

Education funding key question at all-candidates meeting

By JANET BAINE
Staff writer

Bureaucracy, overspending and not enough parental control were some of the problems with the education system which candidates spoke about at an

all-candidates meeting held at Georgetown and District Christian School Tuesday night.

The three candidates who attended the meeting were Conservative Ted Chudleigh, Liberal Walt Elliot, and Family

Coalition Party's Alex McKee. NDP incumbent Noel Duignan declined, and sent a letter outlining his governments proposals instead. He said he was spending the evening canvassing. Libertarian John

Shadbolt, who surfaced as a candidate last week, wasn't invited.

All three candidates appeared to agree that parents don't have enough control over the education of their children, that reform is necessary and that there is too much bureaucracy in the education system.

Walt Elliot stressed his career as an educator, which he left in 1971 to pursue politics.

"I could see slippage of parental control then. It has grown, and grown and grown and it's a real problem to turn it back. What it takes is people like myself who have had the same views for 25 years. It is changeable," he said. "I believe the people in the (education) system are good people but it's easy to get caught up in the bureaucratic maze."

Ted Chudleigh said that 45 cents of every dollar spent on education is going to administration, and the PCs would cut this dramatically.

McKee said 60 cents of every

dollar is spend on administration and suggested the solution to the education problems would be a voucher system, where parents would be given a voucher for about \$7,000, the cost of educating a child for a year. The parents could then enroll their child in the school of their choice. They may chose a public, Catholic or independent school.

Many people attending the meeting had children attending Georgetown Christian School, an independent school, and wanted to know the views of candidates on more choice for parents.

Chudleigh pointed out that some Catholics feel they lost a lot of control when they received government funding. He said in two or three years, the PC government would provide some sort of "funding mechanism" for independent schools. Elliot spoke about a Mennonite school which was integrated into the public board and fully funded. This kind of arrangement is possible, he said.

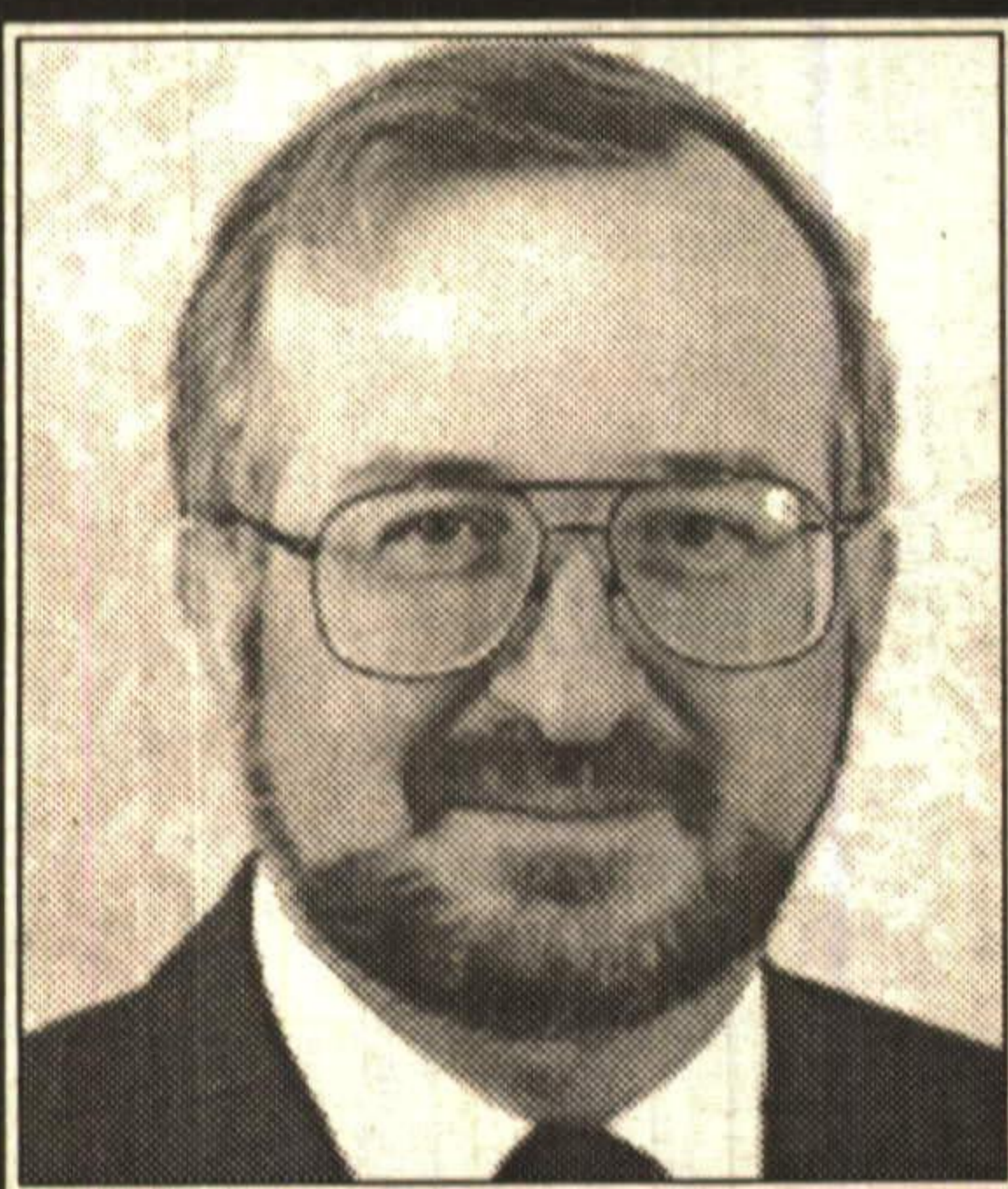
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