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Collection Of Teachers' Resignations Underway

BY JIM IRVING

York County secondary teachers, in an 89.4 percent vote, have agreed to ask the Provincial Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation executive to collect and submit resignations "en masse" to the York County Board of Education, effective December 31, 1973.

At a mass meeting at the Odeon Theatre in Newmarket last week, the teachers rejected the latest offer from the board, which would have given them an increase of 16.5 percent over two years.

The vote to reject the offer, which is slightly higher than the 15.5 percent for the same period accepted recently by Metro teachers, was 95.6 percent against.

A spokesman for District 11 of the OSSTF said the negotiating team didn't consider the offer to be "acceptable in any way."

The salary grid was too low and there was no firm commitment by the board on any of the items in question, he said.

However, he also admitted that the teachers' negotiating team didn't show the teachers the breakdown of figures in the four teaching categories over the two-year period, but only presented them as a percentage figure.

"It was the understanding of the negotiating team that the board wasn't terribly enthusiastic about the two-year contract," he said.

He did not elaborate on this statement.

The spokesman also outlined the procedure to be followed now with the teachers to secure their resignations.

SCREEN RESIGNATIONS

Kits have been sent out to the school from the OSSTF with a covering letter on what to do.

The teachers will then write out their resignations and put them in two envelopes. These will be sealed in a large package and sent to federation headquarters in Toronto.

They will be screened and those people in "untenable positions" will be withdrawn.

These would include people who were not fully qualified and who were teaching on letters of permission, or those who were in "dangerous areas," such as being close to retirement or superannuation.

The letters will then be repackaged and held in reserve.

If a settlement appears imminent, the letters are withheld. If no settlement appears in sight, the resignations will be submitted to the director of education for York County by November 30.

If a settlement is reached before December 31, the resignations would be returned, providing there would be no question of retribution, he said.

In the event of mass resignations, those resigning would receive 40 percent of gross salary, plus all fringes, plus employer's contribution to superannuation, according to a release from the OSSTF.

"DISAPPOINTED"

District 11 objectives in the dispute are as follows: a grievance procedure and redress of grievances relating to the 1971-73 agreement; maintenance of (Continued on page 3)



(Photo by Dave Barbour)

To mark what was probably the biggest event in recent years in the Thornhill area, Markham Town officials and community residents gathered November 17 at Bayview Avenue and John Streets for the unveiling of a sign announcing construction is underway on the \$3,600,000 Thornhill community centre. Shown on one of the few available patches of grass amid the mud are (left to right): Markham Ward 6 (Victoria Square-Dickson's Hill) Councillor Ron Moran; Markham and York Regional Councillor Harry Crisp of 191 Henderson Avenue, Thornhill; Markham and York Regional Councillor Robert Adams of 17 Ida Street, Thornhill, ceremony chairman; Markham Parks and Recreation

Committee Chairman Ted Foster of 61 Romfield Circuit, Thornhill; Project Architect Al Jessop of 5 Ida Street, Thornhill; Markham Ward 3 (Unionville) Councillor Mrs. Carole Bell of 12 Tussey Court, Unionville; Markham Ward 1 (South Thornhill) Councillor Gary Kay of 86 Aberfeldy Crescent, Wycliffe Old Town; Thornhill Lions President Tony Snedka, 184 Bayview Fairways Drive, Thornhill; Markham Mayor Anthony Roman of Victoria Square; Markham Ward 2 (North Thornhill) Councillor Roy Muldrew, 53 Romfield Circuit; and Markham School Trustee Jack MacKay of 167 John Street, Thornhill.

Unveiling Marks Thornhill Community Centre Start

"These facilities are for the Town of Markham and for the Thornhill community. I hope everyone comes out, uses them and treats them as their own," Markham Mayor Anthony Roman said during the November 17 ceremony at Thornhill marking the start of construction for the \$3,600,000 Thornhill Community Centre, Bayview Avenue and John Street.

The 14-acre centre is to include two arenas, library, community meeting hall and rooms, rifle range, indoor running track and fitness facilities. Plans also call for a day care centre and retarded children's facilities if approved by York Region Council.

Mayor Roman described the centre as a dream come true. He said one of the planks in his election platform when he first took office January 1, 1971, was that certain facilities were needed in the Town of

Markham.

