

# Letters Come to Us on Many Subjects

## Answer to 'Taxpayer'

Editor—  
I would like to defend the teaching profession against the attack by "Heated Taxpayer" which appeared in your paper on Feb. 15. I think the rational citizens should be aware of this erroneous picture of the teaching profession as presented in his letter.

I am a rather typical teacher—neither more or less conscientious than most. I feel we are entitled to fair compensation for our services so that we may enjoy the same economic security as most skilled labor and white collar workers in the metropolitan area. After six years of experience I earn \$6,000 a year. This amounts to \$500 a month, not \$1,000. If I were paid merely to be a baby sitter, as Taxpayer suggests, I would be earning about \$150 per day if I got \$50 per hour for each of my 35 students.

Taxpayer says teachers work four hours per day. Let me describe a typical week. I arrive in school at 8 a.m. to prepare for my classes. The children arrive at 8:35 and I stay with them until lunch at 11:30. (There are no coffee breaks, Taxpayer. Even if a teacher leaves the room to use the lavatory, according to law, he is still liable for the students that occur while she is absent. Do you have time to use the bathroom during your working day, Taxpayer? Do you know that there is a high incidence of bladder disorders among members of the teaching profession? Ask most any doctor.)

I have one hour for lunch. One day I have a meeting during this free time to discuss improvement of the curriculum with other teachers. I frequently use much of my lunch hour to correct papers, complete written reports and prepare for the many lessons that are necessary for good teaching. Do you work on your lunch hour, Taxpayer? My class comes back at 12:30 and we work together until 3:25. (I still haven't gotten to that lovely smoking room mentioned in fact, I haven't even found it. If you are referring to our "Teacher's Room," we sit on metal folding chairs if we are lucky enough to get there first at lunch because there aren't enough chairs to accommodate the entire staff.)

After I dismiss my youngsters, I lounge around doing things like arranging free faculty care for the bus that had an abscessed tooth for a week and can't afford a visit to the dentist, or attending a faculty meeting until 4:30, or 5:00, or contacting the visiting teacher about how I can help that mentally disturbed child who is beaten at home. You might also find me leisurely working on the school science fair, setting up displays for an art show, attending a committee meeting on reading. Sometimes I loaf around giving extra tutoring to that little girl that just can't understand the work. One night a week I do sneak out early—so I can get to a 4:30 semester I studied teaching to 8:30 night school class. Last the mentally handicapped in modern math and this semester I'm trying to find a way to help the regular classroom.

A night seldom goes by without a student coming to my door. Taxpayer, that I don't spend some time correcting papers. That sort of eliminates the part-time job you suggest to supplement my income. The time I spend in school amounts to six hours a day at the very minimum and I don't count the extra hours at home.

Of course, I do have the summers. Last summer for example, I attended summer school for six weeks learning new methods of teaching reading and art. That left two full weeks of vacation if you don't count the time I spent reorganizing my teaching materials file.

And do you know something? I still can't think of the children I teach as monsters the way you refer to them, Taxpayer. Some of the parents fit this description more accurately with you at the head of the list.

Least you think I am writing this for some kind of public recognition, I ask that my name be withheld from publication.

TYPICAL TEACHER

## Items For Cost Cuts

Editor—  
To put a stop to the many unnecessary, expensive, school and city, state and Federal elections each year, all elective positions and proposals should be brought before the public only once a year, at the same time. This alone could save the overburdened taxpayers quite a tidy sum. All official positions should be made elective for the public to do the selecting rather than some politicians handing out rewards to their friends.

I should make all high schools to the same blue print and specifications, same with other schools. Eliminate conservatories, etc. and concentrate on class room teaching. Consists of all level ground to one plan shouldn't be too impossible.

I feel we should cut down on the tremendous amount of vaca-

tion time in the year and give the children 11 months of teaching instead of about eight and a half. As it is the students barely get four months of real teaching, even though they are gone from home most of the day.

Our school board is not using the facilities we have now to the fullest extent, yet they have the gall to threaten the taxpayer if they do not get what they want.

