

## Board prepared to negotiate with teachers

In a bid to have their side of the story told, the Halton County Board of Education has replied to statements made by Halton OSSTF president Tom Ramnautarsingh concerning negotiations between the Board and the Halton OSSTF.

In the Tuesday release the board said the teachers were offered a merit pay plan similar to the one accepted in Metro but the plan was rejected without study.

According to the board on May 3 the teachers' committee and the teachers rejected by a large percentage a two-year contract similar to the one accepted by

Toronto teachers.

June 24 the board committee came to an agreement with the teachers' committee and the negotiator from the provincial organization. According to the Board the negotiator and the committee of teachers recommended the settlement to the teachers on June 29 but it was rejected by a narrow margin when 52 per cent of those voting, voted to reject it.

**Changed position**

The release read "It would appear that the District President has withdrawn his approval of the salary package, has enumerated a number of

reasons why he thinks the board offer was not accepted and has converted his recommendation into a vote of support."

The board's reply questions the OSSTF president's statement saying 20 per cent of the teachers get no salary increase other than increment. The board says 10 per cent of the teachers would have received a 4.5 to 5.5 per cent increase through increments. All of those teachers are in their first year. Minimum salaries remain relatively unchanged this year.

**Not true now**

Referring to a statement by Ramnautarsingh charging the

board with not taking advantage of an additional \$75,000 in grants, the board explained 50 per cent of that figure would have to be paid by the ratepayers in Halton and the remainder by the province. The board claims they have exceeded the original salary budget figure in the last offer.

"The implication that \$75,000 remains below the ceiling is no longer true."

The board denied any part in delaying negotiations. "Considerable time was spent moving both the teachers' and the board's position closer to common ground. Unfortunately a gap still existed which appeared

to be unbridgeable."

"The district president has urged that we progress to a discussion of working conditions", said the release.

"By agreement between board and teachers' committees, salary was to be negotiated to a conclusion before any discussion took place on working conditions. To urge that they now occur simultaneously is to retract unilaterally an agreement already made," it read.

**Lack of confidence**

"The board committee had every reason to expect that this salary offer which is acceptable

to the O.S.S.T.F. negotiator and the district executive would be acceptable to the secondary teachers of Halton County. They regret that the teachers did not have enough confidence to accept the executive recommendation," said the board.

"Unfortunately, Mr. Ramnautarsingh has stated in the press that he is unable to reopen negotiations until September. The board committee is prepared, as it always has been, to meet and to negotiate the difficulties to a mutually satisfactory conclusion," the board statement said.



### Pipe dream?

**BUILDING PRODUCTS'** Acton plant is producing huge 12-inch PVC pipe which has excited the imagination of the company and employees. Turn to page 16 for story and pictures.—(Staff Photo)

# Mystery fire, death puzzle for police

North Halton OPP are continuing their investigation into a mystery fire and death on the former R. M. Steele farm on Highway 25 about three miles south of Acton. Police suspect arson and have not ruled out the possibility of foul play in the death of an Acton area man.

Acton firefighters recovered the body of Joseph Roger Lapointe, 31, from the front bedroom of the burning Spanish-style bungalow, early Saturday morning, shortly after receiving a fire call about 5 a.m.

A barn and small shed were levelled in the blaze, but only parts of the interior of the house were charred. This, together with the fact trees on the land between the barn and house were scarcely singed, suggest the two fires may have started separately.

Halton County coroner Dr. Ivan Hunter arrived at the scene soon after the body was discovered. Later, after officers of the OPP identification branch in Burlington arrived, the body was taken to Milton District Hospital, where an autopsy was performed. Police have not revealed results of the autopsy and refused to comment on a report a rifle was found in the house.

**Inspector arrives**

Inspector MacCloud of the Criminal Investigation Branch, Toronto, arrived in Milton Monday morning to aid in the investigation. Investigating officers from North Halton OPP are Corporal Jack Froesch and Constable James Hodson. Police

are now awaiting lab reports from the Forensic Science Centre in Toronto.

The house and property were under police guard all weekend. At the request of the OPP, an investigator was sent to the scene of the fire by the Ontario Fire Marshal's Office in Toronto. Contacted by this paper, investigator Terry Murray said he had visited the scene of the fire, but would give no further details, other than that the case is under investigation by the OPP.

The fire was reported to Acton firefighters by Floyd Foster, a neighbor who was aroused from bed, when two passing motorists pulled into his driveway honking the horn. Mr. Foster lives just south of the scene on the other side of the highway.

"At first I thought it was my sister on her way to work, but when I went to the window and saw the sky all lit up I knew it was a bad fire," he said.

Bill Tatton and Roy Rognvaldson, both of whom live close to the scene of the fire, are

also reported to have notified firefighters, as soon as they saw the blaze.

Foster said he then rushed up to the house and went to the window of the front bedroom where he knew Lapointe usually slept.

**Window open**

"The window was open, but I couldn't see anything for the smoke," he said "I yelled for him, Roger, Roger, but got no answer."

When they arrived, firefighters concentrated on saving the house, which was burning from the interior. The barn and shed were already burning out of control. They checked the bedroom, but saw nothing because of the dense smoke.

Hampering them in their efforts to extinguish the fire in the house were live hydro wires, believed to be felled and bared by the flames. Sparks from the wires flashed intermittently, as firefighters continued to work.

Deputy-chief Bern Van Fleet then ordered a second truck to the scene. The two trucks replenished their water supplies from a creek at the rear of the Rognvaldson property across the highway.

