

# Plymouth's Fair Housing: What Good Will It Do?

Monday night, April 29, 1968, the City of Plymouth's voters took a historic step and put into effect an open housing ordinance. It was historic because the city was the third in the state to pass such an ordinance in a referendum vote.

It was also a historic occasion because it brought to light the need for this type of legislation in a democracy—that had already guaranteed the right of free movement in its founding constitution.

However, this is all very plain to anyone who wishes to think about the ordinance's historical value and perspective. What is not so plain is what good it will do.

SOON AFTER IT was definite that the ordinance was on the books, people began to ask: Was it really necessary? The question was raised, "What good does it do?"

Possibly this was the wrong question to be asked, and also possibly this question reveals how little knowledge there is of the racial crisis facing the country—not just Plymouth and Detroit.

Plymouth's passage of its open housing ordinance was not as much of a victory for the black people so much as it was a victory for white persons and the city itself.

Negro leaders have repeatedly said that their people don't really want to move to Plymouth or Livonia or even Farmington. For one thing, almost all of the Negroes in the inner city could not begin to afford to make the move; besides, they don't want to leave their own

peers and friends just to live in the suburbs.

So why pass an open housing ordinance?

I don't believe that those Plymouth residents who voted "yes" Monday, took this action with the idea that masses of black inner-city residents would come rushing to Plymouth.

I believe they voted yes to show the world that they are aware of racial problems and justice and this was one way of displaying their empathy for the Negro in the public manner.

THE NEGRO-AMERICAN has been defranchised and spat upon for the last 300 years—long before the Mayflower landed at Plymouth Rock.

The black American is fighting an attitude as well as physical discrimination and segregation, and part of the answer to the above question lies in doing away with this sick attitude.

The other part lies in eliminating physical segregation—which passage of an open housing ordinance accomplishes in the eyes of the law.

Therefore, the solution to the racial crisis confronting every American is not simply opening your arms and welcoming Negroes into your neighborhood.

The solution is made of both opening your arms and also opening your minds by not spitting upon a man because he is black.

The Plymouth Open Housing Ordinance accomplishes the first part to the solution, and it may lead the way to an awakening to the second and most difficult part.

—Henry Teutsch

## From the Publisher's Desk OBSERVATION POINT

By Philip H. Power

This weekend's edition of the Livonia Observer carried a headline: "8 Dope Rings Smashed; Teen Traffic Up."

The story was a wrap-up of various moves taken by law enforcement authorities in Livonia to deal with traffic in drugs among teen agers and others. For example, it revealed that a local 16-year-old is now in the hospital, committed following a bad trip on LSD.

It's no secret that drug traffic and abuses are not confined to Livonia alone. Last year, the particularly grisly murders of two sub-teen girls were committed in Westland; the prime suspect was said by authorities to have been sniffing glue before attacking the girls. School authorities are worried about use of marijuana in Farmington and Redford.

Dope and its use is not only an inner city problem. It hits the suburbs; to cover up consideration of the matter would be to bury one's head in the ground.

HOWEVER, IT IS important to use a little bit of perspective in looking at the problem.

First, all teen agers are not dope fiends.

Most know that drugs like LSD or speed are in fact dangerous. There is good evidence, for example, that use of LSD can result in genetic damage to the user. The kids know this.

But the kids also know that what little research has been done on the results of using marijuana has been inconclusive. The drug supposedly produces a mild hallucinatory sensation, perhaps some heightened sensations,

euphoria, and a loss of balance and perspective similar to that produced by over-use of alcohol.

There is also some evidence that users who may be psychologically unbalanced may have very severe reactions, and that it is difficult to predict whether one individual will have a good or a bad trip on the drug. Some authorities also say that use of marijuana will lead to "psychological addiction," perhaps tending toward wider use of drugs such as LSD, cocaine or heroin.

So one thing that is needed is research, much more research, into the real effects of marijuana on the user. Most research findings on the matter of alcohol, for example, conclude that it is relatively harmless if used in moderation. Partly for this reason, and partly because of the long-time human custom of drinking alcoholic beverages, use of alcohol in moderation is accepted in our society.

