

# The Independent & Free Press

Weekend Edition

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## Let's make a deal

We are hoping that school boards and teachers' unions across the province will take time this weekend to do what many of them have been unable to do for the past four weeks.

Put the students of this province first and reach contract settlements.

We don't want to see Education Minister Dave Johnson bring in back-to-work legislation as he has promised to do tomorrow (Monday) when the Legislature resumes sitting. But, it is clear that he can no longer sit by while thousands of students are sitting at home instead of in a classroom.

Johnson really has been left with no choice in this matter—the kids must get back in the classroom... and soon. (Luckily here in Halton they have been in school, although it has been anything but "business as usual".)

Unbelievably, the NDP and Liberals, have indicated a willingness to carry on this political war of wills by saying they will fight any back-to-work legislation. That posturing would see the kids remain out of school for about two additional weeks.

This past Friday the Halton District Catholic School Board and its elementary teachers managed to reach a tentative agreement.

It's an example other teachers' unions and school boards should follow.

### PUD



## Critics should go to school

Dear editor,  
Re: Your editorial (Sept. 9) School daze.

From where I sit, your job as editor is to present the facts, and then to pass your opinion on them. Once again, you have been so entranced by the Harris spin doctors that you have blindly used their terminology to make your point. Shame on you for not doing your research!

Specifically, when Education Minister Dave Johnson first trotted out his 7 of 8 (classes), he said that this would provide more time for the students in class. This was repeated by Harris, and has been often repeated by others.

The numbers here are not mind-boggling. Teachers who used to teach 6 of 8 are now teaching 7 of 8. The extra class they now teach used to be taught by a different teacher. Notice, however, that the students do not spend one extra minute of time in class.

The only thing that the government has accomplished is to seriously reduce the number of teachers in the system. There are 14 per cent fewer teachers in the school to interact with the students, to coach sports, to

## Letter of the day

### Teachers creating smokescreen

Dear editor,  
When a reader (Independent & Free Press Sept. 20) starts using terms such as "Tory government assault", "...Johnson and his backroom neo-cons", and "Tories began the crisis", it tells me the person has already made up his mind and closed it.

The statement "students will still be required to attend the same number of classes" is true, but with teachers doing an extra class it means smaller class sizes. It's simple math, not complex calculus.

Your editorial (Sept. 9) was bang on, but don't waste your time trying to convince the intelligentsia. If you spend most of your life in the academic world, you too will think that you are much smarter than the rest due to the amount of education you received.

A lot of teachers can't grasp the fact that education and intelligence are mutually exclusive. Most people in the real world who work eight and more hours a day with two or three weeks vacation a year can see through the smokescreen the teachers and their unions are creating.

R. J. Summers, Georgetown

produce drama, to direct music, to lead into math contests and so on. Who is going to pick up those activities that were directed by the teachers who are no longer there? Who is going to cover on-call classes when most of the preparation periods that were employed last year are not there this year?

has expressed his (er...Harris') views on the subject. Why doesn't he dare to pop into a secondary school to really see what is going on?

In fact, why don't any of you who criticize from your armchairs get invited into a secondary school and talk to the folks there?

Don Ablett,  
Glen Williams

Ted Chudleigh is another who

## Our Readers Write

The Independent & Free Press welcomes letters to the editor from our readers. All letters must be signed and include an address and a daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for content and length and can be mailed, delivered to our office address at 211 Armstrong Ave., Georgetown, Ont., L7G 4X5, faxed to us at (905) 873-0398 or e-mailed to: independent.freepress@aztec-net.com