

Mayoralty candidates visit Osgoode

By John Parker
courtesy of Obiter Dicta

The amazing John White Society pulled off another coup last Wednesday by bringing the three leading contenders for the mayoralty of Toronto to Osgoode for a noon-hour address to a packed audience of non-voters.

SEWELL

Having arrived first and picked up a sandwich from the Osgoode cafeteria, Sewell introduced John White Society member Roger Whatkiss and proceeded with his remarks.

"The TTC is in real trouble," he said. "Fares are up and ridership is down... It has all the signs of a transit system in decay." Sewell said he would like to reduce the rate of transit expansion in Toronto and divert the capital funds thus saved towards reducing fares and improving the service on existing lines.

On the subject of tax reform, Sewell said that the days of being rescued by assessment growth are over. Next year will be the first year since the depression that the assessment of Toronto's tax base will fail to increase. It will be no help to increase the rates against the wealthy landowners, Sewell said, because "the assessment process is so screwed up that the

big owners will appeal it" and get a reduction in rates in any event. It is important to Sewell that Toronto get cracking on this matter because "if we don't do it the Province will do it for us."

Sewell despairs the fact that only ten per cent of Toronto families can afford to own houses. They key to this problem he said, is the cost of land.

"Twenty - five per cent of the cost of a house in the suburbs is the profit on the land," he noted. He is anxious to fight the federal government decision to stop land banking.

SMITH

Alderman David Smith spoke second while Sewell had his lunch. He pressed his election theme that he is the logical candidate to follow the administration of Mayor Crombie.

"In 1972 we entered a new era" when Mr. Crombie was elected mayor and nine new aldermen - Smith included - came to city council. The new directions embarked upon at that time, said Smith, were "by and large good ones." Overnight, he said, there was a majority on Council which opposed downtown expressways, opposed the removal of the Island homes, and opposed blockbusting. Smith included his own vote among those of the majority on these issues.

This Council has given Toronto "the most comprehensive downtown plan in North America Smith claimed. He noted five accomplishments in particular which have been achieved over this period:

- 1) the reduction of building densities
- 2) reasonable building height limits
- 3) preservation of historic buildings
- 4) increase in residential accommodation in the downtown core
- 5) a plan to increase downtown parkland

These five accomplishments represent a plan which, if left in place, "will make Toronto a model-a renaissance city," Smith said. "It wasn't the ideological warriors of the left who implemented it," he noted. "Sewell voted against it 96 out of 97 times."

But in the 1980's we're going to enter a new era, argued Smith, and we must determine which direction the city should be going in. "We don't need more planning restrictions," he insisted. What we must do now is make the existing plan work. To do that Toronto needs investment and jobs. This means encouraging private enterprise. "Money should stay in this city, not go to Calgary," he said. To meet this challenge, Smith said, Toronto needs "positive leadership".

Smith made it clear that he views Sewell as his primary opponent. "You can feel strongly about an issue without being carried out in a straitjacket," he said.

A vote for Smith is a vote for more projects like the Eaton's College St. development or the Village by the Grange and more economic activity in Toronto to help pay the bills of the city, he said.

"In a nutshell, I think we can have the best of both worlds," he concluded. "We can have preservation and the bricklayers can be laying bricks in the meantime."

O'DONOHUGH

Alderman O'Donohugh was a welcome soft voice after the strident high volume of the previous two speakers. His main theme was that it will take a person with his experience and vision to meet the challenges of running the city in the next few years. "Running Toronto is a business," he said, "We need someone with business sense. I've got it."

He cited the massive costs of modern government as proof of the need for competent management. In 1971 the city budget was \$93 million. In 1978 it is \$196 million. Despite the fact that costs have more than doubled, the level of sources has not risen. "This indicates to me that money has not been wisely used," he said.

He dispensed with Sewell as a

man with faith in a money tree. "Radical left rhetoric is an investment in poverty." If Sewell's plan to buy up land is implemented, he claimed, the cost would be from two to three billion dollars. "It just ain't gonna happen," he said.

"We need realism. Someone with experience. Someone who knows where the problems are. We have too much damn rhetoric. Too many people jumping on this or that academic bandwagon. We need direction from City Hall".

As a commissioner with the TTC O'Donohugh had a great deal to say about transit in Toronto. He insisted that TTC planning must be carried out for all of Metro.

"There's no wall around the city at St. Clair," he said in obvious reference to Sewell's plan to reduce expansion. He favours expansion of subway service to the waterfront and the CNE. An opponent of fare increases, O'Donohugh said he favours a European-style monthly pass system for the TTC.



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The CYSF typing service is back under new management. It appears from early signs that the service is a much improved success.

CYSF has changed the date of budget night. The new date for budget night is November 14, 1978 at 7 p.m. in the Senate chambers. All CYSF council members are reminded to pick up the proposed budget at the CYSF offices room 105 Central Square.

CYSF is pleased to announce that there will be a fall Fine Arts Festival. If you are interested in getting involved with the planning please speak to Tim Dayfoot. Tim can be reached through the CYSF offices.

CYSF Classic Movie Series continues tonight with its fourth film of the Series "The Rocky Horror Picture Show". The cost is \$1.75 for York students and \$2 for non-York members. The show begins promptly at 8 pm. in Curtis Lecture hall "L", so get there early to ensure that you get a good seat.

submitted on behalf of the Council

D.W. Chodikoff

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