

Readers' Views On 1-City

Welday Opposes Consolidation, Defends Allen

EDITOR:

I write this letter as a concerned resident and citizen of the City of Farmington. It is not intended as a reply to Dr. Blumberg's open letter to John Allen which appeared in your paper on Oct. 29 (Councilman Allen can and, I am sure, will want to respond for himself) but my writing is prompted by the doctor's letter.

Why does the consolidation question create the kind of personal outburst and attack upon "close friends" as displayed in Dr. Blumberg's letter? Why make-or publicize-accusations against the individual, when it is solely the issue which is in question? Why berate Allen as a person primarily on the ground that he has been one of the very few to publicly oppose consolidation of the several communities encompassed by the pro-

posal to do so?

Dr. Blumberg emphasizes that "almost every leader... HAS come out in favor of a YES vote...". And then he accuses Mr. Allen of not being a leader because Mr. Allen is not a follower! If there is logic to this argument, that logic escapes me. For me to come to a decision on the merits of a proposition, I intend to examine the quality of the positions and the arguments;

I refuse to be swayed by the quantity of the endorsements and to accept that as a standard by which the merit of the proposition itself should be weighed. I expect a leader to do the same thing.

We all have the privilege of stating the proposition in our own way, and we all have the privilege of determining what, to ourselves, is the "merit" of the proposition. To me the leading question presented by consolidation is "what will the proposed charter say?" but rather the key and crucial question is: "Does consolidation—under any form of charter—offer sufficient advantage to the present city of Farmington to make it worth while?"

And before any one of us proceeds to make any answer to that question, we must first recognize the plain, simple, unalterable, unchallengeable fact that consolidation destroys the present city. It cannot but destroy the city. By definition, consolidation would destroy the city.

The advantages of consolidation which have been urged to me are:

1. Consolidation will broaden the city's tax base and prevent the present tax base from "crumbling"; This, potentially is not true. Consolidation will not "broaden" the city's tax base!

at all. It will simply merge that base into the existing tax base of the already larger—both geographically and politically—township of Farmington.

2. Consolidation can prevent the city from being landlocked without a voice in deciding its border development. Again, potentially not so. No city can control development across its borders. This is true whether the

city is large or small. The truth of the matter is that the larger the city, the less that adverse border development will affect the total population of the city.

3. Consolidation can be used to facilitate downtown redevelopment. Maybe yes, maybe no. Consolidation can also mean that the time, talent, money, and services which would otherwise have gone into downtown redevelopment

"are urgently needed elsewhere".

4. Consolidation would give the city a voice in a 36 square mile area, instead of a voice in only a 2.6 square mile area. On the "one-man, one vote" principle, I am now one voice in about 100,000. If we however, I would have one voice in 60,000 -- soon to be one voice in 100,000! I like the proportion better the way it is.

Consolidation now does not offer enough to make me want to destroy the present city of Farmington. I intend therefore, to vote against the proposition.

To Dr. Blumberg I add that, while I am not one of the civic or club leaders or government officials who you list, I am one of those who support Mr. Allen's position on the issue.

So far as I am concerned, Mr. Allen is still a leader.

DONALD F. WELDAY JR.

Wants To Save City She Loves

EDITOR:

When the consolidation issues were first presented to us, the citizens of the City of Farmington, I like many people in the city began thinking hard about a lot of things, not only from an economic viewpoint but also from an esthetic and moral one as well.

At first, I was inclined to think as John Allen, "Small is best." After all the city is a small, old, charming and complete in itself, town. When, really, did we owe the township and their myriad of growing problems—nothing? We were small, we had a very adequate police department, fire department, and pretty good, paid-for streets. Let's hang onto these things and keep the city the same, unchanged and familiar Farmington we liked best.

Besides I respect the judgment and admire the contributions made to this city by men like John Allen. Without thinking too much more about it or reading the issues, I decided then, "What's good enough for John is good enough for me."

I FINALLY began to read and became more involved in all the issues. I heard pros and cons reiterated often and was forced to change my ways of thinking.