Such is not the case with marijuana. This is partly because we really don't know what the drug does to people. We need to know this.

HOWEVER, THE LAWS dealing with the use or sale of marijuana are extremely strict.

Mere possession carries a prison sentence of up to 10 years. A mandatory minimum sentence of 20 years is required in the case of people who are convicted of selling or even giving the stuff away.

These penalties have been criticized by a number of prominent legal and medical authorities as being too rigid. For example, a kid just trying pot for the first time, innocent of everything except a desire to experiment in forbidden drugs, could be sent up for 10 years into a prison environment which could do more to warp his personality than anything one puff of marijuana could do.

For this reason, most courts have been trying to enforce the law with some understanding, pending development of more research findings. In this respect, the authorities in Livonia are being extremely sensible.

Sgt. Lee B. Grieve, head of the Livonia Police Intelligence Bureau in charge of narcotic investigations, advises parents who suspect their children are using drugs to contact the police.

"We're not here to put every kid that uses junk in jail," Grieve says. "We'll work with the parents and we'll work with the teen or adult. But it is the parents who must take the initial step."

Police officers must respect the law, but such an approach respects also the human problems involved in the use of dope.

IT IS THESE human problems that lie at the heart of the matter.

We can condemn people for using LSD or marijuana. We can talk about the terrible damage such drugs can do. We can pass laws banning the use of such drugs, and we can clamp down on the pushers and sellers.

But we will have missed the point if we don't stop for just a moment to think about just what is missing in our society that leads people to use such drugs—despite the risk.

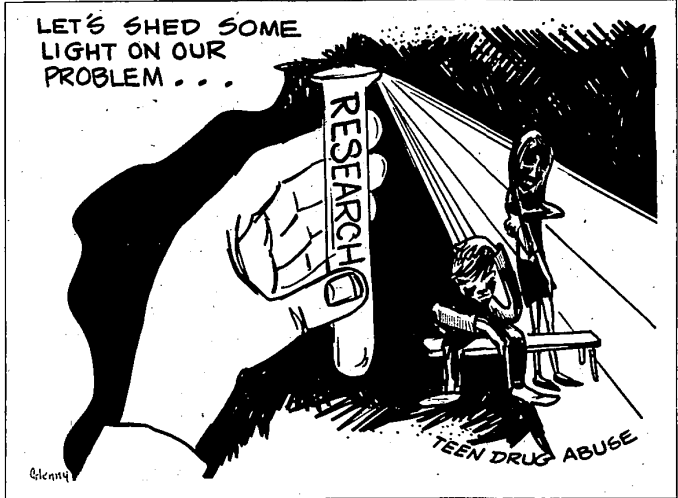
Out here in Observerland, incomes are high. Houses, by and large, are pleasant. Lawns are green. Kids are healthy, well dressed, with a great future ahead of them.

But they'll take marijuana, experiment with LSD.

Curiosity is an important part of it. So is the rebellious act of doing something forbidden, like taking a beer when you're 16 was 20 years ago.

But there's something more, something lacking in a society which leaves a gaping hole in the lives of some people such that they try drugs.

If you're concerned about dope, OK. But just think about the wider issues. You might learn something.



### A View From Washington

## Hippies Go Conservative

WASHINGTON — Maybe it means something, and maybe it doesn't, but the hippies are more conservative this year.

They congregated Sundays in a fountain-centered park that interrupts Connecticut Ave, about six blocks north of the White House and three or four blocks south of the Washington Hilton Hotel, which was the headquarters for the Livonia delegation attending the U.S. Chamber of Commerce convention.

This Sunday evening, there were two musical groups going at it—one of a couple of guitars and the other of a half-dozen percussionists playing drums of apparently African and Indian design.

A dancing, sunburned girl had probably been there for hours; other hippies dropped in and out. Some were in a large group watching the drummers; others sat in pairs or alone, reading.

"THOSE COPS shouldn't be bunched up like that. They should be spread around the place in case of trouble."

