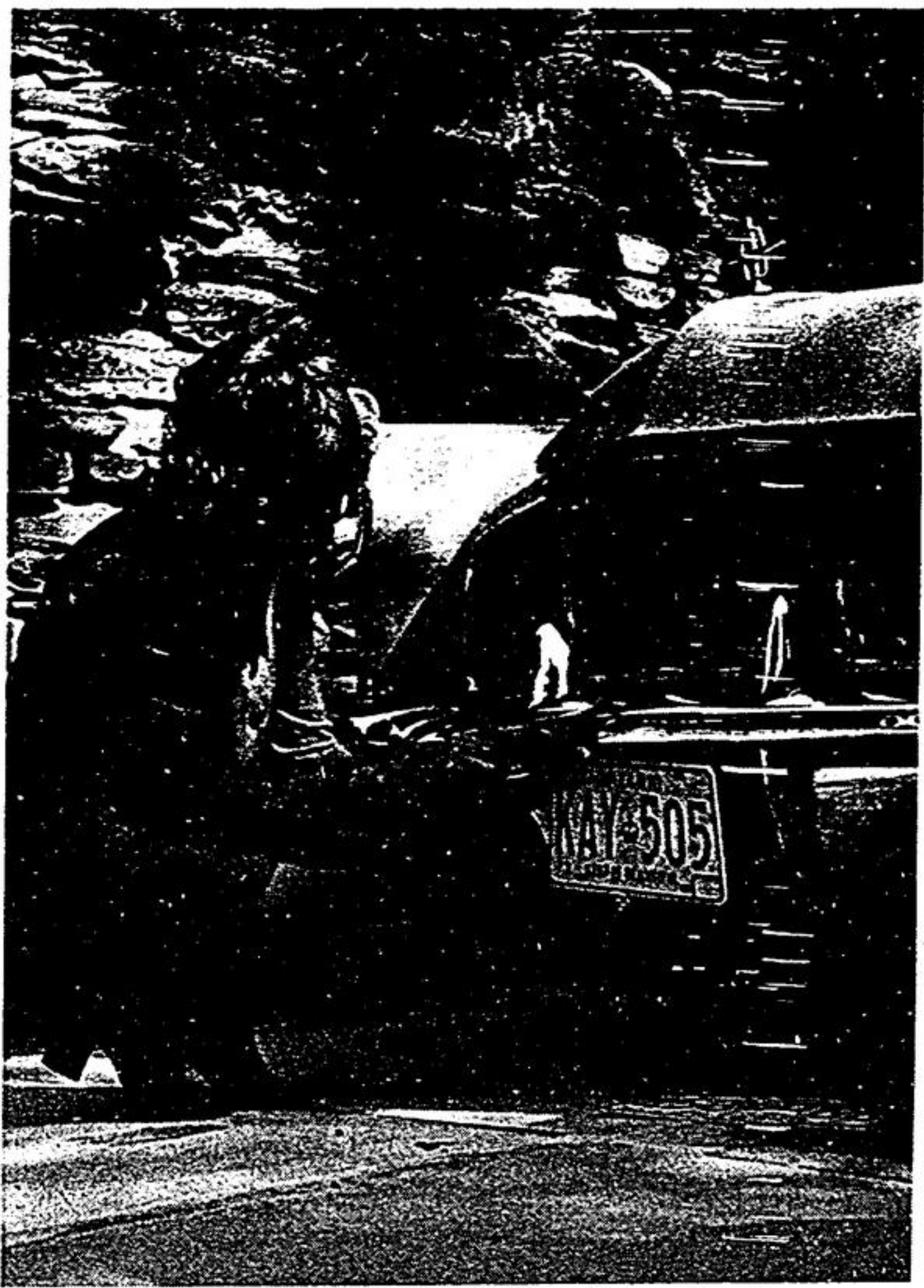
Answers to questions are revealing. For instance, I have been better able to understand my constituents' views on such things as tax reform, commuter services, labour unions, as a result of questionnaire

replies. Moreover, a large number of people add their own comments and criticisms to the forms I send out. These spontaneous notes are even more helpful in letting me know what are the concerns of the people of our area.

In both the newsletters and the newspaper columns I try and stay clear of partisan propaganda - though obviously, as a Liberal M.P., I have a bias in favor of the government side. However, all my newsletters are read by the Commons staff, and partisan political comment must be kept out if they are to be printed at a parliamentary expense.

Perhaps the most important thing about newsletters and columns is that they "break the ice". Sometimes citizens with problems are reluctant to approach their M.P. for fear that their problem is unimportant, or that the M.P. is too busy. It is easier to write or telephone the M.P. if you are in the habit of reading his column - or if you send him your views regularly by replying to his questionnaire. If you are in the habit of writing to him, it is easier to raise an individual problem with him when one comes along.

So - my columns and



Personalized licence plates will be available next year, according to a recent announcement by the Ministry of Transportation & Communications. The 1973 licences will be the first 5-year tags, and will contain three letters and three numbers. The "own-choice" plates, though, will cost an extra \$25.

newsletters are not, I hope, a gimmick. Along with my regular office hours and telephone service they are an attempt to increase the contacts between the M.P. and

the people he is elected to serve. As such, they are a step towards the ideal of participation which must be developed even further if our democratic system is to work well.

By the way - if you did not get a copy of my recent questionnaire write to me John Roberts, M.P., House of Commons, and we will send you along a copy.

