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House should go down, says angry neighbour

• from MAN CHARGED on page 1

"Then it all kind of blew over," said Mr. Pickfield. "My view is it is much ado about nothing."

But Mr. Saliba said that while he did raise the cane, it wasn't until after he had been socked in the eye.

"I don't deny it," he said. "After getting punched in the eye, wouldn't you do the

same?"

The incident occured after council voted to deny Mr. Martin's request for a temporary zoning bylaw amendment permitting six to eight off-shore farm workers to live in a second home built on his property.

Mr. Martins rents 300 acres of land for his crops, and owns another 15 acres.

According to Town bylaws, the owned

portion of Mr. Martins property is too small to support two homes.

But after building a new home for the family, Mr. Martins realized that the former home would be needed to shelter offshore workers.

"(The foreign workers) are now essential to the viability of the operation," said Mr. Pickfield. "They have the know-how he needs."

After paying a fine for disregarding the demolition order, Mr. Martins filed an application for a bylaw amendment.

A court order placed on the second home also came under fire at council.

According to Mr. Pickfield, that order acts as a stay on the demolition direction.

But Councillor John Challinor contended that the court order made it clear the second residence had to go.

"As I understood it, that building should not be occupied. It is also staff's opinion that it should not be occupied," he said. "But it is occupied. I think it is time to draw a line in the sand."

Councillor Barry Lee, who put forth the successful motion to quash Mr. Martin's application, said the item should not have come before council.

"If Mr. Martins had fulfilled the conditions of the building permit then that second building wouldn't be there now," he said. "And therefore you wouldn't be here now."

But Mr. Martins proposal was a last ditch bid to save both his Milton business and rebuild his strained relationship with the Town, said Mr. Pickfield.

Asking for a temporary zoning change would allow the Town to monitor the home over the next three years, he added.

"I've advised (Mr. Martins) that for the

next few years, he will be under a spotlight," said Mr. Pickfield. "It is a test for him."

But any relaxation of the bylaw was bitterly opposed by Mr. Saliba, who said there should not be different rules for those who abide by bylaws and those who break them

"Apparently in this town, our bylaws don't mean a thing," he told council. "Apparently there are laws for Tony Martin that are different than for anyone else. I think this is ridiculous. The house should go down."

Mr. Saliba also objected when Councillor Rick Day suggested that the proposal should go through the regular process — which would lead to a technical report from staff — rather than be rejected outright.

"Regardless of the history, the Martins are entitled to a hearing, entitled to a say," said Mr. Day.

That prompted an angered Mr. Saliba to cry out from the benches, "That is the most absurd thing, what you just said."

Mr. Martins later said he felt council had treated him poorly.

"Why don't you put it in the paper that they treated me like a second-class citizen. You have a council who doesn't know how to read a court order," he said.

Voting to kill the application before reading a planning report submitted by Mr. Martins is atypical, said Mr. Pickfield.

"It is highly unusual that council would make a decision on a matter without getting the advice of their staff or reviewing the planning document," he said. "It floors me. I don't think he was treated fairly. I think he was treated unfairly."

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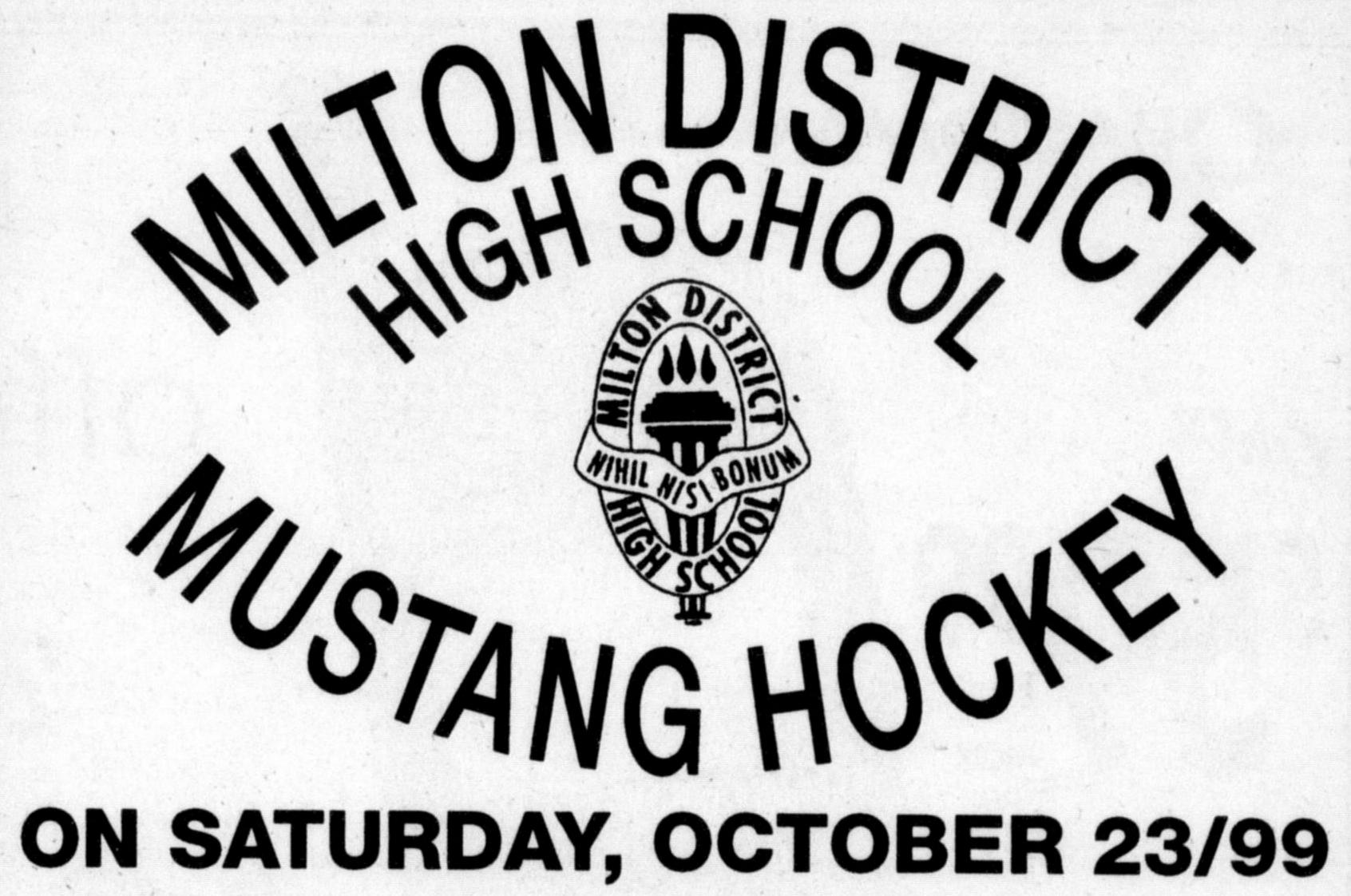
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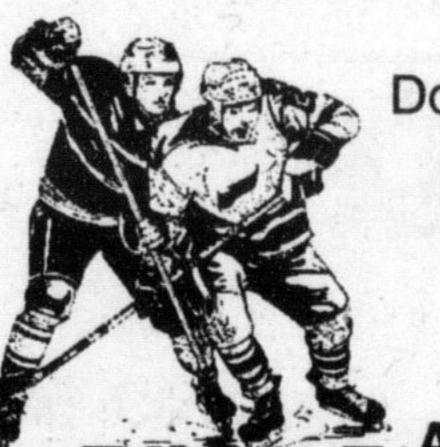
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