

## editorial opinion

## U-M study shows integration is failing effort

Once again, we've been reminded, integration in the metropolitan Detroit area is a failing effort.

This year's report comes from the University of Michigan Population Research Center. It says, in short, that prospects for residential integration in Detroit and the suburbs aren't good.

In situations of minimum integration — defined as one black to 14 whites — 7 percent of those queried would move out and 27 percent would be unwilling to move in.

When black families make up three of 15 families, 24 percent of the white respondents would move out and 50 percent said they would be unwilling to move into such a neighborhood situation.

These statistics were gathered in a survey of 400 blacks and 734 whites taken in 1976. The report was just released.

Concerning whites, the study concluded that they believed black neighbors cause declining property values, crime, vandalism and juvenile delinquency.

On the other hand, blacks expressed a reluctance to become the first family to integrate a neighbor-

hood because of fear of violence or scrutiny from neighbors.

While blacks preferred to live in a community with a 50-50 racial mix, they tended to live in predominantly black neighborhoods because there are few racially balanced communities.

THE STUDY FOUND three common excuses given for the failure of integration to be untrue: "blacks cannot afford to live in suburban housing; whites are prejudiced; and blacks prefer to live with other blacks."

To expand on these three points, the study noted that while blacks' incomes have risen substantially over the last 20 years, there wasn't an equal increase in the number of blacks in suburban communities.

Since 1942, whites have become more accepting of the concept of blacks in predominantly white neighborhoods — 40 percent in 1942, 84 percent in 1972.



So what is the problem?

Fear is the barometer. No one enjoys being rejected as happens to many blacks. Neither does anyone like the idea of losing a cultural identity, as do many whites. Included in that identity is a person's house — the supreme benchmark in the American white society.

Cultural education is the answer. But society doesn't provide it and the young aren't getting it. We are allowing them to grow up with the same misconceptions and fears with which we grew up.

THIS GENERATION of Americans has pretty well gone down the tubes when it comes to acculturation. The fears have been well beaten into our heads. But that is no excuse for the next generation to suffer through the same comedy of errors which ironically leads to tragedy.

It's time we sacrifice rusty old ideas and dust off ideals which have laid dormant for so many years. Slowly we are learning to live together. In this country, the Irish and English have learned. Protestant and Catholic, likewise. So, too, Arab and Jew.

Give your children a chance to live in a more peaceful and tranquil society. Put away your mantle of fear and let in the fresh air of integration.

## 'Hey, look who's coming!'



## Avoid buying now

## Contradicting the Realtors

In the last few months, the real estate market has softened. Sales have been tougher to make.

Interest rates are 12.5 percent, and you need a 20 percent down payment. Buyers are being driven out.

And so the Metropolitan Detroit Council of Boards of Realtors called a press conference last week. They announced that by 1985 an average existing house price in such typical new suburbs as Troy and Livonia would reach \$100,000.

The conclusion, as one of them said in an interview with our reporter: You won't save any money by waiting for prices to go down, so buy now. But then, realtors — er, Realtors (trademark) — are always saying that.

WHEN TIMES ARE tough, Realtors say, "Buy now — prices are down."

When times are improving, Realtors say, "Buy now — the market's getting good."

When inflation is running rampant, Realtors say, "Buy now — land won't get any cheaper."

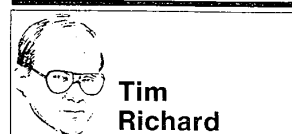
When the population is increasing, Realtors say, "Buy now — the supply of property can't be increased."

When the population is declining, Realtors say, "Buy now — well, I don't know why."

Realtors live off commissions, not salaries. The rest of us have to buy and sell properties for them to survive. We can't forget their motives in advising us to "buy now."

WELL, NOW IS NOT the time to buy, if you can humanly avoid it.

From a consumer's point of view, a 20 percent down payment is utter madness. A 12.5 percent interest rate is madness. A mortgage with payments that climb each year for five years is madness.



Tim Richard

And the latest is that home heating costs will take off again — yet.

Those of us who can possibly refrain from buying housing should do it. Just sit tight. Stick with the apartment or mobile home, hold off having kids.

Let the industry suffer for a year or two and see if they don't figure out ways to stabilize prices.

Did you notice, in the last round of inflation figures from Washington, what item was leading the price hike list, right after oil? Housing.

The builders blame the suppliers of materials.

Others blame the construction trades, which bargain for big wage hikes even when their members suffer depression level unemployment.

They all blame local government for requiring lots of inspections to protect us consumers.

ALL OF US SUFFER, not just house buyers, from this inflation-leading industry.

