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Tuesday, March 28, 2006.. c:/wklylt6.6wc20                                                                                                 (2006 NHN&WR letter/story/poem/card # 6)

**Scabs?**

Ontario has had a teachers strike at the college level. We’ve a family member teaching at the college level. We sort of followed along as it ran its course. Following along in no way means understanding, … perhaps ‘comprehending’ would be a better word. As near as we can figure out: Academic Management did not want the Union butting into their administrative affairs and the Union thought they knew how to run colleges better than the current administrators. Ah, confrontational self-destruction, … wherein lies thy sting? Well, we’ll tell you where we think it lies.

\* With students being denied an education they have already paid for.

\* With non-union personnel being persecuted for trying to show up and do their job.

\* With that long suffering group of unorganized patsies, …taxpayers.

With roots in the anthracite coal mining region, with its *‘Molly Maguire*’ history, it is hard to be completely anti-union, but with public service unions going on strike right and left you’ve got to wonder, there must be a better way. Whatever happened to the "Teamwork" concept? Confrontation management kills competitiveness and here the patsy finally gets in a few words. The UAW/Car manufacturers would like us to buy a second rate car at an inflated price to save their precious pensions. The words, *“Forget it*”, … the last thing needed is a car that is in the shop half the time.. Programming is fleeing to India and Malaysia, excellent autos are coming from Japan & Korea, so … students do not be disheartened, fight back. Consider ‘Out Sourcing’ yourself. Check out the confrontational situation in: Scandinavia, The Sorbonne, The Playing Fields of Eton, and Heidelberg.

(Whoa! Time to get off the soap box and back to reporting. Please excuse the above diatribe.)

Previously mentioned family member would appreciate a ride through the picket line. No problem, we said. But you’ll have to be pleasant, member said. Big problem, we said.

*“You’ve got to talk to them, cause I’m gonna scrunch down in the back seat so they don’t see me.”*

*“We have a Vermont license, … I’ll say I am a qualified American coming up to apply for a tenured position.”*

*“Don’t you dare.”*

*“Alright, I’ll be good.”*

Normally, the driver in question would have opted out due to darkness and or number of martinis, but the route in question was very familiar and we'd had no gin. The Picket line was a 3 wood shot from the best hair dresser in the Canadian capital. We had taxied there many times. So, … off go the 3 scabs, family member and NHN&WR staff. Three red lights were encountered en route. At each the driver was reminded to be pleasant. Geez. Finally we arrive. The pickets are in view. Hmmmn, how will we report this. I think … *“Picket* *said” “Driver said”* *“but driver thought”* method would do the scene the most justice.

OK, … one’s approaching the driver’s side of the car. Roll’em.

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*“Hi! How are you tonight?”*

*“Just fine.”*

Least I was till you folks blocked my way.

*“Are you aware of what we are striking for?”*

More money, less hours, smaller classes I am sure.

*“No, … actually I’m from America and don’t have a clue.”*

*We’d like you to read this material and support our efforts to give students a better education.”*

Pretty hard to educate anyone when you’re on a picket line isn’t it?

*Sure, be glad to.*

*Have a good evening and be careful of our pickets as you proceed.*

*Sure thing.*

Wonder how many years I’d get for mowing down a few of these jaywalkers?

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Pfui, … we got thru. Did I do OK?

*“I’m proud of you, you did fine.”*

*“It wasn’t easy! The nerve of those people!”*

*“Calm down, you still have to come back and get me.”*

*“Yeah, well lying is easier the second time around.”*

Would I be forgiven the carnage if my foot slipped off the brake and hit the accelerator? Ah Satan, … tempt me not.

Ontario colleges are back in session. Both sides have agreed to binding arbitration. They could have agreed to this in the beginning without impacting thousands of students future plans. So long till next month from biased old folks. Along with unions, perhaps we have just outlived our time..

Ken & Lucile.

NHN&WR Ontario/Vermont relocation date is April 11. Have a fine Spring.