

# This Young Man Is A Shaker

There is a tale concerning the personnel director of a large company who advertised for someone with 20 years of experience for an administrative position — and he had to be under 30.

You can't have everything in picking a new administrator but the Wayne Community Board of Education, who's district includes most of Westland, had the best of everything last week when it named 29-year-old Timothy Dyer, assistant principal for one and a half years at Wayne Memorial High School, to principal of the new Adlai E. Stevenson Junior High School.

THERE WERE 16 candidates for the position, which opens in September, and Dyer's age and relative lack of experience in administration were against him but the Board accepted the recommendation of Supt. Harry Howard.

However, two Board members, P. R. Biebesheimer and Myron Becker, cast dissenting votes, a rarity in personnel decisions among governmental bodies.

Their objections to Dyer were based on age and lack of administrative experience.

Normally, this would be a valid point. Stevenson Junior High will have 52 teaching stations and 1,200 students in a \$3.5 million building.

Not only will the principal have the anticipated problems which come from the size of the school but intemperate other problems caused just by the fact that it is a new school with a new staff and curriculum.

On paper, the task should be assigned. Excuse me a d c h e Number 25.

But administrators, like most persons, are different and talents and capabilities also vary.

AT LEAST TWO teachers and administrators in other school districts outside of Wayne have told this writer that formal experience shouldn't be stressed too heavily.

"I know a teacher with 19 years of background who still behaves like a first year teacher," said one person from an Oakland County district.

An administrator, who has considerable experience in taking part in the selection of new principals, commented on a recent appointment over Board members' objections: "We already have too many housekeepers. Our new man is not a housekeeper."

He hit the center of the issue.

Principals should do more than make sure the building doesn't burn to the ground and the faculty doesn't hold a mass demonstration outside the school protesting the country's Vietnam policy.

Tim Dyer, despite his less than three decades on earth, has accomplished personally and professionally more than many middle-aged persons.

Anyone who has had any contact with him knows what kind of a job he can do.

THE FACT THAT many of his teachers at Stevenson Junior High will be older may actually prompt those persons to give him a bit more respect, if for no other reason than that he had to compete against older and more experienced persons for the position.

As the sign said when posted last year in the Garden City School Board office:

"This is the age of the doers and the shakers."

Westland students who attend Stevenson Junior High and their parents should be grateful that Mr. Dyer is a doer and shaker, not a housekeeper.

—Leonard Poger

## CAN WE AFFORD TO ECONOMIZE?



## From the Publisher's Desk OBSERVATION POINT

By Philip H. Power

Lately it has become fashionable to criticize the police.

Just look at what they're called in our everyday slang: cops, dicks, bulls, fuzz. The mocking bumper stickers reading "Support Your Local Fuzz" appeared last year in California and rapidly spread to various college campuses across the country.

Kids lounging on a street corner make surly remarks when a police cruiser drives by.

But take it from a reporter who has covered the police beat and has seen the police at work: They do a darn fine job, perhaps the toughest in this country, for remarkably little money and with a great deal of loyalty.

And the communities they serve ought to realize it.

THINK, FOR A moment, about what goes into a policeman's job. He has to have physical courage and skill, and a lot of it. For we expect a police officer to walk into a barroom fight and come out on top. We expect him to be able to face down a man with a gun or, if necessary, disarm him so he doesn't hurt an innocent citizen.

A police recruit spends a lot of time learning how to protect himself and others. He learns more about the use of his pistol than 500 of Mayor Moelke's gun school could teach, and as a result I'd much rather be around a police officer with a gun than anyone else.

Because he knows how to handle himself, you usually don't find the policeman prone to the kind of insecure boasting to which so many people fall prey. They're nice guys to talk to, and generally they're pretty sensible.

POLICEMEN CAN'T be dumb,

either, at least not today.

Perhaps the stereotype of the stupid cop in the big city was applicable 50 years ago, but it certainly isn't now.

