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We've got to separate plant and the people

Following an outburst on this page last week in connection with the education of our children we've had visits from several parents and a few teachers. Some have said we don't know what we're talking about. Others have said something like, keep up the good work.

One teacher of six years made an interesting observation. He actually complained of a lack of supervision in terms of his own efforts. In all his six years, he's had one visit to his classroom (and a quick one, at that) from a superior checking up on his teaching methods.

Compare that, said the teacher, to how our various governmental bodies inspect things like buildings, or road work or sewer construction....

All of which raises an excellent point, and brings us to the kind of meetings school boards of trustees hold. We've covered probably over a hundred meetings of school boards in a number of Ontario communities. The boards have always had one thing in common. Trustees spend 95 per cent of their time talking about teachers' salaries, improvements to the school's eavestroughs, wax for the floors, new fire escapes, a computer in the administration office, a new paint job for the kindergarten room and so on.

We've seldomly attended a meeting where the quality of education was the subject for trustees to consider.

All this sounds negative?

We don't mean to be negative and we realize full well the difficulties facing our trustees on our boards of education.

The problem lies in the way our whole system is set up.

We keep mixing our soft services and hard services in one bag, right from the federal level of government down through the provincial one to the regional and local level.

And we keep putting people who are good at hard service management in charge of the people-kind-of-services. There lies the problem, and a drastic and basic change in this respect is required.

Government should be simply divided into two categories - one dealing with people, the soft services, and the other dealing with buildings and roads and sewage disposal plants and things.

You'd be amazed what it would do to the existing government red tape we all face.

Bring this simple proposition to the local level, and see how many now separate departments could work together as a unit and how manpower could be utilized to the maximum benefit and how, for example, our soft services people would have ample time on their hands to really get into the business of what goes on in the classroom.

We are convinced our teachers would welcome it, our parents would and our students would come out the winners.

The "hard services" board could look after the "education plant" as some present day administrators lovingly refer to it.

If enough of us start pushing for this kind of government setup we'll see it come about. In our lifetime. If we push hard enough, perhaps even before our youngest child has graduated from high school.

Think about it!

Public relations or just a party?

A wine and cheese party? A five-and-one-half-day unscheduled holiday for Christmas? Oh to be a municipal employee of Halton Hills.

To the holidays we don't object all that strongly. With Christmas right in the middle of the week many offices and businesses have decided to close Tuesday and open again the next Monday.

We do however, find the reason that Mayor Tom Hill originally presented for giving the town's office employees an extra day off very objectionable.

Halton Hills' employees, our Mayor tells us, worked on Remembrance Day. They were the only ones in Halton to do so. That's far from an adequate reason for giving our employees an extra day off, whether it was actually Remembrance Day or a Friday during the Christmas season.

That's what you call setting a precedent.

Because Halton did it does not mean Halton Hills must follow suit. After all, how many times has Halton Region followed Halton Hills' example? It's nice to see municipal

employees trying to work a little harder than their counterparts in another municipality.

However this bit about a wine and cheese party has really got our backs up. Council has approved a public-sponsored party on the afternoon of Christmas Eve for themselves and the town's office workers.

The purpose, we're told, is to increase the public relations between the staff, administrators and council. Or at least that's how they justify paying for it from the Public Relations Budget. There's reportedly over \$800 in the fund but certainly not all of that is going to be spent on the Christmas Eve Party.

What really gripes us is that when a reporter covering a town council meeting asked for a copy of a new town bylaw which will affect each and every one of us in Halton Hills, he was told that, to provide the Press with copies of these public bylaws would be too costly.

Weighing a hunk of cheese or a glass of wine against a bit of real public relations we find it very hard to balance the two.

Farmers taking a stand, thank goodness

We were encouraged to see at last Wednesday's annual meeting of the Halton Federation of Agriculture that farmers in this area have finally begun to pull together to protect their own interests. Of course a little dissension was sparked when the operator of a beef operation didn't quite see eye to eye with a crop farmer but then, when have cattlemen and farmers ever been able to agree?

The important factor to come from the evening was farmers have become organized—largely within the past year—to the extent they are now a recognized, very formalized faction here in Halton. This is particularly important during these days when an official plan for the region of Halton is still lying on the planners' drawing boards.

Farmers, it seems, have never been able to see that they have to work just as hard to get and then protect something in the paper world of government as they do on a day to day basis to get something from the land.

Perhaps trusting a little too naively in their elected representatives they allowed themselves to fall victims to any whim or fancy of something they really didn't understand: local government.

It's a bit ridiculous, but compare that attitude with the thinking of that other group of men aiming to make money from the land: developers. When it came down to protecting their interests no holds were barred. They spent time, money and a lot of effort

to get what they wanted. And they usually got it.

It was about time farmers started looking out for themselves, because, very directly, by looking out for themselves they are looking out for us.

Talk of any sort of food shortage may not really strike home to those of us living snugly here in Halton Hills. But consider this fact brought out quite frequently these days by agriculturalists and conservationists alike: Every hour 26 more acres of farmland are taken out of production, permanently.

It's about time someone put a stop to this indiscriminate loss of prime farmland. And who better to do it than those who now own that land?

But farmers, they will tell you, have to live too. How do you encourage them to stay in it when costs—from fertilizer to feed—are skyrocketing, yet farm incomes are low?

