

In Our Opinion . . .

Sideline Matters Cloud Vote On Heart Of The Income Tax Issue

Conservatives have become tired of being labeled as flatly opposed to everything. The smarter conservatives, therefore, avoid direct opposition to an idea they don't like; instead, they bargain for changes they probably won't be able to get and finally vote "no" on the grounds the new proposal isn't good enough or is poorly drafted.

State Sen. George Kuhn, R-West Bloomfield, as wily a conservative as there is, seemed to be following that technique when he voted against the unsuccessful state income tax bill that was part of Gov. Romney's fiscal reform package. Kuhn's stated reasons are several, but they can be boiled down into two categories.

FIRST, HE complained about the lack of limitation on the proposed income tax rates. He cited "tradition" in Michigan of popularly voted limitations on taxes — most notably the constitutional limitations on the sales tax (four per cent) and the property tax (15 mills).

Under close inspection, that reasoning is seen to have flaws. There is no limitation on the cigarette or tobacco tax. There is no limitation on the liquor tax or the beer tax. There is no limitation on amusement taxes. There is no limitation on state park entrance fees. There is no limitation on the hotel tax.

The basic reason there are no limitations on those taxes is probably that historically they were the ones most popular among rural conservatives who dominated the Legislature for years on end.

Whatever the reason, it seems to us that for every tax Sen. Kuhn can cite that has a constitutional or popular limitation, an equal number of taxes can be listed which don't have limitations.

There's no clear tradition of rate limitations on taxes in Michigan.

SECOND, SEN. KUHN contends that if there is to be a state income tax, then

cities should be made to surrender their power to levy an income tax on non-residents who work there; he also cites a concern about the possibility of income taxes at many levels — federal, state, city, even school district and county.

The opposition to the city income tax on non-residents is based on the old bromide of "taxation without representation." The trouble with the theory is that it's never applied across the board to all taxes on non-residents.

No one, for example, says that tourists from other states should be exempted from Michigan's sales taxes, gasoline taxes, hotel taxes, fishing license charges, state park entrance fees, and inf. No one says that foreign movie stars or entertainers should be exempt from the U.S. income tax.

The Kuhn-suburbanite reasoning operates on a one-way street. It argues that it's wrong for a big city such as Detroit to tax non-residents who work there, but it never carries the principle to its logical conclusion by arguing that all taxes on all non-residents of any governmental jurisdiction ought to be lifted.

The truth of the matter is that "taxation without representation" is one of the most traditional, time-honored and widely applied principles in American government. It's a weak excuse for a vote against fiscal reform in Michigan in 1967.

Finally, Sen. Kuhn — and a number of state income tax critics, for that matter — point to a fear that there will be a proliferation of income taxes at all levels of government.

This fear stems from the erroneous theory that certain kinds of taxes have been "pre-empted" by certain levels of government — that the income tax belongs to the federal government, the sales tax to the state government, property taxes to local government and so on.

Actually, the first principle of taxation is that all taxes are eventually paid out of income. (The only exception is when taxes exceed income, in which case they must be paid out of capital.) The income tax is paid out of income; the sales tax, out of income; the property tax, out of income — every tax is an income tax.

If it's wrong for the federal, state, and local governments all to be supported by income taxes, then it follows that it's wrong to have more than one level of government.

And if it's not wrong to have federal, state and local governments, then it's not wrong for each to be supported by an income tax.

GOV. ROMNEY has made the case clear. His budget and tax messages showed that, even without any major programs, it will take new sources of revenue to keep the level of state aid and services we already have. To keep that level, there will have to be fiscal reform, and this means a state income tax.

The issue is not city income taxes, or limitations on income taxes, or any sideline matter. The issue is whether we want the same levels of school aid, college instruction, mental health programs and state police protection and whether we are grown up enough to accept the income tax as the method of payment.

