

editorial opinion

All share blame for violence

The Farmington area has been involved in several grisly incidents in the past few years.

Two children have been killed here by youths who were neighbors. Another Farmington girl died violently while vacationing. A Detroit girl was abducted and killed in the Farmington area.

These deaths have touched thousands of residents. Many residents know the families, or know friends of the families, or drive by the area where a killing occurred.

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE for most of us to imagine how a normal person could commit such crimes. Of course the people who kill others without pity must be insane.

It is not enough for society to merely dismiss the offenses as the works of deranged mind and twisted emotions.

Each of us in some small way has contributed to the violence which horrifies us. When our children are late for an appointed meeting, the fear and terror we feel is in some way the product of our own behavior.

Every resident of the Farmington area should be alert to help their neighbors, especially the youngsters.

Every resident should try even seemingly inadequate methods to attempt to prevent similar killings. The word "kill" perhaps should be stricken from everyday speech except when it refers to taking a life. Offhandedly threatening to kill a child over a minor incident may do no harm at all — or it may lead to a pattern of thought which does not respect others' rights to life.

SOCIETY MUST also re-examine the rules by which it lives, its laws. Now courts determine not only factual evidence of the terrible crimes which have affected the Farmington area, but also the moral implications. If a man is incapable of exercising proper judgment society cannot hold him morally responsible.

However, the criminal process should be separated into two operations. One proceeding should determine the facts of the crime. A second proceeding could determine punishment based on the moral ability of the criminal.

Society cannot take revenge on an insane person, which is the implication when criminals are punished. But it must protect itself from those who have no respect for the fragility of human life.

How are teachers evaluated?

(The following questions and answers concerning teacher evaluation were prepared by Farmington school district administrators and PTA members. The questions were results of the PTA's "coffee and comment" series.)

Q. What are the standards for teacher evaluation?

Teachers are evaluated in writing by the principals, directors and assistant superintendents and must demonstrate satisfactory performance in the following areas: Teacher-pupil relationships, personal qualities, teacher-staff relationships, teacher-community relationships, classroom control and management, and professional techniques.

Q. How often are teachers observed and evaluated?

Probationary (non-tenure) teachers are evaluated in writing no less than

twice each school year. Each written evaluation is a composite of the administrator's daily observations and specific classroom observations prior to the actual written evaluation.

Tenure teachers are formally evaluated in writing at least once every three years, and usually more often. If the administrator believes there is a need for further written probationary or tenure teacher evaluations, they will be done.

Q. What procedure is followed if the teacher does not meet district evaluation standards?

If the teacher does not meet district evaluation standards, he is given specific direction and advice by the administrator on how to correct the deficiencies noted on the written evaluation.

Failure to improve performance and correct the deficiencies noted on

the written evaluation could result in the dismissal of a teacher for poor performance according to the procedures of the master contract and the Michigan Teacher Tenure Law.

Q. What recourse do parents have when a number of parents have been dissatisfied with the teaching skills of one teacher?

Dissatisfied parents should contact the building principal to attempt to resolve the problem.

Q. How can parents register complaints about teachers without fear of retaliation by the teacher or principal?

Complaints are resolved at the building level, and the school district does not allow retaliation against either a student or parent. Any instances of retaliation should be reported to the assistant superintendent of elementary or secondary education.

Your ecology calendar

Ecology-minded persons who wish to save cans, bottles or newspapers for recycling may use these facilities. To prepare glass, thoroughly wash the containers, remove all metal caps and rings from the glass and separate the glass by color. To prepare cans, clean only. Paper need not be removed. Newspapers should be tied in bundles with heavy string or rope or secured in heavy paper bags.

*FARMINGTON—A glass recycling center operates on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon at the west end of the Farmington Hills city hall parking lot. The city hall is at 11 Mile and Orchard Lake.
*SOUTHFIELD—The old city offices, 3000 Berg Road at Ten and One-half Mile, one block east of Telegraph.
*LATHRUP VILLAGE—At the Public Services Building, 19101

Twelve Mile Road, adjacent to the high school. Newspapers are collected 10 a.m.-3 p.m. by volunteers the first Saturday of each month.

*GROVES ECOLOGY CLUB—Bundled or bagged newspapers and cardboard will be collected from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday the second week of each month at the high school's front parking lot.