Christensen Opposes

Editor:

As a former candidate for councilman in the City of Farmington last April 7, I took a firm stand on a "no" vote for consolidation and incorporation. I felt at that time as I feel today that it is not a solution to the many problems that confront the City of Farmington. I took my stand then as a citizen and not as a leader of the community at heart. I will further conform my feelings as a citizen of the community, not as a leader, but as a fellow voter.

I feel that we're all smoke-screened by paid literature, mimeographed forms, by supposed spokesmen of various clubs and religious groups and subdivisions, without prior knowledge of the before mentioned. They say it will not be "this" and they say it does not mean "that" but what they do not say that in reality it will cost us dollars and cents whether we live in the city or township, Clasketown or Wood Creek Farms.

They tell us, the people in the city, that we will be landlocked with 2.6 square miles and no room to expand. With rumors, this is especially important when you consider that a "no" vote commits us to a landlock similar to the very small cities along Woodward Ave., with worn out tax base, with an ever increasing hunger for services which must be satisfied with ever increasing taxes.

But they do not tell you that our charter has a tax limitation of 2.5% of mill. They also do not tell you that we are not on Woodward Ave., we are on Grand River Ave. and have been by-passed by free-

I also began to realize more and more why many people, intelligent people, are basely suspicious of change. Some actually fear it. But this is not the 19th century and we cannot afford to think in a small way. Small can also mean small, nearighted thinking, small goals and small results.

This whole consolidation issue is not simply an economic move for Farmington. If it were then most well-informed people would have to admit, in the light of the issues presented, that consolidation is our only logical course, the sooner the better.

There are many diaries in our city, who have stated, some publicly, that they are willing to pay twice the price in taxes that it might eventually cost the city to retain the status quo and be left alone. I feel this is a pretty selfish attitude. There are many families in our city that couldn't possibly afford doubled taxes.

WE CAN'T possibly remain immune to future economic changes involving added freeways, proposed interchanges, airports and industries looming up on all four sides of us with the present rate of growth projected to include 120,000 people in this area by the year

ways which have long been here and still exist with an identity. Our fire protection for a city of our size is one of the top in the nation, as well as our law enforcement.

Our tax rates per capita is ahead of our neighboring communities. I, as a citizen, feel that our roads are the best in the state. Our DPW is one of the best. I can get home in the wintertime. I have very adequate garbage and trash collection jointly by the city and their private collectors.

The people that are pushing the affirmative vote for consolidation use reports from the community development of OMSU but do not tell you of other exhaustive studies that do not freely agree with them. They say only that a "yes" vote will allow a charter commission to translate the recommendation, but do not truthfully say how to get away in plain English, from numerous ballots and elections that will cost x dollars in the future.

They state that further extension of present area-wide consolidation approaches to local services with examples of Farmington, public schools, Farmington Community Center, Farmington Public Library, 4th District Court, I grant you that these are prime examples of a consolidated city, but we already have these. What more do they have to offer us? Nothing in my opinion.

I feel that this is another one of their smoke screens to dupe the public of their true right opinion. This is a question for my fellow voters, to decide and not our self-appointed presidents, chairmen, leaders and spokesmen.

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Creamed Chicken on Mashed Potatoes, Cole-slaw, Fruit Cup, Bishop's Bread and Butter. Mik

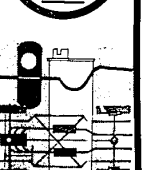
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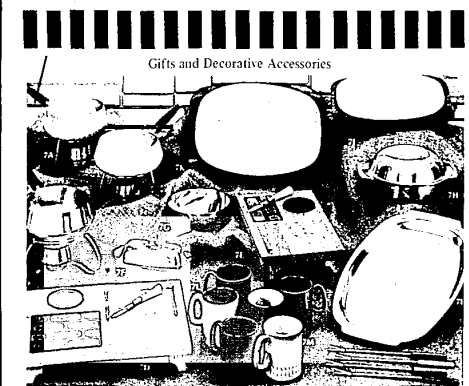
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