Investigation of crime is no simple matter. For example, most criminals know that fingerprints exist, so they wear gloves. This means that the policeman investigating a crime has to go to other techniques.

In an era of organized crime and the professional criminal, the police have to track down men who consider their life's work to be breaking the law. Being outside the law, they can take advantage of techniques — electronic bugging, intimidation, even violence — which are not available to the police.

Which means the police have to use their brains.

THE REAL PROBLEM is that our police officers work in precisely that area of human behavior where things are at their most difficult: in conflict situations.

A speeder is in conflict with the law; it's a police officer's responsibility to stop him. A husband and wife are in conflict; a policeman is expected to calm them both down. A criminal is in conflict with society; the police are charged with finding him and making sure he doesn't continue to trouble people.

A policeman, by definition, works always at the razor's edge of life.

AND HE DOES IT at a salary which is pitifully low, considering the qualifications for a police recruit.

Good men cost money. Often, the money just isn't there.

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# Homer Martin - A Populist Passes

All there was was a paragraph in Time Magazine's obituary column. Yet in his day he was one of the most widely cussed and discussed men in the nation.

He was Homer Martin, once a Plymouth resident. He died a few weeks ago in Los Angeles of a heart attack at the age of 66. The magazine didn't say what he was doing there.

He was a man before his time and after his time.

THE WORLD knew him as the first president of the United Auto Workers union at the time of the violent sit-down strikes in Flint. Martin came out of a small college in Missouri and was ordained a Baptist minister. But he was canned as pastor of a suburban Kansas City church because his sermons were too pro-labor. A lot of people didn't like organized labor in those days, in 1932.

So Homer Martin went to work in a Chevrolet plant. He didn't know much about factory work, and he didn't know much about unions then, but he got active in organizing anyway. In 1934 Chevy canned him as a trouble-maker.

Martin became a full-time union organizer.

There were a lot of auto workers unions, and the American Federation of Labor set up a council to pull them all together. Martin was appointed vice president. When the United Auto Workers were organized as a separate union in 1936, Homer Martin was its first president.

MARTIN LED THE UAW out of the skilled, trades-oriented AFL and into the industry-oriented Congress of Industrial Organizations. A union like the UAW logically belonged there.

Martin asked General Motors to bargain on an industry-wide basis rather than on a plant-by-plant basis. It was a pretty radical idea at the time, and William Knudsen, then GM's executive vice president, said no.

So in the latter part of 1936, the Flint sit-down strikes began. GM, the courts, the newspapers — all held this was an invasion of private property. Homer Martin responded with another radical notion: That the job is the work-

ers' property, and that GM was guilty of confiscating their property.

The fight was long. It was bitter. But to make a long story short, today there is virtually industry-wide bargaining in the auto industry.

BUT MARTIN HAD internal troubles.

There were factional fights within the UAW. Martin hurled charges around and tried to suspend members of the executive board.

The board in 1939 organized its own convention with representatives of 300,000 UAW members. Martin had his own convention with representatives of 60,000 members.

Martin was ousted, and the Reuther boys were in. That was the end of Homer Martin's career in big labor.

HE SURFACED publicly in the 1950's as a candidate for the Republican nomination for Congress in the old 17th District, which then included northwest Detroit, Redford, Livonia, Plymouth and Northville.

This writer remembers Martin from the campaign — a wiry man with the tone of an evangelist, fighting the battles of labor, the farmer and the small businessman, blistering Walter Reuther and giant business.

He wasn't so much a Republican as a Populist of the rural Midwest school. Reuther and big business were here to stay. There was no use blasting them, and he lost.

His last appearance in the public eye was during the milk producers strike in Livingston County around 1960. It was never very clear how he happened to wind up in the middle of it. Perhaps it was because there was a fight and apparent social injustice. Homer Martin loved a fight and hated what he considered social injustice.

In the months ahead, you may hear an inordinate amount of thunder and lightning coming from the heavens. That'll be Homer Martin.

He'll be trying to unionize the angels.

—Tim Richard

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