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Don Blenkarn wants the government 'to get out of the hotel business'

By: JIM ROBINSON
City Editor

Mississauga Member of Parliament Don Blenkarn, P.C. says he will ask the government in the House to "quit wasting the taxpayers' money and get bloody well out of the hotel business."

He is leading an amendment to a proposed bill that would see more money going to Canadian National Railways hotels. His amendment calls for the railway to relinquish all ownership of hotels in this country instead of subsidizing the CN-owned hotels.

"CN's history of operating hotels is atrocious. They shouldn't be in the hotel business but in the railroad business.

"Last year, on \$50 million investment in their hotels, they had a gross profit of only \$400,000, or less than one per cent.

"At the same time they have let the Hilton chain manage two of their hotels, the Queen Elizabeth and the Hotel Vancouver and the profit there was 10 per cent.

"It just shows they don't know what they are doing when it comes to running a hotel.

"Rather than passing this bill which will see more money going to hotel operation, I think they should get right out of it and run the railroads. Leave the hotels to people who bloody well know what they're doing," he said.

He said the government invested close to \$50 million last year alone in the operation of five CN-owned hotels. And the profit on that investment was "miniscule."

Now that the government has a new bill to place a similar amount of money into the same hotels this year, Mr. Blenkarn said the time has come to "quit throwing away the money of Canadian taxpayers."

"That's taxpayers money CN is fooling around with. And I say something is wrong with any business that can't get a better return than that.

"You could put \$47 million in the bank and get a higher percentage return than what CN hotels are getting."

MP would invite PM

Mississauga Member of Parliament Don Blenkarn, P.C. says he will be glad to invite "Prime Minister Trudeau personally," to Mississauga's inaugural meeting if the city wants him to do so.

"I understand that the city council has asked Trudeau to come but they aren't sure if he will be here or not.

"If the city wants, I'll go right to his office in the East Block and invite him in the name of the city," he said.

The inaugural meeting of council for the new City of Mississauga will be held in the Glenforest Secondary School Jan. 16 at 7:30 p.m. Elaborate steps have been taken already to make the event as colorful as possible.

Scheduled to speak are Ontario Premier and Peel North M.P.P. William Davis, and Peel Regional Chairman, Lou Parsons. Premier Davis is to deliver the keynote

address and administer the oath of office to each member of council.

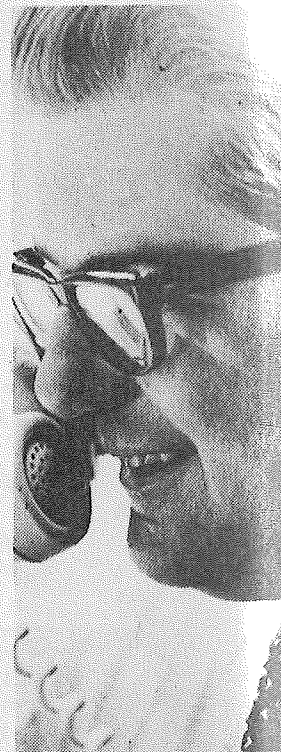
The secondary school is expected to be staffed by several officers of the Peel Regional Police Force as well as four officers that have been requested to attend from the RCMP.

The only thing missing is word from Prime Minister Trudeau if he will attend the opening.

The city's organizational committee was told recently that the Prime Minister won't confirm his intentions to come or not.

Mr. Blenkarn told The Mississauga News that, subject to the wishes of the city, he would "be delighted to help out anyway I can."

He said the creation of a new Canadian city, and one of the country's largest at that, should warrant a visit from the Prime Minister.



DON BLENKARN,
M.P. for Mississauga