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WEDNESDAY, MAY 31, 1995



ALL ABOARD! Acton Preschool Playshop students dropped by the Fire Hall last Wednesday and talked to Fire Prevention Officer Brian Ellsworth as part of a *Learn Not To Burn* program. Front row, from left: Samantha Bartlett, Shane Carr, Katie Zions and John Spehar. Middle row: Connor Gibbons, Mark Cullen, John Cullen and Riley McGilloway. Back row: Natasha Brown, Alicia Manuel, Nicholas Higgins and Ben Bruce. (Doug Harrison photo)

Jobs to be axed at Acton firm?

Company blames union, labour laws

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
The Acton Tanner

In a Provincial election campaign with job creation as a central theme, owners of an Acton company are drawing attention to a case of what they call job destruction.

The latest salvo in Acton Precision Millwright's (APM) fight against an unwanted union is an appeal to the three Provincial leadership hopefuls and their candidates in Halton North.

The company said it may have to lay off loyal employees because of Ontario's labour legislation.

"To get justice you need maximum publicity," said APM general manager Alec Kitson in an interview on Monday. He went on to explain the company had sent letters to the candidates asking for their reaction to their fight with the Millwright District Council of Ontario, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America.

The union insists that a 1987 agreement between the union and company is still in force, despite the fact that it was terminated six years ago.

"The worst case scenario, if we lose this case, would be that we would have to lay off 80% of our field work force," Kitson said.

"We would be forced to hire only union members from union halls in Toronto or Hamilton and we would lose the non-union workers that have helped make this company a success."

The issue began in 1987 when APM founder Ted Lyons needed a short-term worker to help him complete a job.

The worker did not want to lose union status so Kitson joined the union, after checking to see that the agreement could be terminated.

Kitson tried to terminate the agreement and was told by the union that it could not be cancelled and that APM could only use union employees.

Kitson heard nothing for six years. Then, three months ago a union official visited a Hamilton site where an APM crew was working and insisted union labour had to be used.

The union has applied to the Ontario Labour Relations Board asking it to enforce the agreement.

Kitson is not optimistic about the hearing because he said that the Labour Board has nothing in common with the culture at APM.

"The Board talks and deals exclusively in adversarial terms that

See *WORKERS*, Page 4

'Vindication' for Pomeroy

Former Regional Chair Pete Pomeroy and local developer Ab Tennant can finally breathe easier.

Last Wednesday the two were acquitted on all charges by Justice James Carnwath, who ruled that the allegations against the men were "substantially without merit."

Pomeroy was charged with breach of public trust and accepting a bribe, and Tennant was charged with offering a bribe.

"This was not a technical win," Pomeroy said in an interview on Friday, "it was total vindication."

Pomeroy said the allegations were politically-driven and he feels there were eight or nine people behind the smear campaign.

"We are weighing our options to try to decide what to do," Pomeroy said Friday.

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