

Opinion

Teachers' raises will cost us all

The purpose of a diet is to provide a steady, constant means by which to reduce.

If an individual eats celery all week only to binge on hot fudge sundaes on the weekend, we say they've crashed their diet.

The mediator between the York Region Board of Education and its secondary school teachers has effectively crashed the social contract diet of these two parties.

Mediator Mort Mitchnick has decided that the teachers deserve their yearly increments in spite of the provincial social contract which has



Viewpoint

Paula Crowell

frozen the wages of all provincial employees until 1996.

Mitchnick ruled that at the end of the social contract, teachers will be eligible for raises they didn't receive in the previous three years.

Trustee Harvey Nightingale, who chaired the board's negotiating committee, says this

decision defeats the purpose of the social contract.

He's right. What he doesn't mention is the implications this decision could have on the numerous other unions and federations of workers whose wages are paid by provincial taxpayers.

Taking money out of the hands of teachers isn't an honorable goal.

Most work hard for their earnings and face increasing responsibility in their positions as the front line between children and adult society.

But the point of the social contract was to

save money. Taxpayers money, contributed to by teachers and non-teachers alike.

The difference being that in 1996, teachers will receive a boost to help them manage their increased property and provincial taxes while the majority of the rest of us are still making what we did three years ago, and footing their raise as well.

MARKHAM ECONOMIST AND SUN STOUFFVILLE TRIBUNE UXBRIDGE TRIBUNE
 Weekender edition
 A Metroland Community Newspaper
 PATRICIA PAPPAS, PUBLISHER
 JO ANN STEVENSON, Editor-in-Chief
 PAULA CROWELL, Editor
 ANDREW MAIR, Editor
 DEBRA WELLS, Director of Advertising
 BARRY GOODYEAR, Director of Distribution
 VIVIAN O'NEIL, Business Manager
 PAMELA NICHOLS, Operations Manager
 Markham 294-3200 (local 796-7634, classed 254-4331), Stouffville 640-3100, Uxbridge 852-9741
 254-8244 distribution and administration
 9 Heritage Rd. Markham L3P 1M3
 FAX Markham 294-1538, Stouffville 640-5477, Uxbridge 853-4355
 The Markham Economist and Sun, Stouffville Tribune and Uxbridge Tribune, published every Wednesday and Saturday, is one of the Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing group of suburban newspapers which includes: Ajax Pickering News Advertiser; Barrie's Advance; Brampton Guardian; Burlington Post; Collingwood Connection; Etobicoke Guardian; The Liberal; Georgetown Independent/Acton Free Press; Kingston This Week; Lindsay This Week; Milton Canadian Champion; Mississauga News; North York Mirror; Oakville Beaver; Orillia Today; Oshawa-Whitby This Week; Peterborough This Week; Scarborough Mirror; The Era Banner.
 Contents not to be reproduced without written permission from the publisher.

Heaven awaits you in Oregon

Tell me, bucko — are you fed up to the teeth with higher taxes, idiotic politicians, crooked officials and nasty, pointy-headed bureaucrats?

Had it up to here with radar traps, dog licenses, and fines for overdue library books?

Feel like you'll go bonkers if you're forced to shell out one more loonie for the GST, the PST, the VAT or the Airport Improvement Levy?

If this sounds like you, I have a solution.

All you have to do is stick a For Sale sign on your front lawn, cancel the milk delivery and move to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Heaven on earth, that is. You'll find it on a state map of Oregon, about 30 km south of Salem.

Actually, you won't. The Kingdom of Heaven does not appear on official earthly documents such as road maps. But it's there, nonetheless. The Kingdom of Heaven covers 14 hectares of rolling Oregon countryside. It is presided over by a balding, bearded gentleman with coke-bottle hornrims and the historically resonant moniker of Paul Revere.

That's Pastor Paul Revere, spiritual leader of some 200 faithful adherents and titular head of the not-quite-yet-world-famous Embassy of Heaven Church.

He hasn't always occupied this position — or in fact, this name. Not long ago the pastor was Craig Douglas Fleshman, a clerk in the U.S. Department of Transport. But one day Fleshman decided there must be more to life than a bungalow in the burbs, a Chevette in the driveway and the prospect of punching a keyboard 40 hours a week for the rest of his life. So he resigned, retired and reinvented himself as Pastor Paul Revere, chief shepherd of the Kingdom of Heaven, Oregon Branch.

What are the advantages of living in Heaven? Well, no taxes for starters. Every April, the Pastor receives his Income Tax form in the mail and immediately chucks it unopened in the trash bin. "The Kingdom of Heaven is not of this world," intones the pastor. "Jesus did not pay taxes."

Jesus most likely didn't carry a valid driver's licence either. That's why Pastor Paul tells his flock to toss their licences, tear up their social security cards, close their



Basic Black

Arthur Black

bank accounts and forget about car insurance and vehicle registration.

Naturally, all this freedom does not come without a price tag. Every time Pastor Paul attempts to drive out of the Kingdom of Heaven in his white Dodge Dart, he gets stopped by the cops. The state troopers remind the reverend that his car isn't sporting legal licence plates. They also bring it to his attention that the driver's licence he shows them (issued in Heaven) is not considered legal by Oregon courts of law.

The pastor is unperturbed. When they really hassle him he simply goes limp and refuses to eat until they back off and leave him alone. "I would rather lose my body," he says, "than my soul."

But how to keep body and soul together? After all, even shepherds in the Kingdom of Heaven have to eat. Pastor Paul has an answer. A little paradisiacal cottage industry, as it were. Pastor Paul flogs Kingdom of Heaven licence plates and also passports to the Kingdom of Heaven at 20 bucks a pop.

Lucrative? Even though they aren't worth the gold-embossed papers they're printed on, the passports are selling like, well, celestial hot cakes.

Reminds me of the story of a famous American public figure by the name of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen. One night on his way to give a lecture at the Philadelphia city hall, the Bishop got lost in a rather bad neighborhood. He went up to a tough looking guy in front of a bar, told him he was a guest speaker and asked for directions to the city hall. The tough guy told him where to go then asked him what he was going to talk about.

"I'm speaking about how to get to heaven," said the Bishop. "Would you like to come listen?" "Hell, no," said the hood. "You don't even know how to get to city hall."



DOUBLE LOONEY

ADAM

Adam[®] by Brian Basset