Leading The Way Through Poverty

We came across an astounding and perplexing item in the recent letter of the Oakland County Council on Economic Opportunity. We quote it verbatim and without comment, except to ask: What does this have to do with poverty? It says:

"Information on Robert's Rules of Order and other leadership techniques is being offered almost 30 county residents from target poverty areas. The residents are participating in a Community Action Leadership Training Program. It is co-sponsored by OCCEO, the UAW Education Department and the UAW Leadership Studies Center."

"The first in a series of six weekly evening sessions was held March 23 in the Tribune Auditorium, Royal Oak. Subsequent sessions will be held around the county between now and May."

"The program is designed to give grass roots residents improved skills in communications and leadership techniques. It was planned by Henry C. Aiting, OCCEO's training coordinator, and is being conducted by Mal Evans of the UAW Education Department."

On Beautifying Our Roadsides:

If You Can't Lick 'Em, Join 'Em

In Enterprise editorials, besides sometimes ripping apart a government practice or bill, we like to make constructive, positive suggestions, too.

This week's suggestion has to do with the problem of trash on our county roads and state highways, along with our lovely parks.

The most common sort of trash, a casual survey reveals, is the discarded beer can. Beer being a delightful refreshment, especially in warm weather, more and more empty beer cans are dotting our landscape each week.

It won't do any good to preach about neatness and conservation; that

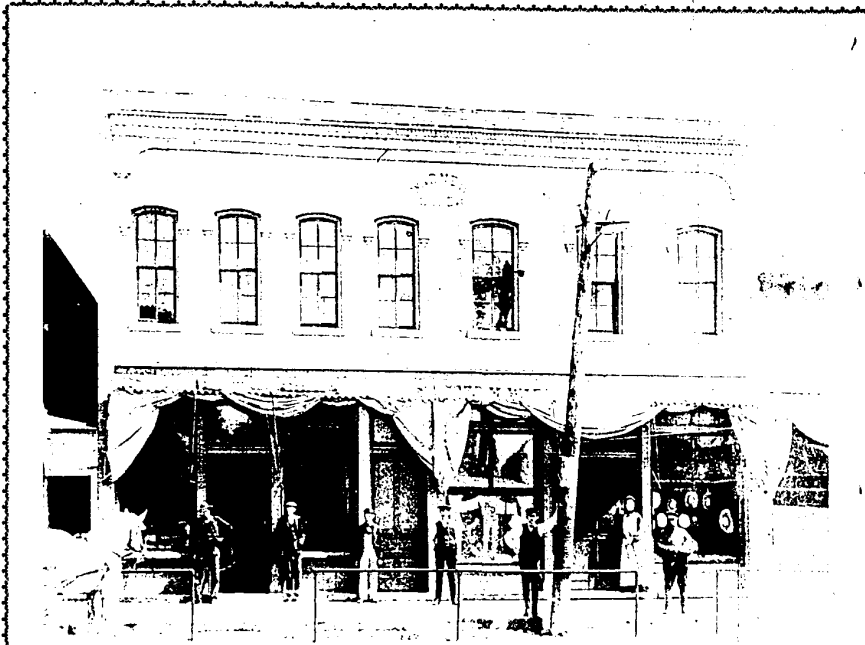
has been tried, and has failed.

And it won't do any good to outlaw the manufacture and sale of beer.

Let us, then, proceed on the theory that, if you can't lick 'em, join 'em.

Let us require by state and federal statute that the background of beer cans be grass-green, and that the cans be decorated with actual-size pictures of wildflowers.

From a distance, one will be unable to distinguish between a beer can and a real flower. We can all stop hollering at the Oakland County Road Commission about its real or alleged failure to clean up our roads. And our flower-decorated thoroughfares will be much more attractive on a spring day.



In Old Farmington: Saga of a Merchant Prince

Fred M. Warner, general merchant, owned this building on the south side of Grand River, near Farmington Rd. After it was destroyed by fire, it was replaced by a one-story structure in which the Farmington Paper and Office Supply Co. is now located.

