editorial opinion

Mayoral choice system needs reexamination

In the coming weeks there is bound to be debate over Farmington City Councilman Bill Hartsock's action in abstaining to protest the mayoral election process.

Hartsock would like to see the process changed so the mayoral tap would be given to the person receiving the high vote in combination with performance. Presently, claims Hartsock, the mayoral position is handed around, with the choice being determined months and even years beforehand

HARTSOCK also would like to see the process debated in public. In the past, councilmen have been gathering in private to debate the choice.

Other councilmen contend the system is fine as is and maintain basing the choice on high vote getter is impractical because of staggered terms. Both arguments have merit, but it is clear a change is needed to firm up the charter language, so a choice is made on clear cut guidelines.

First, residents have the right to see the selec-tion debated in public. One councilman contends it would be embarrassing for some councilmen if the selection was debated in public.

So what? When a person enters public life, he should be cognizant that such matters will be debated in the public eye. All councilmen contacted say they

Did you know that:
• The "over 60" age group in our country is growing at a rate of 18 per cent a year: the "20.39" group at the rate of 30 per cent a year. But the group that so many of us belong to. "40.39" is declining. Fourteen per cent of all women are heads of households — a figure that will continue to

*Divide the last 50,000 years of man's existence into lifetimes of approximately 62 years of age; 650 of the 800 lifetimes were spent in caves. Writing has been possible in the last 70, mass printing in the last six, precise time measurement in the last four, the electric motor in the past, and most of the current material goods in the present.

•Of the juvenile delinquents, only six per cent have ever had contact with any organized pro-gram and only four per cent have had any church relationship

The federal Office of Management and Budget reports that individuals in business firms spend 130 million man—woman hours annually in filling out 5,000 different government forms, exclusive of state and local forms. It costs taxpayers more than \$2 billion just to pay the regulators to read the reports. It costs business billions to fill out the forms. This cost must be passed on to the consumer.

•The reporting burden imposed on business and subsequently, the consumer, increased by 50 per cent between December 1967 and June 1974.

Secondly, dealing with such a selection in private not only defies state law but it breeds distrust among the electorate.

Many persons who attended the council meeting, where John Richardson was selected mayor, remarked how the selection seemed to be cut and dried. That's reasonable since public discussion by the councilmembers was lacking.

The situation was made even worse by Hart-sock's unwillingness to explain his abstention dur-ing the meeting.

IT WOULD BE UNFAIR to say there is any deviousness intended in selecting the mayor. But in these days of distrust toward politicians, it is nec-essary for leaders to take precautions in avoiding actions which might seem questionable.

Hartsock has expressed a willingness to work in harmony with his fellow councilmen. But this issue should be cleared up.

It would take a charter amendment to better de-fine the process through which a mayor is chosen. But the effort would be worth the aggravation it would avoid in the future

STEVE BARNABY

-- by HENRY M. HOG IN, JR



Numbers tell tale of bureaucrats

•If Michigan were a separate nation, its gross product would rank ninth highest among all na-tions in the free world.

*Legislative bodies, when faced with the choice of controlling government spending or raising taxes, have regularly chosen to increase taxes.

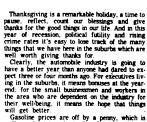
Sense And Nonsense

BERNIE LENNON is hardly a household name BERNIE LENYUN IS NATULY A NOSSENDIO NAME. He's an Olakiand County commissioner from Ferndale who suggests a way to stimulate voter interest and give folks some property tax relief. With only 10 to 25 per cent of the eligible voters good to the polls. Lennon suggests giving a household a 52 rebate on its property taxes for every person in the household who votes in a municipal elec-

Well, we've always assumed that those who stayed away just weren't interested, were uniformed or just didn't care If you pay them to vote, they'll still be uninterested, uninformed and careless. Why pay good money for that kind of participation?

Be thankful we're solving

some of our problems



will get better

Gasoline prices are off by a penny, which is
well worth giving thanks for. Sugar prices are
down, and so are turkey.

Let us thank the state highway people for being
one year cloper to whenever the 148 Schooleraft
expressway and all of 1:275 are open to traffic.
And let's not forget the folks who finally got Ann
Arbor road paved to four easy—flowing lanes.

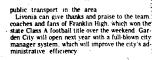
IN PLYMOUTH there is reason to give thanks for two important developments which will improve the area's economy: the First National Bank of Plymouth opened this year, giving added financial support for local growth, and the return bished Plymouth Hiltino opened recently, giving increased tax base to the township. Canton Township may in fact get its own postal designation, giving greater identity to this rapid-may community.

All of us can john with the residents of Birming-ham-Bloomfeeld, in giving thanks that young Timothy Stempel was rescued safe and sound from his kidnappers.

his kidnappers
Southfield has had another year of success in its

Observation Point





ROCHESTER kids in need carl be thankful for the success of the area's "Kops for Kids" program, sponsored by the city police department and the Abon Township Sheriff Department Next year. Westland's serior citzens can be thankful that the city will break ground for the new high rise facility for them.

Despite a \$120,000 slash in state aid the Farmington school system can give thanks that nimble administrative budget work enabled the district to make it through this year without a whopping deficit. And the entire Farmington community ought-to be thankful that the Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College has such a vast cump of programs of benefit to local residents.

