

'It's time for positive attitudes'

The following is the transcript of the speech delivered by outgoing Midland Chamber of Commerce president Hudson Leavens to the chamber at the organization's annual meeting:

Usually the President of the Chamber uses this opportunity to advise the membership of the accomplishments of the Chamber during the year and give some predictions for the future. I am pleased to report that I believe your directors have had an excellent year, but rather than list these accomplishments which I believe most of you are aware of anyway, I would like to take a slightly different tack and address three specific issues that require your help and earnest effort.

In so doing, I may miss some points that are of particular concern and so I would be happy to try to answer any questions you may have.

The three issues are as follows:

1. Positive Attitudes
2. ILAP Designation
3. Chamber Membership

The overriding message in all three of these issues is that with your participation and active promotion, the work of the Chamber will be greatly enhanced. I believe that the whole community will benefit from the success of the Chamber and indeed to a large degree the progress in a community such as Midland, is dependent on the abilities of the Chamber because the municipal government is charged with the responsibility of managing the Corporation and has to concern itself with conserving scarce resources. This is as it should be, but the system requires a strong Chamber to ensure progress. I believe the Chamber membership includes the most progressive elements of a community.

Positive Attitudes

I would like to address this topic first because I believe that while Canadians are positive people, they tend to be

strongly influenced by negative attitudes. Once a positive force is exerted upon them they are capable of accomplishing great projects. Midland's admirable projects such as the new hospital, the YMCA and the arena, and our recent Homecoming, are excellent examples of how Midlanders can work together to produce results, when the project is brought to them by an organization with positive attitudes. Now is the time for the Midland Chamber of Commerce to put some positive attitudes behind some revenue producing projects.

One such project is the Szeliga development. It seems to me that we should promote the positive aspects such as the potential for attracting people with the resources to invest in a development thousands of miles away from their present homes. We will be serving Midland's needs. The track record of the people proposing the development is very impressive on both sides of the Atlantic.

We have common goals with the people of Szeliga and should take every opportunity to encourage their work.

Time after time it is reported that success comes from a positive attitude, a belief in winning, stressing the good things people do and not dwelling on mistakes that can only be avoided by not doing anything.

Many times Wally and I felt overwhelmed by the task of locating investors capable of helping to solve Midland's unemployment problem and the resulting ripple effect. These people tend to be protected from people like Wally and myself and when we went to Germany we found that the competition for the attention of these people is tremendous and they are literally separated from us by several sets of locked doors and teams of pleasant but efficient secretaries. When we did gain access and were fortunate enough to bring a very impressive group to Midland, we found we were to be belittled in the press. We very

much need your help in displacing negative attitudes with positive attitudes.

Each of us have to reconsider our own attitudes and make sure that they are positive. It is an axiom in the advertising industry that attitude changes are possible, but are very expensive. They certainly are possible and Japan has set a good example of how a productivity attitude can be changed through a national quality improvement programme.

As an example of an attitude change I would like to refer to the subject of moonlighting which has a very negative connotation to most employers. A very notable exception can be found in the National Aerospace Administration's facility in Spokane, Washington.

In order to attract highly qualified engineers and physicists at reasonable cost, NASA encourages moonlighting. The result has been a proliferation of small high technology industrial companies around the NASA plant because they are also able to get expert technical advice at reasonable cost. Everybody gains in this example of a positive attitude.

We must appreciate that everyone has strengths and weaknesses and that we will be most likely to succeed if we use our strengths and offset our weaknesses by working with people who have strengths in our own areas of weakness.

Midland-Penetanguishene Joint Manpower Assessment and Planning Committee

As most of you know, Midland and Penetanguishene have formed a committee to enable the two communities to apply for designation under the Federal government's Industry and Labour Adjustment Programme (ILAP). The government has recognized that some communities require financial assistance to encourage increased employment and have



Hudson Leavens

requested proposals from interested communities. The designated communities are then able to assist existing industry, new industries and other projects in the form of interest free loans for up to 50 per cent of an investment with payments of principle deferrable up to 5 years. These loans have an additional benefit of having no adverse effect on depreciation.

