



Court room drama. A mock trial held in Fairview Public School gave parents and students something to think about. Shown from left are: the student jury; Halton Regional Police Constable David Wallace;

Halton Crown Attorney, John Ayre; student Duncan MacDougall "on trial" for a school break-in; and Solicitor Noel Bates, who acted as defence counsel.

School mock trial carries sobering lesson

A mock trial held at Fairview Public School in Lowville was more than a chance for students and parents to find out how the Canadian judicial system works.

The three trials and the verdicts of three student juries were thrown out to parents in the audience to see if they thought the punishment fit the severity of the crime.

Solicitor Noel Bates, father of a student at the school, acted as defence counsel and particularly challenged the parents to rate their feelings on a scale of "Too Harsh, Too Lenient, and Just Right."

"It's an opportunity," he said to a packed Fairview School gymnasium, "to see what side of the fence you're on."

"We want to see if you are in tune with your kids."

"It also allows us to see what some of the feelings are from the community on what are key social issues."

Except for the venue of a public school gymnasium, the proceedings of "Fairview Provincial Court" were exactly the same as any provincial court right down to the

way the arraignments were read.

There was no explanation through the three trials on why the judge was saying something or the Crown Attorney acted in a specific manner.

The whole idea was to get across exactly what a person will see in court and leaving any questions of jurisprudence to the last.

For many, it was a sobering experience.

Duncan MacDougall, who was "on trial" for a mock break-in and vandalism charge at the school, was visibly relieved when he was allowed to leave "the court" while the jury deliberated.

In all, three trials were held. In the case of Duncan MacDougall, he pleaded guilty and several witnesses were called to give testimony. There was no laughing or mugging from the audience.

It was the real thing, conducted in the real manner.

Adding to the authenticity provided by Mr. Bates was Halton Crown Attorney John Ayre, conducting himself as Crown; Constable David Wallace as the testifying police officer; and Family Court Judge James Fuller in the role of Provincial Court Judge.

Mr. Ayre, for instance, attacked Duncan in the stand and put much pressure on him regarding an 11th hour pay-

ment for damages he had committed in the school. Mr. Ayre's cutting style, seen regularly in Provincial Court, was not wasted in the Fairview gym.

Mr. Bates, in his role as defence counsel, pulled the tables on the student jury, asking them to find the onus on Duncan's parents for leaving alcohol readily accessible in the home. The alcohol, the court was told, fired Duncan up and sent him on a \$10,000 rampage in the school.

The results of the mock trial were the pitting of parents against their children in their way of seeing the world and living within the rules society has set up.

In fact, the mock trial concept the way the Fairview Home and School Association runs it should and could easily become part of every public school curriculum in Halton.

It would be a chance for every parent in Halton to, as Mr. Bates said, "see if you are in tune with your kids."

Police growth doubles Halton

Halton police personnel percentile growth has more than doubled the percentage growth rate of Halton Region.

In a report requested at budget time, Halton Personnel Director Dennis Camm noted the region population was 203,191 in 1973 and there were 234 police officers.

The 1980 population for the region was 247,311 or 44,120 people more for an aggregated 21.7 per cent increase.

The police force in 1980 had 362 on staff or 128 more personnel for a 54.7 per cent increase.

Mr. Camm said "it is very difficult" to use this comparison in absolute terms "because Acton was then covered by the O.P.P. who also patrolled Highways 5, 7, and 25.

Old pictures on display

Campbellville Historical Society met May 11 with Mrs. Len Andrews presiding.

Guest speaker Jim Dills, former president of the Milton Historical Society, gave an interesting slide presentation and commentary on early Milton history, entitled "The Miller's Walk."

A delegation was arranged to visit Milton Council May 25 to solicit financial support toward the publication of a village and district history book.

The bus tour of Milton Society was announced for May 18 and on the same day the Catherine T. Hainer McMartin Room will be officially opened at Halton Region Museum, at 4 p.m.

A deadline of May 19 was set for submissions for the history book.

