

"Reputation tarnished"

Police chief still upset over settlement

York Region Police Chief Bruce Crawford last week registered his protest against an out-of-court settlement of a case in which he and two other police officers had been named as defendants.

"Simply stated, I will not allow myself to be auctioned off in any lawyer's office without at least having had the benefit of discussion as to whom the auctioneer will be," the chief told a meeting of the York Regional Police Commission.

At the meeting, Chief Crawford objected strongly to "the tarnish which has been so recklessly and inconsiderately splashed upon my professional reputation, personal integrity and credibility by the unjust settlement of this action".

The action in question was a \$500,000 suit, brought by Dr. Michael Willinsky, who claimed Chief Crawford, Deputy Chief Wallace Harkness and Constable Stephen Horvath had prosecuted him maliciously.

The chief had been told the case had been "dismissed without costs".

However, he later learned that The Canadian Indemnity

Company had made a settlement of \$2,000 with Dr. Willinsky.

The firm, which insures the region and its employees against liability, apparently disregarded an instruction from the chief and deputy chief, who said: "There is not to be one penny paid in settlement of this action".

The chief told members of the police commission that the lawyer for Canadian Indemnity had told him "the insurance company has paid Mr. Willinsky \$2,000 purely as a matter of economics".

Commenting on the settlement, Chief Crawford said in a report: "I am deeply offended by the outcome of this entire event. I consider that the 'economic reasons' for and the manner in which the outcome was achieved, to be an outrageous violation of the 32½ years of clear record in the police service. I assure the board that I will pursue every legal avenue available to me. . . ."

Later in the report, he added:

"... I do not intend, as of this moment, to place my professional reputation, personal integrity and hard-earned clear record in the hands

of any solicitor appointed by any insurance company that has been retained or appointed as the liability insurers by and for the Regional Municipality of York until such time as I have been consulted with and have agreed upon the selection of that solicitor."

Commission member Ray Twinney, who is also a member of regional council, said the matter had been discussed at regional council and no further action was planned.

He said Regional Solicitor Ted Oakes had said the region has only two alternatives: continue its liability insurance as it is, which means the company has the right to make whatever settlements it sees fit, or cancel the policy and take its chances in court.

Mr. Twinney said there is little chance that regional council would cancel its policy, since it simply wouldn't have the money to pay any major damages awarded by the courts.

He added that, in his mind, the chief and deputy chief were involved in the matter only indirectly and their reputations "are not on the line".

Judge William Lyon, chairman of the police commission, appeared more sympathetic to the chief's situation.

He won support of the commission members for a request that Regional Solicitor Ted Oakes take another look at York's policy.

He wondered whether it might be possible to rewrite the policy to ensure that no similar matter could be resolved without the consent of the people who are insured.

Noting the chief had said he had been named in several more court actions, Judge Lyon also wondered if there might be some way to ensure no solicitor would take an action that "reflects on his integrity".



Four children who got involved in Centre Street East; Jim Mc-Richmond Hill's Clean-Up Day Saturday were, left to right, Edwood Tettman, 9, of Cartier Crescent; Jill Hinchcliffe, 10, Margaret Pond-Brevik of Aurora, who has done much of her research for her honors B.A. and master degrees with the board, was selected to carry out the survey.

Students will be asked if sex education needed

A committee has received sanction from the board of education to survey York County students on their need for sex education.

The survey will be done before the end of this school year at a cost of about \$2,300.

It is the most logical avenue of attack since the committee's studies (headed by chairman and East Gwillimbury Trustee Dr. John Denison) have found little evidence that sex education instruction is effective in reducing the occurrence of unwanted pregnancies, promiscuity and venereal disease among young people.

One reason for such shortcomings, says the committee's interim report, is that relevant instruction is given when educators have thought it necessary as opposed to when the child needs it.

The proposed research should help in the development of a meaningful and effective sex education curriculum — one that is gauged to the needs of the students at each grade level.

It should also give staff and teachers some kind of feedback as to the projected depth of coverage of individual topics, those not well understood, and methods of better communication with students on these

sexual experiences will be kept out of responses and that all attempts to preserve anonymity of those questioned, will be made.

The other trustees agreed that privacy of individual students is important.

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OHS inspector wants children to experience farm animals

Education and understanding are almost synonymous to G. Donald Hepworth, Chief Inspector of the Ontario Humane Society.

The society expects to move into its new 50-acre home on Yonge Street, south of Newmarket on June 1.

Once they get settled, they plan to apply to York Regional Education Authority for a grant enabling them to maintain a number of domestic farm animals, to educate children.

