

Bad Jail Violates Inmates' Rights

EDITOR:

In response to Tim Richard's editorial on the millage proposal to build a new Wayne County Jail: His implication that the court made a political decision (in part, "It's quite another thing when a court tells us to levy taxes and spend millions of dollars on some buildings") is a distortion of the truth.

The ruling of the Wayne County Circuit Court was that the conditions in the Wayne County Jail were so horrible that they constituted cruel and unusual punishment" in violation of the inmates' eighth amendment rights.

The judges charged that the jail was unsanitary; that plumbing, heating and wiring systems were totally inadequate; that vermin were rampant; that medical attention given to inmates was unsatisfactory; that no psychiatric attention is given to mentally ill or potentially suicidal inmates, and that inmates were kept in a position of "forced idleness," with no exercise, in an "intolerable, dehumanizing overcrowding fraught with potential for epidemics and riots."

Their findings dealt with violations of the constitutional rights of the inmates. (And "inmates" in the Wayne County Jail are those prisoners who have not yet come to trial, those presumed innocent until proven guilty.) So, it was not the judges that ordered a new jail. The Wayne County Board of Commissioners made that decision.

His article goes on to criticize plans of Michigan's Human Rights Party to institute a similar suit against the state prison system, by saying: "I'm hoping the radicals, if they really want to be worthy of their name, will drop their plan for an anti-prison suit and devote that money instead to campaigning for the jail system."

I call your attention to a portion of Philip Power's column that ran the same day, same page, as the jail editorial. "Wayne County could build a new jail and pay for the bonds by more property taxes - without a vote of the people." He

READERS' FORUM

Please type (or write clearly) and limit letters to 300 words.

- Letters must be signed, with the writer's address. Names will be withheld only at the writer's request and for good cause.
- The editor reserves the right to reject unsuitable letters.

referred to the implications of the recent state Supreme Court ruling that "there were, in effect, no real limits to local property taxes."

If you felt Human Rights Party efforts were so important to this millage campaign, why didn't you attack the composition of the 60 - prominent - citizen - committee appointed to wage the campaign itself?

If the court's ruling on such a matter is so abusive to you, why haven't you charged the Legislature with dereliction of its duties? Their actions could have prevented any such case from having to go to court.

Indeed, why haven't you criticized the commissioners themselves for wasting the time of a 60 - prominent - citizen - committee when all they have to do is levy the taxes required, as Mr. Power pointed out, and they could go on to other problems?

JEANEANE HAVSTAD,
Chairperson
Human Rights Party
of Michigan
Livonia

EDITOR'S NOTE: Since the two editorials were written, Wayne County Board Chairman Robert FitzPatrick has stated: "We have to go to the people as far as we are concerned. I think we would want the public to know that we were not going to build a jail without a vote, but that the court said you will build a jail and levy the taxes necessary?"

In addition, after Mrs. Havstad's letter was received, the court itself said: "Positive action to make a new jail a reality is long past due," which is the strongest kind of judicial hint that a new jail is endorsed.

Integration Vote Hit

EDITOR:

On March 13 at the meeting of the Livonia Board of Education, I was astounded to hear four elected board members vote in favor of a resolution endorsing "integrated housing" for equalizing education.

Our board's primary responsibility is to the students of the Livonia school district. The quality of education being offered to Livonia students won't be improved by integrating housing in Livonia or elsewhere.

Board members Joyner, Herta, Katz and Murch have no business using the Livonia school board as a platform for advancing personal racial objectives regarding housing. I hope that they resist future temptations to abuse the influence of their elected positions.

CHARLES CHANDLER
Livonia

Candy Sale Big Success

EDITOR:

The Detroit Area Council of Camp Fire Girls, Wa No Su District, wishes to thank all the residents of this area for the tremendous support given the organization's fund-raising candy sale.

The Wa No Su District is pleased to announce that the 1972 candy fund-raising effort was very successful. This was due in large part to our hard-working Camp Fire Girls and adult volunteers. But public responsiveness made the drive a soaring success.