Mrs. L. Stokes was named social convener, and Mrs. O. Van Sickle

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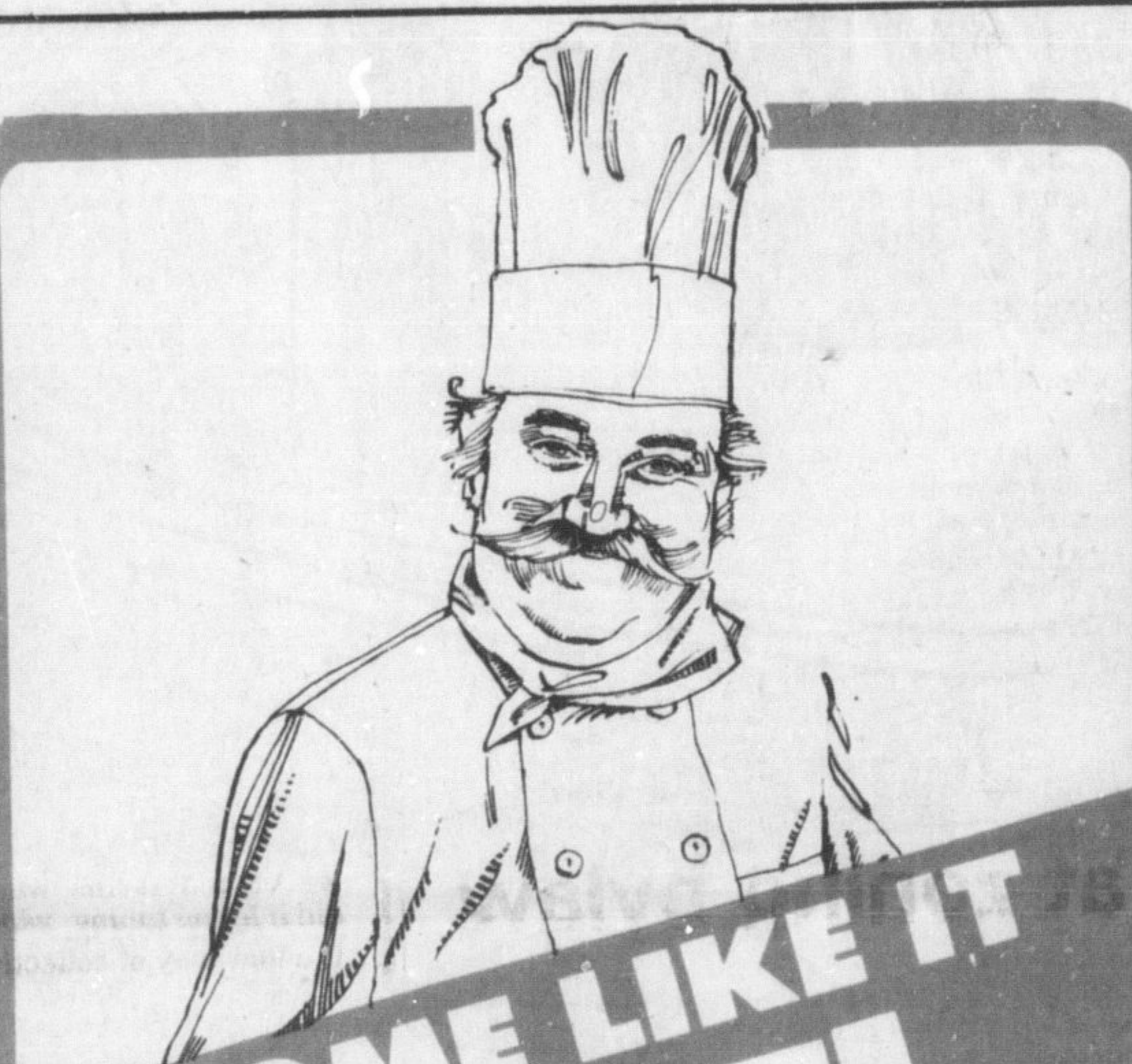
