

## Civil servant resigns over pension



PETER BRANCH

ing but rather that his career was sidetracked so that he could not straighten it out and finish off the other five years he had originally planned to spend with the government. Then when he went to look into what his pension would be, he realized that because his pension was based on his income over the years prior to his retirement it had been badly decreased by the freeze over the past four years. "They picked the worst four years in our economy since the war to freeze my salary," he says. "Since my salary base didn't rise I lose 25 to 31 per cent of the pension I expected to have."

Mr. Branch hopes that although it will be too late to do anything for him he can be instrumental in getting the regulations changed to make them equal for everyone. Red-circling himself wasn't what wrecked his career. It was the re-classification which made him ineligible to apply for jobs he was qualified to do that angers him.

He wants regulations changed to include people who are reclassified.

By MAGGIE HANNAN  
Herald staff writer  
A Halton Hills civil servant who received national coverage for daring to tell the Royal Commission on the Status of Pensions and Retirement Income in Ontario that certain clauses in the civil servant's contracts can discriminate against employees, has resigned.

Peter Branch resigned Friday, a month after he told the commission how being re-circled in 1974 has cut down the pension he expected to have on retirement by "25 to 31 per cent depending on how you compute it."

Although he has received "lots of pressure" to leave his post with the ministry of treasury, economics and intergovernmental affairs he did not do so because he was intimidated, he says. He has retired because it was "common sense and best for all concerned."

To retire on a full pension a civil servant must have spent 20 years working for the government and reached the age of 60. Mr. Branch met the requirements this spring and he took advantage of his opportunity.

"I would have quit long ago if I hadn't thought I could get moved," he says. He began investigating what his pension would be if he retired this year and then he discovered just how badly it had been effected by the red-circling.

His battle to correct the inequities in the civil servants' regulations has not ended with his retirement, however. Ontario Ombudsman Arthur Maloney has the case and the fight is continuing over what Mr. Branch feels is "a lack of concern for a civil servant who is denied a reinstatement at appropriate opportunities because his superiors saw fit to reclassify him."

At the present time, Mr. Branch says, there are over 400 civil servants who are re-circled. He has no idea how many people have been affected since the practice began in June 1974.

Mr. Branch's problems began when the Toronto Centre Regional Plan on which he was working from 1970 to 1973 was completed. He was an industrial development officer with a supervisor's capacity at that time.

When the job ended he was re-circled and his salary frozen until he could be put on another job. This did not disturb him because a regulation in the civil servants' agreement says when an opening comes in the ministry those with the skills required may apply for it.

Things didn't work out that way, however, because Mr. Branch was re-classified as an economist, something for which he had neither training nor experience. It was also a lower classification pay wise.

"The best way to explain it to you is to say that it was like taking a carpenter on a job and making him a plumber," he says. "If he's a good carpenter the boss doesn't want to lose him but if the carpentry work is all done you have to give him another job. So you make him a plumber. But I wasn't a class 3 plumber. I was down in class 1. That put me two steps out of the running for jobs as a carpenter."

Mr. Branch was refused an interview when he tried to see an official in the Civil Service Commission to try to get the legislation changed or whatever it would take to make re-classified individuals eligible to receive jobs in their original classification when they became available. That was when he decided to appear before the commission and his story was picked up and published by the Globe and Mail.

Mr. Branch is distressed that the publicity he received kept pointing to the fact that his salary was so high but he was dissatisfied. What has really angered him is not the amount of money he was carrying. Now that he has retired Mr. Branch won't be sitting around vegetating. He'll be helping his wife with the sheep she raises on their farm on Steeles Avenue. He is also "prepared to do anything interesting or challenging in the community."



## AIR CADETS WIN AWARDS

Georgetown's 756 Squadron Royal Canadian Air Cadets walked off with four trophies when they competed against nine other squadrons from western and central Ontario in Stratford on Saturday. The Georgetown squadron took the range trophy, the volleyball trophy, and

the overall trophy. Cadet Sgt Gaston Primeau, a member of the Georgetown team, took the Best Sportsman trophy. Members of the range team are shown above with their trophy: Cadet LAC S. Baker, Cpl R. Parsons, Sgt G. Primeau, WO2 A. Vernon, and Sgt M. Vernon.

## Suicide leads to assessment

The tragic suicide of 15-year-old Robert Bruce Shepherd, at Hillcrest training school Guelph, last November, will lead Children's Aid Societies and psychiatrists into an assessment of problems at the case worker, professional work and board of directors levels.

That statement by Dr. Ron Stokes, president of the Ontario Psychiatric Association, was made Wednesday to about 200 persons at the 64th annual meeting of the Halton Children's Aid Society in Milton.

Suicide of the young is not uncommon, but in the case of the youth at Hillcrest, a lot of guilt, crises and criticism has been levelled at groups involv-

ed with him, Dr. Stokes said, adding that the reporting of the case was "biased and inaccurate."

Training schools have dealt with thousands of children, "many violent," and some who have committed murders, he said. Yet this was only the second suicide reported in 22 years.

The inquest into the suicide was told that nine agencies saw the youth, Dr. Stokes said. "But there was a tendency for each agency to do its particular job and no co-ordination of overall direction."

As the inquest developed, Dr. Stokes said, it was apparent that every possible attempt was made to help the

youth and his family but his behaviour continued until he was contained in an institution that protected both him and society.

He said that in training school there are eight students to one teacher and six students to one staff member on a round the clock basis. Public schools are fortunate to have 30 students to one teacher.

He said that perhaps it would seem more humane to have Shepherd in another setting, without bars, but then he would have been chemically or physically restrained. "But there's always a need for a small, secure institution."

