

## OBSERVATION POINT

# Winning-Is-Everything Mentality Louses Up Our Political System

By Philip H. Power  
Publisher

Yesterday was election day here in the suburbs. The weather was cold. The lines were short in most places; the vote was light.

But the people spoke through the age-old method of the ballot. Mayors were re-elected; new city councils were picked; treasurers and clerks were selected. The performance of incumbent officials was weighed against the promise of new candidates, and power was confirmed and placed.

In this day of squalor and scandal in our national government, it was somehow heartening to see the processes of democracy working here at the local level. Most campaigns were free of last-minute irresponsible charges, and with a few exceptions campaign spending abuses were at a minimum.

Most local candidates seemed content to state their positions and outline their qualifications for office, and then to sit back and await the judgment of the people.

Nearly all the candidates interviewed by this

newspaper seemed to have a rational, balanced view of their ambitions. "Sure, I'd like another term," remarked one city councilman, "because I think I can help the city. But I've been around a long time, and if I don't win, well it isn't the end of the world."

THAT ATTITUDE seems to me remarkably healthy, particularly in the context of the recent excesses we have seen revealed at the national political level.

There are a lot of reasons for such indignities, but one major one stems from the excessively single-minded obsession with winning which seems to have afflicted national politicians of both parties in recent years. It's as though every person who even thinks about being a U.S. Senator, let alone President, somehow gets mysteriously brainwashed with Vince Lombardi's axiom about winning being the only thing.

If winning is the only thing that counts, then it's no real ethical problem to order bugging of the opposition's headquarters or to collect and disburse large sums of illegal campaign funds or to commit all the

other absurd shenanigans to which we have recently become so accustomed.

THE PROBLEM with this, of course, is that the process of politics is not the same thing as the game of football. In football, you can play the winning is everything game and get away with it partly because there are umpires and referees on the field who can spot infractions and who are never wrong in dishing out penalties and partly because once the game is over life goes back to normal.

In politics, there are no umpires who are never wrong and who have the power to dish out instantly a 15-yard penalty for bugging the opposition.

More importantly, in politics the event never ends at the 60-minute whistle. The campaign may end with an election, but the process of government is always continuing. That is why the suspicion and mistrust that the winning is everything mentality produces always circle back and consume the man who created them.

This is the situation in which Mr. Nixon finds himself, and this, too, is why so many national politicians are so despised by the public.

AND THIS IS why this week's local election can teach us so much.

In most cases, the issues at stake and the ambitions at contest were not so large that overall balance and perspective was lost. Instead of a group of insecure neophytes playing the winning is everything political game with every ounce of their being, most candidates ran as reasonable people — ambitious to be sure, but not carried to a nutty extreme.

I admire them all for running, in this year of cynicism and skepticism. The reward for the winners is simply to help try to make their community a better place to live; the solace for the losers is to have participated in the democratic process.

Winners and losers, they are all worthy of respect, in that they understood the other old axiom about competition: It isn't who won or lost, it's how you played the game.

Tim Richard writes

## Should Senior Residency Be Limited?

After a week of reading Panhandle Civic Assn. is fighting a proposed senior citizen housing complex in the Schoolcraft-Telegraph vicinity.

Archie is straightforward and honest. He doesn't like the "colored," thinks they have attributes inferior to whites, doesn't want them in his house and doesn't want to go to theirs. I respect Archie. I don't share his views, but I respect him.

He's a refreshing contrast to the meaty-mouthed euphemisms that are uttered at governmental and political meetings.

Like Archie, I will be specific.

In Redford Township, the

fighting a proposed senior citizen housing complex in the Schoolcraft-Telegraph vicinity.

A chief objection is that state and federal funding will be needed to finance the 200 units. Joe McCullough, Panhandle president, points out that the township would be unable to restrict residency to senior citizens from Redford.

Well, if you know anything about the suburbs, you know that 98 per cent of the people who die in Redford Township weren't born there. So what's the big problem about letting "outsiders" reside in a senior citizen dwelling?

I don't live in Redford Township, but I've shopped

there and applauded lustily its fine orchestra. No one has ever refused my money or kicked me out of the auditorium because I'm a non-resident. No real estate firm ever refused to show me a house there when I was shopping.

