

# Funding religious schools wrong, retired teacher tells Tory

From page 1.

“Mr. Reodica stated, adding, “Everybody is accountable for their actions”

He has filed a complaint. Resident, Cliff Dunkeld felt having a representative who lives locally would be advantageous to the town. Whitchurch-Stouffville has been represented by Tory Frank Klees, an Aurora resident.

As a Whitchurch-Stouffville councillor, Mr. Bannan said, he has forged close bonds with the mayor and council, which will allow him to address the issues for constituents if he's elected provincially.

Mr. Bannan is hearing a lot about his party's proposal to fund to religious schools as he knocks on doors around the riding. He thinks the problem was in the party's presentation.

“People are satisfied now that it has been taken off the table,” Mr. Bannan said.

Mr. Tory said Monday he would allow a free vote on the issue at Queen's Park, if he becomes premier.

The story was front-page in the Toronto dailies. Mr. Tory walked by newspaper boxes on Main Street with his photograph and news of his change of heart looking out.

David Brown, who moved to Stouffville four months ago, said the people of Stouffville are “going to go blue”, judging by the election signs he's seen.

While there was a short flurry of handshaking and greeting at places such as Scotiabank and For the Love of Jo, the visit to Stouffville Fine

Furniture was more intense. Owner Ville Papas made sure Mr. Tory was aware of how difficult it was for Canadian manufacturers of furniture to compete because of lower-priced imports. She prides herself on carrying mainly Canadian-made goods.

Canadian furniture manufacturers are on “shaky ground”, Mrs. Papas told Mr. Tory.

It's also important for companies to give employees 40-hour work weeks, instead of part-time jobs, she said.

A program to help promote Canadian goods might be one solution, Mr. Tory said, as well as tax breaks for owners who want to improve their businesses.

The Conservatives have a proposal to help with the revitalization of small town downtowns, Mr. Tory said.

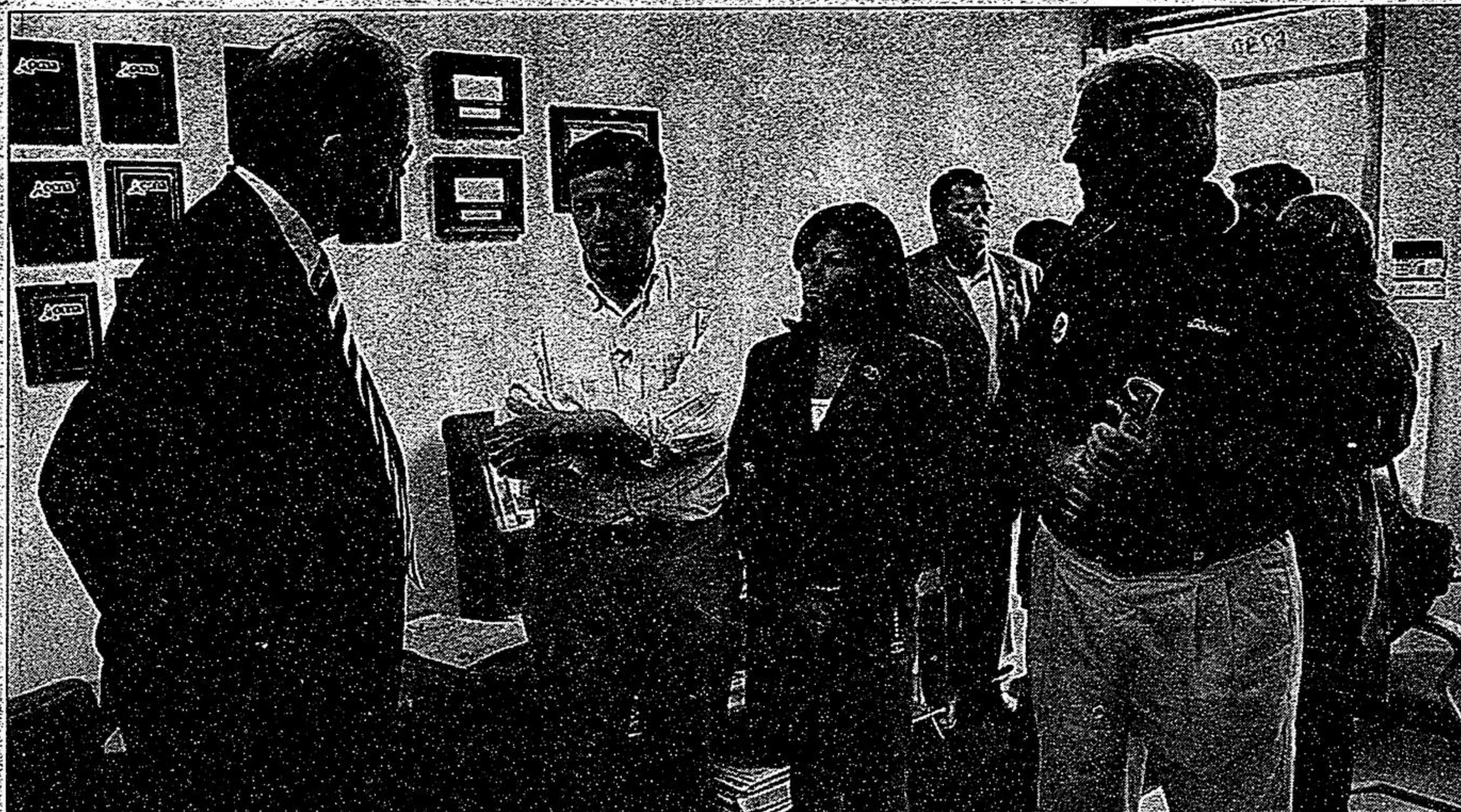
While talking to Suze Joyce, owner of the Healing Force, Mr. Tory noted that his party wants to put an electronic health record in place, so pharmacists and doctors can alert patients if they are taking too many or the wrong kinds of drugs.

As the media and assistants almost filled her store, Mrs. Joyce asked if the Montessori Schools would be affected by faith-based funding.

Since they aren't faith based, they aren't involved, Mr. Tory said.

In six-provinces and territories in Canada, all schools are publicly funded, he said. Ontario is the only province where only the Catholic schools are funded.

Retired teacher Herb Bell stopped Mr. Tory on the street and suggested world religions



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEN

Sun-Tribune editor Jim Mason (left) talks with Conservative Leader John Tory, his wife Barbara Hackett and Oak Ridge-Markham candidate Phil Bannan at the newspaper's offices during a tour of Main Street Tuesday.

be taught in all schools in the province instead.

“Faith-based schools are divisive,” he said.

“Children live together, share their time together and

need to be in school together,” Mr. Bell said.

At The Sun-Tribune office, Mr. Tory picked up the most recent edition “to read on the bus”.

He talked of delivering the Toronto Star as a boy near Lake Simcoe and chatted with staff.

“I bet Phil Bannan's in here all the time, hoping someone

will take his picture,” he said.

The tour continued in Durham Region and moved to Ottawa yesterday.

Election day is Wednesday.

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