

Inaugural address

Searle stresses solutions

By JOHN STEWART
 Mississauga council will be concerned only with solutions, "not with problems that give us an expedient platform from which to wave a flag."

So stated Mayor Ron Searle this week in his inaugural address before about 650 people at Glenforest Secondary School. Searle and the nine other members of council were sworn into office by county court Judge B. Barry Shapiro.

The new mayor, who was a Ward 7 councillor for 12 years, said "tonight is just a short pause in the history of this great municipality. In the final analysis, everything we have is a continuing process and the city we have is the sum total of the good men and women who preceded us and built this into one of the finest municipalities in Canada — one with its faults but with its greatness too."

It is people such as those in the audience who are willing to become part of the process who make the political system work, Searle said. "You more than we up on this platform make it work."

He said that all the

members of previous councils "are here in spirit," just as all those who contested the December election did not really fail because they did not win office.

The new mayor paid tribute to his four adversaries for the post, saying he'd never seen a harder fought or cleaner campaign.

"I want to publicly thank all of my opponents for making the system work. Without them and the spirit of competition, nothing we believe in could be achieved."

"We owe a debt to those whom we sometimes too lightly call 'the losers.'"

Searle, the former president of the Orchard Heights Ratepayers Association, who was elected in his first try for office in 1963, paid tribute to his predecessors who led the municipality: Mary Fix, Robert Speck, Chic Murray and Martin Dobkin.

Of Dobkin, whom he defeated by 3,600 votes, Searle said, "Martin introduced a new theme at city hall, a theme which appealed to many. He introduced many new philosophies, although they were not all adopted. But much of what he has done



Mayor Ron Searle (left) chats with Bud Gregory, Progressive Conservative MPP for Mississauga East, during swearing-in ceremonies for municipal politicians at Glenforest Secondary School.

helped create the great mix that makes up the city of Mississauga."

Politicians often disagree bitterly in public, noted Searle, but "we have a greater affinity for a rough, tough opponent than we have for that percentage of the people who just sit back and do nothing."

In repeating a constant theme during the campaign, the new mayor told the audience that the people whom they had elected, are

still pledged to represent them.

"By being elected they do not overnight cease to be one of you and join another club. They aren't 'one of them' or 'one of those politicians.'"

"We will make mistakes and sometimes we will offend you," Searle stated, adding council had the difficult role of trying to co-ordinate the differing priorities of all citizens.

"This council has to make

some rough, tough decisions. Remember when they make those decisions that that's what you elected them to do, to use their judgment and stand up and be counted. We will face many obstacles, but I promise you that we will look at the obstacles as only a temporary impediment to solutions."

At the conclusion of his address, Searle announced that he would present an oil portrait of former Mayor Dobkin to him. Dobkin was not in attendance. The painting will be hung at city hall.

Searle's address, delivered spontaneously in his typically animated style, was warmly received. Both Peel Regional Chairman Lou Parsons and Housing Minister John

Rhodes, who was the keynote speaker, called it one of the best inaugural addresses they'd heard.

In his speech, Rhodes told the new councillors that the problems of local government are "truly gigantic, but not insurmountable."

He called Mississauga one of the rare urban experiments where a large city is located close to an even larger urban area. "But we can't compare Mississauga and Metropolitan Toronto because the infrastructure is in place in Toronto and it's not here."

Council can still effect meaningful changes in the shape of the future city, the housing minister maintained.

"You have an original chance to create your own identity and cultural heritage.

The major danger lies not in no growth or irrational planning, but in sterility," Rhodes said. The success of shaping the city depends on "making courageous choices rather than making no choices at all."

Rhodes expressed particular interest in Searle's proposal of a Housing Mississauga conference to involve public and private sectors alike in a forum.

In the next two years, the new council will be criticized by the public, noted the minister. "Criticism is needed, but at the same time do not forget to praise as well. Tell these people that they're doing a good job when you believe they are. They're your representatives and they deserve your support."

Dobkin begins job at nursing home

Former mayor Martin Dobkin has accepted a position as a physician with the Tyndall Nursing Home at 1060 Eglinton Ave. E. in Mississauga.

The former mayor also in-

tends to resume his post as county coroner. He took a leave of absence during his tenure on city council.

David Culham, another defeated mayoralty candidate, has also taken a job. He is administrative assistant

at the Kennedy Road field office of the Peel Board of Education. Culham says that at the moment he does not plan to return to teaching. He was the former head of the geography department at Cawthra Park Secondary School in Mississauga.

Another councillor defeated in the December election, Hubert Wolf, said last week he is still undecided on whether or not he will return to work. Before being elected in 1973, Wolf was employed at the University of Toronto.

Sears eyes Dixie Plaza site

Sears, the American-based department store and catalogue-shopping chain, is considering opening a massive catalogue-clearance outlet in one wing of the financially troubled Dixie Plaza on Dixie Road at the Queen Elizabeth Way.

of Dixie Plaza, and Sears General Manager H. J. Mandel say that the possibility of the opening of a Sears catalogue - clearance warehouse does exist, but that nothing had been finalized or committed to paper.

fared poorly, however, as the more sophisticated semi-enclosed and enclosed malls spread out from Metro Toronto in the 1960s and 1970s.

Many businesses have been taken out to L-shaped plaza and several units are unrented. If Sears did move in, it would probably take over most of the north-south arm of the plaza.

Sears also operates a large department store in Square One Shopping Centre at Burnhamthorpe Road and Highway 10 in Mississauga.

Both A. G. Bennett, owner

"We are still just looking at it and we have not made up our minds yet," Mandel said Tuesday. He added that he would probably know more by Monday morning.

Dixie Plaza was the first major plaza to be built in Mississauga (then Toronto Township) in the mid 1950s. It

DRAMATIC SOCIETY
 The Credit Valley Dramatic Society will hold their first meeting of the year at the clubhouse at the Lions Club Park and Rosewood Street, Jan. 16 at 8 p.m. New members are welcome.

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And on the lighter side...

If Judge B. Barry Shapiro ever decides to leave the judiciary, he might well consider a career as a stand-up comic.

Judge Shapiro's off-the-cuff remarks were one of the highlights of city council's ceremonial inaugural meeting this week.

After swearing in Ron Searle as mayor, Judge Shapiro began to ask councillors to stand and take their oaths as well. But Mississauga East MPP Bud Gregory, the master of ceremonies, cut the judge off, indicating that Ontario Housing Minister John Rhodes would first present the chain of office to the new mayor.

When Judge Shapiro was recalled shortly after to swear in the councillors he broke up the audience with the comment that "for a moment there I thought I was on the Gong Show."

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THE LOAN a RANGER
 by Jim Wales

The average family can vacation anyplace, so long as it's somewhere near reasonable.

Sign on highway: "Smile — you're on radar!"

He's found the secret of youth — he lies about his age.

Little boy we know lost his Christmas job when school opened; his mother was paying him \$1 a week not to play his drums.

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