

RC board head annoyed with both sides in dispute

• from BLASTING on page 1

Mr. Pece counters that the teachers have offered four proposals to deal with seven of eight class time issues. All, he said, have been rejected by the board.

The latest proposal involved a rotating timetable, which would have seen teachers still only teach three classes daily, but would accommodate reduced instruction in all four of the students' scheduled classes.

Can't afford more teachers

Mr. Pece said all the union's proposals have satisfied Bill 160's demands for 1,250 minutes of instructional time from teachers.

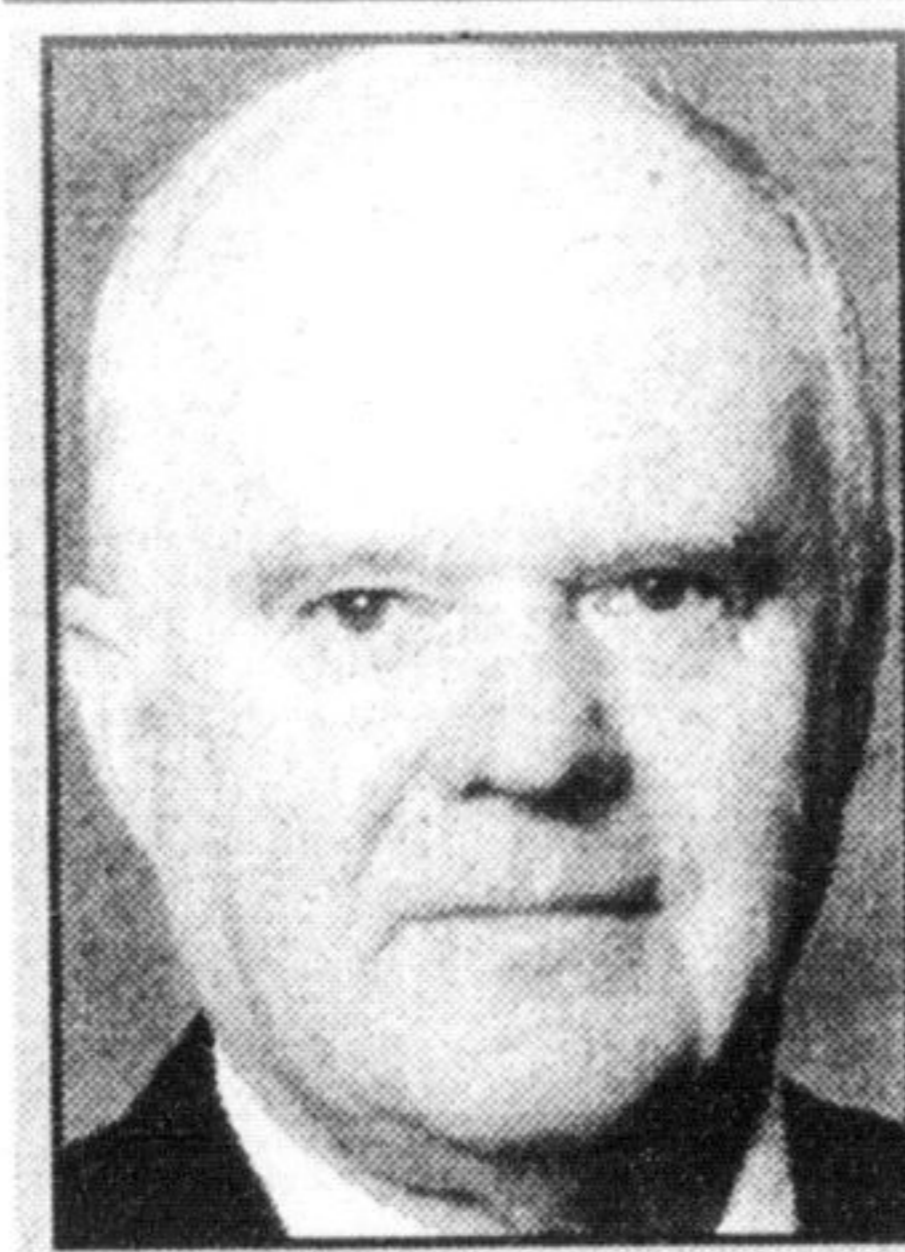
But Mr. Sherlock said all these proposals fail to take into account Bill 160's other stipulation of reduced average class sizes (a 22 pupil average).

Mr. Sherlock said the only way to meet this requirement and the extra class time stipulation without hiring more teachers, is by having teachers teach seven of eight classes. The board cannot afford to hire any additional teachers, he said.

Mr. Sherlock fears the dispute is threatening the school year.

Cumulatively, students in Halton's five Catholic secondary schools have lost approximately 47,097 hours in total instructional time for credit courses that have not been taught as a result of teachers' job sanctions.

Mr. Pece contends the Halton board is jumping the gun in asking the province to intervene. "In my opinion going to the government and asking for back-to-work legislation is irresponsible on their part," said



"Don't you think that our students have been punished enough by your pathetic, political power struggle?"

— JIM SHERLOCK

Mr. Pece. "In the past, back-to-work legislation has not come about until five to six weeks into the dispute."

Questions for Mike Harris

In a press release, Mr. Sherlock asked Premier Mike Harris the following questions:

— The OECTA president is continuing to defy you, our school boards and Bill 160. When are you going to do something about the situation?

— Mr. Harris, can you please explain why both presidents of secondary teachers' unions have the power not only to disrupt the academic year, but also to cancel extra-curricular activities for every secondary student in Ontario at their whim?

— How can this impasse be solved at the bargaining table as long as a teachers' union is allowed to defy the law?

— Your ads, Mr. Harris, tell us what a wonderful year this will be for students in Ontario. Will you please inform our parents when this wonderful year will start?

Cross country season on hold

Halton's public elementary school system has lost, for the time being, one of its most popular sports.

The cross-country running season for eight to 13-year-olds, scheduled to begin September 29, has been postponed after a vast majority of schools reported they would not be sending a team.

The person who first received the bad news, and who made the decision to postpone the season, was Sue Amos, instructional leader of health and physical education for the Halton District School Board.

"The reports of 'no' were overwhelming," Ms

Amos said of the response from schools. "In my 30 years, this has been never happened before. It's very disappointing. I could hear it in the teachers' voices that they are disappointed, too."

The decision means nearly 4,000 youths, who account for nearly 5,800 running positions, won't be scurrying over grass and trails over the next two weeks.

The September 29 cross-country meets for junior and senior runners in Burlington, the September 30

• see THREATENED on page 10

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