Why not send half of the children to school for four hours of honest teaching in the morning and the other half for four hours of the same in the afternoon? This would automatically do away with the need for cafeterias and supplies and personnel. More education for the children and less money from the taxpayers' pocket.

Reducing the number of classrooms and then filling them up with outsiders. Change the school boundaries or the city boundaries.

Everyone seems to be a physical education minded who will eliminate the buses, drivers, maintenance costs, and let the kids walk. This plus all the recesses they now get should keep them fit.

Here is a good place to help educate our children. Let the school board divide the administration duties among themselves and get rid of that expensive figurehead of a Superintendent that costs us \$23,000 each year. How many teachers could we hire for that kind of money? If he is really important then we could get rid of the school board.

Reduce the number of extracurricular activities that now go on in our schools, like gun classes, adult education in upholstery, etc. Concentrate our time and money on the little ones.

With the type of seniority system that teachers have in Michigan they feel like it, if the school board doesn't come across with a fat raise every year. When is this going to stop?

If all the church properties in Livonia were taxed equally with the homes, and the money that would be raised would lighten everyone's load.

If there are legal reasons why some of these things can't be done, then we should get some officials in office who can change the laws.

A final word to the school board, there is no reason why you should not have to live within the income you now get from the bused taxpayers. Since your enrollment increases yearly, but do like any family does when they have an addition, complete written reports, not hold their hand and threaten either give or else.

I believe in education, but I also believe in getting value for my money, and we are not at present.

JOE WEST  
Livonia

## More on Schools

Editor—  
I agree with the taxpayers who have had the gumption to up and say what they think of the tax situation in this city of Livonia and I say Bah! Humberg to the school board. The Mayor and everyone else who wants to up the taxes to the point of no return. Don't try and scare us into voting by saying this will be cut out and that will be cut out, so go ahead and cut, cut, cut.

I, for one, am glad the last bond issue was voted down and when the blasted papers come up again, I'm voting against it. If we have to pay such high taxes, then the place to enjoy is your yard and not some park where everyone but Livonians could enjoy it. We need a new high school like a hole in the head, sure, a plain two story building with a basement and no frills like glass and marble. Yes, we do pamper the kids, so let some of them walk and get a little exercise which they don't get very much of anyway. So I will say I will not vote for any more increases and do not intend to vote the same. It would be nice if every time they wanted an increase we would get an increase in the old paycheck, but we are average citizens trying to get by and I'm going to vote against everything that is going to make my living conditions a little bit worse, and put more of a strain on my budget.

Last year I had the good fortune to write a letter to this paper almost about the same things: taxes, etc. and received a few phone calls from the Mayor's Beautifying Committee trying to pacify me with a lot of nonsense, also a call from the tax assessor who didn't want to answer my questions. I told him the same things again, how come the assessment was raised on my house this year and where can I find out why and who to complain to. No improvements have been made since we bought it three years ago, no additions or extras have been added. I was one of the lucky ones who was in City Hall this past New Year's Eve and paid the taxes so I could take the deduction on our income. (Like Mr. Edgar) they have all year to

complain in Lansing about taxes they could at least get the bills out on time to the citizens who want to have that little bit deducted from their income tax. But no they give you the old runaround at City Hall and put the blame on everyone else. Pacify the big businesses and the heck with you regular citizens. Well, I say, people, stick to your guns and vote No. They will soon come down with something and give you people a break. What is so wonderful about being one of the highest taxed cities in the state when we haven't got anything to show for it?

MRS. BETTE ROBINSON  
Livonia

P.S.—I'm still waiting for two garbage cans that were supposed to be replaced last year, according to Mrs. McKewen.

I will welcome all phone calls. Probably two of the things that irk me the worst are the 1 1/2 mile levy on us for construction bonds without a vote by the people, for Schoolcraft College. Don't they get enough of our taxes and the extra millage levied on us, also without our vote for advertising purposes. Now really, is that taxation without representation or voting on it. Well, I say I won't vote for any more taxes.

Ed Note: You may check your assessment with the City Treasurers' office, Livonia City Hall.

