

# COUNCILLOR'S COMMENT BRINGS FLOOD OF LETTERS

## Reduced Salaries 'Ridiculous', Look in Own Yard: Armitage

Fred Armitage, chairman of the Halton County Board of Education has branded the suggestion by Esquering Council that the salaries paid trustees be reduced as "ridiculous" and suggested they look in their own back yard for places to save the public's money.

His remarks were made in a press release issued last week after Esquering passed a resolution urging the honoraria for school board trustees be reduced from \$3,000 to \$1,500, employees' salaries be chopped by as much as 25 per cent and teachers' salaries be held.

"He said in his release, 'The press recently carried a motion of the Esquering Township council proposing certain measures to keep down the cost of education. The Halton County Board of Education is always willing to receive constructive suggestions in all matters. The fact that the motion passed the Esquering Township council unanimously adds considerable weight to the recommendation. A detailed consideration of the proposal has been made.

"One of the suggestions is that members of the Board cut their 'fees' by 50% with no mileage allowance. The fact that this comment comes from the one council which doubled its own honoraria this year does not necessarily destroy the suggestion. A survey of the honoraria paid to members of councils in Halton County is as follows:

Municipality	Amt. of Honoraria in 1969 Budget	Cost per Capita
Acton	\$10,200	\$2.13
Burlington	\$36,000	.44
Esquering	\$8,000	.88
Georgetown	\$25,000	1.62
Milton	\$9,250	1.23
Nasagawaya	\$3,200	1.02
Oakville	\$20,520	.36
County Council	\$31,200	.17
Total Halton councils	\$143,370	Cost per capita .80
Halton County Bd. of Ed. Fees to Board members	\$58,600	Cost per capita .33

"There does seem to be behind the motion the naive belief that if a cost is scattered into smaller packages in many places, it is not as large. Council honoraria cost the county taxpayer two and one half times as much as the honoraria to Board of Education members.

"The suggestion that the board investigate the use of existing buildings for temporary classrooms is not an acceptable one. The board is subject to the

most stringent controls from the Fire Marshall, the Health Department and other agencies. The amount of light, the ceiling height, the volume of air exchange, enclosed stairwells, fire doors, etc., are all restrictions upon the accommodation we use and the normal buildings in the community do not meet these requirements even as temporary accommodation for 'five years.'

"In the matter of salaries for staff, the board has always acted responsibly. This year we may experience difficulty because of the size of recent wage settlements in commerce and industry. The special factors surrounding some of these jobs are not applicable to teaching. However, our greatest difficulty will be the fact that many municipal employees have received salary settlements far in excess of what we can offer. We just wonder how we can explain what councils mean when a policeman receives \$8,550 (and rightly so) and a teacher with a BA in a high school with the same experience receives \$7,800 and a public school teacher receives \$6,200. In the light of settlements in other sectors of the economy, the suggestion that we 'hold the line' is really not.

"While the board has a responsibility to control and derive maximum benefit from the educational dollar, it also has a most important responsibility that the quality of education be consistent with the needs of the students and the demands of the ratepayers. The concern of the ratepayers as represented by some municipal bodies over educational costs at budget time are not consistent with their demand for better programs, improved facilities and improved qualification of teachers during the remainder of the year. In light of the foregoing, the suggestion that salaries be reduced is utterly ridiculous and, in fact, an insult to the staff of the Board of Education.

"The Board particularly resents the attack on its staff and the 'suggestions' must arouse

## 'Misleading, Derogatory', Teachers Blasts Council

The teaching profession is one which is the subject of a great deal of criticism in these crucial times of change in the field of education. Some of the criticisms are valid indeed, and we in the profession give these due regard. On the other hand, teachers, as well as those in other professions, are recipients of broad, sweeping generalizations which are poorly considered by the people who advance them. Such statements tend to be harmful, destructive, and damaging to the morale of the majority of individuals to whom they refer.

On the whole, very little is done in the way of publicly defending the victims of ill-considered criticism. Perhaps teachers, doctors, lawyers, and other professionals are too reluctant at times to speak out in their own defense. Still, there are times when such defense becomes due.

Last week, in your newspaper, one of the lead stories concerned a resolution which was passed by the Esquering Council. One high official of the council, calling it "a well written document, and a lot of sense," I cannot agree!

