

Letters

Viewpoint columnist hasn't got all school board facts

Dear editor: Jim Irving in his Viewpoint column asks, "Why all the tumult over the Y.C.B.E. beaurocratic salary increases?"; Simple. My MP, Sinclair Stevens, told me it's because the AIB has re-opened the case for investigation.

Why? Because they are not satisfied that John Raniowski is a one man board to approve Education Director Sam Chapman's proposals.

Now I ask you, "Why do you attack Joy Horton?" Is it because she got our wish as taxpayers to have all the facts out in the open, however unpleasant the results may be?

Or is it because you didn't get yours, a sublime tranquility with all the unpleasantness swept under the rug?

Any insult to Joy Horton is an insult to the taxpayers of East Gwillimbury and we resent it. We are proud of Joy. She is our trustee and her dedication sir, not ambition as you termed it, is to perform the tasks we asked her to do.

We did not like the old rubber-stamp board with its insensitive treatment to the taxpayers, its press releases against the teachers, its secrecy and refusal to give out information, and finally the

rising costs of education with benefits apparent in administration and not in the classroom.

We are the ones who voted overwhelmingly for Joy with the clear understanding she would try to correct these things for us.

Sir, it seems to me that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing."

By the statements in his article, Irving doesn't appear to have read or listened carefully to the proceedings of the March 22 meeting.

According to the minutes of the Oct. 14 meeting, Mr. Weller and Mrs. McMonagle requested that the salary scales for 16-19.8 per cent be withdrawn and that 10 per cent or \$2,400 be paid to the senior staff and the director.

They stated several reasons why they would not approve the 16-19.8 per cent. They voted against it.

Remember sir, these are the two who were members of the four person committee. They state to this day that at no time did the committee approve the salaries.

Who did then? John Raniowski and Mr. Chapman signed the affidavits. The taxpayers want to know who gave them the right to speak for the whole board and

especially our elected trustees?

If this creates tumult, all power to it. I, for one, hope it gathers force and clarifies our questions.

Irving also saw, I hope, in Mr. Chapman's letter of Nov. 17 to the AIB, that the board had ratified an agreement on the Oct. 14

meeting (one day late). Where can you find any mention of ratification or agreement in the minutes of that day?

We the taxpayers have repeatedly encouraged and asked Joy Horton to probe for the truth.

We are indeed proud that for the first time since Mr. Chapman came to office, some of our reserve is coming back to us to help with the mill rate reduction.

The general public realize that every year the board has banked the surplus money in an account and have called it 'their reserve fund'.

The fussy Irving mentions in his article was Joy Horton's attempt to have some surplus returned to us last year.

That sir, was savings from the teacher's strike, which is now by law refundable to the taxpayers, in full.

She was ahead of her time in her moral judgement as to whom this money belonged.

I cannot buy the fact that administrative costs are rising while classrooms are suffering.

Next week the new \$3,000,000 palatial administrative complex opens in Aurora — the one we were told, would not be a burden.

But maybe Mr. Chapman thinks, \$170,000 a year in interest, is not a burden.

He also assured us that the children would not suffer. They do suffer from an overburdened mill-rate. I hope the trustees are too ashamed to have a grand opening.

Trust them, you say. Why should I? I am only grateful to the Joy Hortons in this world and any trustee who has the courage to face the attacks and the harassment in their probing for the truth.

What is important to the taxpayers? That the administration give to our elected trustees the full powers invested in them by their election. That they shall be treated with RESPECT, for they are our trustees.

That their questions must be answered, for if they are not, we the taxpayers, can assume that there is something to be hidden from us.

What is most important to us? It is not the layers of administration. It is the teachers and the calibre of the education of our children in the classroom.

Margaret Preston, 152 Ilcrest Dr., RR1, Newmarket, Ont.



OTTAWA and Small Business

(This column is provided with the co-operation of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and is published by The Liberal in order to provide a forum for a point of view from this important sector of the economy in York Region—Editor)

Lack of quality

By KENNETH McDONALD
Our good workers are middle-aged people who have been used to working. The young people are brought up to the idea that they can get as much as possible for doing nothing. We offer construction workers year-round employment and full careers but they say that they can work for four months, then go on unemployment insurance and be better off. Apprentices programs have broken down because of union demands that everyone be paid the going rate.

These quotes from a government industry-labour seminar, held in October, 1975, describe the number one problem of Canadian small business: quality of labour.

A "no fail" education system drained of competition. UIC benefits for 44 weeks after eight weeks work — the causes have been building for years. Yet in the U.S. the problem is a minor one.

To draw the comparison, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business co-ordinated a survey of U.S. small businesses with a survey of similar scope in Canada. The same question was asked of all participants: "What is the single most important problem facing your business today?"

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Mr. David M. Sorenson, Vice-President of Sorenson Chrysler Plymouth Ltd. wishes to announce that Mr. Garry McIntaggart has joined his staff as sales representative. Mr. McIntaggart has a long career in selling Chrysler products in the area. Garry has been a long time resident of Richmond Hill. He would like to invite all of his many customers and friends to drop in and say hello at

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Issues sticking impossible dream

Dear EDITOR: The year of the smear is indeed here, and apparently moving into high gear.

I would prefer to stick to real issues in the field of education, but in the fraction, political environment of today this may be an "impossible dream".

But I think it is appropriate to reflect on the democratic process in this regard, an issue raised by one of your letter-writers a few weeks ago.

