



COMMENT



THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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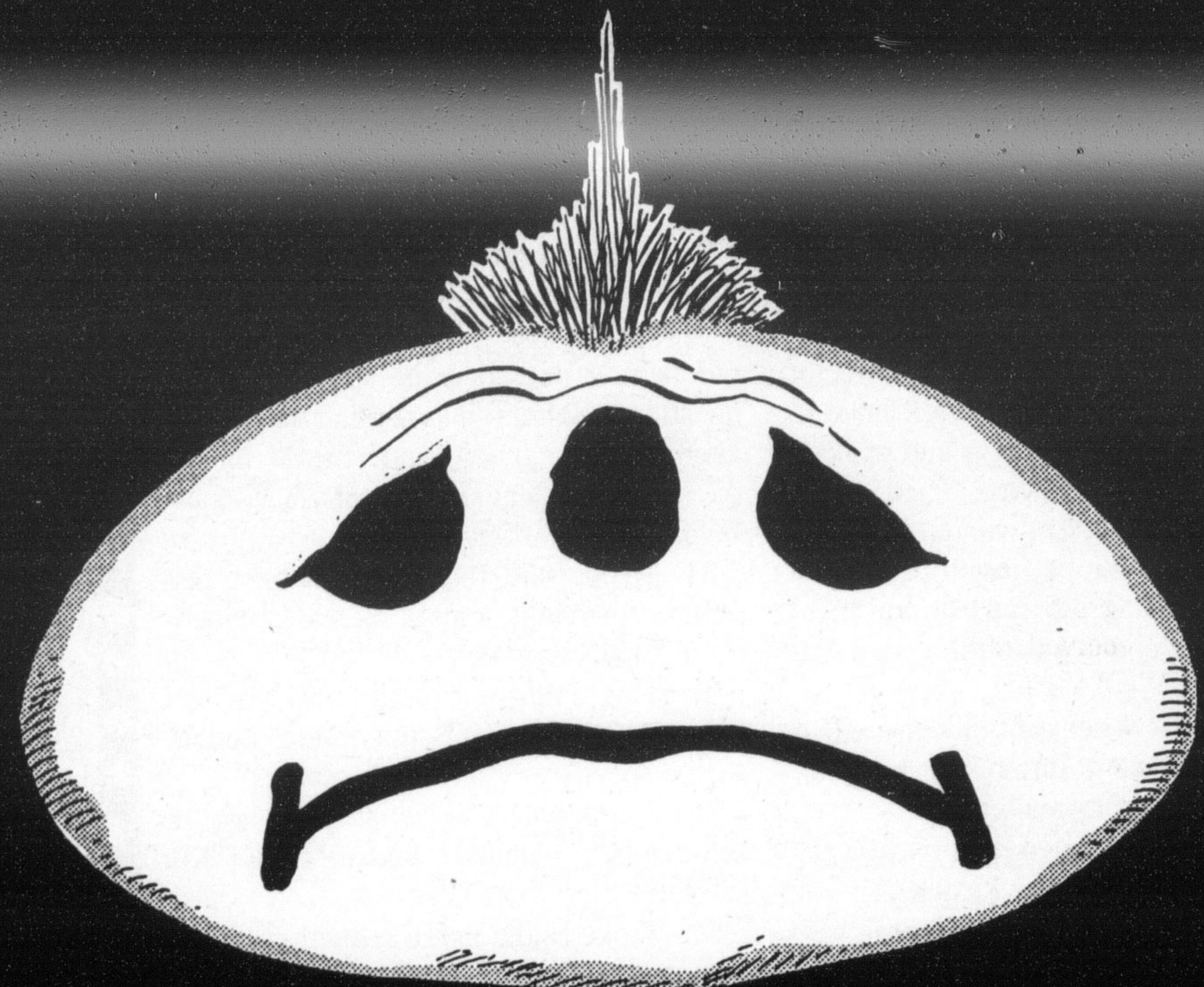
Classified: 875-3300

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DEVOLUTION

In reality, poor aren't really getting richer

Depending on whose statistics you choose to embrace, Halton residents are either better or worse off than they have been in recent years.

On one hand, the provincial government reports that 81 per cent fewer people in the region are on welfare compared to five years ago.

But in apparent contrast, the Halton Social Planning Council, in its latest poverty report — The Hidden Faces of Poverty — indicates the number of poor families in Halton climbed by 52 per cent in a recent five-year period.

