

# Letters...

## 'Meter beater' speaks out

To The Publisher:

In the beginning, there was two-way traffic on Main Street, Hyannis, and diagonal parking on the north side. Then one night at Town Meeting a young man named Bruce Besse spoke in favor of one-way traffic west and parallel parking. Although downtown Hyannis merchants were overwhelmingly against it, Besse's speech was nothing less than eloquent. He spoke so well and convincingly that the new plan was approved by the taxpayers.

This was many years ago. I voted against it.

Shortly thereafter, the merchants on Main Street asked that taxpayers buy and/or lease property behind their stores so potential customers could park there to shop in the merchants' stores. I felt that if they wanted parking space behind their stores, **THEY** should buy or lease it, not the taxpayers.

I was one of a minority voting against it.

It was then proposed that the taxpayers pay for hard-topping those parking lots.

I voted against it and some of my closest friends advised me that I was fighting a lost cause. I was.

It was further proposed that the Town's taxpayers should pay for having white lines painted on the black-top so that people would park in an orderly fashion.

Fellow taxpayers smiled at me condescendingly as I voted against it.

Then (I was advised by a very courteous police Sgt. from the Hyannis headquarters), it seems that employees of the stores were using parking space designated for customers. So the merchants came to Town Meeting again and asked the taxpayers to buy parking meters and to pay for the installation of these meters on the lots we were buying or leasing.

The vote was close, but I was on the loser's side again. I voted against it.

Having paid for the meters and the installation of same, we were asked to pay someone to repair them when they were faulty or vandalized.

I said, "NO, to hell with it; let 'em rot on the lots."

Good friends began mumbling during conversations with me that I was some kind of a nut. A "meter beater" they said:

"Would you mind," said one, "if we hire somebody to empty all that money out of all those meters, so that we get some of our money back?"

"Whose money back?" I asked.

"Mine," he said.

"You're going to get your money back by paying a guy to collect money that you feed into the meters?"

"Well," he said, "the taxes won't be so high on payin' for all those parking lots if somebody collects the money for us."

"Oh," I replied.

Back to Town Meeting and I voted against having and paying a guy to collect our money from the meters.

Talk about a minority, I think the only other guy on my side was a shellfisherman from Cotuit. We lost.

Trouble was brewing. I could see it coming as sure as it came to "River City". The police Dept. wanted to expand its budget to print more parking tickets. Tickets with more "teeth" in them. Who pays for these new tickets?

Who pays and what's new about 'em?

Well, we pay for 'em and the new thing about 'em is that there ain't any one of them that sez "Warning for first offense".

I'm against paying more for the new tickets.

I lose.

Taxpayers at Town Meeting approve larger police budget part of which is to print new parking tickets.

With new parking tickets we taxpayers need somebody to distribute them in our parking lots with all those parking meters.

Increase police budget to hire extra police to put new parking tickets on cars of taxpayers that are spending too much time and money in Downtown Hyannis stores while their meters run out.

I was a "Dummy" 'cause I was against it from the beginning.

Now, if you are a taxpayer in the Town of Barnstable, you are stuffing your money in meters on lots of land which you have leased or paid for and have been taxed to black-top and are paying every year to paint white lines upon; have purchased parking meters, continue to pay for their repair, maintenance, collection of money from and policemen to attach two-dollar parking tickets for overtime parking.

There are no more "warning tickets". The first offense ticket now states on the reverse side as follows: "Failure to obey this notice within 21 DAYS after the date of violation will result in the appearance in court on a **criminal** complaint."

You say you're planning to shop Downtown Hyannis?

Let me make a suggestion. Bring along an alarm clock and be sure it's synchronized with your parking meter when you leave that parking lot.

It occurs to me that there are acres of free parking and stores galore off Route 132 in Hyannis.

If you're a masochist as well as a taxpayer in this Town, shop Downtown Hyannis.

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