## Candidate's Statement

Editor—  
Now that the Livonia election is history I would appreciate your accepting a statement from one of the defeated candidates in the Council race.

This was my first attempt to secure an elective office so I want to express my appreciation for the 7,115 votes cast in my behalf.

I wish to thank the many organizations, civic groups and confidence in me, including the support of the Livonian Observer.

Most of all, I feel I have gained much as a person by meeting hundreds of new friends at the many Civic Association meetings, coffee meetings at homes, and at programs sponsored by interested groups of Livonia citizens.

It is a tribute to Livonia that men of the calibre noted would run for all of the elective positions in this city. I am proud to have been among them during both Primary and Final campaigns.

DON POLLOCK

## Thanks for Support

Editor—  
I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Observer staff and all the wonderful people of Farmington for the kind expressions of good luck during my week in Mobile. This support was greatly appreciated and my only regret is that I could not have returned to Farmington with a little more to merit such confidence.

Many thanks to everyone.

Sincerely,  
"MICHIGAN'S JUNIOR MISS"  
BONNIE BRITTON.

## Against Horse Play

Editor—  
The taxpayers of Garden City nominate and elect Johnny Come Lateley. Who? I am quite unfamiliar with the local needs and who are told by outside interests they have a job. Do as we say or you do not have a job.

The headlines in the local and metropolitan papers prove that Garden City has sunk to a point below the laws of gravity under this kind of management. Time to stop the horse play.

Earl P. Hazon,  
Garden City

## Livonians Can Afford

Editor—  
It seems to me that the citizens of America, and of Livonia in particular, have only two choices concerning the education of our young. First, we can pay what we use ourselves; or, second, we can arrange for others to help pay the total cost.

Mr. W. Edgar (Livonian) said that the first choice would be best. That is, charge for tuition for those who send their children to school. Last year Livonia spent \$331 education each child, and that does not include building the school. The average family paid \$255 of this in taxes and the balance came from state and federal aid.

Statistics show the average Livonia family has 2.8 children (let's just say 3 for simplicity). Therefore, under Mr. Edgar's plan, an average family would pay \$765 to educate their three children. But, since Mr. Edgar would do away with all taxes except the property tax, the family would have to take over the taxes which industry now pays, and therefore the education bill all families would be much higher than \$765.

Personally, I don't think this is what Livonia citizens want to do. It would more than quadruple what they are paying now. Of course all the businesses and people with a

lien and Senator Farrell Roberts only the present \$37 for building schools and nothing for operating them (tuition). This would cut their taxes to one-fourth of the present.

It has been the philosophy of America that we all share in the cost of education since we all benefit from the results of education. Thomas Jefferson said, "A nation cannot be both ignorant and free." We must all work and pay for the best possible education for all Americans.

So we have found a way, unfair as it may be to some, of raising money by property taxes. This is the only way a local board of education can raise the money it needs. If we don't like this way, then it is not the board of education we must complain to, but the state legislators who have made such a law.

I hope all those who voted against paying for the schools themselves, will now write to Representative Marvin Stemp-

and Senator Farrell Roberts in Lansing and tell them that our state needs a complete fiscal reform and a more equitable way of financing our most cherished institution, the school.

Since the legislature is not likely to act unless pushed by the individual citizens, we must continue to operate our schools ourselves. The general idea is "We can't afford any more taxes." It is ridiculous. The people of the richest county in the world can buy what they want, of greater value than anything else that they can buy.

Livonia's per family income, I understand, is over \$10,000 a year. This is one of the highest in the state and is, incidentally, about \$4,000 more than the average Livonia teacher's salary. Yes, Livonians are highly taxed, but they can afford it, and must be willing to pay for education until they can get their legislators to act on fiscal reform.

GEORGE A. CALDER  
Livonia

### If you want a job minutes from home READ THIS!

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DON POLLOCK

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13" x 7"	24.50	20.75	18.70	17.10
13" x 7.5"	28.05	23.90	21.40	19.90
13" x 8"	30.90	26.30	23.70	21.90
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