

Repeal 'idiotic' laws, GOP leader urges

By ELMER E. WHITE

Watch it this winter. In Michigan, it's illegal to wear a mask covering all or part of the face while in a public place.

So reports House GOP Floor Leader William Bryant of Grosse Pointe Farms, a lawyer who recently persuaded Michigan's statutes to see just how many "idiotic" ones he could find. At least 39 cropped up, including the mask law.

"The list is only the tip of the iceberg, only the most stand-out examples of criminal laws which need re-

examination," Bryant says. "It is not in the interest of freedom that laws exist which reasonable and moral men cannot help but violate in a daily routine."

RELATIVELY HIGH on Bryant's list is an old law that's undoubtedly violated across the state every day at rush hour. It's a misdemeanor if a person is "... found jostling or roughly crowding people unnecessarily in a public place."

It's also a crime to ride a bike on any sidewalk in "any unincorporated

village" or hold a dance marathon or "walkathon or similar endurance contest," says Bryant.

And a 1933 law still requires all Communists or the Communist Party off the ballot and precludes Communists from any public job.

Getting out-dated laws off the books is Bryant's goal.

"There are so many left over laws on the books that aren't needed anymore," he says. "And we just keep piling others on top of them. The only time we examine the old laws is when someone calls a particularly bad one to our attention."

Bryant contends that "respect for the law demands rational and limited laws which are widely known, understood and accepted, and which are vigorously, fairly and impartially enforced."

COY, HE'S not. Just being practical.

Zolton A. Ferency, the shaggy-haired lawyer who once chaired Michigan's Democratic Party, then tried to help found the Human Rights Party, says he has no plans at this point to run for office. But, he adds, that doesn't mean he won't be a candidate. Ferency noted recently that "after we see who and what is available, the need may be that I run for office."

Ferency has been mentioned as a possible HRP candidate for the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by Democrat Philip A. Hart.

What is HRP all about? Ferency sees the party as an alternative to the two-party system. "We must convince the people that voting is not choosing the lesser of two evils," he says. "I think the Human Rights Party is helping to provide that alternative."

The HRP candidate for East Lansing City Council recently garnered 23 per cent of the vote—not enough to win a council seat—and an HRP-backed rent control proposal picked up 42 per cent of the votes in that community.

JUST NINE pupils in a school district in Michigan.

Yep, that's what the Michigan Department of Education reports for the student population of Bois Blanc Pines School District on Bois Blanc Island in northern Lake Huron.

Needless to say, that's the smallest district in the state. And the next largest, the Oneida Township School District in Eaton County, has 10. (Both are non-K-12 school districts.)

Largest of Michigan's districts in Detroit, with exactly 254,519 students more than the districts on Bois Blanc Island. Flint follows with 414,688, and Grand Rapids chalks up 381,169.

These items come along with a report that well over two million students are enrolled in Michigan's public schools this year, a decline of some 13,000 from last year.

The department says it's the smallest year-to-year drop since public school enrollments in Michigan began

declining four years ago.

IT'S OFFICIAL. Motorists now have the alternative of repairing defective equipment prior to court date, rather than paying a fine for the infraction. Governor Milliken signed that measure into law last month.

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