EDITORIALS

Does Prayer Have A Place in Public Schools?

Are we going to rule God or any mention of God and His teachings out of the classrooms of our schools?

This is the very controversial question that the Farmington Board of Education as well as other educational governing bodies across the country and the courts of our land are now wrestling with. That faction which is opposed to prayer in the schools claim that this is a violation of the constitutional rights of those who do not believe in God or worship a God in a like manner to the majority.

We are reasonably certain that a lot of rather involved discussion on this matter is yet to come before any decision is reached and perhaps a clear-cut decision will never be handed down.

Firm believers in majority rule, we would sincerely hope that before any action is taken forbidding the use of God's name or prayers in our schools, the matter would go to a vote of the people. If a ruling is handed down that under our present constitution prayers or the use of God's name in our schools is not permissible then we would recommend serious consideration to the constitution being amended.

Some may feel that this is a strong stand to take and perhaps it is. But, it is our feeling that now more than ever in the history of our country there is a real need for instilling in the minds of our young people the fact that there is a God and that the Ten Commandments and other teachings of God are no less important to be adhered to today than they were in the past. The trend today is to put greatest emphasis on materialistic things than on the really important ends that each any everyone of us should be seeking in life.

For those who do not feel that any prayers should be said or God's name mentioned in our schools then we feel they should set up their own private school system. Those religious denominations which did not feel their children would be getting enough religious training in the schools have done this and we feel that those who feel no religious teaching should be allowed should do the same.

Clarification Needed

From some of the phone calls and written material we have been receiving lately it is becoming apparent that there are still a lot of citizens in the community who are not too well versed on local school financial matters.

A few points need to be emphasized to clarify some misinformation which seems to be going around.

1. All that is being asked for in the coming special election is renewal of a 5 mill tax levy for operations that is now expiring and it will cause no increase in the present school tax rate.

2. Renewal of this levy is being asked for a ten year period since there is little to indicate that Farmington will be able to improve its tax base so much that at least five mills over and above what the county allows the school district to levy will not be needed for at least this long. School officials are quick to point out, however, that when and if this total amount is not needed it will not be levied.

3. The money raised from this 5 mill levy will be used for operational purposes only. Over 85 percent of the operational budget of the school system presently goes for teachers and other employees' salaries. The quality of the buildings in the school district has no place in discussion on the pros and cons of the proposition coming up for a vote at this time.

4. The local school system has no control over who votes on this proposition. State law stipulates that both property owners and non-property owners be allowed to vote.

5. Five mills per $1,000 valuation is the correct amount being asked for. The only clarification that is needed here is the fact that school, county and township taxes are levied on state equalized valuation and not assessed valuation as the year end tax bill you receive might confusingly show.

A Compromise Fee

The water and sewer tap-in fees that the Township should charge for each house trailer in a trailer park deserves some very serious consideration.

At last week's regular Township Board meeting Trustee Thomas Duke proposed that the fee for each trailer be made the same as that for any other residential homesite. If the county's recommendation is followed, the fee for each trailer house tap-in will run only about one-third the amount of the tap-in charges for a house.

The county proposal seems low but we don't think charging the same rate for each trailerhouse as for homesites is justifiable either. A rate somewhere in-between—about 50 or 60 percent of the fee for a homesite sounds right to us.

A lot more line has to be run to serve 50 homes than would be required to get the same number of trailer homes hooked up to a water or sewer system. Few would disagree that those living in a trailer do not have a lesser degree of need for water and sewer systems and use them less than those families with a home situated on a good sized residential lot.

PUBLIC LETTER BOX

Letters submitted to the Editor for publication must be signed. Names will be withheld upon request. Opinions expressed in this column are those of the writer and do not necessarily represent the policies of this newspaper. Maximum length is 1,000 words.

Opposing View on School Taxes

Dear Sir:

On Nov. 5 as I was leaving my voting place I was handed a one page circular supporting the Dec. 10 election, the hand bill was signed by the Citizens Advisory Committee, and distributed by two Farmington Public School teachers.

This propoganda is very misleading in that it ask you to vote for 5 mills when it was recently brought out that it will mean 10 dollars for every one thousand dollar township valuation.

Following the exhortation to vote YES are five items which I presume hang in the balance, depending on how you vote. I would like to comment on 1,4 and 5.

