

Springfield Teacher Challenges

The head of Springfield's special education program Monday night denied that the district board had legitimate grounds for demoting her.

Appearing at a meeting of the board in the school administration building, Mrs. Rita McDonald said she was "amazed" when she learned last month that the board had voted to demote her from supervisor of special education to the status of a regular teacher. The demotion included a \$800 pay cut.

"If something had been wrong with the special education program, the teachers and other supervisors would have told me," Mrs. McDonald said. "You cannot build the kind of program we have here without the full cooperation of the teachers."

The special education department was established in the fall of 1950 to help children who are mentally retarded or have physical or emotional handicaps. Mrs. McDonald was hired as supervisor in 1952.

The school board voted to demote Mrs. McDonald and another department supervisor during a closed meeting March 9. The action was disclosed at the next public meeting of the board, but no reason was given for the demotions. Asst. Superintendent Laurence Moffit said later that the board had decided there would be no point in airing the cases in public.

Mrs. McDonald said Monday night she believed part of the criticism against her came from the department's refusal to accept physical examination forms prepared by chiropractors. She read the board copies of 2 letters from Springfield chiropractors asking her to maintain a fair-minded attitude toward their profession.

Denying that she had been unfair, Mrs. McDonald said her office had once tried to submit a chiropractor's examination form to the state department of education. She said the state returned the form with instructions to have the child examined by a medical doctor.

One member of the school board, Dr. Melvin P. Bryson, is a Springfield chiropractor. The board made no comment to Mrs. McDonald's statements.

Mrs. McDonald said she knew there had been complaints from medical doctors as well as from chiropractors over the physical examination forms required for children in special education. She said she had heard objections to the paper-work involved in filling out the forms.

SALARIES DISCUSSED

"We have to require the examinations," Mrs. McDonald said. "One out of 7 children in the program has physical disabilities that need treatment."

Three points on the district's 1955-56 salary schedule came in for criticism at the meeting as representatives of music teachers, coaches and school principals asked the board to reconsider its plans for setting their salaries and extra benefits.

High school basketball coach Roger Wiley said that coaches in the system will take a cut in pay because of the board's decision to pay a flat amount for extra coaching duties instead of adding an amount based on a percentage of the coaches' salaries.

GI Treason Cases Mount

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Justice Department says an estimate that some 200 treason cases might stem from the Korean War may have been "much too conservative."

Asst. Atty. Gen. William F. Tompkins told a House Appropriations subcommittee, in testimony released this week, that the department already is acting on 175 treason cases involving GIs captured by the Communists during the Korean fighting.

Tompkins, Justice Department security chief, said he expected "many more" cases to follow.

Although there have been a number of court-martial trials against former POWs, none has yet been charged with treason.

Without elaborating, Tompkins said also that "a large number of potential espionage cases," not limited to service personnel, are being investigated.

Meeting Demotion Act

aries. He recommended that the payments to teachers be increased.

Frank Light, director of the Springfield High School band, said that music teachers in the school system should receive extra pay to compensate for the amount of work they do outside of regular school hours.

Ray McCormack, Maple School principal, said principals in

Springfield schools feel that their salaries are not on a par with those paid to principals in comparable districts. He asked the board to consider revising the principals' scale upward.

Dr. Melvin Bryson read to the board a letter he had received from State Sen. Gene L. Brown in which Brown described a bill he has proposed to prevent pro-

ganda from being distributed through the schools. Board chairman George Easton said the board's policy had been to discourage such activities.

The board discussed the question of giving teachers time off to attend special conferences. Supt. Eugene Silke recommended that the board decide on a definite number of teacher-days that will be allowed each year for

conferences. No final action was taken on the subject during the meeting.

Board members also discussed a proposal that they visit parent-teacher groups in the schools to discuss the budget for the coming year and to encourage residents to vote in the coming school election. The school election, in which voters will be asked to vote on the budget and a \$300,000

bond issue for construction, will be held April 28.

At the close of the meeting, Easton presented the outgoing superintendent with a barometer as a token of his 15 years' service in Springfield. Silke will assume the superintendent's post at Troutdale next fall. No plans have been announced for the selection of his successor in Springfield.

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Driver Charged

An accident in which his car reportedly rammed a merry-go-round fence at the Big Y Market Saturday resulted in a disorderly conduct charge against Seth William Gard, 42, 389 Blair Blvd. Gard pleaded innocent Monday morning in municipal court and was released on \$100 bail.

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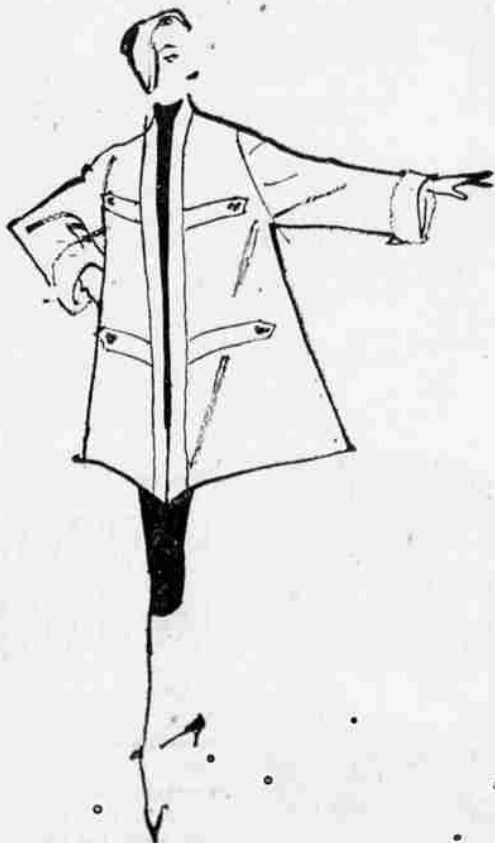


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