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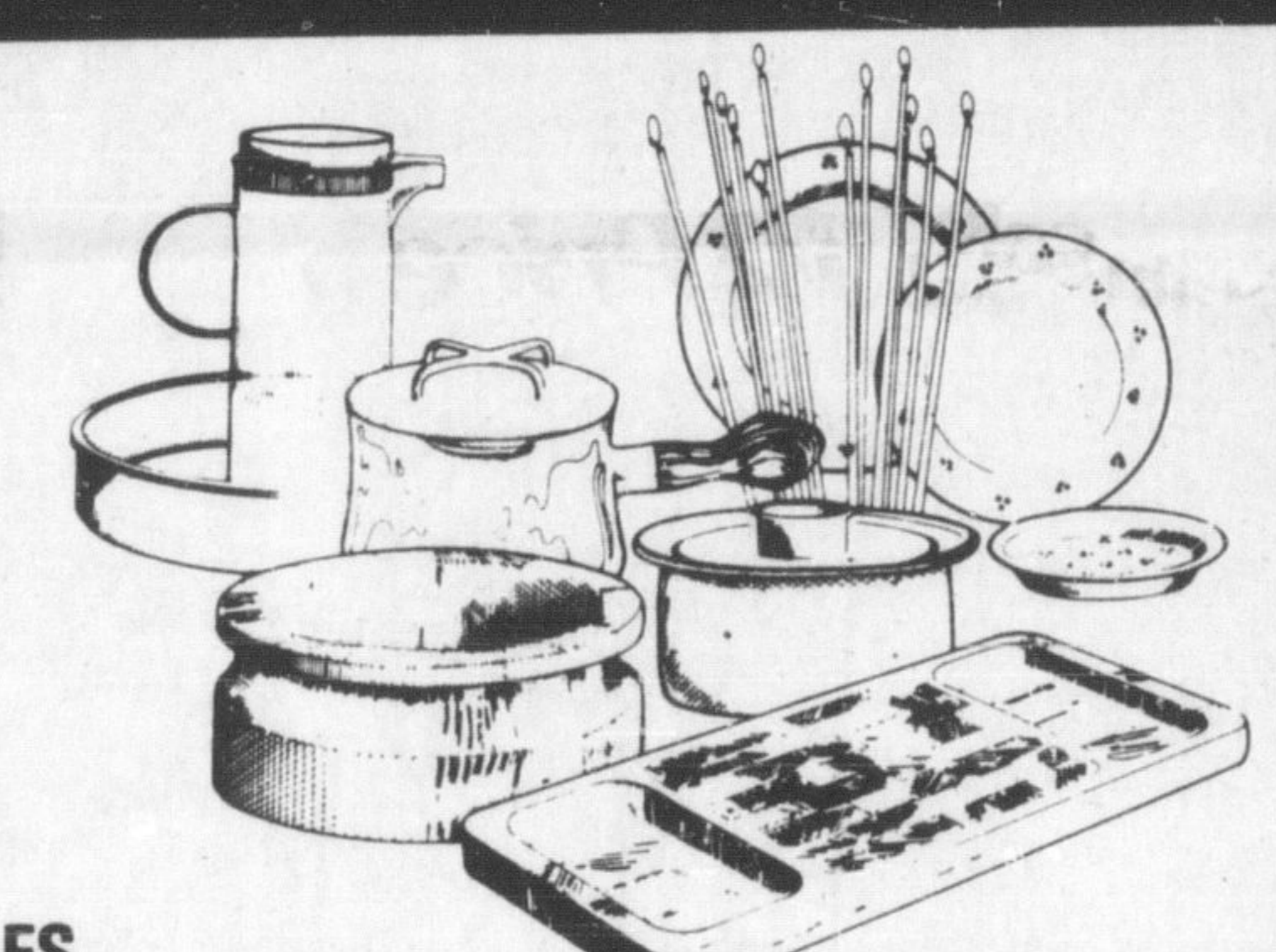
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