

*The Address—Mr. Stevens*

mately 60 miles from a point north of Toronto to the outskirts of Barrie. Speaking generally, one may say that it lies on either side of Highway 400 going north from Toronto. It includes such urban areas as Stouffville, Aurora, Newmarket, Bradford and Tottenham. It has some of the most beautiful rural countryside in Ontario.

A little over two years ago a major portion of the riding was reconstituted municipally into the region of York. On average it is not a poor riding, nor is it a wealthy riding. In many ways it is an average constituency, reflecting an interesting cross-section of Ontario urban and rural life. Many people both live and work in the riding. There are many more, however, who work in other areas, particularly Toronto, who must commute to and from their place of work.

• (1510)

In the past four years the Trudeau Liberal government has failed in the Toronto-centred region to listen to the people. On behalf of those people, let me tell the government once again, we do not need a second airport at Pickering. We do need, however, federal assistance to facilitate urban transportation, and we desperately need federal action to help lower our housing costs, in particular our building land costs and mortgage interest costs.

Not only does the present government fail to listen to our problems but they appear, at least in the urban affairs field, to act in the most erratic way. They either do studies on studies or they act completely without research. Let me be specific. With no reference to municipal officials in my area, or even to the former Member of Parliament who was then Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand), the Pickering airport site and proposal was suddenly announced one morning. It now appears that there was inadequate thought and study before the decision was made. But rather than hoist the whole proposal, the Trudeau government has been trying to cover their tracks by clever public relations.

After starting expropriation proceedings at the request of the former Minister of Transport, the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Dubé) ordered a hearing, not on the question of need but, rather, in what way a second airport should be developed. It is proposed that when the expropriation is confirmed there will be a new study into southern Ontario transportation needs, which may or may not confirm that there is need for a second Toronto airport and that the most ideal site for it is Pickering. If the government were honest they would inform this House that the selection of the second airport at Pickering was a political decision. We now find that, having made that decision, they place themselves in a ridiculous position when they try to justify the earlier decision.

For example, while they were reviewing alternative sites for the airport they stated that they did not wish to put the airport in another location that had been mentioned because the noise area of the airport—which I remind hon. members is now proposed to be substantially in my riding—would, in the case of the other proposed site, be over a swamp and they felt that swamp life might be disturbed by the noise from the aircraft. They appear to be more concerned with swamp life than with human life.

[Mr. Stevens.]

The Trudeau government's other approach of studying studies is shown in connection with the institution of commuter rail service in my area and Toronto generally. There have been ten studies to date, including the last one, the Soberman study. For ten years Liberal representatives from my region stated that a commuter train service would be instituted on a permanent basis. As the past election drew near, pressure obviously grew to commence the service. We were informed in June of last year by the then minister of transport that he felt there was in fact a need for commuter train service into our area and that he had authorized the institution of an experimental train—not a permanent one, an experimental one—and he would subsidize the running of that train to the extent of \$100,000. Then there was silence. Subsequently, after the election was called, we were advised the train would be starting November 1, two days after the election, but that it would run for approximately five weeks, not indefinitely as was first indicated.

This information was received by the residents of my riding for what it was, a wanton attempt by the present government to buy votes. It was not made clear at the time, however, that the \$100,000 referred to by the then minister of transport was simply a numbers game. What he really proposed was that his department would underwrite the losses of the Crown-owned CNR in running the train, but that the extent of the losses would be determined and set by the CNR themselves. How nice a situation—out of one pocket and into another within the same department!

When I asked officials of the CNR how they determined the daily running loss for the train, one official was very explicit; he said, "Well, it is to be run for 28 days. We were to be underwritten to the extent of \$100,000, so we simply divided the 28 days into \$100,000. That worked out to about \$3,600 per day, so that was the charge". It mattered little to the Department of Transport that a private group was able to rent a similar train to run between the same points for \$1,800 a day. In any event, the train ran. It was well utilized. The Minister of Transport was asked to extend the service, but I suppose, the election being over, he felt: what is the point? They completed their double bookkeeping and ended the service. As a result, Aurora, which was the terminal point for the first railway in western Canada to run from Toronto—that was in the 1850s—found itself in the 1970s, 120 years later, without passenger train service.

I have dwelt on these two immediate problems in my riding because I feel that parliament should be aware of such specific ineptitudes of the present government, but I have also referred to these two matters because I feel that in Canada today one of the great weaknesses of the present government has been their lack of action on the urgent needs of our urban areas generally.

I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that the present government's ineptitude, their lack of planning, their politicking, has not been restricted to my riding alone. It is typical of how this Trudeau Liberal government has ruled the nation for over four years. Their deficiencies in handling Canada's inflationary trends, the unemployment crisis, and the maladministration of the unemployment insurance fund, have already been referred to by some of my