1. Keep present class load from growing larger. You build more classrooms to keep class loads from growing, classrooms are built with bond issues not operating milage. I will agree that you may pay the teachers salary with this operating milage.

4. Bus Transportation This is not even a statement and I believe it was designed to let your imagination do tricks. Bus transportation is paid for by the state for all REIMBERSIBLE pupils up to $60.00 per child, and all buses are paid for over a seven year period. The state allocates the money on a basis that doesn't even consider whether the child attends public or parochial school. Why then does the Farmington School Board deny transportation to the parochial students? Do they not know that in 1946 the Supreme Court ruled that there is no constitutional conflict when tax money is spent to transport parochial students? Are not all students worth protecting?

5. Preserve cultural activities, including sports. This should have read "Preserve cultural activities, including sports for public school students only". Cultural activities engaged in by parochial students are discouraged by the public school board when a charge is made for the use of a football field or a gymnasium.

Before reaching a decision on how to vote Dec. 10 would the voter study a few facts and figures found in the latest edition of the Metropolitan Detroit Bureau of School Studies. Financhial Data property equal to more than 20 percent of the valuation placed on it by the tax assessor. This amounts to $284.00 for every pupil.

Farmington school tax is nearly the highest in southeast Michigan, of 62 school districts only Inkster 30.00, Nankin Mills 29.90, Oak Park 30.41 and Redford Union 32.80 are listed as bejng higher than Farmington's 29.31 and since a millage was passed only a few months ago we could well be the very highest. These rates are on state equalized valuation, for a comparison Detroit's school tax is 16.13 nearly one half that of Farmington . . . and they tax our pay. We would have to defeat 2 such tax request to get our school tax down to Southfield's 20.40 (Southfield Twp. 19.74).

Please remember when voting, the school board does not mortgage the school building, the mortgage is on your home and this time it is for 10 years.

Sincerely yours,
Victor B. Smolis
29581 Moran
Farmington

Frost Leaves Him 'Cold'

Gentlemen:

I have nothing but criticism for the Friends of the Library of the University of Detroit and their arrangements for the Robert Frost lecture.

About 1500 to 2000 persons, mostly young people, saw only the back of Mr. Frost's head and heard but a scattered word or two from his lips.

It may be significant that Mr. Frost has played to greater audiences than America's athletic teams as the president of the University pointed out in his opening remarks, but it seems more significant to this observer that Mr. Frost, nevertheless, had to perform in a building designed specifically for the athletes.

The travesty perpetrated against Mr. Frost and thousands of his admirers is not the principle point of this letter, however. The point I would like to make is this: We are still trying in this country to make auditoriums and lecture halls out of buildings which are acoustical abominations designed for the screaming masses.

Thinking of our own fair area, this observer — and taxpayer — finds it ironic that though the general public gives lip service to the growth of popular culture it has not, to my knowledge, authorized expenditure of a single penny of public monies for the construction of a single facility in the township or the city for presentation of what may be termed cultural programs.

We have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on gyms and tens of thousands of dollars on football and track stadiums, thousands on a new township hall and on a service building, and will spend thousands more on a municipal building but where are the auditoriums or the lecture halls or the assembly buildings?

The truth of the matter is there is no climate of opinion among us which demands equal space. And though Americans — if we may believe the reports and the statistics — are becoming more interested in cultural affairs, this observer sees no change in the foreseeable future in the way public monies will be spent.

Perhaps the key is federal aid. The city is getting it to the tune of $62,500 from the federal government to pay half the cost of a new city hall.

We might well intone:

O, Uncle Sam, you money bag,
When will you help our cultural lag?

Lee S. Peel

Wants Stores To Open on Sunday

Gentlemen:

I read in this week's paper where "The New Store" in Farmington dared to open on Sunday. There was a further paragraph about regulating, thru an ordinance, all stores except drug and grocery stores, from opening on Sunday.

I believe it is the right of the owner of this concern and for that matter, any other concern to open when they please and for any hours they want to do so. If customers want to shop on Sunday and the store owners are making a profit, why stop them.

I have not yet shopped at this store, but there may be a Sunday that I will want to do so. I work 5½ days one week and 5 days a week the next. I get home from work at 6 p.m. If the stores are not open, how can I spend my salary I earn in Dearborn and my husband's which he earns in Southfield? Shall we spend our money elsewhere and give another town a break? Or should we shop in Farmington and help our own home town.

