

## OBSERVATION POINT

The Suburban Economy;  
Shape Of Things To ComeBy Philip H. Power  
Publisher

Summer in the suburbs is a lazy time. The power mowers are humming, the lawn sprinklers hissing quietly. Leaves rustle in the wind, and the shouts of kids playing Little League ball carry only faintly into the back yards. The soft tinkle of ice cubes is heard throughout the land.

And along with the drinks on suburban patios, there is a lot of stock-taking about where our economy is headed in the months ahead when business picks up in the fall.

While you're pouring that second gin and tonic, let me add some economic grist to the conversation mill.

IT'S BEEN A strange year, economically. We have experienced the curious combination of rapidly rising prices in the middle of a recession. (We can now use that word with accuracy, if that makes any difference, since the Brookings Institution in Washington recently consulted its navel and decided what it was: a recession.)

sion; the Administration has been loathe to use that term.)

We've had economic trouble going all the way back to the fall-winter of 1969, when sales dropped off and unemployment started to rise. It looked like we might be getting out of it, but then the GM strike knocked that into a cocked hat, and since then we've been going along with neither much improvement nor much decline. Stagnation, the analysts call it.

This situation has led to odd contrasts. The auto industry (the key to economic health for all of us in this area) is having a fairly good year (by fall, output should be at a rate of around 11 million units a year, which is darn good), but unemployment remains very high. In fact, most of the kids coming home to this area to try to get summer jobs after college had a terrible time. Even the free want ads we run for them in this newspaper to

help out couldn't produce jobs where there were none.

There is money available to buy houses with, after a long dry spell, but my friends in banking say nobody much is buying. Retailers report that sales are still off, but that they seem to be able to pass along the manufacturer's price increases without hurting sales much.

About the only constant thing is that taxes keep going up.

MY OWN BEST leading economic indicator is our classified want ad section, which usually leads general movements in the economy by around three months. For example, in the fall of 1969, our want ad count went all to heck over a period of about three weeks; two or three months later, everyone was talking about the recession.

Beginning in May this year, our want ad count started to go up for the first time since fall of 1969. In May, it was 11% higher

than May, 1970, and later figures show about the same pattern.

This leads me to believe that starting in September or October things should start to get measurably better.

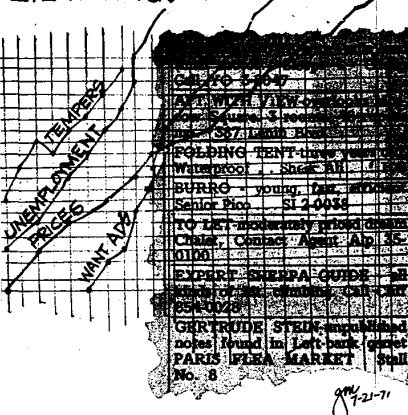
By then, the auto industry should be charging along after model changeover. Interest rates, though a little higher than they were six months ago, should be not excessively high, and there should be plenty of money for people to borrow to buy homes.

THE ONLY real hooker in all of this is that there is no indication that prices are going to level off or that unemployment will drop.

So, although things will be getting better, it won't be a sudden, sharp improvement. Rather, what I expect is a long, slow climb back to economic health for this area.

What about a little more ice for that gin and tonic?

## EVERYTHING'S UP.



Doug Johnson Writes:

Young Voters'  
Impact Unknown

With the adoption of the 26th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, there has been wide speculation from all quarters about the impact of youthful voters on American politics.

EXACT PREDICTIONS are impossible but we have these observations:

• Observerland's 18, 19 and 20-year-old voters will probably vote like their parents do. The youngsters may not like that, but the influence of parents on all attitudes, from jobs to cars to political and religious preferences is well documented.

• The young voters, if recent trends hold up, will not vote in as great a number as do other age

groups. The 21 to 25 age group for instance, is a notoriously poor voter group. Studies show that older people 25 and up vote in the largest possible percentage. It begins to fall off at old age.

• Many Americans — even the enthusiastic young ones — will still not turn out at the polls, thus voluntarily disenfranchising themselves. More than 40 million didn't vote for a presidential candidate in 1964.

• Recent efforts to get young people registered may pave the way for more active involvement in politics. But we guess that this will only come with a respect and knowledge of the American political system. The prospect for that knowledge blossoming seems dim despite efforts in local high schools with government classes and political clubs.

No matter how it turns out, it will be newsworthy. We can see the polls this summer and fall, with TV cameras and newsmen asking youthful voters what they think and feel.

All this attention on voting is good, since it focuses our attention on the entire political process. But once the hoopla dies down, will the young voter make a significant impact at the polls? They can, and should, but it depends to a large extent on their faith in the political system.

For those of us who have faith in the system — and its adaptability and potential for decency and justice — it is our job to pass those beliefs on to the younger generation of voters.

It is in our rational self interest to set examples as reasonable people who believe the world can be understood and changed. The best way to express our faith in our rationality is to go to the polls and vote ourselves, leading the way for the youthful voter.

Tim Richard writes

## What Causes Liberals To Quit Posts?

Some moons ago, I used to cover the board of supervisors in an out-state urban county where there was the customary deep split between the central city boys and the country slickers.