It takes about two years to modify behaviour, Dr. Stokes said. And in the case of youths at training schools, "this population has a high incidence of violence to others, and self." Those with mental illness are helped by psychiatry and those without mental illness, less so, he said.

Dr. Stokes indicated that some youths appear beyond help. "Those with problems - low education may be helped by professional but some individuals are not helped at all. We seem to accept these as permanent disabled."

Dr. Stokes said he is pleased the inquest has recommended the societies should play a leading role of co-ordination and he is delighted that the ministry of correction services officially informed Children's Aid Societies of the inquest's

recommendations.

He said he is also pleased that children could get help without having to commit crimes but dismayed that Hillcrest training school was being phased out.

Dr. Stokes also levelled some criticism against the psychiatric profession. He told the audience that the Ontario Psychiatric Association had been advised by a doctor in January to stop offering opinions to the media. "It makes us look very silly."

Psychiatrists were also charged with making "grand promises" but "just grabbed the next day."

In February, the association was told that the best efforts after 30 years of studying delinquent children in institutions was "a dismal failure," Dr. Stokes said.

Welfare, Children's Aid Societies and mental health education, were all aids in combating the problems, he said but "budgets are cut and services go."

He said the time is overdue for psychiatrists to cease rhetorical discussions on their role in society. "We are professionals and if we don't understand, our respective disciplines ought to be in doubt."

Psychiatrists "vacillate between our abilities to not selling enough," Dr. Stokes said.

"If we do our job properly and as staffed as we say we are at coffee breaks, we have precious little time left over from our work," Dr. Stokes concluded. "We have much to do and many to serve. Let's get the job done and do it with discipline, humility and neatness."

## New CAS board

The 1978-1979 board of directors for the Children's Aid Society of Halton 9 (CAS) was elected at the 64th annual meeting, Wednesday in Milton. Among the business carried out at the meeting was an amendment proposed by Marjorie Powys board secretary and carried by the board to ensure that there be at least one representative from each municipality in the region on the CAS board of directors.

The CAS also passed a resolution endorsing the social and health services policy statements in Halton's draft official plan and commending Halton council and others responsible for the draft plan. "For the development of this most progressive statement."

Coun. Russ Miller, as one of six appointees to the CAS board by Halton region, is the only Halton Hills citizen on the 24-member board.

The other regional appointees to the board are coun. J.M. Kerr, Milton; Coun. Laurie Mannell and Coun. Ron Planché of Oakville; Coun. Walter Mulkevic of Burlington and Mrs. Diane Funk of Milton as a citizen appointee.

The two directors who represent foster parents are Mark Heerema of Campbellville and Mrs. Vivian Rust of Burlington.

The two directors who represent the CAS volunteer auxiliary are Mrs. Corrie Galloway of Oakville and Mrs. Marilyn Milligan of Burlington.

The two directors who represent the CAS staff are:

Despite a "noose of fiscal restraint" placed around the neck of social services in Ontario, the board and staff of the Children's Aid Society (CAS) of Halton got enough funds to do the job, the 64th annual meeting of Halton Children's Aid was told last Wednesday.

"Perhaps the cries of frustration of ourselves and other societies across the province have at long last been noted and acted upon," CAS president Bryan Clarke said.

Kon Coupland, executive director, enthusiastically summed up his report as: "We made it!" He said that, "given the financial resources for which we so ardently battled, the society is running very well indeed." He credited that to "the tireless dedication" of the board and CAS president Bryan Clarke, and staff.

According to figures supplied, the CAS spent \$1,374,107 in 1977. It received in subsidy from the ministry of community and social services \$1,103,465 and \$275,866 from Halton region. Taking into account deficit carried over from 1976, the net deficit at the end of 1977 was \$982.

esent the CAS staff on the board are Mrs. Marion Dettor of Milton and Mrs. Donna Novousek of Burlington.

The 12 citizen directors are Erwin Fisher of Campbellville, William Barrely of Burlington, Boris Chemers, Bryan Clarke CAS president, and from Burlington, Mrs. Suzanne Dalgleish of Oakville, Dr. R.B. Edwards of Milton, Mrs. Nancy Emerson of Burlington, John Graham of Oakville, Joe Meighen of Burlington, Doug Penfold of Oakville, Angelo Serafini of Oakville and Mike Whyte of Burlington.

The application seeks to change this zoning from residential to commercial and requires an amendment to the town's present official plan.

Herald publisher Bill Eydokimoff says the plans for the new facility will be a progressive step forward for the newspaper in the Halton Hills community.

"It is part of The Herald's continuing effort to provide a highly professional, quality community newspaper," he said.

Plans for the building call for a split level operation with general, advertising and editorial offices on a lower level with entrance off Main Street. The second floor plan is for composition, mailing and pressroom facilities with ground level entrance from the rear at the top of the Cross Street hill.

The building would be about 9,500 square feet on a lot of about 11,400 square feet. It will require the removal of a present dwelling and garage on the property.

Construction is expected to spring with completion by autumn.

The new facility has provision for printing of the Herald on an offset press. The Herald is now published Tuesdays by its sister paper The Guelph Daily Mercury.

The Brampton-Georgetown Liberal Association will be choosing its candidate for the next federal election at a nomination meeting at the Lester B. Pearson Memorial Theatre in the Brampton Civic Centre, 159 Central Park Dr., Brampton, 8 p.m. April 26.

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## Herald building plans revealed

Halter Hills planning board will entertain an application Tuesday to rezone about a quarter-acre of land at the corner of Cross and Main Streets, Georgetown, for construction of new offices and plant for The Herald.

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