

Councillors give Canada Post the cold shoulder

A speech made about the success of Canada Post at a town meeting Monday was "flag-waving media-hype" rural Halton Hills councillor Joe Hewitt told a Canada Post representative.

Mr. Hewitt said a presentation read by Peter Darvill, director of city services for Canada Post west Metro division was "almost offensive."

Mr. Hewitt said Canada Post's profit of \$96 million last year was due to reductions in service decreases in staff and increase in volume.

"This is just an opportunity for Canada Post to stand up and wave the flag," the councillor said in response to Mr. Darvill's claims that the postal service had increased while costs to taxpayers decreased since 1981.

"I find a presentation like this to be media-hype," he said.

Mr. Darvill told Halton Hills councillors that Canada Post recorded its first profit in 33 years in 1988. He said proposed changes for the crown corporation mean that Canadians are paying once for postal service when they go to retail outlets and not twice by paying through taxes.

"Canadian taxpayers are no longer being asked to bear the burden of postal benefits," Mr. Darvill said.

But Coun. Hewitt said Canada Post is spending money on advertising. "If this is supposed to be a cost-cutting measure, all I see is Canada Post out there trying to sell a new image."

Coun. Rick Bonnette and Al Cook approved of going to the local councils to inform them directly about Canada Post's operations. They said it would save money otherwise spent on television advertisement.

Acton Coun. Norm Elliot questioned the Canada Post representative about super mail boxes, saying there is "inequity" when older houses can get door-to-door service while newer subdivisions rely on super mail boxes.

"Obviously Canada Post anticipated that you would encounter some reaction from citizens when you got into topics like community mail boxes," the councillor said to Mr. Darvill.

The Canada Post representative said super boxes are part of Canada Post's 1981 long-range plan that asked for the crown corporation, in debt in 1981 to be "breaking even" financially by 1988.

"There had to be some hard decisions made. We still had to deliver the mail. We had to get better at delivering the mail."

Mr. Darvill said there is "resistance" to change in the

postal service within both the rural and urban sectors. But he said at a recent meeting in Whitby, residents were "happy" with community postal boxes.

"It was building pride in the community. People were meeting each other who had never met each other before," he said.



Joe Hewitt

Canada Post will work to retain rural post offices, Mr. Darvill told councillors. He said those post offices are "in rural Canada to stay."

But Rural Dignity, the cross-Canada organization formed to combat rural post office closures, says Canada Post intends to use "natural opportunity" to privatize and close rural post offices, ousting the postmaster from the system. Retirement of a postmaster, death of a retailer, or sale of a local store give the crown

\$250,000 damage in flour mill fire

By DONNA KELL
Herald Staff

Halton Flour Milling Inc. owner Brian Dolotowicz stayed at his Mill Street office until 6:30 Friday night, unaware that flames were licking at the insides of his flour mill and would cause an estimated \$250,000 damage.

He was exiting the Acton milling company when a warning from a boy across the road alerted him of the developing fire. "We were inside the office ready to go home," Mr. Dolotowicz, who had stayed late for a meeting that night told the Herald Tuesday. "Some kid said, 'Hey you're mill's on fire.' We didn't believe him at first."

Mr. Dolotowicz said there are no windows in the front office - no way of knowing that a fire was building inside the flour mill.

The Halton Hills Fire Department says the blaze broke out in a shed that sits atop four of the mill's silos. The fire then spread down to the silos.

"A couple of the silos got cracked through the heat and they may have to be repaired. I don't know," Mr. Dolotowicz said Tuesday.

"We won't be able to carry as much inventory as we had."

Firefighters battled the blaze for five hours Friday night. The loose flour and grain in the mill could have exploded if hit by sparks or flame, the mill owner said.

The plant itself was unharmed by the blaze. The company was back in to operation yesterday (Tuesday). It will be Christmas before the storage area, where mill inventory is kept, is back to full service.

Acton Councillors Rick Bonnette and Norm Elliot were at the scene Friday. Coun. Bonnette said the fire department did a "great job" dousing the blaze.

"It was a potentially dangerous

situation and it was averted, by firefighters and volunteers," he said.

Halton Flour Milling Inc. has been in operation in Acton for the

past seven years. The milling itself has been at that location since 1835. Halton Flour Milling supplies wheat flour to buyers in all parts of Southern Ontario.

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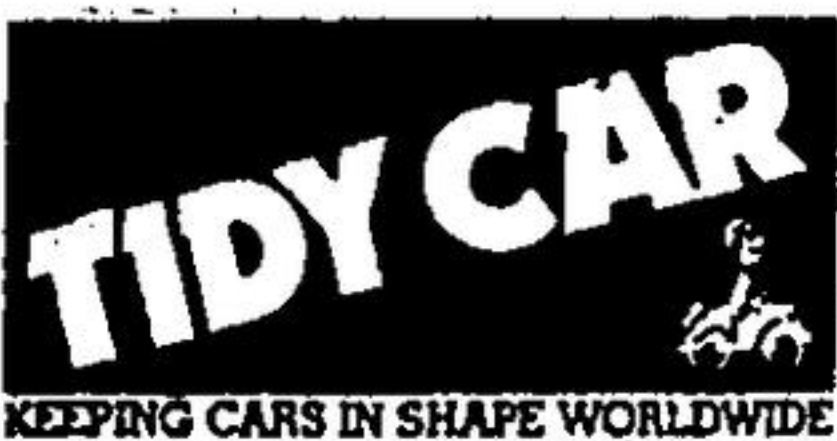
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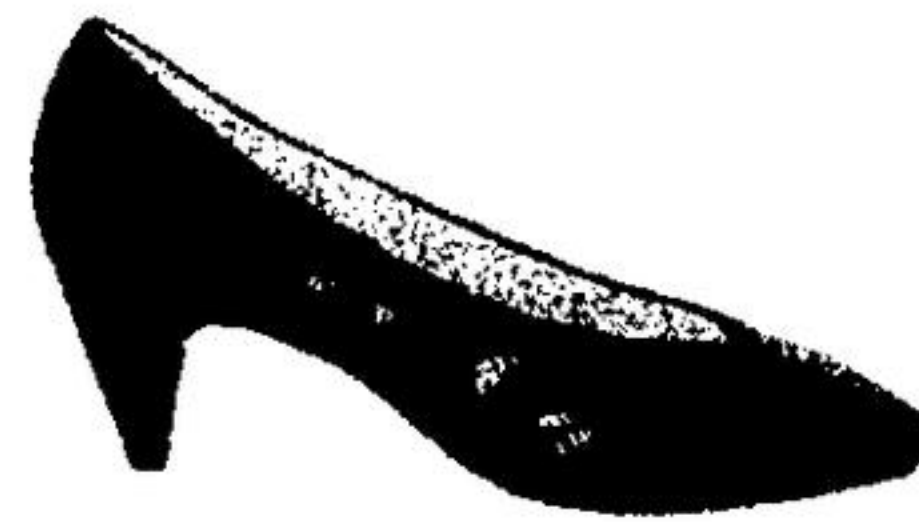
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