

# Comment

## Bid farewell to Wilmot and columnist

I would like to meditate, momentarily, on the part played by fast food restaurants in the near eradication of snootiness from our society. Snootiness of the haute variety epitomized by a tweed cape and jodhpur-clad butt disappearing into the oak-panelled confines of the Punjab Club for a sarsaparilla and bitters.

It began when they plunked those french fries on my tray and presumptuously neglected to offer me a utensil to eat them with. So I suggested a fork and they gave me a puny plastic gizmo with spindly tines that I despaired of aiming at the shoestring potatoes. When I did hit the mark, the tines snapped every time.

I got the picture. At a penny apiece, 60 billion served could cost a chain \$600 million. Their preference was that I should eat french fries with my fingers. So I did.

Today I've progressed well beyond the finger fries stage. Maybe I even overdo matters now and again out of rebellion. For example, when a restaurant serves peas I eat them with a spoon and, of late, I've taken to the impish habit of licking my knife when other patrons are looking my way.

As one who used to place a diagonally sliced piece of roast on the edge of his plate and politely cut small portions therefrom to deftly dab in his egg yolk with the aid of a fork, I've come a long way in shedding my snooty pretensions. I suppose we all have if the ambient indifference when I dropped a fistful of mashed potatoes on the floor of a local eatery just the other evening is a reliable indicator.

Sometimes I feel the onset of a relapse, and I start getting haughty ideas of taking along an 1847 Rogers Bros. fine sterling bifurcated specimen on an excursion, to Hoojackapivvie's Hamburger Haven. Whenever these little nostalgic pangs hit, however, I recollect an incident that happened way back in the days of widespread snootiness and it serves as a whole body panacea.

Then, as now, downtown Toronto was such a bustle of determined humanity at high noon on a workday that the chances of three railway ladies — one-time finishing school acquaintances long since married and graduated to posh but geographically disparate segments of the then suburban landscape — meeting there, and then with their only sons in tow were infinitesimal. Snooty was the major distinguishing mark of our three main

### Viewpoint

with RON BEZANT



characters — not one a smidgeon less than several cuts above the rhinestone crowd.

Elspeth, Hilary, and Felicity had attained their elevated stations thanks to the correct breeding, upbringing, coming out, going in and nuptial arrangement, bliss aside. Elspeth's father was a high financier with an advanced degree in misappropriation. Hilary's a barrister specializing in flamboodle, while Felicity's pater returned from service in India with the 47th Hoof and Mouth to the family seat at Epsom Salts from whence he came out to Canada to live on a private income.

When their chauffeured broughams pulled to the curb outside a fashionable furrier shop,

the infinitesimally likely had occurred. Their chauffeurs alit, eased open the rear doors, then stiffened ingratiatingly as the trio clambered out followed by their sons.

Elspeth was first to recognize Hilary who was first to recognize Felicity who was first to recognize Elspeth and so on. "How have you been, dah-ling? Don't you look absolutely mah-velous! My, what beautiful cahs you both have! Ah m so chah-med and delighted to have you stand here, admiring my expensive clothes."

"Ah would like both of you to meet mah son, Christopher," said Elspeth. He's really our pride and joy, ah-n't you, Christopher? Christopher is taking medicine at the University of Toronto, ah-n't you, Christopher?"

"Yes, mother."

"Say good day to the ladies, Christopher."

"Good day, ladies," said Christopher, bowing politely toward Hilary and again in the direction of Felicity.

"And ah would like to present mah son, Lionel," said Hilary. "Lionel is studying law at Osgood Hall, isn't that right, Lionel?" Ah cannot possibly express how very proud we are of Lionel, ah-n't we, Lionel?"

"Yes, mother."

Lionel bowed first to Elspeth, then to Felicity, as he obediently said, "Good day, ladies."

"And ah would like to introduce mah son, Wilmot," said Felicity, her voice beginning to quiver as she continued, "Wilmot is attending refrigeration school, even though we really wanted him to become an officer and a gentleman, didn't we, Wilmot? Say good day to the ladies, Wilmot."

"Aw, maw," said Wilmot, "don't be a puke."

Whereupon Felicity in a paroxysm of temper clobbered Wilmot alongside the head with her snakeskin handbag, sending him staggering off the sidewalk and straight into the path of an approaching streetcar. She watched the papers for months to see whether the police had identified the body. The others never breathed a word.

As this is my last column for The Champion I thought it somewhat appropriate to kill Wilmot off, rather than to leave him wandering amiably. To anyone who may have had the perseverance to read more than the first paragraph of my first column, a couple of years back, I'd like to say thanks. Keep smiling.

## Our Readers Write

### Slow Service

Dear Editor:

We received a magazine in the mail today from Middleboro Mass. So what? Well this wasn't just any magazine for it contained an article on a friend of ours. The post mark was Jan. 15. As I read the article my eyes filled with tears, for Billy would never know if we enjoyed it or if we got a kick out of the proud look on his face as he surveyed his huge record collection, for exactly two months to the post mark he suffered a fatal heart attack, in his mid 40s.

No Billy will never know why it took two months and 10 days for his magazine to reach us and frankly neither will we. Just another prime example of the inadequate postal service of today.

HARB & BILL BEENEY  
Georgetown

### Support Needed

Dear Editor:

Thank you for the kind, supportive words you had for our proposed home for youths. It is most encouraging not only for people like us, the developers and administrators of non-profit housing programs, but more importantly for the prospective tenants of the projects, to gain support and acceptance from the community. Let us all hope that such statements continue to foster the caring community we know Milton to be. Our community has too much to lose without the development of affordable housing.

M. A. DELNER  
Community Development Worker  
Halton Adolescent Support Services

### Letters welcome

The Canadian Champion welcomes letters to the editor. We reserve the right to edit, revise and reject letters. Writers will be contacted in regard to revisions or rejections. Letters must be signed and the address and telephone number of the writer included.

Those who don't want to write may contact the editor, Jane Muller, by telephone Wednesday afternoons between 1 and 2 to give a verbal letter. The letter line number is 878-2341.

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My nominee for Air Canada's "Heart of Gold" Award is

Name

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\*Nominee must be 18 years of age.

AIR CANADA