It is a mystery to me why the City Council and the Shopping Center owners continually advertise to shop in Farmington, and then, turn around and say the stores can only be open hours to suit you and not the owners who are picking up the tab and the customers who are shopping.

You seem to think that only drug and grocery stores are working on Sunday, how about movie theatres, restaurants and drive-ins, Radio and TV stations, ice cream parlors, milk depots, policemen, firemen, cab drivers, gas stations, and real estate salesmen. If you are going to be such a blue nose - why not close everything down except the Churches - get back to the 1890's where Church and Bible reading were the only recreation for Sundays.

This would be fine for those who prefer to do them, but for those who prefer to live in modern times, leave the rules and regulations alone. I feel that most businessmen have enough rules and regulations to deal with now without adding more to their load.

Yours very truly,
Mary Ellen Orell
32380 Marblehead

MICHIGAN'S PROPOSED NEW CONSTITUTION

St.'s League of Women Voters Endorse Proposed Basic Law

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is one of a series of articles prepared by the League of Women Voters of Michigan, a nonpartisan, nonpartisan organization whose purpose is to promote informed and active participation of citizens in government. The views expressed are not necessarily the policies of this newspaper.

A new basic law for Michigan — a new constitution — will be approved or rejected by us, the voters, on Monday, April 1, 1963.

Our state constitution is important. It determines, for example, who can vote, how we are represented in the legislature, what powers the governor has. It is vital that each voter understand the proposed document and decide how to vote.

The following articles are presented as a public service by the League of Women Voters of Michigan. The League is a national, nonpartisan organization.

LEAGUE MEMBERS have studied the new constitution and believe it should be adopted. These articles will explain the new constitution in everyday language, and each article will be short and easy to read. We hope you will find them informative and helpful to you in making your decision.

The new constitution was written by 144 delegates to the Michigan Constitutional Convention elected one from each state senatorial district and one from each state representative district. The convention worked mostly during the period from October 3, 1961, to May 11, 1962. Final delegate action was taken in a one-day session held August 1, 1962, and the convention then went out of existence.

Even if the proposed constitution is rejected, the convention cannot take further action; its work is finished. Additional changes in the old constitution (or in the new if adopted) can be made only by the amendment process or by some future constitutional convention if one is voted by the people.

The convention began with study and discussion of existing and proposed constitutional provisions. Work was largely in ten committees, each of which had responsibility for a certain section of the constitution: Since the convention consisted initially of 99 Republicans and 45 Democrats, each committee was composed of two-thirds Republicans and one-third Democrats.

Committee work culminated in the drafting of committee proposals. Beginning in January, these proposals were debated at length in the whole convention. Each part of the proposed constitution was considered three times before being finally adopted. Between considerations, the Committee on Style and Drafting worked to make the final document clear, consistent, logical, and well stated.

The convention had available to it the research of an able staff from Michigan's colleges and universities, preliminary work by a governor's commission, and the aid of private Michigan foundations and organizations. Few conventions have had such help.

THE CONVENTION worked to keep the proven and historic; to strengthen the three branches of government, each in its proper sphere; to maintain and strengthen local government; to consider the best thinking of those experienced in government, of students of government, and of constitution builders in other states. The convention was also guided by a knowledge of how the citizens of Michigan think their government should be organized and what it should do.

Michigan's proposed new constitution is several thousands of words shorter than the old, 19,000 as compared with 22,000. This was made possible, after careful study, by eliminating unnecessary words, legislative detail, and outmoded sections.

The organization has also been improved and simplified. In place of the present 17 articles, the new document has 12: I. Declaration of Rights; II. Elections; III. General Government; IV. Legislative Branch; V. Executive Branch; VI. Judicial Branch; VII. Local Government; VIII. Education; IX. Finance and Taxation; X. Property; XI. Public Officers and Employment; XII. Amendment and Revision.

The main reason why it is not practical to submit the new constitution to the electors piece is that the old and new articles do not correspond exactly, either as to number or content.

Both new and old constitutions include a brief Preamble and a Schedule. The latter provides an orderly changeover from the old to the new.

George Giffin Takes Office

George Searle Giffin, son of Mrs. Mary E. Giffin, 31471 Northwestern St., Farmington, has been elected a Student Association senator at Berea College.

