

## 'No question we have a problem right in our own backyard' — Larry Salci

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some subway in it," said Kirksey. A subway opponent, Kirksey said his opposition has "no other overtones other than the fact that the subway aspect of the package is not a wise use of tax money."

Mrs. Tomboulion, D-Rochester, refused to say how she'll vote on the issue. "I'm looking at all sides of it," she said.

"The debate in Lansing is how it will effect you if you vote for it. Now the (Oakland) county (state) representa-

tives are talking more about what would happen to you as a representative than about the issue."

This is a re-election year for House members, and Mrs. Tomboulion is expected to face stiff Republican opposition. Senators don't run until 1982.

**LIVONIA MAYOR** Edward McNamara, SEMTA board chairman, said the House vote "is going to be awful touch-and-go."

"The Republicans, the governor can't seem to be able to put them together," said McNamara, a Democrat. "The

longer it goes on, the tougher it's going to be."

Salci said a key issue may be a stronger commitment from Young that the Detroit Department of Transportation (D-DOT) will merge with SEMTA.

Some legislators want Young to agree to put the sale of D-DOT on this November's general election ballot. Salci said Young is considering the proposal but hasn't made a decision.

"No question it would help," said Salci.

"They (legislators) are concerned that if they approve preliminary engi-

neering and the people mover, the mayor still has the option to say no (to merger)."

Detroit's commitment to merger was part of a compromise among city and suburban SEMTA board members to approve the current length of the proposed rail system.

The light rail system is the big cog of SEMTA's estimated \$1.5 billion transportation plan. Construction costs of the subway and surface rail are an estimated \$885 million, about three-fifths of the total. The light rail system's con-

struction would be 80 percent federally funded.

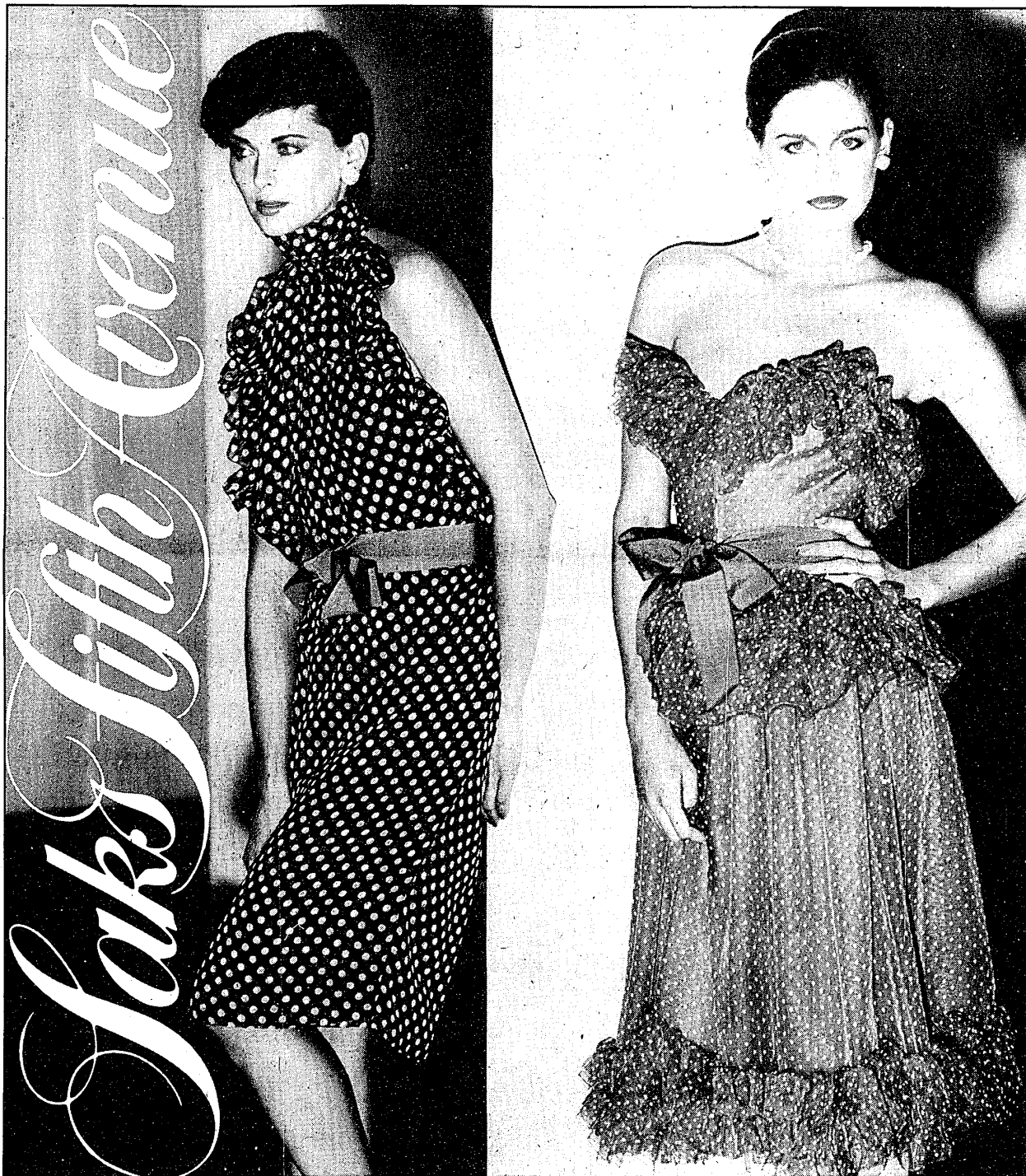
The entire system — buses, light rail and commuter rail — is expected to operate at a deficit which SEMTA estimates may reach \$55 million by 1990. Only a small part of that operating deficit would be due to the highly automated light rail system.

How that's going to be paid for — through increased transportation taxes in the tri-county area or a state gas tax increase — has yet to be resolved. That issue is also the brunt of the subway opposition.

**STATE REPRESENTATIVES** who said they'll oppose funding the current SEMTA plan include James DeFebaugh, R-Birmingham; Ruth McNamee, R-Birmingham; W.V. "Sandy" Brotherton, R-Farrington; William Keith, D-Garden City; Sal Rocca, D-Sterling Heights; and John Bennett, D-Redford Township.

Their opposition is probably best summed up in Rocca's comment:

"So much money is going to go in that subway, there's going to be nothing left for communities like Troy."



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