

## OBSERVATION POINT

## DISSENT

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## '60s Marked Coming Of Suburbs

By Philip H. Power

This is the last day of the decade of the 1960s.

It's astonishing just how fast time has spun itself out over these past 10 years. 1960 came and John F. Kennedy was our new President.

The civil rights movement reached full flower, and we had riots in our cities, including the worst one in Detroit. We were eyeball to eyeball with the Russians over Cuban missiles, and we saw the horrifying results of our mistake in Viet Nam.

Any of these events, it can be argued, can stand out as determining the central character of the decade we are closing. But I think the most significant development—indeed, the one that could do most in the long run to change the nature of American society—is going on right here in the suburbs.

The 1960s were the years when we first began to realize the power, wealth and impact of the suburbs.

If someone's collecting titles for the decade passing today, let me suggest "The Coming of the Suburbs."

THE ENORMOUS explosion of the people off the farms and out of the central cities into the suburbs began, of course, much earlier than 1960. The process really started with the end of World War II, when returning servicemen had jobs, started families, and could get a car to drive to work. It grew in strength and speed during 1950s, but it was mostly unnoticed.

It was only during the past decade that people—politicians, planners, social scientists, retailers, and just ordinary guys—really noticed that something altogether new was happening in the suburbs.

They had to notice because you can't ignore the kind of staggering population growth experienced in the suburbs over the decade of the '60s.

The figures for this northwest suburban corridor are particularly striking, according to the latest report issued by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, which compares population on April 1, 1960, with July 1, 1968.

● Livonia had 66,702 in 1960, compared with 103,000 in 1968, a 54% increase.

● Farmington Township grew 66% from 25,526 to 42,500. The City of Farmington went from 6,881 to 9,900, a 44% increase.

● Plymouth Township mushroomed to 15,900 from 8,364 or eye-popping 102%. The City of Plymouth grew 34%, from 8,766 to 11,750.

● Westland became a city incorporated out of Nankin Township.

ship, and in the process grew from 57,706 to 83,000, or 44%.

● Garden City, nearing the end of its population growth cycle, grew 12%, from 38,017 to 42,800.

● Redford Township, arguably an extension of the City of Detroit rather than uniquely suburban, grew only slightly, from 71,276 to 75,700 or a 6% rate.

In 1960, the total population of these communities was 283,238; by 1968 it had grown to 385,550, or a growth of 102,322. That's like creating an entire new city the size of Livonia just in 10 years!

THE KEY EVENT which translated population growth in the suburbs into social power was the historic U.S. Supreme Court decision making "one-man, one-vote" the law of the land.

Issued in 1962, the decision meant that allocation of seats in Congress and in state legislatures would have to be made in accordance with population changes, such that roughly an equal number of people would be represented by each congressman or state legislator.

For the suburbs, this brought political power.

In 1960, for example, the 21st state representative district included the cities of Belleville, Livonia, Northville, and Plymouth, and the townships of Canton, Northville, Plymouth, Redford, Sumpter and Van Buren. Today, after reapportionment, the 35th state representative district includes Livonia, Northville and Northville Township only.

The same pattern has happened in the State Senate and U.S. house seats allocated to this area. The suburbs get more of the available seats.

As population grew in the suburbs during the 1960s, representation and political clout grew, too.

TODAY THE SUBURBS are recognized as a key part of this country.

The people with money and education have moved to the suburbs. The retailers have moved after them, building enormous shopping centers. The politicians have set up their strategy to woo the suburban vote. The planners have developed gray hair trying to figure out how to fit the suburbs into regional development plans.

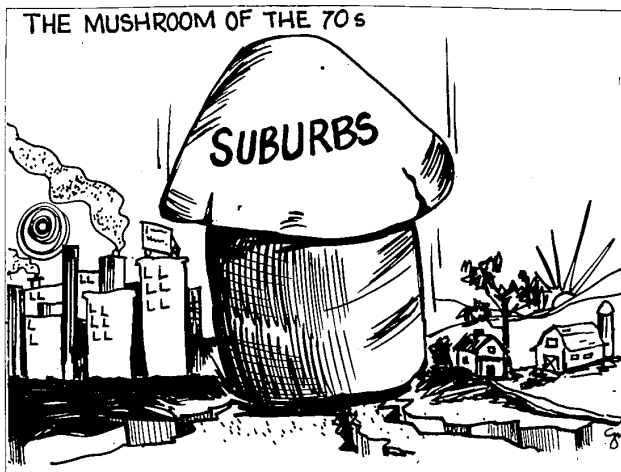
All this has happened in this decade we are now ending, the 1960s.

