

POINTS OF VIEW

Suburbs, city must share in cooperation

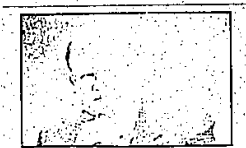
There's a cartoon in which a spoiled teen mooches money from his father. "Dad, I'd like you to cooperate with my learning venture — advance me \$10 on my allowance."

The gag, of course, is that to this kid "cooperation" is a one-way street. Dad pays, he spends.

Coleman Young was full of the cooperative spirit last month when he presented the Detroit City Council his budget, a message whose fine print I recently perused.

"The communities of southeastern Michigan will rise and fall together. We are interconnected," said the mayor.

Young pointed to the "jewels" — the Detroit Institute of Arts, Belle Isle and so on. "We welcome your concern," he told the suburbs. Then Young got to the point: "I want to tell you up front that this budget does not propose to dispose of any of the city's assets in a fire sale atmosphere. I was not elected mayor to dismantle



TIM RICHARD

I was not elected mayor to dismantle Detroit one piece at a time, selling off our jewels to some sort of regional pawnbroker.

Coleman Young
Detroit mayor

• Detroit used to underwrite the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Young failed to come through with its pledge about four years ago, precipitated to a fiscal crisis.

This city department gets a paltry \$500,000 from the city. Private money brings in upwards of \$9 million. The state kicked in as much as \$16 million until the 1991 budget cuts.

Here's how Young's "cooperation" works: The city controls all jobs. Suburbanites may work as volunteers. The state provides the bulk of the public money.

The GRAILS (Guilt-Induced Affluent Liberal Suburbanites) eat it up. They have made Gov. John Engler their whipping boy. The truth is that Detroit, under the leadership of Mayor Young, has abandoned everything about the DIA except political control.

Of the zoo. The city contributes about one-third the budget, ticket and souvenir sales are one-third, and the state kicks in one-third.

Who controls all the jobs? Young, naturally.

Whose name is emblazoned on the water tower? Young's, of course.

How's that for "cooperation," "joint effort" and "welcome your concern?"

Folks outside Detroit use those jewels. We should help pay for them.

We should also have a proportionate share of control. We should have our share of the jobs. Our political chiefs should have their names on the signs.

That would be "cooperation."

Tim Richard reports on the local implications of state and regional news.

Neither side guides meaning of life, death

Both sides of the abortion issue are equally crazy. One waves fetuses in the air and the other side coats hangers. Neither is very appealing and solves nothing for us. We end up pondering the meaning of life and death on our own.

Both sides are in a frenzy. The pro-choice people act as though every child should be aborted, while the pro-life folks are not only intent on banning abortion, but also birth control.

They're unhappy people, intent on inflicting their own personal misery on the rest of us. It's pick your poison on this one. It's what we expect from reformers and folks who want to tell other people what to do.

Usually I can't even watch abortion stories, either pro or anti, on the tube. The



JEFF COUNTS

The coat hanger vs. fetus showdown makes a hockey game look like a Baptist picnic.

time to clean them off and send them squealing to market.

The same is true of the pro-life folks, most of whom would rather live in a religious painting than deal with the realities of life.

There is no compromise for either side. That means it's up to us, the sane folks in the middle to do something about the abortion issue.

Politicians will never make a decision on it. As it turns out, about 8 percent of the voters on each side make a voting decision based on the abortion issue. That means no matter which way a politician goes on it, he or she alienates an equal number of people.

BUT THEN maybe that's the way it should be. If somebody wants eight kids,

it's their business. The same holds true of those who want an abortion.

The idea of having lawyers and judges deciding when life starts is scary. Most lawyers would re-write a stop sign. If given the chance, God knows what would happen when deciding on when life starts.

It's time to put the abortion issue back where it belongs, in the living room. And let's make sure it isn't crowded with feminists, pro-life zealots and lawyers.

Life and death decisions are tough enough to make alone, much less with pressure from crazy folks.

Jeff Counts is the editor of the Plymouth and Canton Observer-News.

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