Warner was one of Farmington's most notable citizens having become Michigan's youngest secretary of state in 1900, served in that office for two terms and subsequently became the first Michigan governor to serve for three consecutive terms.

He later established a large cheese factory in Farmington, helped found and

was president of the Farmington Savings Bank. He was vice president of the Detroit United Bank and had interests in other Michigan financial institutions.

The Farmington Masonic Lodge held meetings from 1874 to 1876 on the second floor of the building. The young man holding up the light pole is Fred L. Cook, a lodge member for many years. The lady in the doorway is Cook's wife, Ana, and immediately to the left of Cook is Fred Pauline, another member of the Farmington Lodge. The other men in the picture (and the horse) remain unidentified. The picture was loaned by the Ralph Everts.

Public Letterbox

PUBLIC VS. NOTICES

To The Editor:

I feel that the points raised in your editorial on public notices, "Public Notices — They Don't Notify and the Public Can't Understand Them," is well taken. Although I plead not guilty "a colossal amount of arrogance," since these notices are prepared in my office, we will attempt in the future to make them more communicative in line with your very constructive criticism.

Regretfully, we must also satisfy the "Lawyers Law" if these notices are going to be legally effective. The "Lawyers Law" requires, for instance, that we inform the public where further information may be obtained. We have always considered this a salutary requirement.

I would like to point out in addition, that our previous notices have not really been all that bad. You did not point it out, but we have been including a map with the notice, showing the location of the property to be rezoned and identified as "property to be rezoned."

The "Lawyers Law" requires us to publish an accurate legal description, but we will attempt to incorporate a description also in terms more understandable to the layman.

A statement of the present use of the property might well be helpful and could be included within the general description of the property.

The Planning Commission, of course, is concerned with proper land uses. The ownership of the property appears to me to have little relevance to the proper function of the Township in zoning matters. And, I see no particular legal or practical reason for including this information in the notice.

Giving due regard to all of your criticisms, which as I say are well taken, as a practical matter interested people seem to get informed somehow about these hearings.

I suspect that even with considerable improvement, most people will learn about the hearings on the news page of the paper or by word of mouth, rather than from the printed notice itself.

Unfortunately, many people seldom get beyond the front page of the local paper. That fact, and the fact that in order to take valid action the courts have required the community to follow the statutory

requirements to the letter,

cause us to draft a printed notice which can be criticized as being more "legal" than informative. In the future we'll see if we can't strike a happy medium.

JOSEPH T. BRENNAN, Attorney for Farmington Township

EDITOR'S NOTE: The problem of legal ads' length and detail apparently isn't entirely by local. The Michigan Press Association reports that a lobbyist for the Macomb County Board of Supervisors asked the Legislature for changes in the law to allow counties to print only "summaries" of their activities.

And Joseph A. Parisi Jr., representing the Michigan Township Association, suggested that an interim study committee be formed to check Michigan law for revisions of all statutes on required publications.

We join Attorney Brennan in hoping that out of this will come laws which facilitate "the happy medium."

ARBOR WEEK

To The Editor:

Arbor Day — tree planting day — was first observed by state April 10, 1872 in Nebraska, promoted by a man named Morton who had been a newspaper reporter in Detroit. In 1867 he had promoted planting seedlings to replace forests cut down for lumber in Michigan.

This year in Michigan April 22-29 is proclaimed by Gov. Romney as Arbor Week.

We know that trees beautify our streets and lawns. They are a haven for our birds and other wild life. Their shade makes life more comfortable on hot summer days. Forest areas are set aside for recreation.

But the scientists tell us of how they fight air pollution. During the growing season of a tree, an excess of oxygen is eliminated and carbon dioxide is absorbed by the tree.

An apple orchard of 40 trees (one acre) will collect from the ground and discharge into the air 480 tons of water a month.

