

# Teachers ask for moratorium on reorganization of staff

Halton County teachers packed the board room of the Halton County Board of Education Thursday to hear president of Halton OSSTF Tom Ramautarsingh and Halton Elementary Teachers Association President Joan Thibault express the concerns of teachers across the county about the board's plans for major changes in the staff organization. In his presentation Ramautarsingh called for a two year moratorium on the acceptance of the Staff Organization and Differential Staffing report. He said two years would allow thorough evaluation of the existing structure in each secondary school to be done by a committee of trustees and secondary teachers appointed by the District Executive of OSSTF. The president questioned whether or not there would be any educational value to be received by implementing the recommendations in the report. Both Ramautarsingh and Mrs. Thibault expressed concern about the use of para professionals. Ramautarsingh said OSSTF did not oppose the hiring of para professionals but asked for some clarification.

Any change in the staffing pattern should be made by local initiative as suggested in the brief. Staff members and the community must be involved in the decision making process regarding the implementation of structures involving the use of para-professionals. After considerable discussion the board defeated two and passed four of the six recommendations they dealt with at the meeting. The board defeated the following: —That the three area chairmen among the assistant superintendents be selected, be given more authority, and be given a new role definition which requires more exercise of executive leadership in the area. —That, as a policy, successful principals should remain with their schools for four years in elementary schools and for eight years in secondary schools,

unless the good of the system as a whole or the specific request of the principal for transfer dictates consideration of earlier changes. The following motions were adopted: —That we stabilize the situation of autonomy and accountability of the principal in their present forms in order to allow practice to develop more closely to theory. —That vice-principals before appointment to principal should have: undertaken definite leadership training or have revealed outstanding leadership qualities; been exercised in both the program and instruction sides of the principal's role; held a position of responsibility in two or more schools and given evidence of experience or involvement in both panels or give evidence of other accomplishments which satisfy the intent of these concepts.

—That the present practice of cross-posting principals and vice-principals between panels for stated periods of times be continued and expanded. —That the present system of paying assistant superintendents on the basis of merit modified by experience be continued. To date only non-contentious issues have been handled by the board. Some of the controversial issues yet to be dealt with include a stepping up in the hiring of para-professionals, the elimination of minor department heads, the phasing out of assistant department heads and a reduction in the number of department heads by placing fewer under groupings of subjects. Director Jim Singleton has said the board must either get the same program for less money or more program for the same money. Many of the recommendations in his brief if adopted are expected to cut expenses.

## Suggests common complex for regional services

Who goes "If at some future time, for any reason whatever, the situation arises where a choice has to be made between reducing staff by declaring redundant a teacher presently on permanent contract or equivalent para-professional assistance what would be the policy of the Board? This question arises not only out of the Federation's concern for job-protection, but rather from the more fundamental concern as to whether or not the Board regards the contact between professional teachers and students as more important in the educational context than contact between students and laymen," he said. Mrs. Thibault claimed the use of para professionals was the chief area of concern for the HETA. HETA agrees with the concept of a redeployment of teaching personnel and the involvement of a greater number of adults in teaching and non-teaching roles. It must be kept in mind that the plan for differentiated staffing outlined in the brief is only one alternative and other patterns of staffing must be investigated before any decisions are made at the local level.

All government agencies serving Halton County should be housed in one building in a regional government setup, Burlington Deputy Reeve Dave Coons told the county's administration committee at a meeting last week. Coons suggested the Halton Children's Aid and Halton Region Conservation Authority should be housed in that building as well. The discussion was triggered when members considered a \$3,700 item for repairs to a veranda at the Hugh St. headquarters for the Children's Aid. Coons suggested the county shouldn't put money into that building but wait a year, vacate the building and move CAS into a regional headquarters. Members cited a problem in receiving co-operation from CAS on that count in the past. Administrator Garfield Brown said CAS has moved into offices in Oakville and Burlington against the will of County Council and the regional offices.

New building Coons suggested withholding county funds would get the necessary co-operation. Brown suggested having CAS move from Hugh St. to new facilities and selling the building. Warden MacArthur indicated CAS had architect's sketches for a new building. She suggested that HRCA was going ahead with plans for a building to house administrators at Kelso and she supported the move. "These people have lived like rats for seven years and no-one else in the county has lived like that," she said.

Coons told the committee the decision on where regional headquarters would be located would be up to the regional chairman and a regional council, but he felt the chairman would work closely with county council when he or she is appointed. Will call tenders for new bridge Tenders will be called next week by the Ministry of Transportation and Communications for the construction of the new Credit River Bridge on Highway 7 in the Village of Norval, MPP Jim Snow announced. Contract will include, in addition to the New Bridge, a truck climbing lane for a distance of 1.2 miles and also a retaining wall at the Credit River Bridge.

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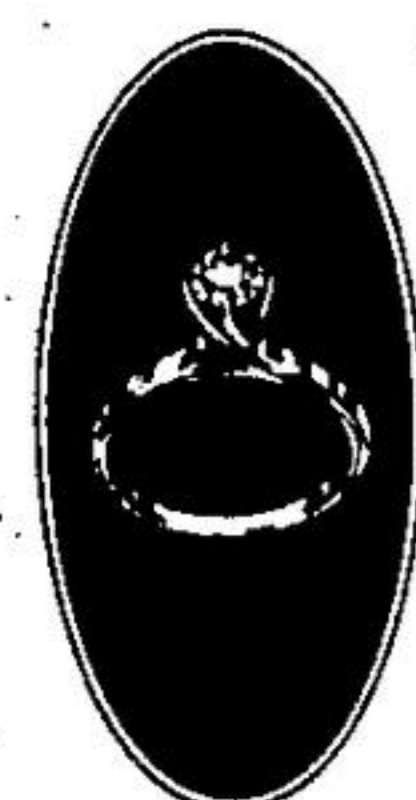
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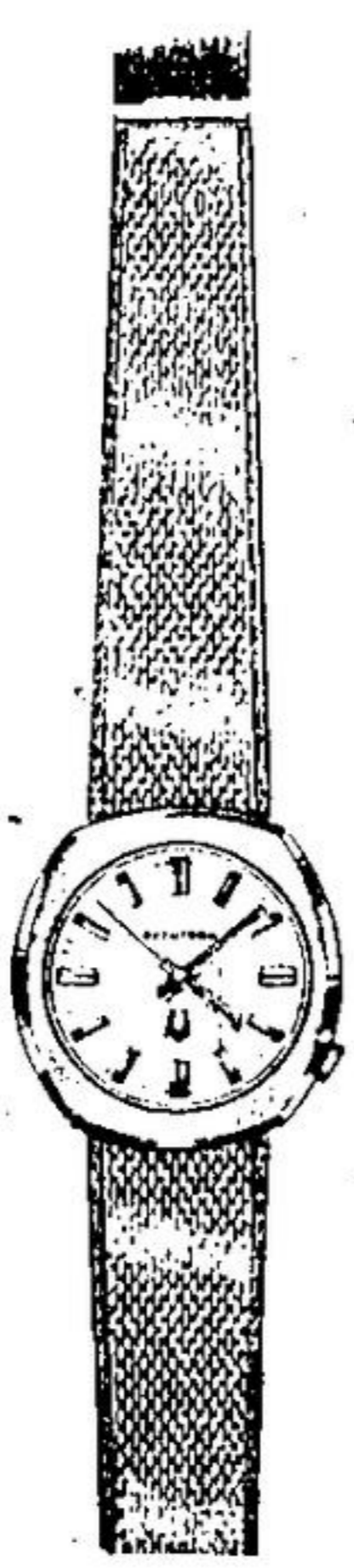
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