It will give school age children a close-up experience with farm animals, said Mr. Hepworth.

"How many Rich-

mond Hill children have seen sheep," he said. "And how many can tell the difference between domestic fowl and bantams."

The Humane Society plans to tell kids how the animals live, what is good for them and what is bad, and show them what their best environment is.

The theory behind the experiment is the feeling Mr. Hepworth has that if OHS can educate enough children, the amount of neglect and cruelty to animals will be reduced.

Mr. Hepworth would like children to learn how to act in relation to animals.

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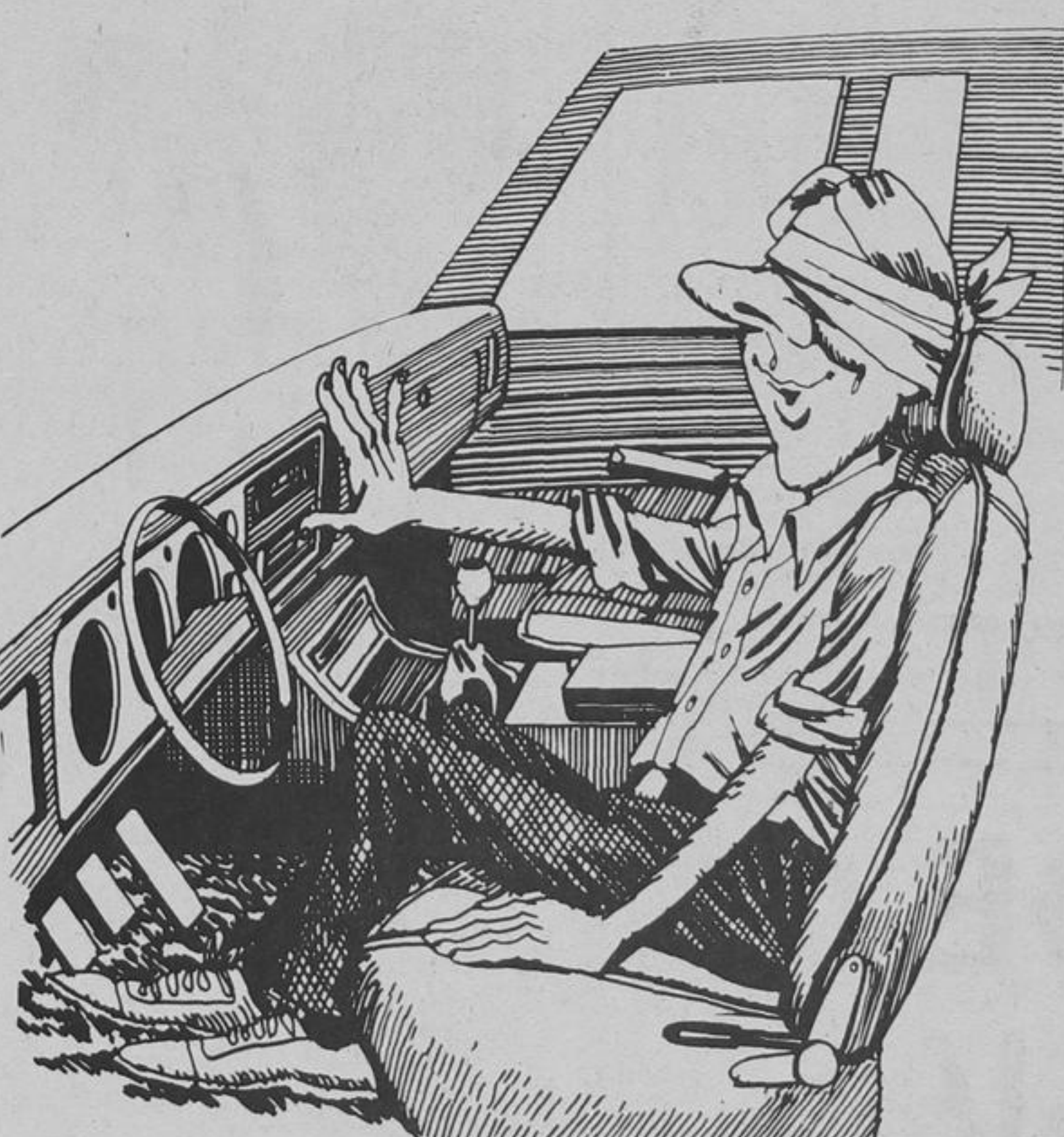
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