

Editorial

A good deal

Did you hear that?

It's the enormous sigh of relief expressed by hundreds of Halton parents whose special needs children will be able to return to class with help from educational assistants.

The Halton District School Board and its EAs reached a tentative two-year deal last weekend bringing an end to a strike that began Oct. 7.

The contract, which includes a pay raise retroactive to September 2002, was ratified by EAs over the weekend. The school board made the new contract official Monday night.

We applaud the two sides in this dispute for working to find common ground.

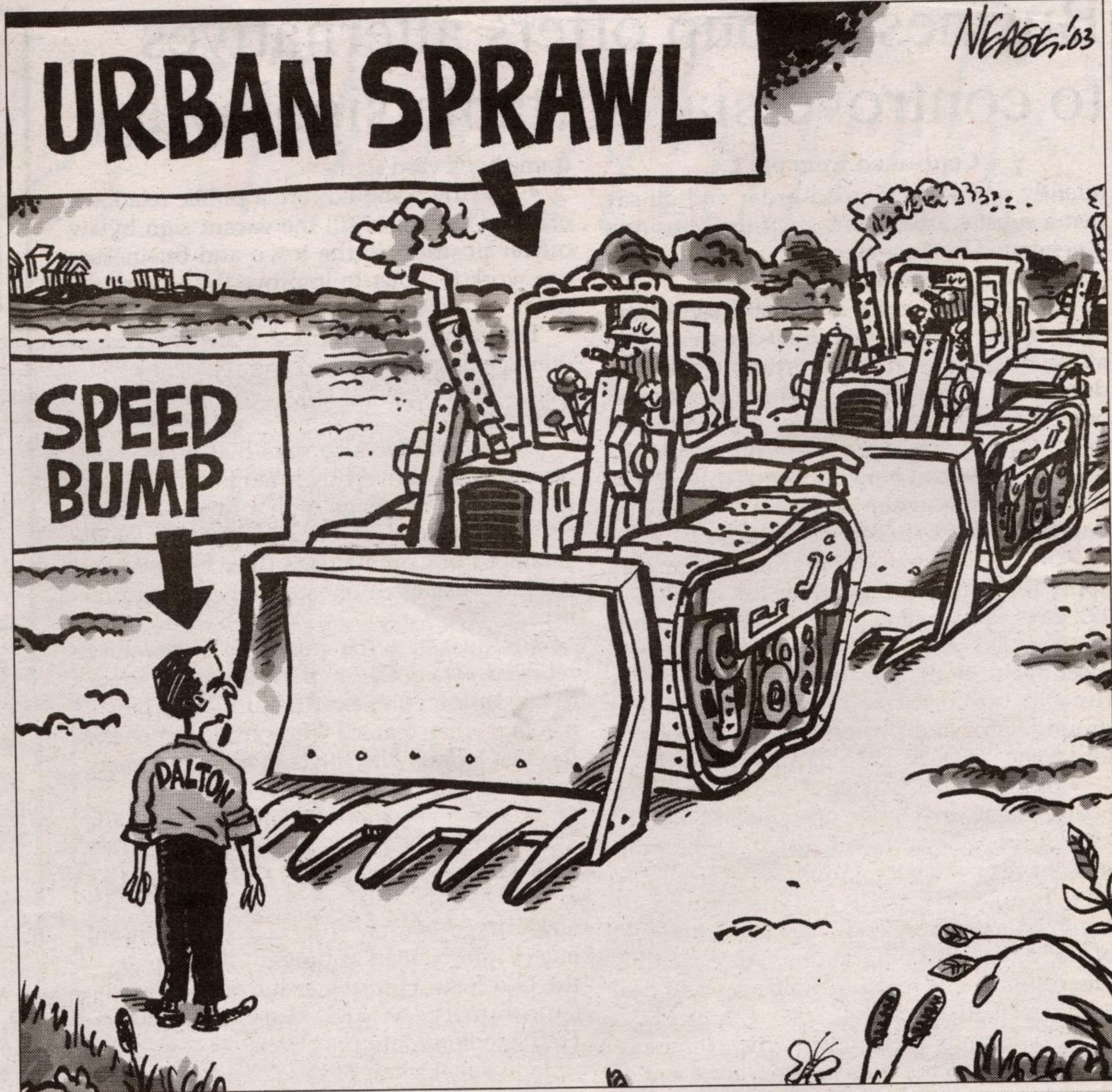
Thanks to their efforts children with special learning needs can return to the classroom and continue the progress some parents had already reported just one month into a new school year.