Foster said a green pickup truck had been pushed from the driveway to the ditch, alongside the highway, by the passing motorists, who feared it might



**FLAMES THAT DESTROYED** a barn and small shed on the former Steele property, Highway 25 three miles south of Acton early Saturday morning could be seen easily from

town. Acton firefighters concentrated on saving the house on the property. There they found the body of Joseph Roger Lapointe, 31, in a front bedroom.—(Staff Photo)

catch on fire. The cap of the truck's gas tank was missing.

**Returns to room**

Foster said he returned to the window and this time saw Lapointe's body on the floor. He then motioned firefighters and

police to the window. Firefighters entered the smoke-filled bedroom and brought the body out through the front window. According to Acton firefighters, there was very little evidence of fire damage in the bedroom.

Eyewitnesses reported seeing signs of head injuries on the man's body. Firefighters reported there was blood on the floor of the bedroom. The body was fully clothed.

Deputy-chief Van Fleet said he

found no evidence of burned livestock in the ruins of the barn, when he checked Sunday. OPP also said they knew of no stock being destroyed in the fire. Several pigs were roaming around between the barn and the

house, while firefighters were bringing the house fire under control. A dog, believed to have belonged to Mr. Lapointe, was recovered unharmed.

Witnesses at the fire reported seeing Mr. Lapointe in the Reliable Snack Bar in Acton about 1:30 a.m. the same

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## Charge youth with possession

Assisted by two R.C.M.P. officers from Kitchener, Acton police checked a 19 year-old youth on Mill St. and charged him with possession of alleged drugs. A sizable quantity of the stuff, suspected to be hashish, was also found at the youth's residence.

Another charge is also pending. The youth is alleged to have supplied the alleged drugs to two 13 year-old grade eight students and he could also be charged with contributing to juvenile delinquency.

No arrests were made. Officers were acting on a tip.

Constables Wood and MacArthur assisted the two RCMP constables.

"ROCKET RONNIE", another member of the Turkosz family of fine goal scorers, walked off with \$20 at Monday night's Ram-Mississauga junior game, when he fired two perfect shots into the circle during the Scoro contest. Ron's older brothers Bob and Gary

play for the Rams, while Ron himself is a sharpshooter with the Acton bantams and younger brother Pete plays with Acton novices. Parents of the boxla standouts are Mr. and Mrs. Pete Turkosz.—(Staff Photo)

## Twp. doesn't want park

The wedge-shaped roadside park at Silvercreek at the junction of Highway 7 and County Road 3 may revert to a reforestation project if no one will pick up the option for it to remain as a park.

Reeve Tom Hill told Esquesing council Monday that the county

had a letter from the Department of Highways asking if they wanted the park; otherwise it would revert to the township.

Hill said he suggested the county leave it with the Department of highways because the township doesn't want it. Why not have it used for re-

forestation? he asked.

The park originally was accessible from Highway 7 but alterations at the Silvercreek curve make it accessible only from County Road 3 as it goes to Ballinfad. Picnic tables at the spot made it popular with motorists.

## Four car collision hospitalizes three

A four car collision on Highway 7, just west of Acton, Sunday night, caused an estimated \$3,500 damage and sent three persons to hospital.

Shirley Lovell of Georgetown, a passenger in the second car, was admitted to Georgetown District Memorial Hospital with head and neck injuries. She remains there where hospital officials describe her condition as satisfactory.

Driver of the car, Gerald Lovell, 30, also of Georgetown was admitted to Georgetown District Memorial Hospital suffering from a dislocated left knee and whiplash. He was treated and later released.

**Rockwood couple**

Fred Proper, R. R. 4, Rockwood, a passenger in the first car was treated at Georgetown District Memorial Hospital for a sprained ankle and later released. Driver of the car, Bob Proper, 23, of the same address suffered a bump on the head.

Driver of the third car, Clifford

Jackson, 66, R. R. 2, Guelph and driver of the fourth car, Charles Doornbos, 18, of Longfield Road, Acton, escaped uninjured.

**Estimate damage**

The Proper car received the highest estimated damage, \$1800. Damage to the Lovell car was estimated at \$1200, while the

Jackson car received an estimated \$80 damage and the Doornbos car an estimated \$500 damage.

The collision occurred about 9:30 p.m., just east of the First Lane of Esquesing.

Constable Joyce, North Halton OPP investigated.

## Second crash death

A second victim of the tragic into collision which took the life of 37 year old Julka Topolovec died this week.

Steven Topolovec, 38, died Monday at Hamilton General Hospital as the result of injuries he received in the accident which took the life of his wife. The Topolovecs lived at Orville Road in Acton. Their son Michael, 15, who was also in the death car, was discharged from Hamilton General about 10 days ago.

The family had lived in Acton for the past two years. Mr. Topolovec worked at Ontario Steel in Milton.

Funeral for Mr. Topolovec will be held Thursday morning from the Dermody-Markey funeral home in Hamilton to Holy Cross Church for requiem mass at 10 o'clock.

Colin Ager, of Churchill Rd., the other driver in the two car smash, is reported to be recovering nicely in Joseph Brant Hospital, Burlington.



## Checking on the Gee-Gees

YOU'RE NEVER too young to become a harness racing fan. Two year old Kimberly Ann Papillon of Acton watches for her favorite horse, as the sulks parade past the grandstand at Orangeville Raceway. Kimberly Ann was visiting the track with her parents Mr. and Mrs. David Papillon. Orangeville Raceway is increasing in popularity among harness fans. . . . For story and more pictures see the Free Press sports pages.—(Staff Photo)