

# Mount Joy Borough Council;

*Police want back-up men; merchants want boro to remove snow; and no more right turn on red*

To double-up or not to double-up? That was the question at last week's Mount Joy Borough Council meeting. Council discussed the matter for an hour and 45 minutes before reaching a temporary solution.

"Doubling-up," in this case, means putting two policemen in one patrol car. Mount Joy police had routinely cruised the streets in pairs on Friday and Saturday nights, until council halted the practice last August for financial reasons.

Because the budget for part-time policemen had been exceeded, the council decided that one officer per car should be enough.

Policemen attacked the change at last week's meeting. Chief Bruce Kline pointed out that, although the part-time police budget has been exceeded, the overall police budget is exactly at the 1/2 mark at the end of a six-month budget period.

(Although Mr. Ricedorf notes wages overall have exceeded the budget.)

Officer William Reuter told the councilmen that having a second patrolman on duty could both deter law-breakers and prevent injury to policemen.

## MOUNT JOY AS DANGEROUS AS ANYPLACE?

Reuter stated that a police officer in Mount Joy is in no less danger than a police officer in any city or town in the world. His report indicated that Friday and Saturday nights are the particular nights in the week when domestic arguments and barroom disturbances most often happen.

Statistics show that more police officers are injured and killed while answering domestic calls than while performing any other duties.

Following Officer Reuter's report, council discussed the question of doubling-up policemen.

Councilman James Heisey suggested that council ask the public which they prefer: a cut in police service or a tax increase.

A group of area residents who attended the meeting urged that the doubling-up system be re-instated. One resident offered council the use of police radio scanners, free of charge, "so you fellows (councilmen) can hear what's going on in this county, because you apparently don't know what's happening." Other comments from the audience included: "We need two officers at all times," and "How can we afford not to have this service on Friday and Saturday nights?"

Councilman William Bower offered a motion to "reinstate the double-up program." Bower's motion was seconded by Councilman Ammon Smith.

The motion was defeated by a 5-3 vote. (Councilman Keller and Mayor Gingrich were not present.)

It was noted that the motion could have been misunderstood, and a differently worded motion was offered by Councilman Smith (and seconded by Councilman Bower) to reinstate the double-up system.

This second motion met a 4-4 deadlock. Under normal circumstances, Mayor Gingrich would have been empowered to cast to deciding vote, but his absence left the matter unresolved.

Council President Charles Ricedorf then told council that "as acting mayor I say the double-up will be reinstated for this following weekend, and when the mayor returns, he can decide whether to continue doubling-up until the next council meeting."

Mr. Ricedorf pointed out that, under the August motion eliminating doubling-up, the mayor has the right to reinstate the practice on any weekend during which it seems necessary.

Mr. Heisey then asked why Mr. Ricedorf felt that doubling-up was suddenly necessary this weekend.

Mr. Ricedorf said that he was responding to public opinion, as expressed by citizens at the meeting. "No one here has spoken against doubling-up," he noted.

Supporters of the doubling-up system claim that the budgetary problem was of council's own making. In drawing up the budget, council did not take into consideration the fact that three part-time officers were scheduled to attend training school during double-up nights.

This schooling for police officers is mandatory (as of 7/16/74) and the borough is reimbursed in part by Federal funds. Council budgeted \$4000 for part-time officers this year, which may represent an oversight on council's part, since last year's for part-time help was \$,100.

Earlier in the meeting, during the public hour, council was told that the Merchant's Association is unhappy with the handling of snow-removal in the borough.

Councilmen point out that the police, including Chief Kline, had a hand in making up the budget. Some councilmen suspect that the law did not require sending all three part-time

policemen to school this year.

"We thought we'd send two," a councilman said. "I think that sending three was a goof-up, and I don't know how it happened."

## MERCHANTS WANT BORO TO PAY FOR SNOW REMOVAL

Merchants Association president Jim Roberts, owner of the Western Auto store, told council that, since the downtown area is metered, the merchants feel that the borough should pay for snow removal.

The Merchants' Association has a \$1100 snow removal fund, which they volunteered to turn over to council; Mr. Roberts indicated that the merchants would probably be willing to contribute more.

The borough currently scrapes downtown streets, but doesn't remove the snow. However, the boro lends its trucks and personnel to the merchants, who pay the cost of having snow trucked out of town.

The merchants feel that, since the downtown is metered, council should pay for snow removal. Councilmen, however, point out that snow removal is a special service, which is not performed in other parts of town.

The Merchants and councilmen plan to hold meetings to discuss the subject, and spokesmen for both groups are confident that a workable compromise can be arranged.

## NO RIGHT TURN ON RED

In other business, it was decided to install "No right turn on red" signs at the four traffic lights in town. The cost will be about \$200.

## DID YOU HEAR....

Stephen Ruby of Marietta made the front page of Saturday's Intelligencer Journal—but he probably wishes he hadn't. Stephen was bitten by a rabid bat right in the boro of Marietta.

Although he is undergoing a very painful series of anti-rabies vaccinations, young Stephen complained to reporters only about the tedium of the two-week hospital stay he faces. "It burns when he shoots (the serum)," Stephen admitted when pressed.

The experience has not dampened his ambition to become a game warden. He still likes working with animals.

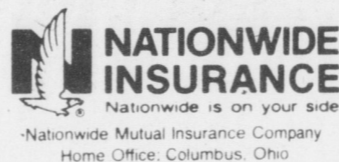
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