No, one must conclude that the objection to the senior citizen housing project is based not on the fact that persons from Farmington, Southfield, Garden City or Dearborn Heights might move in. It's because persons from Detroit might move in, and Detroit is 50 per cent black.

Let us turn now to Harvey W. Moelke, once the mayor of Livonia, now running for a

city council seat. Some background: As mayor, Moelke vetoed an open housing ordinance; he also emulated Dearborn Mayor Orville Hubbard's sinister "Keep Dearborn Clean" campaign.

Moelke says he's for senior citizen housing as long as it's controlled by the city and for Livonia residents only. "Outside ownership of senior citizen housing means persons from any community can move in," Moelke said at a meeting of the St. Edith Catholic parish altar society.

In 1950 Livonia had only 8,000 residents; in 1960, there were more than 60,000; today, more than 110,000. Obviously, most "Livonians" weren't born in that city. So

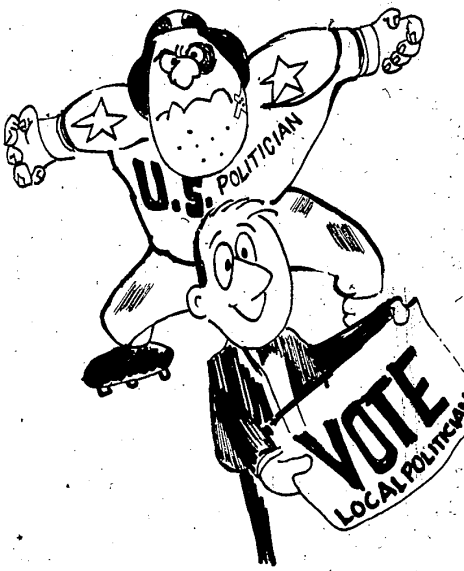
what's the objection to outsiders?

In the seven years I've lived in Livonia, I've never heard a Livonian say a bad word about anyone from Plymouth, Northville, Farmington, Southfield, or Redford Township, to mention just a few of the neighbors. Nor have I ever heard a Livonian downgrade a white Detroitite. But a black Detroitite ... that's another matter.

Let us be perfectly accurate: Joe McCullough and Harvey Moelke have never said a word about Redford Township and Livonia to be racially segregated.

But the rest of us can read between the lines. We know what they mean, don't we?

## THERE'S NO NEED TO PLAY DIRTY WHEN YOU REACH THE BIG LEAGUES



Fred DeLano writes

## Judge Deserves Praise For Amputee Ruling

History may little note last week's ruling by Federal Judge Lawrence Gubow permitting a Huron High School amputee to play tackle against Grosse Ile in a scholastic football encounter, but here's one cry of "bully for the judge."

Maybe you've never seen Budd Lynch, the highly regarded Red Wing telecaster, play golf. Maybe you are too old to remember Pete Gray, an outfielder with the St. Louis Browns during World War II. Maybe you don't know my good friend Bill Veck.

These three come quickly to mind among the countless thousands around this world who have lost this or that bodily trinket like an arm or a leg. All are thankful that God has spared them more impairing losses.

Lynch, for instance, left his right arm at Dieppe, and yet you know what out of a golf ball.

Gray was minus the hand of one arm or another and had to tuck his glove under the opposite stump after catching a fly ball, yet the records always will show that he played in the major leagues — and no one will add an asterisk indicating one handicap or another.

If they edited the record books that way, think of the notations they'd have to make for all the blind umpires!

Bill Veck is something else. This master wordsmith and promoter, who now abides in semi-retirement on the east shore of Chesapeake Bay, gave a leg for his country back in that scrap of the '40s, but, my, wouldn't we have welcomed him as an

owner of the Tigers had his bid been successful a few years back.

The list is endless ... former Michigan governor and current State Supreme Court Justice John Swainson, who has no legs at all thanks to the same shootout ... a president of the United States who couldn't walk, because of polio ... and on and on.

Nor on any basis that the kid lacks a gumpion. He might not look so hot in a

Athletic Association among them.

If medical advice to the court actually says the Huron High tackle would risk more than normal gridiron danger by playing, then Judge Gubow will have to bar him. But not on the basis of danger to others, certainly.

Nor on any basis that the kid lacks a gumpion. He might not look so hot in a

A recent Plymouth City Commission meeting included a public hearing on the vacating of an alley.