This was prior to the golden era of "one-man, one-vote," and the city had half the county's population but only one-third of the county board votes.

Most of the city supervisors could vaguely be dubbed moderate or liberal, and the country boys could be safely called conservative, especially when processing city annexation petitions or buying parkland.

They had their behavioral differences, too. The city boys were easily bored by county board meetings. Their absenteeism rate was higher. They left early, to return to work or business. Their interest in committee work was even less.

The country slickers, in contrast, arrived early and stayed to the end. Whenever a township supervisor was in the hospital with a heart attack or prostate trouble, he always arranged to have a substitute.

WHAT BRINGS THIS to mind today is the behavior of several school trustees of liberal bent here in Observerland.

In Farmington, Gary Lichtman quit as a trustee when the board's five relatively more

conservative members bypassed him for the second year in a row for a leadership position.

A few days later, Livonia trustee Donald Murch, who was due for a crack at board leadership there, found that other members had caucused and decided to elect someone else. So Murch quit and walked out.

I have already commented, with my customary degree of nastiness, on the behavior or Schoolcraft College trustee James Boswell, who continually had problems finding support for some of his further-out ideas, unilaterally declared the other board members unconstitutional and unfit, and spent more than a year pointing in solitude.

In each case, the trustees who picked up their marbles, snarled and went home could be described as liberal, as measured by their more indulgent attitude toward student behavior, their relative lack of fear of the mixing of the races, and the frequency with which they aroused the wrath of known conservatives. Generalizations are always a trifle dangerous, but the above summation is probably fair.

WHY, THEN, do conservatives stick it out through year after year of long meetings while liberals blow their stacks and quit?

It is a question for one with greater credentials as a psychologist to answer, and I hope for a response. Arthur Schlesinger Jr., who lacks such credentials, would say that conservatives are dull people who like dull meetings and wallow in lack of progress while liberals like action and

excitement and progress. That's no answer.

Whatever the psychodynamics, this much is certain politically: If liberals ever intend to prevail, they must have more patience than Job. They must have the patience of the hayseeds.

R.T. Thompson writes

## Courtesy Needed In Parking

We realize new papas, expectant fathers, friends and relatives of patients who may be in critical condition or in various stages of recovery and those rushing injured to the emergency rooms all are in a hurry, but does this necessarily mean that they should take up three or four parking spots in a hospital lot.

Never does the need for careful parking to make full use of the space available come to one's attention more than at St. Mary Hospital in Livonia.

Hospital authorities have provided what should be ample space for all. In fact they are in the process of opening additional space east of the present facilities. The new section has been covered with gravel and takes care of perhaps 60 cars.

The issue is with those who drive in, pay no attention to the space allotted for one car, park in between two spaces and often crosswise across three.

These means those coming in

to visit patients have to drive round and round to find a parking spot and often have to park on the side of the road leading into the lot.

This creates an additional problem since the road is two cars wide and a parked vehicle causes motorists to drive around, and wait for an oncoming car.

It is our feeling that everyone driving to the hospital should have thoughts about others. There are only so many places for cars. Used wisely, there is room for all; our gripe is against those who have no feeling for anyone other than themselves and they cause the troubles.

The hospital can't afford to have attendants on duty to handle parking. That costs

money and one thing most hospitals do not have is a surplus of cash. The management has enough headaches trying to make things come out even without the aggravation of additional problems.

Hospital parking lots are generally operated on an honor system... a driver finds a spot, parks the car within the lines and thus allows another car to move alongside.

But there are those who have no respect for any kind of a system and they are the ones that are making an intolerable situation and causing blood pressures to rise for those who drive round and round, without luck, seeing several cars taking two and three places.

## DISSENT

## Reader Expresses His Views

By EDWARD BENDA

Farmington  
The current discussions between Lockheed Aircraft and the U.S. Government over the Tri Star Aircraft can be viewed with alarm since it is but one more example of attempts to prime the pump of a known dry well.

Public statements have been made indicating that insufficient orders have been placed to break even, and even with this known information the discussions continue on taxpayers expense. If the loan is granted I'm sure the payoff terms will never be met.

The ability to recognize a dead horse does not always appear evident in our government's appraisal of a situation. The mythical "Uncle Sam" in his

top hat and striped pants appears to have lost some of his basic practical intelligence and has gained in his ability to spend.

I earn my living in the auto industry which appears to be the last bastion in the transportation field of the free enterprise system that made our country.

The government has in hand the railroads and the airlines which are both in a financial mess. If the critics have their way the auto industry will also succumb — the end result can only then be disaster.

I WOULD WONDER how long the stockholders of these auto companies would stand for an operation such as Lockheed's.

If Uncle Sam decides to give the so-called loan to build the Tri

Star, why not also furnish the auto industry the same type loan with the same payoff guarantee to:

1. American Motors to resurrect the Essex and Hudson.
2. Chrysler to bring back the DeSoto.
3. Ford to resurrect the Edsel.
4. G.M. to make more "I love my Corvair" bumper stickers.

The managers of these auto companies were able to recognize unprofitable business and were able to discharge their responsibility to the stockholders in an effective manner. This operating philosophy should be the same for all segments of American industry without discrimination.

## Editorial &amp; Opinion

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