

Freedom: indeed special

WILL ANYTHING occur in the next 51 weeks to distinguish the year 1987 from all the rest? Will there be a facsimile of Lee Iacocca to lead us into national ga-galand over the birthday of a statue?

Foretelling the unknown is not my bag, so we won't speculate on the hide-and-seek games of international war-mongers, the political chess gambits of Washington and Lansing, or even where our beloved Detroit Tigers will finish in the American League pennant chase.

But in the Almighty's timetable for the United States of America we may well have another tribute through parades, fancy balls, fireworks and everything except tall ships to honor one of the greatest documents ever penned in mankind's quest for freedom: The bi-centennial celebration of our Constitution.

But first, let's set the stage.

Eighteen days hence, Michigan will observe its 150th anniversary of statehood. There'll be a \$150-a-copy dinner-dance at the Detroit Institute of Arts, plus \$65 and \$25 cheapies at Lansing and Marquette.

PARTIES like that bring to mind this paragraph written by my favorite social columnist four weeks ago: "When car parkers couldn't find a black Cadillac one woman asked for — they first brought the wrong Cadillac — her husband reminded her they had arrived in a Mercedes."

If the guy on the assembly line thinks at all on Jan. 26 of Michigan history, it's more apt to be thankfulness for "30 and out" instead of asking his buddy over an



through
bifocals

Fred
DeLano

after-work beer, "Who the hell was Lewis Cass?"

So be it.

Nonetheless, it may have seeped into our friend's conception that he lives in a land where he is free to worship as he pleases, speak his mind when he wants, send his children to public schools and, hopefully, be considered innocent of any wrongdoing until proven guilty by a jury of his peers.

A HISTORIAN I'm not, but a few days ago I asked myself:

If Cornwallis surrendered the British troops to Gen. George Washington on Oct. 19, 1781 at Yorktown . . . and if the Treaty of Paris formally ending our revolution against the mother country was not signed until Sept. 3, 1783 . . . and if Washington did not take his oath of office as the first president of the United States until April 30, 1789, who the hell was running the store?

It was well and good that we celebrated the 200th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1976. That was the colonists' Declaration of freedom from the crown. It took war to prove the point and make it stick.

But then, you may recall from high school history, a wobbly government

was formed under the Articles of Confederation by our forefathers (mothers couldn't vote). This conglomerate of Yankees, Quakers, Southerners et al tried to fashion a parlay on which God himself couldn't quote the odds. It didn't score.

OH, YES; there was one great accomplishment from that initial, interim government: Adoption in 1787 of the Northwest Ordinance governing the territory from which Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin have sprung. That's another 200th birthday worth noting this semester.

But dissatisfaction was rampant. In Virginia and other states, Washington and other leaders wondered whether the colonies had rebelled in vain. They led the movement to form a new government and on May 25, 1787, with delegates from a quorum of seven states present, a convention to draw plans for a new governmental form opened in Independence Hall at Philadelphia.

IT WAS on Feb. 4, 1789, that the electors named George Washington the first president of the United States of America under a Constitution whose opening preamble still reads:

"We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

Two hundred years later, those three little words — "We the people" — are just as meaningful. Let's have a parade.

Farmington readers' forum

Letters must be signed, original copies and include the address and telephone number of the writer. None can be returned. Names will be withheld from publication only for sufficient reason. Letters should be limited to 300 words in most cases. We reserve the right to edit them. Send letters to Readers' Forum, Farmington Observer, 33203 Grand River Ave., Farmington 48024.

Do not moralize baby-sitting issue

To the editor:

The Christmas Day editorial advocating zoning changes that would permit professional baby-sitting in Farmington Hills neighborhoods contained the following statement: "They're businesses only in the sense they add to family income. Commercial ventures they are not."

Editor Sklar makes a distinction that I cannot accept. Is there an exchange of money for a service? Does a venture become "commercial" by its size and volume or by the fact that a profit can be made?

If zoning laws are to be changed permitting businesses to operate in residential neighborhoods — and I am opposed to this suggested change — then I recommend that all legal businesses meeting the new zoning criteria be allowed.

In other words, there should be no exceptional, or favored, status granted any commercial enterprise, including one established to care for children whose parents work.

Community decisions should be made on an appraisal of the facts, not editorializing and promoting.

Lawrence Niblett
Farmington Hills

Yule program called success

To the editor:

Thank you for Loraine McClish's help with our children's tree program for Christmas.

Here are some facts you might like: We had 319 names on our tree. Our names came from all over the community: the Salvation Army, St. Alexander, Our Lady of Sorrows, the public schools, Head Start.

Our customers and employees took all but 50 toys off the tree. We took the rest off and raised enough money from our customers, employees and the Farmington Hills Reserve Police to make sure every boy and girl was remembered with clothes and toys.

Dolores Batchelor,
K mart Good News Committee

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