

Skit for Sale!

CHILDHOOD OBESITY

NEWS ANCHOR

With concern over childhood obesity expanding, reporter Bjorn Tribble visited school lunchrooms to “chew the fat” with those in the trenches. Here’s his report.

(Sounds of a school cafeteria.)

REPORTER BJORN

It’s lunchtime here at Cramden Elementary, where the grade-schoolers are tucking into a ritual of youth: a high-fat, high-carb, salt-soaked midday meal — greasy paper plates groaning under sopping cheese fries, corn doodles, and pudding. All of it washed down with a jug of high-fructose cola, purchased from the cafeteria Coke machine.

KID 1

(In the background.)

I’ll trade ya’ a can ‘a Pringles for yer Yodel.

KID 2

Deal.

REPORTER

It’s a meal that would make a pig blush. But with America’s children waddling through an overstuffed youth, Congress has declared war on childhood obesity. And as always, where there’s war, there’s the promise of profit.

(The din of a factory floor.)

FACTORY OWNER ARBUCKLE

(Calling out.)

Get me 12,000 gallons of the broccoli paste and 3 gross of the frozen fish bars! The mackerel!

REPORTER

If school cafeterias are the battlefield, then the factory floor here at Arbuckle Foods is the beachhead in the fight against young fat. Arbuckle Foods is the biggest player in the federally funded healthy lunch market. Roscoe “Skinny” Arbuckle is the CEO.

ARBUCKLE

(A real operator.)

The kids love this sh— stuff. Believe me.

REPORTER

This beloved “stuff” consists of such fiber-rich fare as prune fritters, soy chips sans salt, and boiled beet fricassee.

(To Arbuckle.)

Kids like this food? Frozen fish bars?

ARBUCKLE

They eat more of the cod pops than we can make! You know why? Because we put a gumball in the middle of every bar—so they gotta eat *through* the filet to get at the gum. It’s a game. They love it. *And* they’re eating healthy.

REPORTER

Uh huh.

ARBUCKLE

(Bites off a piece and chews lustily.)

Here, try one.

REPORTER

No thanks.

REPORTER *(Cont’d)*

Elsewhere in Cramden Elementary, it’s another busy afternoon for Nurse Dolores Breen.

School nurse’s office. Medical chatter in the background. BOY BILLY groans.)

NURSE BREEN

(Harried, but in command.)

Just lie down on your left side, sweetie. Try to find an empty cot. I’ll be with you in a minute.

BILLY

(In pain.)

OK.

NURSE’S ASSISTANT

(In background.)

Cramper in Number Four! Stat!

REPORTER BJORN

Lots of hurting little kids here.

NURSE BREEN

Tell me about it.

(Aside.)

That's it, Tommy. Push. Push!

REPORTER BJORN

What's going on?

NURSE BREEN

It's this "healthy" lunch program, that's what's going on.

REPORTER BJORN

What do you mean?

NURSE BREEN

Look, maybe this violates all of my medical training, but sometimes I wish they'd go back to serving cotton candy, Fritos and foot longs. We didn't get half the crampers back then.

LITTLE GIRL SUZY

(In pain.)

Nurse Breen, I don't feel so good.

NURSE BREEN

What'd you have for lunch, honey?

SUZIE

Root-mulch patties.

NURSE BREEN

Third cot on the left, dear. Go.

REPORTER BJORN

In the war on fat, maybe fat should win. ... For National News Radio, I'm Bjorn Tribble.

(Fade out.)

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