The city of Troy cut taxes last spring by one tenth of a mill, and thanks are due that the city got through the year with a balanced budget.

THE LIST could go on endlessly But the collage makes the point Although it's been a tough year, there is much to be grateful for And on top of a beautiful fall. Michigan's going to the Orange Bowl.

Let's make a deal on commuter tax hike:

•Car buyers paid out \$3 billion in 1974 for federal government mandated features. The federally re-quired items cost an average of \$320 per car for the 1968-1974, period.

A seat belt buzzer system for cars introduced by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administ ration added \$200 to the cost of every 1974 car, and 40 percent or two out of every five people who bought cars had the system disconnected.

•Regulations governing the trucking industry frequently allow firms to ship goods in one direction but not to make a return trip.

Airline fares are 50 per cent higher on airlines regulated by the Civil Aeronautics Board than on non-regulated airlines.

«Proposed lawnmower safety standards cur-rently being prepared by the Consumer Pro-tection Safety Commission could raise the price of a mower from \$100 to \$186 - an increase of 86 per

•The list of new regulations by the federal government issued last year alone covers 45,000 pages of fine print.

•5,146 new forms had to be devised.

*Our unemployment insurance system was created 40 years ago under the Social Security Act. By next year it will have paid out \$100 billion to claimants. Nearly one-third of that will have been expended in 1975 and 1976 alone.

Coleman Young's got a good case, no doubt about it. The question is whether suburban legisla-tors have enough savvy to turn the situation to

tors have enough savvy to turn the situation to their advantage. The situation is that the City-of Detroit, like New York City, has big money problems. Detroit's Mayor Young, unlike certain eastern officials, is trying to do something about it before there's any talk of default. Young warfis the state to give Detroit authority or asie its income tax rate by one per cent. For Detroit residents, the rate would go from two per cent to three; for non-residents who work in Detroit, the rate would go from 0.5 to 1.5. He and the council can't just lift the rates by themselves, however. They need an enabling act from the state.

NATURALLY, legislators from Detroit are in Young's corner. Out-state legislators can be wood to give Young what he wants because it's not costing them money. In fact, lawmakers from Dollar Bay and Alpena would be happy to be able to help Detroit without dipping into the state treasury.

ury.
Suburban lawmakers, on the other hand, can be expected to balk. It's the old theory of taxation without representation.

That's a mistake. Suburban legislators shouldn't automatically say 'no' to Detroit, because the bill may pass anyway. What they should do is some old-fashioned, hard-nosed, Yankee horse-

Tim Richard writes

Sure, give Young what he wants. But make him pay a price.

WHAT KIND of price?

Well. Young runs the Detroit Metropolitan Water Department with an iron hand, selling water and sewerage services to \$0.000m suburban communities. The suburbs don't like the way he's running it. Indeed, the Detroit mayor calls it "our" water, even though it comes from Lake Huron.

So go ahead and let Young hike the city income tax—but demand a stronger voice for the suburbs on the Detroit Metropolitan Water Board. Better yet, put the DMWD rates under the jurisdiction of the state Public Service, Dommission, Just like gas and electric rates. Even-better yet, make the DMWD a regional facility and apply the "one person, one vote" theory of representation.

Young is also making a power grab for control of the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Autority, with Gov. Milliken's backing. Suburban legislators could offer to trade the income tax enabling act for Young's promising to keep hands off SEMTA.

Detroft operates several regional facilities—the Zoo. the Art Institute, the Bicentennial Commission but Detroit worn him suburbanites for city jobs. OK. if Young wards to hike the income tax on non-residents, let him cut out the discriminatory hiring practice.

Western Wayne Courty residents would like to have a county services center in the suburbs—a clerk's office. a circuit courtroom, a jail annex. Detroiters on the county commission refuse because they want to keep as many services as possible at 2 Woodward Avenue. Well, let's make a deal: Suburban votes from western Wayne Courty for the income tax bill in return for Detroit wokes. deal: Suburban votes from western wayue comp, for the income tax bill in return for Detroit votes on the county board for an out-county services center.

GOT THE idea Don't give Young what he wants, but don't automatically be negative. Make him pay a price Remember the first three rules of politics: Com

The sleeper

As holidays go, Thanksgiving is the sleeper—the one you expect to be safe because it's so short and you don't travel' as far.
Although motorists travel So per cent fewer miles the Auto Club notes: traffic deaths of Thanksgiving weekend are higher than the sum; mer holidays. Short trips lull drivers into a false sense of safety, alcohol during the festivities is gense of safety, alcohol during the festivities is a feath of the safety and trip to a point 200 miles away is the maximum one-day trip a driver should attempt. A round trip to a point 200 miles away is the maximum one-day trip a driver should attempt Sarting at 8 a.m. you can travel 200 miles ig four hours on the freeway, enjoy five hours at your destination, and be home in the early evening.

Sense And Nonsense

ABC-TV gets good marks this year for its handing of "the battle of the bands." As all warmy blooded Ohio State and Michigan fans knowed there's as much pride in the two marching bands as there is in the football team.

A couple of years ago, the television producers made the terrible mistake of ignoring the half time band shows for some insipid commentary by a retired coach.

In 1975, happily, ABC rectified the error by get ting in half or more of both bands shows, to the amusement and edification of all true sports.

Harmington, Observer Eccentric

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