From our readers

Out of time

The council chamber was well filled with property owners objecting to the proposed Pernick Drain, Thursday night, June 12. Mr. Burns of Hubble, Roth and Clark, and George Kuhn, chairman of the Oakland County Drain Commission, wandered from the issue, "the Pernick drain," in their lengthy dissertations. Therefore, this did not allow time

for many of the homeowners' questions to be answered.

WHEN THE MEETING adjourned at 11:45 p.m. Steve Harte, council president and chairman of the meeting, had only presented one third of the questions submitted by the homeowners: asking the meeting to ask the Michigan State University, suggested should be given serious consideration. The Pernick Drain as projected will

cause much damage to the flood plain on our property.

MR. and MRS. WALTER FYTH Southfield

Take garbage bags

Editor: May I suggest to the Jaycees that next year they give all the voluntary garbage bags, and send them out in their bags with litter.

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Eccentricities

by HANK HOGAN



The U.S. Postal Serviceless

Several years ago the United States Postal Service was created as a separate public corporation with the announced purpose of taking the mail out of politics and building a self-sufficient, more efficient postal system in the United States.

Well, who are in the business of substantial mailings, applauded the move because it looked as though mail would be moved quicker at a substantially lower cost to the taxpayer.

I feel like a Monday morning quarterback, but in retrospect I now question the move.

Since the United States Postal Service has come into being, postal rates have increased substantially and mail service has been reduced substantially.

THE PROBLEM is not a local one. Letters mailed locally are handled with dispatch. Newspapers are delivered on a local basis with the same dedication and efficiency.

However, once you want to send something out of town the ground rules are changed.

In the old days you could mail letters well into the evening and still expect them to be delivered in the next town the next day. Today it is very difficult to find a place where a letter will be picked up after six o'clock in the evening, and it takes a minimum of two days for that letter to be delivered to the next town.

AN EXAMPLE OF the new systems is that a letter mailed in Birmingham, going to Troy or Bloomfield Hills, which are the city limits of Birmingham, must now travel to Royal Oak to be sorted and then sent back to those communities—and we are paying more for this service. Maybe this increased travel is one of the reasons it is more expensive.

Under the new law creating the United States Postal Service, postal rates were set by the Postal Rate Commission. The new service made a pro-

posal in 1972 to the Postal Rate Commission and that proposal still has not been acted upon.

UNDER THE POSTAL Service Law the new service was allowed to charge temporary rates until the postal rate commission acted. It makes a mockery of the terms to have temporary rates for two years and still not be near to having any permanent rates.

At the end of last month an administrative law judge named Seymour Wenner, as part of the rate commission procedure, made new recommendations. He proposed that the first class rates be decreased, air mail rates be increased and, the second class rate, which covers newspapers, be increased 47% for local newspapers and over 300% for magazines, and that the parcel post be increased by 67.5%.

THE SECOND AND third class mailings of newspapers, magazines and circulars help keep the post office in business because their volume pays the basic salaries of postal employees. The average American household, according to the best market research available, sends only 3.2 first class letters in a typical week.

If Wenner's rulings were to be adopted by the postal rate commission, which I am sure they will not be, people will either be spending a lot more for newspaper and magazine subscriptions or the post office is going to lose an awful lot of business when commercial mailers turn to alternative delivery systems.

LOCAL NEWSPAPERS at least, are fortunate because they can convert to a carrier service and deliver at one ninth of the postal rate.

It was everyone's fond hope that an independent postal corporation would be able to deliver the mail more efficiently and at less cost. The facts of the matter are that neither has occurred.

Observation Point

by PHILIP H. POWER



Heavy fog over government

"There is good news from Washington today. The Congress is dead-locked and can't act." Will Rogers.

Then, maybe three, seven, even an old saw would have been greeted with grins and even snarls from many people, when the bulk of the nation viewed government action as the surest and best way of solving our problems.

But today it's all different, perhaps not provable by hard data but, as obvious though as impossible, as a heavy fog stealing over the landscape, leaving everything quite the same yet somehow utterly different. Quite simply, we don't trust government much anymore.