On the surface it would seem the two conclusions couldn't possibly co-exist. But upon closer inspection it's possible that one statistical trend may be directly influencing the other.

What the welfare caseload statistics don't tell us is how many people coming off social assistance are actually achieving a better life for themselves.

If a single parent leaves social assistance for a job that pays marginally more, and must then contend with the cost of day care, has their quality of life really improved or have they simply joined the ranks of the working poor?

It appears the provincial government's approach is in fact reducing welfare cases, and taking some of the burden off taxpayers, but it's not the answer to poverty.

It didn't take me long to get that small-town feel

Milton definitely has that small-town feel. I know this because I recently moved here and have picked up on a few of the sure-fire signs.

One of the biggest tip-offs you're in a small town is the way everyone drops what they're doing to check you out.

This past weekend — my first weekend living in town I might add — despite the less than perfect weather I decided to stroll around and see what this town has to offer. On my trip, both driven and walked, I witnessed the small town phenomenon that is intense curiosity.

Nearly everyone I passed took the time to stop what they were doing to see who the new face in town belongs to. Many people even went so far as to approach me and say, "hello." Several more people stopped to investigate the new vehicle parked in the neighbourhood.

I must confess a moderate degree of uncom-

fortably when approached by complete strangers, but that subsided after I realized their friendly intentions.

City dwellers seldom notice small changes to the structure of their neighbourhoods. Other than immediate neighbours, few people seem to go out of their way to meet or greet newcomers. I guess I became accustomed to the anonymity of the city.

The second tell-tale sign you're in a small town also came to me during my travels. I didn't count how many I saw, but Milton has an incredible amount of green space within the settlement area.

Even in Guelph, my hometown, where consideration has been given to the image of the Royal City, you become accustomed to concrete. It doesn't matter how many flowers are there, you still notice the concrete box they're in.

The final sign of a small town I noticed I'm

Dear Editor:

A friend of mine in Milton sent me a recent clipping of a letter published in The Canadian Champion, submitted by Doug and Karen Card of Mary Street.

The subject being the deliberate insult to the Canadian people by the removal of the Canadian flag and the substitution of a foreign emblem on the Milton war memorial.

I sense the anger and resentment in this letter.

Although British, I feel outraged too. As the authors of the letter say, try a similar stunt in the U.S. by removing the American national

flag and see what happens.

What has this to do with an old guy in England?

Well, being a frequent visitor to Milton and having served in the Battle of the Atlantic, I feel justified in passing comment.

My only brother was gunnery officer on HMS Itchen the S.O. of the 9th Canadian Escort Group, comprising, HMS Itchen, destroyers HMCS St. Croix and HMCS St. Francis, corvette HMCS Chambly, HMCS Sackville and HMCS Morden.

On the September 22, 1943 while covering convoy HX256, St. Croix was torpedoed and my brother's

ship rescued all of its survivors.

Then the British corvette Polyanthus was sunk and again, Itchen rescued the survivors.

At that time she had aboard her nearly three ships companies.

Itchen was then herself hit in the f'wd magazine by a torpedo fired by U666, the ship blew up, all those young lives lost.

Now American movie tycoons insult the memory of so many fallen soldiers with the desecration of your town's war memorial. The people of Milton should feel outraged, too.

Roy A. White (Ex R.N. WW2)
South Yorkshire, England

**From my perspective**

with RICHARD VIVIAN

sure will come as no surprise to anyone who lives here. With the exception of the bar scene, there's nothing to do in town.

Milton seems to have its fair share of bars, but little else. There's no movie theatre, no bowling alley (not that I would use it), and no significant live entertainment venues. I've heard the complaints that the youth have nothing to do, but I

didn't think it would be this bad.

Even as I talked with people around town I was instructed I must leave Milton to find entertainment value of any sort.

To me, one of the biggest benefits of living in Milton is the close proximity to not only The Big Smoke, but also Hamilton, Oakville, Burlington, and Mississauga. This is where I'm told to go if I'm looking to have fun beyond renting a video and sitting still.

I would prefer to be able to walk to my entertainment destination, but since that seems impossible in Milton, I will contribute to the summer smog.

Although I'm sure some will disagree, I can't say Milton has anything that would set it apart from any other small Ontario town.

Green space is well and good, but it takes more than that.