The soft Southern voice belonged to a man of 35 or 40 dressed in—er, well—civilian garb. He was addressing me since I appeared to be "straight," too.

"Buncha criminals and looters and arsonists," he said.

The hippies didn't look like those kinds of criminals to me, but I had come there to gawk and shoot color slides for my suburban family and friends, so I wasn't going to argue with the guy.

"It's not as bad as it was last year," he went on. "Last year most of them were like that"—he nodded to a wild-colored, particularly shaggy youth with a wild-colored, long shirt, bell and sandals.

"Now, most of them are wearing jeans and regular clothes, even though they're dirty. The girls aren't as rotten-looking; they look like girls. The boys' hair isn't as long. But maybe that's because they're still in school. Last spring they started off short, but by mid-summer they looked like animals."

Yet, there was no doubt. The hippies, though they had, weren't quite as bad as before. Maybe they figured they had won something on the Johnson issue and were now prepared to clean up.

I STOOD AT a light to cross the street, and three long-haired lads with round, rimless glasses, conservative hippie clothes and pasty faces strolled up.

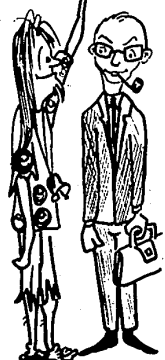
One nudged the other, looked at me, and said: "The Establishment."

I guess I did look out of place—black shoes, socks and trousers, dark tie, conservative sports jacket, horn rims, a face tanned and glowing from long hours of exercising a poodle. A regular square, cubed.

"Thanks," I said. "I've worked for years to get where I am, and it's nice to be told you've made it."

We all had a laugh.

—Tim Richard



### This Is The Week That

... By Don Hoenshell

Here's a news flash, folks, while you're contemplating the stories of corruption in high places and the dope raids and rappings that plague us all.

Ten-agers these days are more sophisticated about the world—and probably a lot smarter, too—than we were.

We fret about the 3 per cent who freak out on booze and grass, who sass teachers, steal bicycles and cars and show a thumb-nose to the standards their elders have imposed on them.

Everybody should fret when the seed produces weeds.

But how about the rest, the ones who are making it big, the ones who have found their own way of life even if it is different from the la-de-da of us parents?

Every once in a while we come upon an example that shows us the kids are better than ever.

So let's hear it for the young people who write *Pilgrim Prints*, the Plymouth High School newspaper. Stevenson High School in Livonia also does a great job, as do most of the others around.

But for sheer delight in the awareness of the young, let us read the very well done *Prints* by Alice Perry, who put together the current political picture with popular music.

Well, if anything, 1968 will be the Year of the Song—related to most anyone—and it could prove to be a strange one, too.

Robert Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy are running to the tune of the Beatles' "All You Need Is Love" (with a little peace on the side), while President Johnson insists "You Won't See Me" (also Beatles) on election day... it could be that Lyndon is bouncing

through the rest of this year humming "I Wanna Be Free" (the Monkees), or "Let Me Be (the Turtles)... and with very good reason."

"The citizens of Michigan continue to let George Romney trip to 'Go Where You Wanna Go' (Fifth Dimension), though lately he's been tilting at home... travels around the state itself have kept him from going outside, and it seems he hasn't had time for anything..."

"There is one VIP that seems to be faking a few trips a week, however... it's none other than THE Bobby Kennedy... although he's going no farther than his barbershop, isn't that far enough?... twice a week he has a little hair trimmed off... he can afford to shock the younger generation into switching their votes, so he's getting his mop, trimmed a little at a time..."

Alice takes them all apart and whether she puts them back together isn't very important.

She says George Wallace and Fred Halstead (who's he?) are wrinkling brows in the major parties. Halstead, she explains, is the Young Socialist movement's draft choice for president.

Quick, now, how many of you adults knew that?

Alice winds up with: "This election looks like it could prove to be a good one... the whole mess with candidates, primaries, and everything else can all be summed up in one little song title... 'We Ain't Got Nothing Yet' (Blues Magoo)." And here's one for Alice from a political writer, "I Surrender, Dear" (Bing Crosby).

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### Sense And Nonsense

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