

## Letters

# GDHS principal discusses flag controversy

Letter to Editor:

It has been an emotional few weeks at Georgetown District High School. At issue is the meaning of our rebel flag and whether or not it symbolizes the values we wish to communicate.

For many Georgetown students, past and present, the flag represents a rich tradition of school pride in being "the Rebels

of the north". We are hard working, self-reliant, resilient, competitive, proud of our achievements and incredibly caring.

My concern is that we also be sensitive; sensitive to the feelings of those who might feel some discomfort with our flag, no matter what their race or religion; sensitive to the perceptions that

others might have of us because of our flag, whether verbalized or not.

So, what's the issue?

The issue is that for many people, especially those outside our community, the Confederate flag represents the "rebel south" and a racism that endures to this very day. If you have seen the movies Mississippi Burning or Betrayed, or if you saw the Ku Klux Klan rally on TV this past October 26, I hope you'll know what I mean.

This past weekend, our cross country team was asked to remove the flag from a motel window by the management because of a complaint from a patron who found it offensive.

This is why I could not support the creation of a new school mascot that officially incorporated the Confederate flag.

You should also know that I have too much respect for the people who value the flag purely in terms of school tradition to deny them the opportunity to "wave it" if they choose.

So where do we go from here?

Now that the rumors have been dispelled, the discussion is much more constructive. It is important that we continue to talk about what we stand for as a school.

It is also important that everyone have a way to express their school spirit in a manner that is comfortable to them.

For example, a number of people who prefer the Confederate design have also expressed support for an additional flag which contains our traditional, home-grown red and blue Rebel "R". This symbol is currently in the centre of the gym floor, in the stained glass window of the main

foyer, and on many of our school uniforms.

If a second flag were made available, people who prefer one over the other would be able to choose between two traditional symbols.

We are still discussing the matter. I welcome your thoughts and

opinions, of course. If you'd like to register your point of view, please send me a note c/o Georgetown District High School, 70 Guelph Street, Georgetown, L7G 3Z5.

Go Rebels!

Bryn Davies, Principal,  
G.D.H.S.

## R.A.I.D.D. demands reply

Editor's note: The following letter was released to the Halton Hills Herald for publication.

Mr. Peter Pomeroy,  
Regional Chairman,  
1151 Bronte Road,  
P.O. Box 7000  
Oakville, Ontario L6J 6E1

Dear Mr. Pomeroy:

R.A.I.D.D. is a recently formed ratepayers association in Halton Hills, supported by some two thousand residents. We are writing to you for two reasons, both of which are in regard to the Hungry Hollow Ravine and the proposed tinning of the sanitary trunk sewer.

First, why did regional staff not inform the consulting firm, Marshall, Maklin, Monaghan more promptly and directly that the area they were studying included two and possibly three old dumpsites? The Regional Engineer knew in June yet the consultants' office only received a copy of someone else's letter pertaining to the matter at the end of September. The consultants themselves denied knowing anything about the sites on the night of the last public meeting.

Has anyone yet considered that

the water feeding test well fifteen passes through this area as well? How will test well fifteen, operating at full capacity affect Silvercreek and the very important wetlands that ensure our future water supply?

Our second reason for writing to you is to inform you of R.A.I.D.D.'s position on this property. We believe it should be maintained as a natural habitat. It is a unique natural feature of the area with historic, environmental and aesthetic significance. Just as Silvercreek played a vital role in our town founder, George Kennedy's decision to settle here and establish Georgetown, so it plays an even greater role in the town's viability in maintaining sewage treatment capacity and water supply.

The future of Silvercreek, the valley and the wetlands are inseparably interwoven with the future of Georgetown. Decisions made about it need to be made with this in mind. Thank you for your consideration of our questions and concerns. We look forward to your reply.

Cordially,  
Gail Rutherford,  
Chairperson.

## Turner applauded

Dear Editor:

Re: OPEN LETTER TO GARTH TURNER

As you might imagine, I follow the activities at Queen's Park and Parliament Hill with more than a passing interest, as decisions made at those levels of government have significant impact on the level of government that I have the pleasure to lead. As a result, the impact ultimately falls on the beleaguered taxpayer from whom we receive all our revenue in one form or another.

In an attempt to keep abreast of these activities, I spend a lot of time tracking through the various media, not least of which is your newspaper.

Setting aside the political issues, the conclusion of your columnists, editorial writers and the various letters to the editor (most of which are partisan), one observation seems beyond contradiction:

That one of our elected representatives is leading the pack in at least one particular area.

You may like him or dislike him, agree or disagree with him, but you can't deny that he communicates regularly - with columns, open letters, and most importantly, frequent public meetings. I'm sure he's had more

public meetings scattered throughout his riding in his time in office than most of the other Members combined. I am referring, of course, to Garth Turner, M.P.

I've had the opportunity to be in attendance at several of these meetings. Contrary to what some think, he's shown me no evidence that he is just an apologist for his government. Rather, he had often agreed with the criticism directed at his party and bravely soldiers on seeking input from all and carrying the message back to his caucus and to Cabinet.

He appears somewhat battle scarred and shellshocked at times and most readers perceive the frustration and cynicism that sometimes leaks through his columns.

While some may think that this letter itself makes me guilty of partisanship, I do plead guilty to admiring his pluck and determination to give his constituents open forums to give reports and get reports.

On that report card alone he gets an A-plus from me and I'm sure most of his constituents.

Yours very truly,  
R. Frank Bean  
Regional Chairman and  
Chief Executive Officer  
Peel Region

## Columnists

# Don't shed a tear for Finance Minister Wilson

By VIC PARSONS

Ottawa Bureau

Thomson News Service

OTTAWA - Now that you've shed a tear for poor Michael Wilson and his 1973 pay cut, perhaps you'll reserve a sob or two for today's stumbling economy.