In part, it's because at all levels, government has become too darn expensive for what it returns to us. In part, it's because government has become too heavy-handed (the seat-belt interlocks on the cars) to be useful, or too thick-headed (the effect of the Interstate Commerce Commission in keeping freight rates high) to be depended on.

And in part, it is because government seems increasingly to be intervening in a heavy-handed manner into the lives of ordinary citizens in order to accomplish its great end in taxes, things that we don't want done to us.

A few years ago, we could regard our government as an extension of us; now we regard it, in most of its forms, as "them."

THE LITANY of examples is as long as any conversation in a bar.

The State of Michigan is currently figuring out how to spend millions it doesn't have, to buy school buses which very few people want, in order to accomplish the supposed purpose of integrating the schools in Detroit but with the near-certain result of further segregating education in the metropolitan region. It is to be because the government, under the aegis of the federal courts, is telling it to do so.

In the last decade the federal government has spent God-odd-knows how many billions of dollars to stabilize the economy and help out the poor, but then the same government will not tell the catastrophe-ridden automobile industry what the emission standard will be for the next five years or what the rules of the gas mileage game

are, with the net result that unemployment in our region is higher than at any point since the Great Depression.

Our government is supposed to stop malefactors of great pollution from mucking up our lakes and streams and woods. Yet the Reserve Mining Co., by federal court order, is permitted seemingly indefinitely to keep dumping 67,000 tons of toxic tailings daily into Lake Superior. We are paying for this permission with our taxes, and then we shall pay even more in taxes to clean up the mess that Reserve Mining has made in our greatest remaining unpolluted body of fresh water.

And so on, and so on, and so on, etc.

THE ONLY PLACE where government seems to be doing a reasonably good job is on the small, local level, where people can get at it—or better yet, where it keeps its cotton-pickin' hands off what ordinary people are trying to do together.

Most millage renewals in these suburbs passed last week, and even a few increases were approved. This, I suspect, is not because the voters are enmeshed in paying more taxes but because they have a feeling that they have some say for what's going on in their local school systems with their tax money and can beef in an effective manner if they're sore.

Beyond government, even local and accessible, private citizens and businessmen are going about their lives in improving their communities.

Birmingham recently sprouted flowers throughout the downtown, not because some government unit wanted, but because some local businessmen got together and did it.

The Farmington Founders Festival later in July, Livonia's birthday celebration "Spree '73," and the Plymouth Fall Festival are other examples of worthwhile activities which people work hard, and hard, because they think they're worthwhile—not because some government unit wants it.

My guess is that this kind of local, non-governmental, non-coerced, small-scale activity is where people are today. What it means for the future is two-fold: (1) A lot of the government nonsense will be got rid of; (2) A lot of politicians had better sit up and take notice, or else.

project from making statements in response to the permit. Nor were we permitted to respond to Donald Henry, owner of Franklin Manor Convalescent Center who did make a statement in favor of the drain. He stated they are flooded at times and must move elderly patients from the ground floor. He failed to mention the fact that he built the convalescent home near the stream within the flood plain where flood waters naturally go.

HOLIDAY INN directly across from them has filled in the flood plain on their side of the stream, further removing natural storage space for flood waters from the system.

Sitting in the stream from this fill also hampers stream capacity. I feel it was irresponsible to locate a nursing home in an area which normally floods, subjecting elderly people to this trauma. Do taxpayers of Southfield and Oakland County need to build a \$1 million drain with a 15 foot diameter pipe to remedy this irresponsibility?

I WAS ABLE to make a brief statement at midnight when many people

had already left. I stated our position of wanting the river basin dealt with as a whole. Upstream and downstream effects of a project should be considered. A project should not be done at the expense of these residents.

We want a realistic retention system engineered which uses the open water way and natural wet lands in the area as part of this system. Such an alternative was not presented in the present environmental impact statement on the Pernick Drain.

I asked George Kuhn, Oakland County drain commissioner, to consider our request for such a study and asked that we have a voice in choosing who will do such a study. This is a reasonable request as the retention system approach may well be economically favorable. It would almost certainly eliminate increased flooding downstream along the Rouge River which is feared by residents there if the planned 13 foot diameter drain dumps all the drainage into the river at 11 Mile Road.

VERONICA L. MORSE
President
Rouge Basin Coalition