



LONG LOAD

(Herald photo)

Although Ferro Steel on Armstrong Avenue, Georgetown may ship out heavier loads, the one that moved out Friday morning has to be a record for length. The load was 110 feet long. These long span steel joists were heading for a construction sight

in Brampton. The tractor hauling the load was remarkable too, a company spokesman said, since the back of the load was mounted on a steerable dolly which was not attached to the front of the load. The tail just follows where the cab leads it.

VIEWPOINT

Consumer warnings in book

By GERRY LANDSBOUGH
Herald columnist

I just finished a copy of The Canadian Consumers Survival Book (it's available at the library) and I don't know if I'll survive what I read.

Like most consumers I'm aware of certain "ripoffs" but I wasn't prepared for the many products that I believed in, that were a definite consumer "no-no".

What put me in the mood for consumerism was a series of errors on a local supermarket's cash register tape that amounted to \$14.35. To be fair to supermarket it was a new girl on the register but \$14.35 is not your average few cents error.

For most of us because it comes from a machine we believe the total as "God's own truth" instead of taking five or ten minutes to check our bill. This checking of one's bill is also an indication of age - I recall as a young person of 25 thinking how stuffy my Aunt was as she painstakingly went over her groceries comparing prices to what was on the tape, and then adding the total herself for comparison. She wasn't so stuffy after all - she was just more experienced at the consumer rip-off game. Back to the Canadian Consumer Survival (CCS) book.

FOOD SECTION
In the food section, CCS implies that "all" major food chains have been charged at one time or another for various

discrepancies. The old butcher's trick of thumb on the scale still applies and the CCS recommends that the consumer weigh produce and meat at home and if short changed the consumer should return the product and raise a little hell.

In the labelling of the cuts of meat again major food chains have been charged. Cheaper cuts are substituted for expensive cuts and I almost believe that you would have to be a butcher to know the difference. Recently the papers have run stories on how major chains have been mixing pork in with their beef and selling it as all beef hamburger.

CCS doesn't recommend "any" of the orange flavour crystal drinks. Apparently some contain harmful additives and the others don't have any nutrients whatsoever except that vitamin C is added.

Here's a good one: Butterball turkeys don't contain any butter despite what the commercials says. What they do have is 3 per cent injected fat (not butter) and most have coconut oil or water. How nice! CCS recommends that if you want a prebasted turkey - do your own basting and at least you'll know what Mr. Turkey has inside him.

The chapter on food is loaded with so many tales to tell. Before we leave the food section we should mention the health food - if you're a health food freak - beware. Health food stores charge a 30 per

cent markup on products that are available at your local supermarket. Some of the other so called "health" products are anything but, according to CCS.

If the recent cancer scare hasn't unnerved you enough to forsake your favorite brew maybe this will. According to CCS a Mr. Olavo Mirand sued Labatts when he found the remains of a dead field mouse in his bottle. Mr. Mirand drank a case of beer every week for 16 years but since his rather unpleasant experience has switched to wine.

Let us leave the depressing food situation and take a quick look at some of the other chapters.

HOUSING PROBLEMS

Housing - What can happen to the consumer when buying a house is downright criminal. It is too complicated to cover in this short space but it is enough to say that the home buyer should "shop" for home, mortgage, etc. and be very knowledgeable about "terms" and "interest rates". Car - this section is mind boggling. Ford, Thunderbirds and Continentals are referred to as "Ford's luxury lemons". Fiats according to CCS are great for Italy but nothing but grief in Canada. Under the non-recommended cars is the Cordoba - the one I was planning to buy. Oh well.

Next came medicine and law. We are all aware of the hanky-panky that goes on here

but the CCS spells it out for us.

All in all the Canadian Consumers Survival Book is great in terms of information but it sure discourages a lot of things I had grown used to such as eating, driving and faith in my fellow man.

Till next week, remember "caveat emptor" that's Latin for what was a problem even in ancient Rome. Translated it means... "Let the buyer beware".

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Michael Hollett

Herald editor

Police and guns hot issue

Few of us ever experience the anxiety and concern that spouses of police officers do every time their husband or wife ventures out on the job, from the time they enter their patrol cars or begin to walk their beat they are exposed to danger.

It's not easy being home knowing your spouse is on the beat. Each time the phone rings it may be to tell you some drunk has taken a shot at your husband or wife.

This in mind, there has long been a strong argument made for heavily arming the police and training them to shoot to save their lives if threatened.

However, the recent flurry of deaths at the hands of Toronto police has served to raise the question of just how our police are trained to use their gun, and under what circumstances.

The Herald spoke with representatives of the local force on this issue and we were pleased to learn no one has died yet at the hands of the police. However, it was disturbing to me to hear how our police are trained to use their weapons.

For starters, the police get "combat shooting", practise once a month. Staff Sgt. Eric Bullock in charge of the training describes it as not quite "as accurate as target shooting".

Days numbered

The police are trained to shoot at the widest part of the body, that's the torso and it's a pretty safe bet that if you catch a slug from a Halton officer's 38 special calibre Smith and Wesson in the guts, your days are numbered.

If you're brandishing a shotgun or a revolver at the officer or maybe holding someone hostage and there is absolutely no alternative, a police officer finally has to defend himself.

But what about people who aren't carrying guns that the police draw arms on? I know it's not fair to lump the Halton police with the Metro cops currently embroiled in the city-wide controversy, but it doesn't sound like our police are being trained to do anything but kill when they draw a gun.

It's argued that when being threatened by someone waving a gun, an officer doesn't want to take a chance and play "Tom Mix" and try to blast a gun out of the person's hand.

But what about the "violent person" wielding a hand held weapon, like a sickle as happened in the recent Toronto shooting.

Shoot for legs

Staff Sgt. Bullock says "I'm going to knock him down." Okay, but why not shoot for the legs? Surely if the Red Brigade in Italy can blast at politicians' kneecaps, why can't our police fell a criminal with a shot to the legs? But they're not even trained for this contingency.

Unless I'm mistaken, carrying a dangerous weapon still isn't a capital offence in this country but it is if the investigating police officer shoots you.

Obviously, I'm not defending people who threaten police but I don't think they should be shot in the stomach. When local officers only practise shooting once a month, and only practise how to blast somebody, it's unlikely they would even consider trying to wound an assailant not armed with a gun. Let's face it, when an officer is out on the lines in a tense situation, that's not the time to try out some fancy shooting.

I think Halton police, and all police, should be trained at target shooting, to shoot for the lower part of the body so they at least have the option of wounding someone they consider dangerous. It would help make the ugly situation that has developed in Toronto a little less likely to happen here.

RUNNING READY - On a lighter note, Running, the major movie partially shot in Georgetown last year, starring Michael Douglas should be released by November. The film was originally supposed to be released last spring but has run into countless delays. But we know for sure it's finished. It was the Canadian entry recently at something called the San Sebastian film festival.

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