



OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Williams angry with columnist's comments

Dear Editor:

The facts with regard to Patrick Kelly's statement in his column of May 3 in The Canadian Champion are:

(1) I am not a "card carrying member of the teachers' union". The statement is ludicrous, particularly in the context in which it was presented.

(2) As the Director of Education, membership in a teachers' federation is not permitted by legislation. Common sense also suggests that there would be a serious conflict of interest otherwise.

(3) In the 1970s, I was a card carrying member of the teacher's federation. I have not maintained such membership since that time.

(4) Prior to 1995, I was an associate member of the teachers' federations. The associate membership carried no union rights nor privileges. It did permit me to receive the professional teaching journals published by the federations - important information for me to carry out my job.

(5) I have not now, nor have I ever had a conflict of interest

in discharging my responsibilities as Director of Education. I take my job seriously and have been violated by your article.

(6) The statement in Patrick Kelly's article is untrue and defamatory. I can only assume its intent was to damage my credibility and reputation.

Bob Williams
Director of Education
Halton Board of Education
Editor's note: A correction and apology related to this error on the newspaper's part appear on page 4 of today's issue.

Reed serves Halton, says reader, not PM

Dear Editor:

At a recent Liberal convention our area MP Julian Reed stated that he agreed with Prime Minister Jean Chrétien's policy that Liberal MPs must toe the party line or pay the price.

Mr. Reed believes that his first responsibility is to the party and its leader and not his constituents. If that is the case, then why are we taxpayers paying over \$100,000 a year for Mr. Reed and each of his Liberal cohorts if their only function is to act as trained seals for the PM and his unelected advisors?

Mr. Reed was elected to represent the citizens of Halton in Ottawa. The taxpayers of Halton pay his salary, his perks, and his pension fund, not the Liberal party.

In another recent interview concerning the

new federal riding boundaries, Mr. Reed stated that the citizens of Milton have been good to him in the past and that he looks forward to representing the new Milton-Halton Hills riding following the next federal election.

Halton has indeed been good to Mr. Reed, having previously elected him to the provincial legislature, thus allowing him to collect a provincial pension while collecting his federal MP salary.

I believe it is time that Mr. Reed return the favour and start fulfilling his election promises, such as creating jobs, jobs, jobs, reforming our justice and immigration systems and developing fiscal responsibility while maintaining health care and education. This would stand in stark contrast to recent action on the Liberal promises surrounding the GST.

Richard Malboeuf
Milton

Kingsbury takes issue with story

Dear Editor:

I have a concern regarding the article of Wednesday, April 24, entitled "Budget flops, board splits into two camps".

As the board representative for Wards 1 & 3 Milton, I feel a need to comment. First, I must say that I enjoy the writing of Kim Amott. I find her stories balanced and fairly representative of all sides of an issue.

I do take exception to the perception that is conveyed by this article, which includes a list of trustees voting for the budget. The article tries to suggest that somehow the trustees who voted for the budget, at that point in the process, were reformers wanting no tax increases, while those who voted against it were traditionalists trying to hang on to the old way of doing things.

That inference is absolutely incorrect. In fact, when you analyze the recorded voting pattern since I was elected - on issues such as corporate sponsorship, advertising on school buses, alternative programs offering to save busing costs, school technology plans, I think one would conclude there are more reform-minded trustees in the list that voted against the budget than in the list that voted for it at that point.

In terms of trying to achieve a zero percent mill increase, there were certainly items which I supported removing from the budget that would have accomplished this and would have been achievable.

The removal of an additional \$3.6 million in the 1996 budget (or approx \$8 million annualized) termed as "negotiate reductions in staff compensation accounts" when we had already removed over \$6 million (or \$15 million annualized) from the budget subject to negotiations, was for me not achievable.

There is no doubt in my mind that this amendment, made to the budget at the board table during what you would have to term as the last minute, caused the budget to fail at that point.

Now perhaps I had an advantage over those who voted to remove that additional \$3.6 million, because of my corporate negotiation experience. But if the public is given the illusion I could not support the budget because of a mill rate freeze, that is incorrect.


While I clearly sit at that board for the students, a mill rate freeze has been, and will always be, the target for me.

I also believe there are many trustees who voted for and against the budget referred to in your article, who really wanted a freeze.

Tim Kingsbury
Trustee, Wards 1 & 3 Milton

Ross Dixon
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