One woman, whose property touched the alley, spoke up to urge the commission to close the alley because "I've seen a colored man walking down the alley looking into the yards."

The Friends of Bikelogy have recommended building public transportation stations where commuters can store their bicycles and then continue by bus or rail into the city.

There are now 80 million bicyclists in the United States, the Friends say, but only 15,000 miles of bikeways for about 13 inches per rider.

In 1972, some \$22 billion of our gasoline and property taxes were spent for highways, while less than \$1 billion went for public transportation. Practically nothing was provided for bikeways.

Traffic studies show that 43 per cent of all urban work trips made by autos are four miles or less and, in nine out of 10 trips, the driver is the sole occupant. Many of these trips could be made by public transportation, car pools or the Friends point out, bicycles.

chance are that in the collision of football linemen one missing leg here or there would hardly be noticed.

EDITOR:

On Sunday, Oct. 14, at 6:10 a.m., our 13-year-old son was on his way to deliver the Detroit Free Press. As he approached the corner of Rockland and Plymouth Road, a car swerved south from Plymouth onto Rockland and struck our boy.

My husband was helping another son load his paper bags in front of our home and saw the accident happen. The car turned its lights out and kept on going. My husband stepped out to slow the car down and was almost run down. He immediately ran down to the corner to the aid of our son.

Hearing my husband shout, I checked to see what had happened and called the police. The policeman took the report and said they had three scout cars in the area already due to a previous call.

The son who was struck down could not identify the car or driver. My husband and other son could not positively identify the car but said it was a black, late model 1969 or early '70s Chevrolet or Oldsmobile. The car was also noisy, maybe in need of a muffler, and was dented on one side. There were either three or four occupants in the car.

One cannot describe the effects of an accident such as this on the victim and the parents. All we can think is whoever was responsible was either drunk, high on drugs or a person without a backbone. They must also be without a conscience and the only thing about them is, I'm

## Driver Hits, Then Takes Off

### READERS' FORUM

Please type (or write clearly) and limit letters to 300 words.

● Letters must be signed, with the writer's address. Names will be withheld only at the writer's request and for good cause.

● The editor reserves the right to reject unsuitable letters.

Thankful I'm not that person. Also, I hope this person never has to go through what he has made us go through.

MRS. PAT FULLER  
Redford Twp.

### City Tour Delightful

EDITOR:

I'd like to commend the city and especially the mayor's office on the recent Saturday morning bus tours of Livonia.

My special appreciation goes to our "tour director," Bill Joyner, a very well informed and personable young man who conducted our tour to all corners of Livonia. He led us to sights we never knew existed, and through his commentary I learned many facts pertaining to our history that I was unaware of throughout my 14 years of residence.

Also present on the bus was a member of the city

council to field any questions that fell under his jurisdiction.

The trip was informative, delightful and free of charge. I heartily recommend that more of our citizens take the opportunity to learn about "our" city — its history, present and future — when these tours are offered again.

BARBARA LAYMAN  
Livonia

### Salem Golfers Thank Many

EDITOR:

The 1973 Plymouth Salem High School golf team would like to thank Tom Donoghue (sports editor) and the Observer Newspapers Inc. for the sports article and picture about our recent state title.

We would also like to thank Bill Brown, principal, and John Sandmann, athletic director of Salem, for the dinner in our honor and for all the support they have given us in the sports program.

We appreciated the opportunity to represent our school and community in the state finals at Jackson.

Last but not least, we want to express our gratitude to a super golf coach and friend, Bob Waters. Without his dedication and love of the sport, and the inspiration and confidence he gave the team, we couldn't have done it.

SALEM GOLF TEAM,  
Plymouth

### 'A Moment Of Weakness'

EDITOR:

Would you publish an open letter to someone who, in a moment of weakness, took off with my daughter's clarinet from the bus stop where my daughter forgot it and boarded the bus for school on a Monday morning.

A very sad young lady, reported her loss to the police department.

On Tuesday morning when she returned to the bus stop for school, there was the clarinet — back again. We are most happy over this incident, and my husband wanted me to write this letter in hope that the person returning the instrument might know of our daughter's delight.

Her faith in all mankind is once more back intact.

MRS.  
RICHARD W. SCARLETT  
SR.  
Livonia

## Editorial & Opinion

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Philip H. Power, Publisher

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