LONG RANGE PLANS

The mayor said the town has been taking a long range look at the kind of facilities needed. Such things as the big Thornhill centre cost a lot of money, but the taxpayers money is being well spent, he said.

Roman noted the co-operation of many, many people was needed to make the community centre possible. He thanked ceremony chairman, Councillor Adams, (Continued on Page 18)

York Regional Council last week requested its planning and health and social services departments to bring in a report by November 29 on the methods of financing day care centres in the region.

In a report of the committee of the whole, council was asked to consider providing the centres "as a requirement in any community during its development." Also, they would be provided to "anybody who requires such a service regardless of income."

The report also asked the commissioner of health and social services to submit a report with "respect to financial implications of the establishment of a day care centre in the Thornhill Community Centre at John Street and Bayview Avenue, subject to the Town of Markham providing a site."

An alternative report was also sought for the establishment of a centre in Thornhill United Church.

According to Commissioner of Health Dr. Owen Slingerland, who recommended that the committee of health and social services "give serious

consideration to this much needed centre," the latter would accommodate 65 children, at \$3,500 per child, or a total cost of \$227,500.

The cost would be divided evenly between the province and the region.

The joint report of the planning and health and social services departments, showed that some \$30 million would be required to finance construction costs of new centres at present. In the meantime, schools and other existing buildings should be used.

It suggested the following means in which day care services could be provided:

- Assign the responsibility to the board of education as an integral part of the educational system, and financed in the same manner.
- A self-supporting regional service with a subsidy to those unable to pay the full cost.
- A combination of regional and local service; again with subsidies.
- Formation of non-profit corporate bodies across region to provide the centres.
- Private home day care.

Study Financing Of Thornhill, All Region Day Care Centres

Rams First Place Tie

The Richmond Hill Rams jumped into a first place tie with the Vaughan Nationals as they downed Weston Dodgers 6-4 in an Ontario Provincial "A" game Tuesday night at Richmond Hill. Full details of this game and Sunday's play will be found on Pages 7 and 15.

Charge Driver

According to regional police, Mr. Ruffetti was going west on 16th Avenue. He attempted to turn south on Concession 5 and collided with the Stewart vehicle, which was proceeding north on 5.

Ruffetti has been charged with dangerous driving.

Sunday Shopping

Premier William Davis' mail clearly indicates a "reasonable distribution" between those correspondents who want to retain Sunday as it is, and those who want uniform store hours, according to a statement made last week.

This would appear to indicate that the major concern of Ontario citizens is not inflation, the high food prices, or the energy crisis, but Sunday store closing hours. Or perhaps it is a realization of the shopping that extension of shopping hours into Sunday, meaning extra wages, extra use of electricity etc. has a direct bearing on the other subjects.

Mr. Davis told a news conference he finds it strange that store hours should take precedence over the other issues.

He also said the Government's policy paper on Sunday store hours, outlining the policy it will pursue, will be made public soon.

See Editorial on Page 2 of this issue.

Yonge St. Bus Line Has \$8,175 Profit

A profit of \$8,175.41 was realized by the TTC-operated Yonge bus line in the third quarter of 1973, a report received by Richmond Hill Council Monday afternoon revealed.

The line is owned jointly by Vaughan, Markham and Richmond Hill.

Of the surplus Richmond Hill will receive \$5,009.89 (61.28%), Markham \$2,285.03 (27.95%) and Vaughan \$880.49 (10.77%).

An increase of 60,000 from 1972 in the number of fares collected and an increase of 3,300 revenue miles were reported.

In the nine months to September 30 this year, the profit from this bus line has been \$13,886.99 compared to a deficit of \$9,943.64 in 1972, reflecting an increase in rates introduced in September last year.

Richmond Hill Council Seeks 133-Acre Option

Negotiations for an option to purchase property at the corner of 18th Avenue and Leslie Street for a new site for the town's works yard and the annual Spring Fair of the Richmond Hill Agricultural Society were approved by Richmond Hill Town Council Monday evening.

The property was reported to contain 133 acres and the price was not revealed.

The only critical voice was raised by Regional Councillor Lois Hancey who said she was in favor of acquiring new premises for the works yard in an appropriate area, preferably an industrial area. "The moneys for the Pugsley location will offset the cost of new lands. But it upsets me that the public has no right of appeal against locating this in an agricultural area. A municipality or any government agency can go in and use any land without going to the public."