The strike's conclusion and last week's board decision to place a freeze on further school closure studies have been welcome news to families in Halton's public school system.

Give a little

Inside today's edition of *The Independent & Free Press* (Georgetown routes only) you will find bags to use for next Saturday's (Nov. 1) annual Scout, Guide and Cadet food drive in aid of our local food banks— Acton FoodShare and Georgetown Bread Basket.

We urge everyone to make sure they use these bags, and in households which didn't receive them, we ask you set aside a plastic bag of non-perishable items for when the youngsters come knocking. Your simple donation can mean so much.



Letters to the editor...

Use of police dogs in schools 'deplorable'

Dear editor,

Re: September 5 story "Police dogs make return...to schools"
So we are going to get the police

dogs back in our high schools to find drugs, guns and other weapons.

Surely there must be a better way to combat this than turning our schools into something resembling an armed camp.

Then there is the comment by Officer Nishan Duraiappah, who said "it will be interesting to see if the prevalence of what is termed 'soft drugs', like marijuana and hashish, or harder drugs, such as ecstasy, are on the rise among youths."

Interesting? How about horrible, deplorable or downright sad. Does he think this is some kind of data collecting, noble research project, wherein the process, he is sanctioned by some higher authority to violate the right of our students, creating an environment of fear, suspicion, surveillance and confinement? Whatever happened to the words renounce, reform, and rehabilitate? And what ever happened to the use of education

as the most effective tool in the battle against drugs?

I can only hope there are some self-respecting teachers out there who are going to take the time to teach the students their constitutional rights to protect them from such harassment, injustice and intimidation. It is time for all citizens to revolt against actions that are intended to curb illegal and unacceptable activity but only result in curtailing the right and freedoms of responsible law-abiding people. Our youth included.

Ken Key, Glen Williams

Voter finds material funny

Dear editor,

As a communicator, I tell all the people I work with to have "as many eyes as possible" read your material prior to printing because once it's printed, you can't fix it. Someone should have given (Ward 3 candidate) Gerald Parker the same advice.

I had to laugh when I envisioned 'rouge developers'— a bunch of men in hard hats wearing blush! And in order for Ward 3 to win, we must 'loose', not 'lose' past politics. And there was great confusion with apostrophes and spelling over possessive vs. plural. Honestly, I was embarrassed for him when I was reading it.

We can always learn from someone else's mistakes— we don't always have to do it the hard way.
Stephanie Lakin, Georgetown

Candidate's ads are 'distasteful and laughable'

Dear editor,

I find the latest newspaper ads from mayoralty candidate John Day both distasteful and laughable.

First Mr. Day is attacking the other candidates by stating, "don't vote for career politicians". If an individual is a career politician it means they are getting re-elected term after term. This says to me that person must be doing a good job. He goes on to say "broken

promises". What promises and who broke them? Serious accusations, I may add.

Mr. Day goes on to praise his working relationship with Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion. Isn't she a career politician?

Looks like to me, Mr. Day, you are again showing poor judgment like you did a year ago. I thought we had four good choices for the next mayor, but now it is down to three.

Jane Haggett, Georgetown

Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor must be signed and include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters **should not exceed 200 words** and may be edited.

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The Independent & Free Press

Weekend Edition

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The Independent & Free Press is published every Wednesday and Friday at 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown Ont., L7G 4B1. It is one of the newspapers published by Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing Ltd., which includes: Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, Alliston Herald/Courier, Bancroft This Week, Barrie Advance, Bolton Enterprise, Brampton Guardian, Burlington Shopping News, Burlington Post, City Parent, Collingwood/Wasaga Connection, East York Mirror, Erin Advocate/Country Routes,

Etobicoke Guardian, Flamborough Post, Georgetown Independent/Acton Free Press, Huronia Business Times, Lindsay This Week, Markham Economist & Sun, Midland/Penetanguishene Mirror, Milton Canadian Champion, Milton Shopping News, Mississauga News, Mississauga Business Times, Napanee Guide, Newmarket/Aurora Era-Banner, Northumberland News, North York Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Oakville Shopping News, Oldtimers Hockey News, Orangeville Banner, Orillia Today, Oshawa-Whitby/Clarington

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