Giffin is a graduate of Farmington Senior High School where he was yearbook editor, National Honor Society member, Michigan Junior Achievement President of the Year, and semifinalist in the National Junior Achievement President of the Year Contest. He is a freshman at Berea.

Student Association senators are responsible for student legislation and judiciary discipline at Berea College. Qualifications include honesty, academic achievement, and leadership ability.

The devil loves nothing better than the intolerance of reformers, and dreads nothing so much as their charity and patience.—Lowell.

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Looking Back in the Files

15 Years Ago
NOVEMBER 20, 1947

Falcons Bow

Farmington High School's football team closed its 1947 season last Friday afternoon by dropping a close decision to Redford Union, 14-12, on the winner's gridiron. The Falcons thus ended the year with a 6-2 won-lost record and finished second in the Inter-Lakes League behind Keego Harbor who handed them their only Conference defeat.

School Election

A total of 45 new registrations for the special Farmington Township School District election to be held December 6 have been received to date, Superintendent O. E. Dunckel announced this week.

Trojan Cagers

Clarenceville High School's 1947-48 basketball team began its workouts this week in preparation for its opener December 5 against Walled Lake. The team has been working out in the Boys Republic Gym one half hour nightly to mold their plays for the eight-game schedule.

Four Score and Seven

The famous Gettysburg Address was delivered just 84 years ago yesterday, November 19, 1863, and surprisingly enough, there are several residents in the area who can remember very well that occasion which has come to be passed along to every school boy and girl down through the years.

10 Years Ago
NOVEMBER 20, 1952

Seek New Twp. Hall

A resolution, approved by the North Farmington Civic Association, has been filed with the Township Board requesting that consideration be given to the erection of a new Township Hall outside of the City.

School Additions

Superintendent of Schools O. E. Dunckel stated Tuesday that the new additions at Bond and Middlebelt Elementary Schools will be ready to open for use by December 8. All elementary grades, with the exception of kindergarten, will be back on full day sessions with the opening of the new additions, Dunckel added.

Want to Form Troupe

Action has been initiated by George Nahstoll and the local AAUW Chapter to form a group of amateur actors to stage plays in Farmington. Plans have already been made to read over scripts and begin production of just such an endeavor.

All-Conference

Four Falcon gridders gained berths on this year's Inter-Lakes League All-Conference football team. FHS quarterback Dick Tyler was selected as the Most Valuable player in the League and named to a first place berth along with Falcons Ed Rices, Jack Cowart and Evan Staley.

All-League Gridders

Three members of the Farmington High School football team were named this week to All-Conference team. Halfback Dave Catherman, end Frank Clappison and guard Ken Kikkila were the Falcons who earned berths.

5 Years Ago
NOVEMBER 21, 1957

Road Plan Revealed

How Oakland County's coming three-year road building program will affect Farmington Township was indicated tentatively Monday evening by the County Highway Engineer at a maintenance roundtable sponsored by the League of Subdivision Associations.

Get Federal Grant

More than half of the total cost of building and equipping the new elementary school now under construction behind Warner Farms Subdivision will be financed by other than School District taxpayers. Farmington has qualified for a federal grant for the first time in the history of the School District. $278,833.50 has been allocated to the School District.

Harry N. McCracken

Prominent life-long resident of Farmington and public servant for more than 50 years, Harry N. McCracken, died this week at the age of 82.

MSUO Slates Sales Panelist

Charles Letts, executive vice president, Letts Industries, Detroit, will be one of the panelists at the Export Sales Workshop to be held at Michigan State University Oakland, Tuesday, November 27.

Letts' topic will be "Success Story," describing how his company, a manufacturer of industrial equipment, has found entry into foreign markets a source of new profits and growth.

OTHER PANELISTS at the all-day Workshop will discuss promoting and advertising export business, government services available, shipping, documenting, financing and insuring export sales. The Workshop is planned particularly for businessmen whose companies have done little or no export business to date but are interested in learning how to enter foreign markets.

Co-sponsors of the Workshop are the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Division of Continuing Education, MSUO. Reservations may be made by calling the latter at 338-7211, ext. 2147.

A feathercut is a style of hair dressing; featheredge, a very thin edge; featherbedding, limiting output in order to provide more jobs, preventing unemployment.

Macadam was a Scot engineer who invented the process of small broken stones used in making of roads.

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