When prices of new housing soar, prices of old houses and tax assessments follow.

Contrary to what Dick Headlee has been telling you, the housing industry has been more to blame for rising property taxes than those governmental "bureaucrats."

Now is the time to save. Money is a vile thing, so the way I figure it, we should make money work for us whenever possible. The savings and loans associations, which provide most home mortgage money, are offering terrific deals these days.

Saving is not only good personal finance, but it's the patriotic thing to do. Some of the more sophisticated magazines are starting to come out with the truth about the American economy. They're telling us we have the highest incomes and the lowest rate of savings of any major industrial nation in the world.

With low saving, we have low rates of capital investment. With low capital investment, we have the lowest rate of productivity increase of any major industrial nation.

And with low investment, we also have fewer new jobs created, to the detriment of our young people and our minority groups.

It's fashionable, given the conservative political mood of the nation, to blame the federal government's deficits for pouring gasoline on the fires of inflation. But plain American citizens have to shoulder their share of the blame for succumbing to the siren song of "buy now."

Don't buy now, if you can avoid it.

Save and invest.

## Billboard zealots hurt travelers

In the newspaper business, we constantly come across people we call "single issuers." These are people who get excited about things and devote great time and energy to save the world from, or encourage the world to get enthusiastic about, their issue.

These people are earnest and sincere, but many times they are blind to the big picture and don't care about the ripple effect their actions might have on other people's lives.

Many environmentalists fall into this category. In their desire to make the landscape prettier or the air cleaner, they seem to ignore the prospect that their actions may put companies out of business and people out of work.

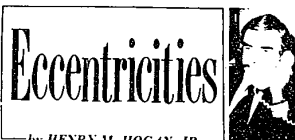
Knowing in their hearts that their cause is right, many times they are more theoretical than practical.

FOR THE LAST 20 years, groups have been trying to eliminate billboards from federal highways. They are fighting "visual pollution."

The federal government has finally gone along with them, and slowly but surely billboards are disappearing from the side of freeways.

Because a lot of billboards are not artistic masterpieces, many will say, "Hurrah!" And the theory of just having a beautiful landscape to observe as we chug along at 55 mph is acceptable to most people as they sit at home and think about it.

But the person who accepts the theory forgets what it's like to be a traveler.



by HENRY M. HOGAN, JR.

IF YOU TAKE a long trip by car, you get on long, boring strips of freeway. Your only contact with the outside world is the radio.

When it's time to eat or get gas, you have no idea what a strange area offers unless it is brought to your attention by signs.

If there is competition among gas stations, the price of gas will be more reasonable because highway signs are the most effective means of promoting competition.

Without advertising signs, motorists are forced to eat at whatever is built at freeway exits, because exploring in the wilderness can be expensive or futile.

Towns have been built catering to the tourist trade. Who would have thought about Pinconning cheese, Lookout Mountain or any of the local food specialties without billboards?

Billboards have become part of Americana in a nation of cars. Signs by the side of the road are

economically sound, but will pass away as one of our institutions.

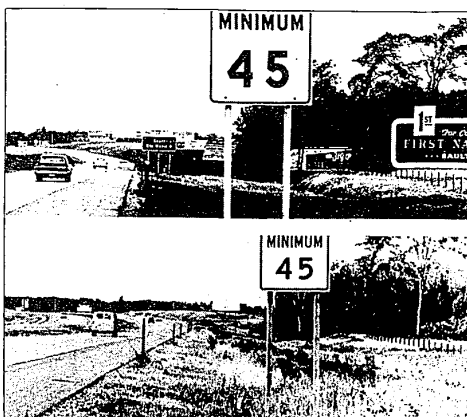
WHAT MAKES IT ridiculous is that, as highway departments are forcing the removal of commercial signs from the side of highways, they are overrunning us with a new type of visual pollution. They are installing new traffic signs of every size, sort and dimension.

Their theory seems to be that if one traffic sign is good, two must be better.

If you travel Woodward Avenue today, you have to cope with signs that say, NO LEFT TURN, RIGHT LANE MUST TURN RIGHT, NO TURN ON RED, speed signs, road signs and many more.

If signs are bad, where are the environmentalists to slow this down?

The answer is that visual pollution is both helpful and necessary. Yet we are blindly trying to eliminate some of the more helpful kind.



## Before and after

Interstate-75 freeway south of Sault Ste. Marie was lined with billboards (top photo) prior to state billboard control law of 1972. Below is a recent picture of the same stretch of highway. More than 29,500 signs have been removed from Michigan highways, with nearly 4,000 to go, and 4,200 legal ones have been erected. (Photos and data from the Michigan Department of Transportation)

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