Competition for an ILAP designation is fierce and only a dozen or so communities have been designated in all of Canada. It is extremely important that we are successful in our application because foreign investors are well aware of the opportunities and this could easily become the deciding factor in the location decision. Furthermore, it is believed that 75 percent of growth comes from within and I believe that there is great potential for growth within our present industrial base: correct this situation, we plan to take several long term steps. We are tending toward an

That was the sales pitch and now comes the request for help. The committee is preparing

the brief for presentation to the Federal government (Messrs. Lalonde, Lumley and Axworthy) and this document must be as complete, as honest and as comprehensive as possible. A questionnaire is being prepared to provide the basic data for the proposal. The questionnaires will be completed in consultation with the industrialists of the area and I am appealing to all industrialists to put forth a concerted effort both in supplying data and in planning projects that will enable our communities to capitalize on this

designation when it is received.

I would like to expand on some thoughts on the timing of investment and expansion within our industrial base through a story told to me by one of my colleagues in Toronto.

Several years ago during a recession, he noticed a developer who was forging ahead with the building of several major industrial plants on Highway 400 in Downsview and he sought out the developer to ask him why he was investing so vigorously during a recession. The developer replied that he hadn't read a newspaper in years and wasn't aware of a recession. I don't know how the developer made out, but I do know that land in that area now sells for about \$200,000 per acre. It appears to me that those who invest during a soft economic cycle are best able to capitalize on the up cycle that always follows.

The ILAP designation is by far the most important topic I will discuss today and I would like to try to answer any questions you may still have.

Membership

The third issue that I would like to address is that of Chamber membership. I realize of course, that I am talking to some of the most supportive members and I am doing so because I believe that you can help by encouraging your colleagues to be supportive.

In my studies of business I spend a great deal of time looking for the attributes that successful businesses have in common. Time after time it has been shown that the businesses that are successful belong to and are active participants in several associations. I believe that it is the resulting dialogue and other forms of communication with members of association that correlates with earnings and therefore, we all have a duty to enhance our own opportunities by encouraging 100 per cent support of the Chamber.

At the Midland Chamber we obviously have strong support, but are a long way from 100 per cent. In order to correct this situation, we plan to take several long term steps. We are tending toward an association with more frequent opportunities for dialogue in business and social situations. It has been shown that a team is far better at making a success of a

business than an individual and we hope to give the independent businessman an opportunity to improve his business through membership in the Chamber.

This year, for the first time, we plan to send membership fee invoices to all potential members in the community, regardless of prior membership. I believe it is very important to both the Chamber and the community and especially the members, that we all take advantage of the opportunity of helping each other.

In this way we can expand our service to members which at this time, ranges from advising telephone callers when the bass season opens and what's on at the show, to the very high quality seminars that are scheduled to follow this meeting and the Ontario Government small business consulting services recently conducted under the able chairmanship of director Bill Moss.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you again for your continued support. Midland has more to offer than most communities in the world and we can all enjoy her benefits more if we work together.

Richard Platt Mayor Leadership

VOTE



Bruce Tinney Reeve- Tay Township

I have lived in Tay Township for nearly 26 years and during this time I have been quite interested and have participated to some degree in Township affairs. I served as a member of the Committee of Adjustment for 3 years and following this as a councillor for 4 consecutive years until the 1972 municipal elections. In 1976 I was elected Deputy Reeve and served in that capacity for four years.

My line of work takes me over a good portion of the Township and affords me the chance to see and talk to people.

I think therefore, that I have kept up to date with many of the problems within the Township and feel that I have something to offer towards the possible solutions of some of these problems. I also feel that I and others have an obligation to contribute in some way towards the well being of the Township and community. For these reasons I ask for your support in electing me as Reeve of the Township of Tay on November 8, 1982.

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