Having spoken briefly over the telephone to a member of the Esquering Council, I gather that the purpose of this resolution is to arouse public concern over the spending of the taxpayers' money in the area of education. I think that this purpose is commendable. As a taxpayer, as well as a teacher, I welcome "watch-dog" precautions over the spending of public funds.

When the topic of teacher salaries was dealt with in the resolution, I feel that the authors got a bit carried away. To say the least, their choice of words was most unfortunate. Their attempts to hold the salaries at the present level are admirable from a taxpayer's point of view, but I don't think that anyone who gives the matter serious thought holds out much hope for success in that aim. The present inflationary trend in all areas of our economy seems to preclude this.

In the same clause of the resolution the assertion is made that "in MANY cases teachers and board employees seek employment in these fields to avoid the competition of private business and to avoid any possible unemployment." This statement is simply not true, and the mere fact of its inclusion in a resolution passed unanimously by an elected council does not reflect too favourably upon the

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**BRIDGE CLUB**  
—Mrs. Gloria Coats and W. Coats were north south winners and Mrs. M. Collier, Mrs. Nettle Goldham were east west winners at the Georgetown Duplicate bridge club on Tuesday, November 4.

Other winners were: North south, A. Norris, R. Dickson; J. Maurer, F. Allen; George Ellen and Mrs. Sue Sullivan. East west, Mrs. Doris Barber, Tom Barber; Peggy Stevens, Flora Smith; J. Cooper, and E. Tomajko. 12 tables were in play.

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## Urges Public School Teachers Unite, Demand More Salary

60 Maple Ave. East  
Dear Sir:  
After last week's article concerning teachers and their salaries, I feel that another view is necessary.

The first point that must be made is that there are many teachers in this profession who are trying to make a living. If the statistics are studied it will be found that over half of all the public school teachers are in the lower two categories. This means that many of the teachers are earning between five and seven thousand dollars.

I see no reason why the teachers shouldn't demand a substantial increase. There is a strong need for the teachers to back up their negotiating committee to the hilt, and if necessary take stronger action than has been used in the past.

There are several reasons why an increase is necessary. Number one, in order to keep up with the ever rising cost of living. Another reason concerns the fact that many areas of labour have negotiated such large increases, that teachers are falling further behind on the economic scale.

My personal opinion with regard to public school teachers is as follows. After obtaining their permanent certificate which comes after a minimum of two years teaching, along with many inspections, teachers should be paid a wage which is capable of supporting a family. At the present rate a public school teacher in this position would be earning less than \$6,000.

In regard to the note that teachers enter the profession for the holidays and for a safeguard against unemployment, my reply is as follows:

In the present set up if a teacher wishes to surpass the \$5,200 income bracket, courses must be taken summer and winter at a cost of \$120 a course. There goes the holidays along with a good piece of the poverty rate income.

Believe it or not many people pick this profession because they are interested in the citizens of the future as well as the field of teaching.

I believe that unless there are some drastic changes many excellent teachers are going to be forced out of the teaching profession and into more lucrative areas.

I personally believe that it is time for all teachers especially public school teachers, to unite and stand up and be counted and change the lethargic and listless image that has been bestowed upon them.

Teachers are not performing a babysitting service. They should be paid a salary that is commensurate with their responsibility in the classroom, in the school, or in your community.

Yours sincerely,  
David McNally

**Need Kids' Shoes Too Teachers No Different,**

R. R. 2, Georgetown  
— It's all a man needs after leaving home at 6:30 a.m. to get to school at 7 a.m. to coach the senior basketball team, then encourage, cajole, discuss and even argue to help the kids gain a better understanding of life; after school is over get the chess club together and laugh and joke with them for another hour or so; then of course, there is a mee-

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## Wants Marshall Motion Backed by Ratepayers

31 Byron Street,  
Gentlemen:  
The resolutions submitted by Councillor Ken Marshall at the Esquering Township council meeting Monday night, November 3rd should be backed up by every resident of Halton County.

His call for a drastic reduction in the amounts paid to employees of the Halton County School Board and the trustees should not merely be a request but a demand that this be effective with the first of January, 1970.

From what I have read of opposition from the southern part of the county to the high rates being paid, I feel sure that the reductions suggested by Mr. Marshall should be backed up by all the areas of Halton County and made effective at the end of this year.

We remember in Georgetown, for example, we had three trustees on the public school board whose services added up to a total of over 60 years of service which was rendered practically without any cost to the municipality until such time as the regional

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