She also stated that "I don't think we need almost 133 acres — 10 acres is all we require. The cost of the land is not the only money that will be needed, particularly if we are going to ask the agricultural society to use the new site. We will have to repay them at least \$32,000 plus grants if they are denied the use of the town park, which we would not have had without them. There is no public transportation to the proposed site and many children and adults walk to the fair. I know we have annual expenses in restoring the grassed surfaces of the park after the fair, but that is less expensive than this move would be."

Increased truck traffic on roads where residents have already appealed to the town to curtail truck traffic.

At this point Mayor Lazenby interrupted to tell Mrs. Hancey that she didn't have the right to tell council what it should do. "I have every right if I think council is acting incorrectly in considering such a proposal," Mrs. Hancey retorted.

"I concur we do need additional space for a works yard, which is now located in a residential area where land is of prime cost," said Ward 1 Councillor Andy Chateauvert. "The suggested location is considerably out of the built-up area and is central between the north and south ends of the town." (Continued on Page 3)

Town Mourns Charles Stewart

Truck Crash Kills Ward 3 Councillor

Charles L. Stewart, 35, of 313 Kerswell Drive, a member of Richmond Hill Town Council for Ward 3 was killed Tuesday morning about 11 o'clock when his car was in collision with a truck on Concession 5 at 16th Avenue in Markham.

Mr. Stewart was alone in his car at the time.

Driver of the truck was Steven Ruffetti, 25, of Midland Avenue, Toronto.

Elected to council last December, Mr. Stewart brought an enthusiasm and a desire to learn to his responsible position. Although he represented the people of Ward 3, who elected him, well he was not parochial in his outlook and was interested also in the problems of the people of all other wards in town.

In January he was named chairman of council's bylaws and procedure committee, vice-chairman of the planning committee and as a member of the finance committee. As a result of these he was council's liaison with the senior citizens of the town and was instrumental in securing satisfactory meeting quarters for the groups of these citizens in Oak Ridges and Richmond Hill. He was also in charge of arrangements for council's annual awards night held last Thursday evening at the Summit Golf and Country Club and emceed the presentation program.

He proved to be a competent chairman for several meetings, was always approachable to all ratepayers, and an active participant in all events of this, Richmond Hill's Centennial Year.

Surviving are his wife, Betty, and four young sons, Eddy, David, Jamie and Ronnie.

The funeral service will be held in the chapel of the Marshall Funeral Home Friday afternoon at 2 pm. Friends will be received at the funeral home after 7 pm Wednesday.

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CHARLES STEWART Thursday's Emcee

School Principals Here In York Region Put Emphasis On Counselling

Ministry Of Education Abandons Complete Free-Choice Curriculum After Trial Run

By MARGARET LADE

The decision of the Ministry of Education to reinstate English and Canadian studies as compulsory subjects in secondary schools in the province will not make much of a difference to the secondary schools of southern York Region.

Four years ago departmental examinations were dropped, and each school graded its own students in their final year. Since then the credit system has been gradually introduced. To earn a diploma a student was required to accumulate 27 credits over four years, and an additional five for an honor graduation diploma.

When the schools opened in September, the Ministry had gone a step further—permitting students in secondary schools to make a free choice of subjects they wished to take, with the proviso that at least three credits must come from four areas: communications, social and environmental studies, pure and applied sciences and arts.

FOUR ENGLISH CREDITS

The announcement by Education Minister Thomas Wells last week that, as of next September, students starting in secondary school programs will need four credits in English and two in Canadian Studies to get a diploma.

Before September, 1972, English and physical education were compulsory throughout Ontario, with local boards of education setting other course requirements as they saw fit. All boards were encouraged to adopt the credit system.

In making his announcement at Queen's Park November 15, Wells said the English credits could include courses in such subjects as creative writing, special areas of literature, drama, or any other courses which develop communications skills in the English language.

At present English, French, German, Latin, merchandising or shorthand may be considered a "communications" subject for credit purposes.

Canadian studies, said Wells, are important because "never has it been so clear that the unique heritage and culture of Canada and Canadians should be cherished and strengthened. Pride in our country and a genuine sense and patriotism should be considered national priorities, and the schools have an essential role to play."

PRINCIPALS AGREE

A telephone poll (poll, that is) of principals of secondary schools in southern York Region shows that the Ministry's dictum will make very little change in what is

now going on in the schools.