These changes, I believe, will drastically alter the structure of our society, just as they have changed the patterns of power, money and influence.

They represent, collectively, the greatest single shift of population in our country's history.

They gave the decade of the '60s its particular character and thrust.

I salute the end of such a decade.



Tim Richard writes

## Are Loud, Noisy Machines Deterrent To Recreation?

Our city, county, regional, state and national governments will spend gigantic sums of money in the 1970s to improve our water, air, lakes, woods, urban areas and parks.

To some extent, there is bound to be success in the urban area.

In the lakes and woods, however, the outlook is grim. These will continue to deteriorate in quality, no matter how much money is poured into them. Too many brooks are at work despoiling them.

This is not a Jonathan Swift sort of warning but a cold prediction based on observation of a clear-cut and probably irreversible trend.

THE REASON for such pessimism is the increasing mechanization of recreation. People can't enjoy our woods and waters unless they have a machine—the louder and more powerful, the better.

Take our lakes, especially those which have some number of cottages. Motors on boats get more and more powerful; outboards become inboards; a boat becomes not a thing to bring man closer to nature, but a racecar that doesn't have to observe traffic laws, lanes and highway courtesy.

Cottage owners around the lake will do nothing to prevent the lakes from becoming wide-open race tracks except restrict speeding figures, with little enforcement, because they have spent too much money on boats to turn back.

The marsh areas and shallow-water spawning beds of fish will be ripped up worse than ever by amphibious vehicles.

The sounds of birds in the woods will be drowned by the raucous sounds of snowmobiles in winter, and by dune scooters, motorbikes and amphibians in warm weather.

Some wildlife areas will, to be sure, be maintained as nature trails. No picnicking. No straying from the path. No pets. No hunting. No fishing. No flower-picking. Big deal.

ONE REASON the process can't be reversed, as already mentioned, is the vast sums people have spent on their machines. In addition, there is the pressure that can be brought to bear by manufacturers and sellers of those machines.

Traffic is becoming increasingly frustrating—so much so that in some large cities today's traffic moves no faster than it

did four decades ago. People will take to the lakes and woods in their machines to get the kicks they were unable to get in their cars.

Finally, there is a concerted "educational" campaign by the sellers of these machines in their advertising, especially on television, to convince people that speed, speed, speed is the way to have fun. No one seems to be propagandizing Americans on how to enjoy

the woods quietly now that cigaret commercials are being phased out.

Only the hippies seem to want to enjoy nature in its primitive state, and one suspects even they are too doped-up to enjoy it fully.

So as you proceed through the northland to enjoy the Walden you purchased with your affluence, fasten your safety belt, drive your machine carefully, don't drink while driving, obey all traffic rules, full speed ahead and damn the wildlife!

R.T. Thompson writes

## 'Pigs, Fuzz, Animals'—

The younger generation may consider the Men in Blue as "fuzz," "pigs" and other labels, all intended to make it appear police officers are some breed of animal or monster.

They appear to take delight in forming gangs and then daring the men in uniform to arrest them—often they succeed simply by vulgar, obscene remarks, by throwing things and then cursing, fighting, kicking and most anything else when the policemen try to keep order.

There have been numerous examples of this at various shopping centers in Observerland in recent weeks.

THUS, WITH ALL of the hubbub and screams about "police brutality," it is refreshing and certainly enlightening to listen to someone who has nothing but good things to say about the police and especially about ambulance drivers.

Livonian Bill Benson, who just happens to be an employee of the Observer Newspapers, has nothing but high praise for the men in blue and the manner in which they handled an emergency call that meant the difference between life and death for his ailing wife.

He has no time for the designations of "fuzz" and "pig." All he can think of and all he talks about is the wonderful cooperation that gave his wife such a tremendous Christmas with her husband and three children.

