

JUNE 23, 1977

An advertising fellow was by the ranch on the week end offering to put up one of those signs saying eat more beef on the highway. In short terms, I informed him that the only sign I wanted was one that said to kill more beef.

Cow people don't have enough time left for the consumers to put us back to operating in the black, as slow as a knife and fork work. What I'm interested in is some kind of animal like a giant octopus that'll eat a hundred head in one swallow.

Worst enemy we have are those franchise hamburger joints that weigh a patty closer than an assayer's call on an ounce of gold dust. Statistics say that about 120 pounds of beef is being eaten by each person every year. From the way restaurants cut down on the servings, 120 pounds of ground beef will throw a cookout for the whole city of Chicago with some left over to invite a few folks up from Detroit.

After school was out, I took Child Who Sits in the Sun and two of my sons on a trip. By the time we'd eat nine meals in motel coffee shops, I thought I was going to have to buy a few pounds of raw meat to keep down the danger of cannibalism.

One place where we stopped had a sirloin strip on the menu for \$7.96. Don't ask me where the odd cents came from. I figured that by counting the revised pickled beet and English pea salad as a depreciable item on the restaurant's tax return, they had about six bits tied up in the salad bar. Figuring the baked potato against the salvage value of the tinfoil, their spuds must have been costing them about 10 cents freshly scorched from the microwave. Charging 96 cents against this sirloin they were heralding in big letters made about as much sense as trying to convince a divorce lawyer that he ought to move from Hollywood California.

The waiter wasn't available to explain the odd price. He was either playing hide and seek or studying to be an undercover agent. It might have just been that he was staying in the kitchen for his own safety. You know folks can get mighty emotional over a \$7.96 steak that would bring the humane society down on a kennel club.

The cashier stayed hidden, too. Once she did appear, she went over to talk to a couple of game wardens. They had on big six-shooters. I imagine she figured she'd be safe as long as she had some friends that were armed.

At another place, we had a buffet of pizza pie. Kids, you know, really go for those Italian tortillas all covered in a tomato paste that'd give an anteater a case of heartburn. While I was drinking a glass of beer, Child Who Sits in the Sun discovered that the parmesan cheese had bread crumbs mixed in the shaker. You know how sensitive Indians are about the whitemen's jokes. She started that low muttering sound that means trouble. I was sure glad to get out of there before she noticed that the beer glass had a false bottom in it deep enough to make a pretty decent sort of fish bowl.

It's every bit her fault that we have to eat out on trips. She won't hear to renting a room with a kitchenette. The boys and myself are real helpful around the kitchen. All of us stack our silverware on the plates so she can pick them up easy.

From the way I saw it, prizefighters use more meat on their eyes than those motels serve on a busy week. Next time we go anywhere, I am going to take a chuck box. Her old mother cooked on a campfire and there's no reason she can't do the same.