Local roadside market-bonus in freshness

Each year a greater number of urban dwellers discover the fun of shopping for fresh fruits and vegetables at roadside markets. According to Food Specialists at the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, the boom in the roadside market industry is evidence of

the popularity and public demand for this type of service. The farmers who operate roadside markets have capitalized on the consumer's desire for top quality, personalized service and leisurely family shopping. The local

produce offered for sale is delivered daily from the operator's own farm or farms in the neighboring area. In some localities vegetables such as sweet corn are picked every hour and delivered immediately to the roadside stand. Instead of prepackaged trays of fruits and vegetables you can buy fresh produce from bulk displays or in 4, and 6 quart or bushel baskets. For many people one of the advantages of roadside markets is the opportunity of chatting with the grower and benefiting from his knowledge in handling and preserving fruits and vegetables.

Stouffville - Markham area, and they are part of 800 such stands throughout Ontario.

Corn roast-hay ride

By Ruth Hutchings GREEN RIVER - Next Friday evening at 7:30 p.m. the Sunday School scholars and friends will hold a corn roast and hay ride at the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. Pearse.

Misses Bray and Timson spent the weekend with their friends Mr. and Mrs. T. Ludlow of Coboconk.

We welcome Mr. and Mrs. W. Brooks and daughter who have taken up residence in the former Duncan home.

The Ladies Aid met at the home of Mrs. H.

Smith on Wednesday evening last week. Miss A. McDowell was the guest speaker and lead a most enjoyable discussion on the word Persuade. We were also pleased to welcome the President Mrs. J. Irwin back in our midst, after spending several weeks holiday in England.

Prayer meeting will be held on Tues. Aug. 29, at 8 p.m. at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Cardy, Willowdale.

Miss J. Letts and Mrs. Wardle visited with Miss Muriel Gostick on Sunday.

Close to a dozen such markets are operating along the highways and byways in the



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39⁹
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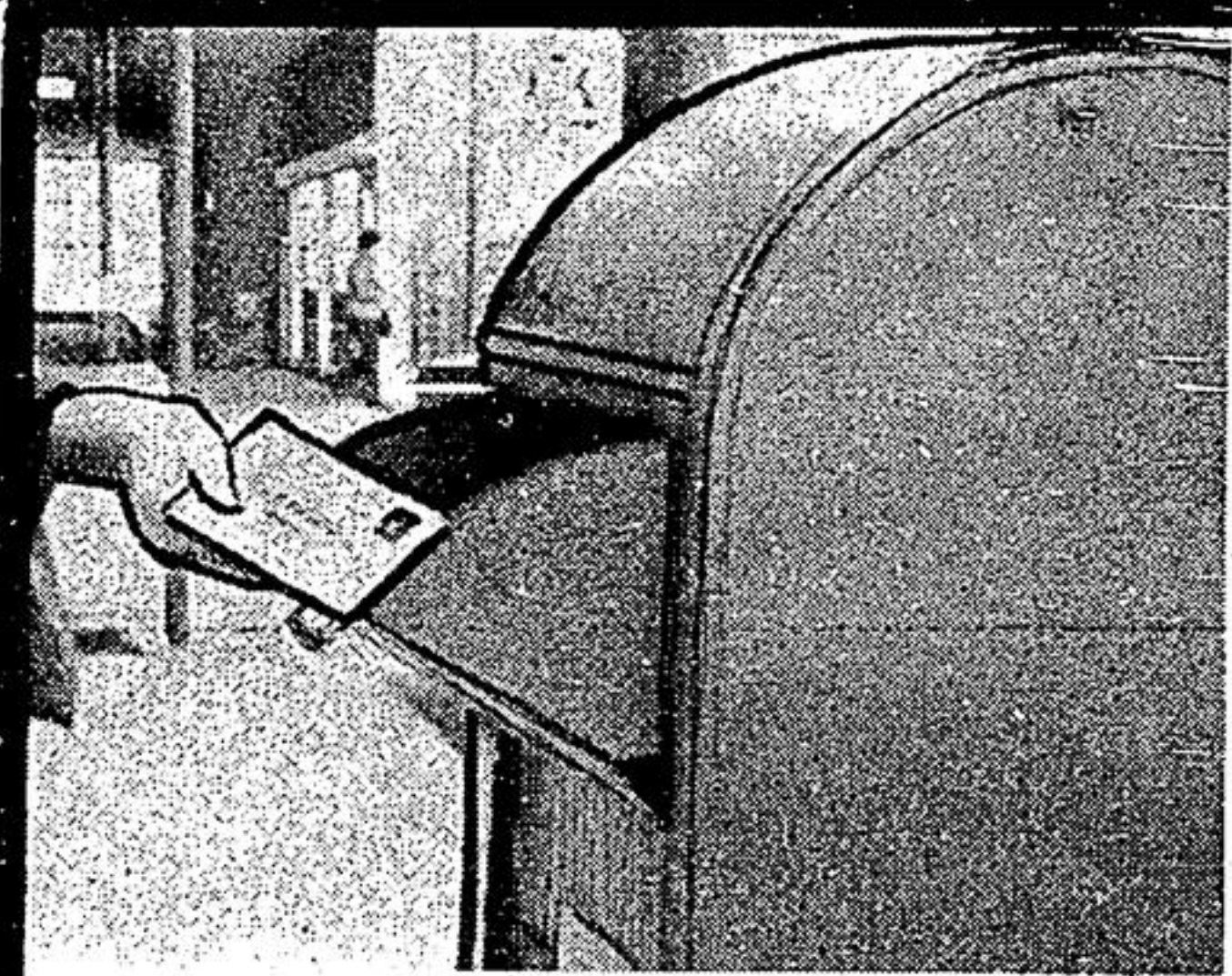
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