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Reed angry over child porn ruling

By KAREN SMITH

The Champion

Flooded with calls from citizens upset over a British Columbia judge's ruling in a child pornography case, Halton MP Julian Reed wants to set the record straight.

The federal Liberals are joining forces with the BC government to fight the judge's recent ruling that a man was within his rights to possess child pornography.

"People are very upset and rightly so," Mr. Reed said. "It will be rectified at some stage."

While last Tuesday the Reform Party pushed a motion calling for the federal government to use the Constitution's 'notwithstanding clause' to overturn the ruling, Mr. Reed said fighting it in the courts is more efficient, as well as proper.

"There are those who feel that if we were to invoke the 'notwithstanding clause' in the House of Commons it would somehow speed up the process and put an instant end to the problem. Such is not the case," he said.

Mr. Reed said in the two instances in which the clause was used by two provincial governments, it was only a last resort after every available legal recourse had been exhausted.

The judge's controversial ruling will be challenged in the BC Court of Appeal later this month, Mr. Reed said.

"Our legal people are with their legal people."

If the appeal fails, the case will go to the Supreme Court of Canada, he added.

Mr. Reed said using the 'notwithstanding clause' is an "extreme" measure because it actually undermines the

Constitution and should only be considered when all else fails.

"Our process will be faster than the 'notwithstanding clause'", he said.

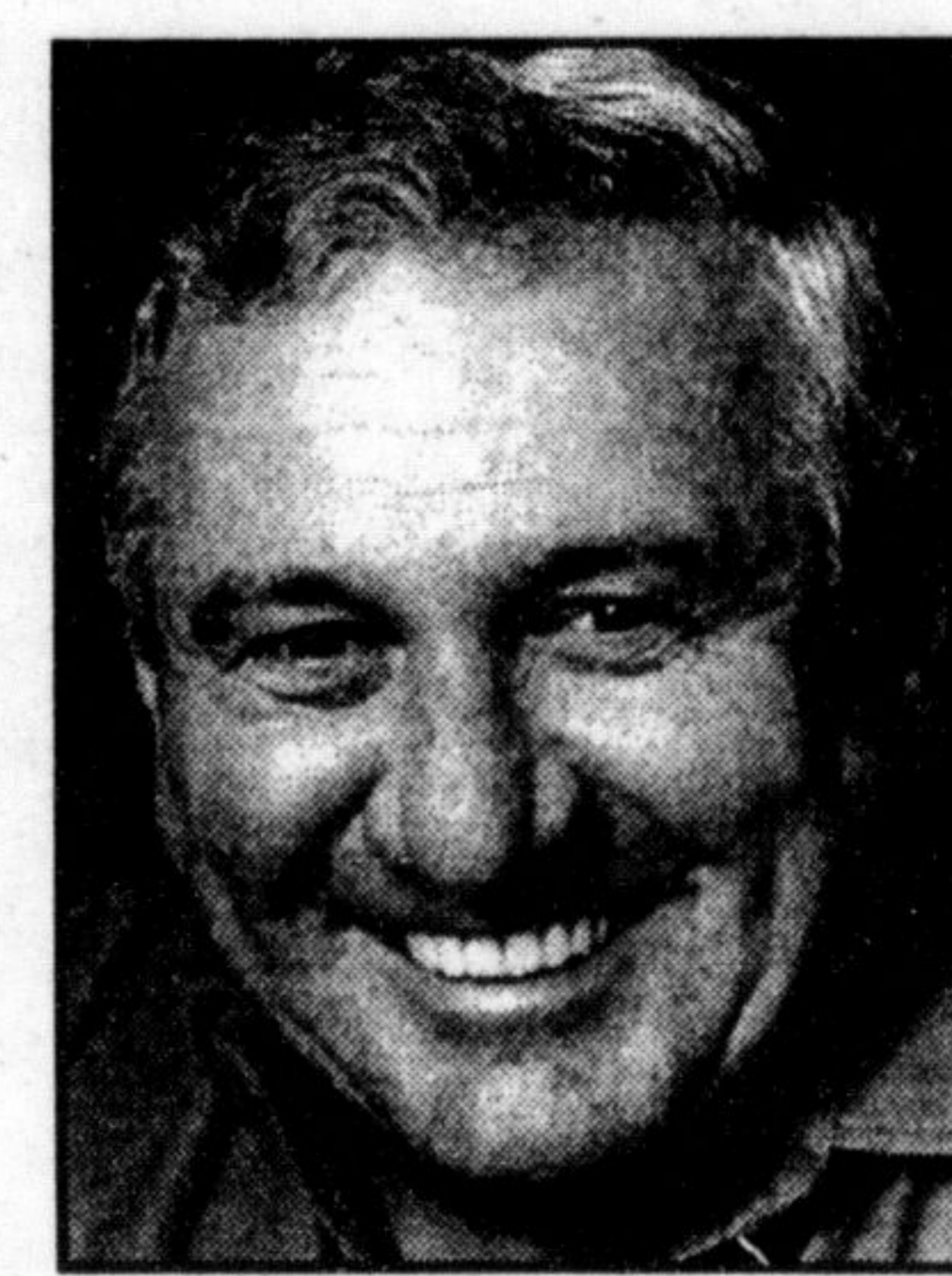
Like many other Canadians,

Mr. Reed said he can't understand what the judge was thinking when he made the ruling. There was no dispute that the accused was in possession of child pornography. The ruling centred around his right to possess it.

"I have no idea how he could think about this individual's (the accused's) rights," Mr. Reed said.

"What he failed to do was recognize the child. Every child has the right not to be abused or sexually exploited."

Mr. Reed added that it's still a criminal offence to possess child pornography in every Canadian province and territory, even in BC, where the appeal has yet to be heard. "I share the outrage expressed by the many constituents who have called our office."



Julian Reed



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Taming the slopes

Milton Height Racing Club's Anna Dyminski heads for the finish line during the Invitational Slalom Race at Glen Eden Ski Area Sunday. The 11-year-old won her division. See the sports section for a related photo.

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By IRENE GENTLE

The Champion

Halton Regional Police coffers are spilling over by at least \$975,000, the region's administration and finance committee heard recently.

Savings in debt charges and delays in the hiring of new officers have resulted in a surplus in the 1998 police budget, said Chief Ean Algar.

"Staffing delays, maternity leaves and alarm system revenues have raised more than we anticipated," he explained.

Chief Algar appeared at the committee to endorse doling out the nest egg to various police reserves.

He was backing a Halton Region Police Services Board blueprint that recommended using nearly half the surplus, or about

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