On the agenda of the York County Board of Education meeting last Monday was a motion which contained a direct quotation from the procedural by-laws of the Regional Municipality of York.

The motion requested the board to develop a bylaw to encompass "the intent" of this bylaw, which is clearly related to the democratic process.

The intent is to reinforce the principle that the majority decision shall stand, and to discourage individuals who have expressed contrary views from running about crying "Not me, not me!", thereby casting discredit on the decision and on those who made it.

There is, in the bylaws of most democratically elected bodies, a procedure for reconsidering a motion, but the bylaws of the York County Board of Education do not cover this all-important procedure, except to say that Roberts Rules of Order shall prevail.

Many trustees find Roberts Rules are too limiting for our purposes, and consequently ignore them.

I withdrew the motion on Monday for two reasons:

(1) Some trustees indicated to me they feel the wording in the quotation is unacceptable — and I agree. The region too is in the process of reviewing its bylaws and may rewrite this one to eliminate some obviously unacceptable implications.

(2) Some trustees feel we need to expand the exercise to include other aspects of board decision-making, and I agree.



Trustee Coburn ... goodies Britton

Mr. Britton's early knowledge of the motion, indicated in his letter last week, is interesting because it was not public information until the agenda went to the trustees Thursday evening.

I would have been glad to discuss the motion with him at the meeting on Monday had he been there.

The board held a productive seminar on a Saturday in January at the Huron Heights Secondary School.

The results were finally processed through the board only last Monday evening. Budget and salary discussions have been given priority up until that time.

I am happy to say there will be some procedural bylaws developed as a result of that meeting.

It is my hope that the next step will be to expand on these, not to muzzle debate but to give it a chance to bring about a resolution of divergent views to achieve an ac-

ceptable compromise position which can be defended by all members of the board.

I share Sid Britton's concern that democracy may be in jeopardy today, but not for the same reasons.

I worry about a disrespect for the process, encouraged by the leaking of selected information from in-camera sessions of the board, and the use of the press to gain support for individual opinions not accepted by the board, nor even discussed by it in some instances.

In the case of the minutes of the committee dealing with senior administration salaries, released by the board because of prior selectively released information, the editing done was to remove from a page of the in-camera meeting minutes all items not related to the topic we had agreed to make public.

That is not selective leaking of information. Britton's comments on why I would try to justify the salaries paid to senior staff members is interesting but lacks logic.

In actual fact even with the raises, senior administration salaries for those at the lower end of the scale will be less than the salaries of many of the principals whom they supervise.

It is actually easier for me, as a trustee, to dislodge the director, than for the director to dislodge my husband, or any other teacher.

I am in a great position to add a cheap shot to the "sound and fury". Come to think of it, I wonder why I haven't managed to share in those cannibals, cigars, etc.

I have twice in the past voted, successfully, to restrain salary increases for senior staff because I felt it was the right decision to make at the time.

Perhaps I should get out my scissors and see if the threat of another one will produce, for my husband and I, the goodies Britton described.

MARGARET COBURN, King Twp. trustee, York County Board of Education, Box 299, Schomberg, Ont.

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MAHARISHI MAHESH YOGI

Justice Bill C-38 is disgusting bilgewater

Dear editor: The peace and security legislation in the form of government Bill C-83 now before Parliament will, if passed, signal the beginning of the end for the legitimate firearms owner in Canada.

This bill represents 38 pages of disgusting, highly obnoxious legal bilgewater which has been purposely designed to reduce firearms availability to Canadians by a policy of discouragement — to be accomplished by beaurocratic roadblocks, legal harassment, and arbitrary regulations to be brought in after the bill is passed.

An outstanding feature built into Bill C-83 means that, in essence, the government will vote itself the power now to make the laws later.

Of special interest to farmers, a partial list of Bill C-83's provisions includes the following:

a) Firearms and ammunition have both been re-defined to include components, and a license will be required to possess either. This carries a two-year penalty for violation.

b) Centre-fire rifles with a barrel-length of 18½" or less will have to be registered.

c) Improper storage of firearms and/or ammunition can result in 5 years' imprisonment. A judge may also prohibit ownership for any length of time. "Improper storage" is not defined in the bill, and rules relating thereto will be added later . . . to be changed from time to time.

d) Without a warrant, police may enter any home to search for and seize firearms and ammunition upon "reasonable grounds" of danger.

e) A licence to own a firearm, ammunition, or parts thereof will now be required. The signatures of two guarantors from an unspecified "class of persons" — to be periodically changed — will also be required. A "fee" will be charged, the amount of which can be

periodically raised by regulation. A license, if issued, will only be valid for 5 years.

f) The applicant may be required to provide "further information and documentation" as deemed "reasonable" in determining his "fitness" — perhaps fingerprints and mug shot.

g) A licensing agent may also add any further conditions to the license which he deems desirable regarding transportation of firearms and ammunition. Theoretically, this can be used to curtail all other legitimate uses of long guns between hunting seasons.

Farmers are urged to immediately inform their respective members of Parliament of their total opposition to Bill C-83.

Farmers are also warned not to accept soothing reassurances from any politician who may say the bill will not significantly affect them — for it most certainly will.

If desired, additional information can be obtained from Firearms & Responsible Ownership, Inc. (FARO), P.O. Box 2490, Station D, Ottawa K1P-5W6.

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