points of view

Wise budgeting

It's the key to fiscal restraint

Circuit Judge James Thorburn rules the state violated the Headlee amendment to the Michigan Coastitution by showing certain mental health costs onto counties and labeling it "aid to local government." The judge said Lansing improperly classified those expenditures in pumping the required 41.6 percent of the state budget into local aid.

e Richard Headlee and friends, under one of their many committee frames, file a Court of Appeals suit to prohibit the collecting of Gov, James Blanchard's 55 sucharge on traffic tickets. They say it's a tax — that the nickname "ticket tax" is a cutally correct — and that it raises state taxes beyond the percentage limit specified in the Headlee amendment.

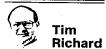
University of Michigan-Dear-born Chancellor William Jenkins an-nounces the addition of a "fee differ-ential" of \$10 to \$20 per credit to all junior, senior and graduate courses offered in UM-D's engineering and management schools. Students will pay up to \$100 more per term, hiking UM-D's revenues \$400,000.

First, the Headlee amendment is too intricate to work, a fact we pointed out editorially when it was on the 1978 ballot.

A constitution is supposed to be a framework for government. Leave the maze of details to the statutes, local ordinances and regulations. The Headlee amendment, with its six claborate sections of very fine print, violates the first principle of constitutional writing.

A SECOND flaw with the Headlee amendment is that its intricacy tempts politicians to sit up late at night dreaming of ways to get around it.

That is exactly what happened in the case decided by Judge Thorburn. While it's true that a few good minds spotted this violation of the Headlee amendment right away, the political fact of life is that it took years for a



court case to be developed and won.
And it's actually not over yet, because the two appellate courts haven't had a crack at it yet.

The third flaw is that the Headlee people, in arguing their case, pounced only on taxes, taxes, taxes as a source of government revenue, not on tuitions and fees.

So the spenders in Lansing and in our schools are concooting all sorts of revenue-enhancing schemes without calling them taxes. The effects of taxes and fees, however, are precisely the same: more money out of our pockets; more money into the

THE CENTRAL idea of the Headlee amendment was and is quite correct. Taxes shouldn't be allowed to rise faster than the rate of inflation, at least not without the voters knowing about it.

I was writing about this topic back in the days when Dick Headlee him-self was laboring outstate for an ob-scure outfit called Mobark Indus-tries.

But our mutual goal — keeping government from taking our income faster than we can produce it — can't be accomplished through a constitution. It must be accomplished through patient attention to every single line of every single budget by good elected officials with a sense of solventrations. self-restraint.

As you can surmise, I'm with Dick Headice on this wastrel spending is-sue. May the Lord grant him a com-plete recovery so he can start writ-ing his high-spirited letters again

Suburbia forges economic peace

SOMETIME EACK when the Japanese were in the genests of their economic invasion of this country I bought a small, yellow Toyota.

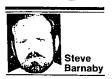
Nothing sinister in my melives. It was the best deal around for a young guy just starting to work. Like many people at that time, I never gave it much thought. It was just a car — the best deal.

My father Irowned a bit. He had been a sailor in the Pacific during World War II. Generations are sometimes prisoners of their own experiences. But he took a ride, anyway, and admitted it wasn't a bad ride for the money.

The car served its purpose, lasting six years, in which time the Japanese presence became even more evident and America went through a decede of near panic. Would these Asian interlopers, after all, destroy our economy with their products?

WELL, THEY didn't. After

WELL, THEY didn't. After squirming a bit, American industrialists got their wits about them and decided to design more competitive products — a mainstay cred of capitalism, competition that is. And the Japanese kept coming, And along with them came the Belgians, Australians, French, Germans, British, Swiss, Swedes and Italians.



After a while, many of us didn't notice the difference. We didn't no-tice when they came to suburban De-troit to set up their plants and offic-

es.

Sure, more often than before, we would hear a foreign accent on main street or in the next booth at a restaurant. But few of us realized that

taurant. But few of us realized that our suburban area was becoming one of the most strategic economic fronts in the world.

A few weeks back, business editor Marilyn Fitchett assigned a reporter to find out just what was happening on the economic front in our sub-

urbs.
The results were breathtaking.

IN SOUTHEASTERN Michigan, 274 foreign companies from 19 coun-tries have put out their shingles to say "open for business." Southfield leads the pack with 49 businesses,

Troy is second with 35. They are followed by Livonia and Farmington Hills, with 19 each.

lowed by Livonia and Farrinington Hills, with Je each.
Suddenly, we are they. In southeastern Michigan, nearly 40,000 people are employed by foreign businesses. In Oakland County, that breaks down to 15,100 people who bring home a paycheck provided by a foreign-owned concern. And that check pays for the mortrage, the groceries, the car payment and the plano lessons.

It doesn't take much to realize that what is happening in suburban Detrolt today is even more important than what is happening in Washington this week. Sure, we need to do away with nuclear weapons, no doubt.

But the true path to peace is through economic interdependence.
Forty-six years ago. Japan was a

doubt the true path to peace is though economic interdependence. Foreight economic interdependence. Foreight economic interdependence. Foreight economic interdependence and a seconomic and a seconomic economic economic

THE SAD fact is that the Hoadlee tax limitation amendment isn't 'Bold bidder' leaves stirring legacy working, at least not without a lot of 'Bold bidder' leaves stirring legacy

HE WAS A BOLD bidder. The operative word is "was." Jay was only 48 when he died last month of a heart attack.

It was a shock if not a surprise. Jay first hid a heart attack three years ago. A former college athlete, he dropped 10-15 pounds as part of his recovery, quit smoking and exercised regularly. He was playing tennis when he died. Good habits and good intentions couldn't overcome bad genetics. His father also died young of a heart attack.

Even immediately after his first attack, it was impossible to imagine that Jay had a heart problem. He was so evuberant, so upbeat, so powerful. So healthy.

THEPRE SHOULD be a way that a man can hear his culogy before be dies. The men who spoke at Jay's funcral — a college classmate, a coworker, a neighbor — spoke with various degrees of comfort but with much eloquence. He was a fun per-

Rich Perlberg

son to be around. He didn't dwell on adversity. Did he fumble in football? No matter, he would do better next play. Were sales down? They would pick up, Was life hard? No, life was a

play. Were sales down? They would pick up, Was life hard? No, life was a loy.

"Jay was a bold bidder," said his friend who sat at the same bridge table with him for many years. "He didn't always have the cards, but he always wanted the bid."

He was successful more times than not, certainly more often than had been cartainly more often than had been and core tun, sond prudent.

He was a fun person to be around. He didn't dwell on adversity. Did he fumble in football? No matter, he would do better next play. Were sales down? They would pick up. Was life hard? No, life was a joy.

large corporation. He did well, but be didn't enjoy it.

So to the amazement and consternation of his friends he quit his job and became his own boss, publishing a magazine about fishing, undaunted by the fact that he had absolutely no knowledge of the publishing field.

"I just put the magazine to sleep," he announced proudly after three

AFTER JAY'S funeral, one friend narveled at how someone could be so steadily upbeat, so positive in the face of life's hever-ending struggles. "I wish I could be more like him," he said.

Jay would likely be puzzele by that remark. There's no wish to it, be would say. You just do it.

Most of us don't find it that easy, although it's hard to figure out, we should be suffered to the said with AFTER JAY'S funeral, one friend

If we acted more like Jay, then we wouldn't have to describe how he was. We could say proudly, "This is the way Jay taught us to be." And Jay would live on, the bold bidder in us all.





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