The principals and staff, with board endorsement, have been encouraging students to select a solid academic base for their subject programs, and they welcome the Ministry's backing. In most cases, the principals said also that in their experience the majority of parents want their children to receive more than casual guidance in selecting subjects, that parents still consider the "3 R's" essential as a background for specialized studies in other areas.

The students of York, according to the principals, have also shown wisdom and maturity in their free-choice selection of subjects. Thornlea Principal Stephen Bacsalmasi said, that from press reports of the Minister's statement, "It appears some students and some schools are not getting or giving mature guidance."

STUDENTS CHOOSE WISELY

Allegations that the ending of compulsory courses has allowed students to avoid achieving basic literacy in English do not apply at Thornlea, said Bacsalmasi, who is also superintendent of Planning and Development for the York County Board of Education.

The school, with an enrolment of 1,180, is entering its second trimester, and there are 1,426 en-

rolled in courses in history, geography and social science, all of which include Canadian studies, indicating that many students are taking more than one course in this subject area. Courses in English show an enrolment of 103 percent of the student body, so obviously many are taking two courses in this area, said Bacsalmasi. And in mathematics, "not an easy subject for many", the enrolment is 1,188.

Read Editorial on Page 2

Classroom teachers as well as guidance personnel have a responsibility in helping students and parents realize the implications for the future when they make up their timetables. When the students understand the long-term implications, they can do a good job in subject selection.

NEED QUALITY TEACHING

"We should concentrate on the quality of teaching. With proper direction, students themselves will make wise choices," said Bacsalmasi. "They will not go out for the 'Mickey Mouse' courses."

Langstaff Secondary Principal Robert Kroll says the Ministry's dictum will make little change in his school's study pattern.

"We have insisted on four English credits, one in geography and one in history and there has been no resistance from the majority of students," said Kroll.

As for the parents, most seem to feel there should be more direction, not less, from the Ministry and the board.

"If there is one area that should be reinforced," said Kroll, "it is English. Parents want the 3 R's to be a compulsory part of the school program, and Canadian history certainly should have a place in the curriculum."

STEP IN RIGHT DIRECTION

Thornhill Secondary School's Principal Donald Sherman agrees wholeheartedly with reinstatement of compulsory subjects, particularly at levels 1 and 2 (grades 9 and 10).

The Minister's announcement is "a step in the right direction," he said, adding that at Langstaff, staff tries to encourage students to carry subjects that will give them a solid academic background, and if a student is having difficulties, "we try to zero in on a one to one basis."

The majority of students at Langstaff, which has an enrolment of 1050 in academic and commercial courses, seem to realize that subjects such as English are

required without any pushing from staff.

"Canadian studies could be interpreted in many areas — geography, history, politics," said Kroll, "and the parents are 100 percent behind it."

NOT NEGLECTED AT RHHS

Principal George Domina of Richmond Hill High School said that his school is small enough that the variety of optional courses is limited.

"English and Canadian History have not been neglected in this school. The new policy won't affect us much because of the nature of the school and its size, but generally the Minister's decision is a step in the right direction."

He added that no doubt direction from the top is necessary in some schools or the question would not have arisen in the Legislature. Domina admitted to being "old fashioned" in his thinking on the subject of education and options, adding that he is so old fashioned he would even like to see reinstatement of external examinations (set by the Ministry and tried in all schools across the province) instead of leaving it to each school to set its own "final" examinations.

Principal Arthur Martin of Bayview Secondary in Richmond Hill

is also "very much in favor" of compulsory credits. "It helps to clear the air."

SHOULD INCLUDE PHYS. ED.

Although Bayview was one of the first schools in York to introduce the credit system, Martin says there have been no problems at his school. "Almost everyone takes English and some form of Canadian studies. Of 1,500 students in the school, there are 1,600 enrolled in English courses, an indication that a number are taking more than one English course."

Very few students have graduated from Bayview with less than four credits in English, said Martin, as well as credits in history, geography and social sciences.

As far as "Canadian studies" is concerned, "Martin said this is a very broad area and can be included in any of the courses mentioned above."

His chief regret is that the Ministry has not included physical education in the list of "compulsory" subjects. Martin is president of the Canadian Federation of Provincial School Athletic Associations which held a four-day convention recently in Charlotte-town, Prince Edward Island.

"I am very concerned about physical education being an elective," said Martin.