Farm income stabilization programs, protection of farming as a major industry, and an expanded ARDA program are ideas worth looking at, particularly that last one. ARDA was originally set up by the federal government to encourage farming in remote areas of the country. Well, if promotion of agriculture was the prerequisite then let's apply it here because—as the Niagara fruit belt and other specialized soil areas dwindle under development's constant, head-on rush

towards who knows what—agriculture as big business must be promoted more now than ever before. It would, indeed, make more sense to pour the federal money into supporting farming where farming is both needed and productive, than into remote areas of eastern Ontario (where it is now going) to subsidize a farmer who's trying to turn out a minimal crop from a couple of inches of top soil.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture has suggested a negative capital gains tax which, they claim, would be an extremely simple method of ensuring that farmers do not come out on the losing end of a zoning change which would decrease the per acre value of their property. We

question that. It would appear more like an easy way for some farmers to pack it in without worrying about whether or not they have a few bucks left to retire in town with.

The one point on which we totally agree with the OFA and the HFA is that Class 1 and 2 lands, defined under the Canada Land Inventory, must be reserved for food production. Any changes of use for those lands must require very close public scrutiny.

That point must be impressed upon public planners here in Halton as they devise a plan of development for this region's growth. From the reports we've heard the farmers are doing it and for that we congratulate them and encourage them to carry on.



Wanted; An Attractive Attendant

I wish I was an "Attractive Attendant". Not that I don't like being a six-foot, one-inch collection of sheer muscle and might. It's just that there seems to be a heckuva lot more money in being an "Attractive Attendant" these days.

Have you noticed those long lists of ads in the Help Wanted sections of the Toronto papers all wanting "Attractive Attendants"? By actual count there were 25 of them in the Toronto Sun one day last week.

"Attractive Attendants wanted for west end health spa. Phone..." Well, we all know what it's all about and if you don't, you're too young to know. Go ask your mother. But, just for fun, I put myself in the position of being an extremely "Attractive Attendant" just so I could feel as though I had a chance to take advantage of all the opportunities in store.

After studying all the offers I decided that my choice of future employers would come down to:

"Attendants Attractive to work in our luxurious surroundings and join Toronto's most beautiful group of attendants..." Being one of the most beautiful "Attractive Attendants" around, I would certainly require a place of employment where I could mingle with my peers.

"Attractive Attendants required for Toronto's finest and most progressive studio. Call..." Now that sounds interesting. Progressive! A refreshing opportunity to be among the forefront of my trade in bridging

about progressive changes in methods and innovations.

Mind you, it's not hard to see that there could be a shoddy side to the trade. I mean, what kind of place would tell an unknowing "Attractive Attendant" to apply at the "lower level" of a certain address between the hours of 9 and 12 a.m. on Wednesday only?

Then there's the place that advertised for "Attractive Attendants



by BILL JOHNSTON

for new gentleman's Health Club." What kind of person might this new gentleman be? An encyclopedia salesman who struck it rich last week? Or perhaps a butler who's looking for a night out?

However, equality has hit the "Attractive Attendant" trade. One health club owner, who was either extremely realistic or just desperate, dropped all qualifications. He just wanted "Attendants for health studio. Call..." Good location too, right on Gerrard. A nice way for mother to

pick up a few extra dollars for Christmas.

My eye caught this one. Was it a mistake or just a new way of asking the same thing? Right in the midst of all these ads for "AA's" was an ad for "Experienced spray buff operation with a clean driving record."

Actually the Help Wanted section can provide some interesting reading when you really get into it. I mean, look at the golden opportunities for a young person willing to tackle anything.

The TTC is looking for drivers. Free uniforms, good pay, pension plan, starting rate of \$5.01 per hour and—here comes the clincher—free transportation. No kidding.

The Italian-Canadian Benevolent Corporation is looking for a "site representative co-ordinator." If that's not your style, how about "assistant to the PDI foreman re: new car check-up."

The Skyline Hotel wants a doorman or doorwoman. The Four Seasons Hotel wants a busboy or busgirl. York Mills Pontiac is looking for a bodyman or bodywoman. A general insurance company is looking for a Boy Friday or a Girl Friday. Hearn Pontiac wants a Shop Foreman or a Shop Forewoman.

Yes, classifieds can be fun, particularly if there is a mistake. One of the worst bloopers I've seen for quite a while had to do with a fellow who was building greenhouses. He

ATTENDANTS attractive to work in our luxurious surroundings & join Toronto's most beautiful group of attendants. 781-4637. 1616 Eglinton Ave. W.
ATTENDANTS attractive for new gentleman's Health Club. 749-9355. 6 Milken Drive, corner of Finch.
ATTENDANTS wanted for health club. Call 789-7109.
ATTENDANTS for brand new north west Health Studio. Airport location, close to all hotels. Apply 6451 Airport Rd., or call 676-9843.
ATTENDANTS attractive for newly opened Health Studio. Full or part time, excellent wages. 3064 Hurontario St. 270-3526.
ATTENDANTS needed for health studio. Call 595-1335 or drop in to 2 Gerrard St. W.
ATTRACTIVE attendants & R.M. wanted for "Exclusive Health Studio" 1724 Eglinton West. For information please call 781-5687.
ATTRACTIVE Attendants wanted. Apply in person

ran short of glass windows so decided to run a small classified. Unfortunately it finally read: "Wanted: Widows for hot beds. Call..."

If the Georgetown Jaycees will forgive me I will tell another one. (Having been invited to speak to their meeting last week I decided to pull some clippings out of my blooper file. So they've already heard this one.)

Two classifieds were placed together, one right beneath the other one, in an American paper. The top ad read:

"If you drink, that's your business. If you want to stop, that's our's. Contact Alcoholics Anonymous..."

Right beneath it:
"If you drink, that's our business. City Bar, 123 Main."