"LAKE KENWOOD" is really Kenwood Street north of Eight Mile Road in Farmington Township, and it's the subject of bitter jests these days. (Observer photo)

We are also grateful to the media which kept our campaign "in the news" during the critical weeks of selling. Proceeds earned by these hard - working Camp Fire Girls are used in three ways: (1) to improve the council's camping program, especially the resident Camp Wathana; (2) to help meet individual Camp Fire Groups' program needs; (3) to help support the Council operations.

We all thank you very much.
PATRICIA SASS
Public Relations
Wa No Su District
Detroit Area Council
Camp Fire Girls

SC Donations Total \$180

Donations totaling \$180 were accepted by the Schoolcraft College Board of Trustees last week.

The West Detroit and Livonia Business and Professional Women's Clubs donated \$100 for the college's human potential seminar scholarship fund. The seminars are conducted by college counselors to assist adults who are considering attending college.

The Schoolcraft College Foundation donated \$50 to the college's endowment funds and the Father Wojcik Memorial Scholarship fund.

'Lake Kenwood' Gets Angry Jibes

EDITOR:

I am writing hoping I am not too late for the Gala Event. I'm sure that somewhere on the schedule for the Farmington Township Board is the time and date of the dedication of Lake Kenwood to the happy contented persons of Farmington Township.

What other municipality can boast about a natural lake situated in such an ideal location? How soon will lake lots be available, or have those "rascal real - estaters" already gobbled up that prime property? I suppose. Well, that's my luck.

If plans have not been finalized, I hereby formally request the township board, in its entirety, to perform dedication services to this "Monument to Its Own Glory." It is but another result of the thoughtful consideration of our illustrious board.

Surely they cannot and would not deny this natural habitat they have permitted for animal life such as mosquitoes, snakes, flies - not to mention the modern day

cemetery type construction of it. Is dredging equipment available in case some unappreciative child should fall in and drown?

Earl Teeples (township supervisor) has asked me the board to refrain from permitting this artistic stretch of landscape, but the board, adamant in its "straight thinking," insisted the people in our area deserved this. Only another "faux pas" (excuse my poor French) - "coup de gras" in the brilliant careers of our neighborhood.

For any citizens concerned about boating licenses, concession stands, life saving equipment, pollution, tours, picnics, etc., call your Township Hall and ask for assistance. They will see to it you get what you are asking for.

CATHERINE V. VIGNOE
Farmington

Give Nixon Some Credit

EDITOR:

I am very disappointed that people have not responded more favorably to a president who has made every effort to respond to us. Not bowing to any extremists, President Nixon has done much to confirm the existence of our democracy and the importance of us "average American" nobodies.

All of us "middle of the roaders" agreed that it was the educational standards that needed raising, not the number of busses. The president listened, agreed, and acted accordingly. Now

the people look upon him in questionable wonder. What do they expect from the man? Miracles?

Personally, I believe President Nixon has shown excellent judgment during his term of office. He has made every sincere effort to consider ALL Americans. He has attempted to solve our serious problems in ways that would benefit everyone. At least give him credit for trying. For the resulting success or failure actually depends on our own efforts.

MRS. SHELDON E. WEINER
Livonia

150 Families Got Shoes

EDITOR:

Would you please put a public thank you in the Observer from Indian Enterprises to Mr. and Mrs. Hank Curcual, the Western Wayne County Conservation Association, the people and businesses in Observerland and Teledyne Co. of Muskegon for the recent shipment of toys, clothing and shoes our people received.

We have served some 150 families with shoes and some 100 with clothing, plus have enough toys to supply the two

annual Christmas parties which are held in December. Last Christmas we had an attendance of near 900 Indian children at the Muskegon - Oceana County party and nearly 400 at the Mason - Manistee County party.

We would like to let the people who helped and cared enough to make our people a little more comfortable know that we do appreciate it. It is wonderful to know that people still care.

ARDITH PIERSON
Indian Enterprises
Rothbury

Hearing Unit To Start Class

For adults in the tri - county area, the Detroit Hearing and Speech Center is offering a spring term of courses in communication skills beginning the week of April 10.

Raymond F. Lindahl, Wyoming (one block north of executive director of the Seven Mile) by professional personnel.

The afternoon and evening classes will be taught in Detroit at the center, 1015

personnel.



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