This knowledge shows us the value of preserving some of the trees in each section where building is being done and where people will live.

Our City of Farmington should be planting trees now to replace so many we have lost because of old age and disease.

FARMINGTON READER

Teen Letterbox

Here's a typical family problem that the Greater Farmington Youth Guidance staff runs across. The teen's complaint generally runs like this:

DEAR T. L.:

I'm a high school girl and share a bedroom with my 12-year-old sister. I would like a room of my own, but that's impossible.

My little sister goes through my dresser drawers, tries on my cosmetics and uses my hair rollers. I think she even reads my diary. I have no privacy at all.

I'm the neat type and she leaves her clothes and books and records scattered about so that the room is messy and I have to pick up. My mother doesn't make her tidy the room. I'm sick of her junk. What can I do about my little sister.

LITTLE BRAT'S SISTER

DEAR L.B.S.:

Your little sister is envious. She would

like to be as grown up as you are.

First, if you have learned nothand (or shorthand), keep your diary in this "secret code." If not, buy a diary with a lock and key.

Then have a talk with your mother. Ask her help in subdividing your bedroom so that your bed, dresser, bookcase or desk will be off-limits to your little sister. If you share a bureau, specify which drawers are to be hers. Clean your half of the room and don't touch hers.

If she is beginning to roll her hair, why not decorate with pretty paper a shoe box in which she can keep her very own rollers?

If you have a problem you can't cope with write to the Teen Letterbox, Youth Guidance Committee, 33423 Grand River Avenue, Farmington. All letters are confidential. Personal replies will be sent to those whose letters are not published.

Looking Back in the Files

5 Years Ago

10 Years Ago

15 Years Ago

APRIL 19, 1962

APRIL 18, 1957

APRIL 17, 1952

Golf Kick-off

Golf season was kicked off several weeks ago as hopeful candidates began tryouts for the 1962 season which gets underway next Monday against Southfield. And along with the start of the new season began a new set of problems for golf coach Jack Hayes. One of his problems? Too many good golfers.

Yoga Demonstration

A Yoga demonstration by Sandy Darwin of Detroit was the program highlight recently for the women's health classes which meets Thursday evenings at the Farmington High School.

Town Hall Fate

Further airing of the pros and cons regarding the Town Hall's future will headline the regular monthly meeting of the Farmington Historical Society.

Michigan in Print

Two well known novelists of the Michigan scene will again be vying for top honors on the best seller list this spring. Adventure novelists have pronounced much for the works of Robert Traver and Glendon Swarth-

Library Encouraged

A joint committee of the City Council and Township Board agreed Tuesday evening to proceed with the draft of a preliminary declaration of Policy for the permanent establishment of the combined district library program.

Structure Rises

Construction work on the new Clarenceville High School being erected across from the present high school on Middlebelt Road is reported progressing on schedule.

Thinclads Win

The Trojan track squad opened its regular season with a win Wednesday, April 10 over Northville and Brighton in a triangular meet on their home track.

Pavement Plans

Resolutions specifying details and cost estimates for the paving of Floral and portions of Lilac and Hawthorne Streets on a special assessment basis this summer were unanimously approved by the City Council at a public hearing last Wednesday evening.

Blood Flows Freely

A total of 223 pints of blood were contributed by Farmington area residents during the two-day visit Monday and Tuesday of the Mobile Red Cross blood bank at the Farmington Town Hall.

Fire Dept. Debut

It didn't take the new North Farmington Fire Dept. very long to spring into action, for only a few hours after the department was inaugurated it was called to a grass fire at 32670 Northwestern Highway.

Building Jumps

With the spring thaw and warmer temperatures, building permits at Farmington Township and City offices have gone on a spree, reaching a combined total of well over a quarter million dollars from March 1 through April 14.

Lots for Sale

Four hundred plotted lots and other tax-reverted parcels in 16 southern Michigan counties will be offered at public auctions the conservation department announces.

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