

The Mississauga News-April 2, 1986 4

Residents take side

B-647

Canadian archives file

Blenkarn gets 'firm' message in Hebert case

Mississauga South MP Donald Blenkarn says most of his constituents who contacted him about Senator Jacques Hebert's hunger strike urged the government "not to give in."

"I've had a number of letters and telephone calls warning me not to give in," the veteran Conservative MP said. "Just think what would happen, whether it is right or wrong, if the government gave in to someone like that," he added. Soon a number of other people would be on hunger strikes to try to influence government policy and "it would just be impossible," Blenkarn commented.

He said that whether or not you support the cause of Katimavik and other youth employment programs "you

can't give in to that kind of blackmail."

The only people who lobbied him to retain the Katimavik program were some of the 600 employees of the program which allows young people to spend nine months travelling throughout Canada doing volunteer jobs in various communities. The students are paid \$1 a day. If they complete the program they receive \$1,000.

"The bureaucracy was enormous," Blenkarn remarked. He said the program undoubtedly broadened some young people's horizons and provided a "nice lifestyle" but he said it simply did not jibe with the Tory government's political philosophy to eliminate non-essential programs.