Mrs. Benson has been seriously ill for months but received permission from her physician to leave the hospital for the holidays if oxygen were available at all times.

In fact, the doctor was instrumental in securing a portable

tank of oxygen for the start of the visit. It contained enough oxygen for 10 hours.

Bill tried and tried to get one of the large tanks from the many firms that advertise 24 hour service but discovered no one would service a new account during the holidays.

THERE WAS BARELY a half-hour left in the portable tank, and in desperation he called the Livonia Police Dept. for aid.

He was almost hysterical when he finally reached Lt. Jim Mogan. Time and oxygen were running out, and he had no one else to turn to. First Lt. Mogan calmed down Benson—then in a matter of fact voice, he promised to have a tank of oxygen delivered well ahead of the deadline.

In less than 10 minutes a General Ambulance Service ambulance was at the door with a portable tank. The two attendants exchanged tanks, had coffee with the thankful Benson and then told him to stop worrying—they would deliver two large tanks that would adequately take care of the situation.

And they did and Mrs. Benson had her best evening's sleep and rest in a long time. So Bill and the three daughters.

"Pigs," "fuzz," "monsters"—perhaps it's time they receive credit for some of the good things they do.

What better way to start the New Year than to begin looking around and appreciating what the Men in Blue do for the community—both those in the Police Department and the Fire Departments alike.

By Philip Sheehan  
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The near-trial of eight Green Berets for the murder of a Vietnamese double agent shocked Arthur Goldberg: the former presidential advisor and Supreme Court Justice was horrified to think Americans might be guilty of such a crime.

The average American, conditioned by Mission: Impossible, took the matter pretty well in stride.

SPY STORIES have been with us longer than television, back at least to Homer and the Old Testament. For about that long, we have understood that spying is a high-risk business, leading to adventure and money, or to death. Of course, no one ever knew a spy, and certainly no one ever was one. The whole business was an interesting fiction, like nerve gas or death rays or trips to the moon.

But one day not long ago, we woke up to a different world, to a sky full of strange chemicals and strange radiation and strange ships. And there, in undeniable reality on our television screen, we found honest, patriotic Americans—the M.I. Force—murdering, stealing, and lying in the cause of justice. Well paid for it, too, to judge from their life style.

The heroes' criminal activity is invariably justified by some greater good, such as preserving democracy or stealing plans for super weapon. The heroes sabotage, seduce, and subvert; they lie, steal, and cheat.

THIS ALL happens, incidentally, in some of the best television ever produced. That is to say, the most effective and appropriate use of the medium. You must watch and listen to all of the program if you expect to comprehend what is happening. No tuning in late, no dashing out in the middle for a sandwich. Each program is tightly constructed, well cast, and superbly directed and edited. Technically, it is exceptional television fare.

If you can accept an "end justifies the means" morality, Mission: Impossible is close to perfect television. But we began with the Green Berets, and it won't do to ignore them the rest of the way.

THE AVERAGE American was not upset by the Beret murder case. It was just another variation on an M.I. theme. There was no such person as the victim, he hadn't been killed, and the American soldiers didn't do it. That was their story, and we accepted it in the spirit in which they told it.

After all, the Mission: Impossible people never actually kill anyone . . . well, hardly ever. People are killed, violently and in quantity, but not directly by the heroes. A favorite gimmick is to sow seeds of doubt among the villains, prompting one of them to shoot or poison or blow up his associates.

The bad guys are disposed of, the good guys maintain a weird brand of innocence, and the audience learns there is no honor among thieves. That the killing was provoked by the good guys proves they are smarter than the bad guys.

So we knew that, though the double agent probably did exist, though the Green Berets wanted him out of the way, and though he probably was killed, none of the Americans had actually pulled the trigger. Not Colonel Rehnalt; not Peter Graves.

## 1970: Last

Sorry, all you swingers, you'll have to wait another year to celebrate the beginning of a new decade.

It's merely the last year of the seventh decade of this century.

IF YOUR FRIENDS should argue, you've got a sure winning bet, and your authority is none other than Webster.

The New World version of Webster plainly states that a century is a 100 year span "such as the period from 1801 through 1900 A.D." Nothing could more explicitly call "1" the starting point and "0" the finale.

## Editorial &amp; Opinion

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