The finance minister's attempt to put himself on a level with those who have seen their jobs and businesses savaged by the current slowdown will hardly win friends.

After all, Wilson's personal tale of woe was about having to take a 25-per-cent pay cut 17 years ago when he was executive vice-president of Dominion Securities Ltd.

He couldn't remember what his salary was back then, but it was less than \$100,000 - a handsome figure then. And the pay cut didn't stop the graduate of Upper Canada College and the University of Toronto from rebounding from his devastation so that now he owns homes in posh areas of both Toronto and Ottawa.

So, hey, all you autoworkers in St. Thomas, Ont., meat packers in Brandon, Man., carpet makers in Collingwood, Ont., and loggers in the British Columbia interior who are losing your jobs, take Wilson's message to heart: You can come back.

This is only a necessary period of adjustment that will lead to a brighter future, the finance minister tells us.

Necessary or not, it's scary and painful. That's why it's hard for many to be consoled by a politician who refused for months to accept the obvious and admit a recession was in the works.

### ECONOMY SHRINKING:

There are more signs than ever

that the economy is shrinking, and many economists are saying now it'll be longer and deeper than once feared. The Gulf oil crisis and the proposed goods and services tax are only likely to add fuel to a smoldering fire.

The latest Statistics Canada figures on production of goods and services show a sharp drop in August, partly because of steel strikes. But even without the strike activity, the downturn was sharp. Translated into an annual rate, the economy would shrink but about 3.5 per cent. In other words, the economy declined in August at a rate that would be considered very healthy if it was a plus rather than a minus.

As it was, the economy had grown by only two-tenths of one per cent in the 12 months ending in August.

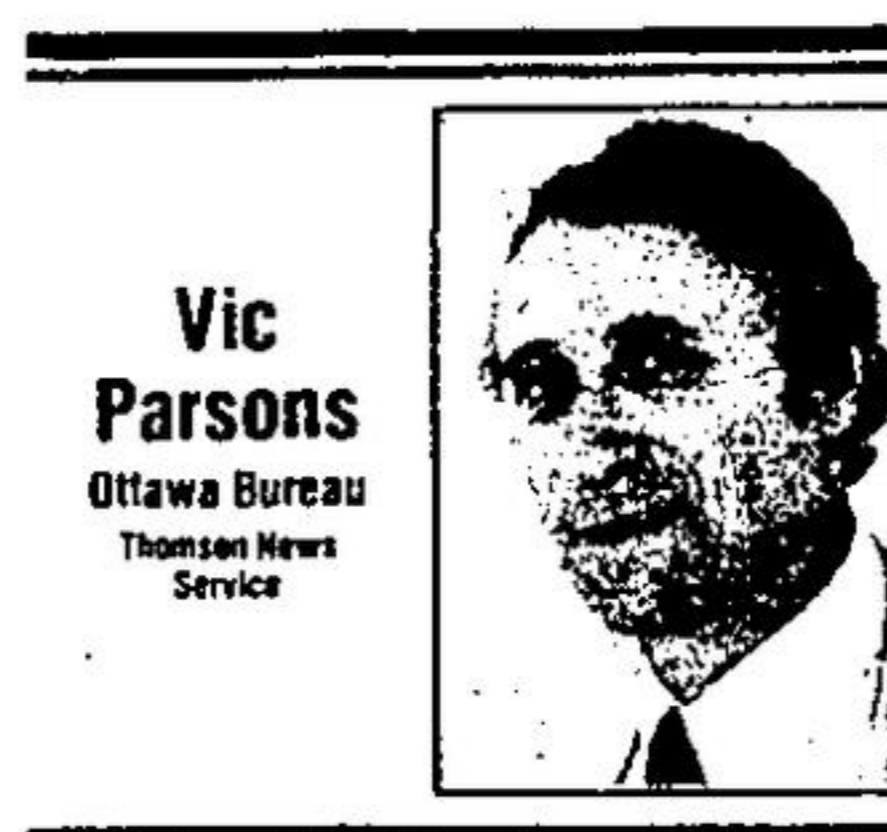
The future isn't great either. StatsCan's leading indicator - a forecaster of business trends - was down for the seventh consecutive month in August.

Housing starts and other construction were off, and purchases of durable goods such as cars, furniture and appliances had tumbled. Moreover, there is confirmation of a shrinkage in demand for services, which is one of the last sectors to be hit by recession.

### BIGGEST CONCERN

Meanwhile, manufacturers are in a blue funk unmatched since the middle of the last recession in 1982. A survey shows that "lack of orders" and weak markets are now seen by manufacturers as their biggest source of concern. Usually, lack of skilled workers tops their list of complaints.

Nearly half of manufacturers questioned by StatsCan said they



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expect lower production over the next quarter, close to three times

as many who anticipated producing more.

The gloom is deepened by pronouncements like that from Laurent Thibault, president of the Canadian Manufacturers Association. "Anybody making traditional products in Canada with standard technology and high labor content just doesn't have a future here," he said. Thibault also predicted the recession will go on for at least another eight months.

Forgetting Wilson's crocodile tears and hand-writing, there is little in the way of effective ac-

tion by Ottawa. Federal policy, of late, seems to consist merely of blaming the Liberal-dominated Senate for holding up legislation.

The Bank of Canada, through its monetary policy, is hanging tough against inflation, which it regards as an infinitely worse, and longer-lasting, problem than recession and unemployment.

It's doubtful many working Canadians, who feel the effect of high interest rates on their jobs, mortgages and loans, see things in the same light. After all, they aren't well-padded Michael Wilsons.

