

OBSERVATION POINT



'The Trouble Starts When Kids Give Up'

By Philip H. Power

NEW YORK — This is the biggest city in the country, with more problems than Detroit, even. It's been called ungovernable, and after looking at the race for mayor going on here, I can only suspect the cynics may be right.

Not enough money. Swarming ghettos, breeding hate and crime. Too many people, existing in a grimy concrete jungle. A state legislature that thinks money given to the city is a bad joke, and a swarm of outlying suburbs to which countless people escape at the end of a day.

The mayor's race features John Lindsay (handsome, nice but with lotta enemies), former Mayor Robert Wagner (suave, an old pro who has managed to clean up his hands while out of office), a number of also-rans, and two writers self-described as hard drinkers and irresponsible.

Two writers? you ask. Yes, Norman Mailer (author of "The Naked and the Dead," plus lots of other books and articles, some of which are political) and running mate Jimmy Breslin (a former columnist for the old Herald Tribune and one of the best writers ever to grace a newspaper page.)

Not being politicians, they tend to tell it like it is. Being writers, they tell it well. And being from New York, they are talking about issues that will concern us all—suburbanites or big city dwellers—in a very short time.

What follows is a few excerpts from a recent campaign article written by Breslin.

His words demand to be heard, for they are well-chosen, to the point, and terribly relevant to any person who lives within 100 miles of a big city like Detroit.

LIKE EVERYBODY else in the City of New York, I'm afraid of crime and I hate what it has done to the life of the city. I still re-

member the night a junk pusher was shotgun caught a detective named Pollins in a dark hallway and fired from a couple of feet away.

The woman around the corner from me came home from shopping the other afternoon and a prowler was at her moment she closed the front door and he tried to kill her with a tire iron. A day later, my friend Mabel came home from scrubbing somebody else's floor all day and three of them pulled her into a doorway on Franklin Avenue in Brooklyn, took her purse, and then started punching. One of the punches left Mabel's ear damaged.

Mabel is black. About 70 per cent of the crimes in this city are committed by minority people against other minority people. So I think you'll find Mabel is just as enthusiastic about adding 5,500 more policemen to the force as are the people in Staten Island or Queens Village.

But it is either enormous ignorance or an enormous lie to tell people that 5,500 policemen, strategically placed, will stop the crime in New York. For we in this city grow, in the soot and chipped plaster and spilled garbage of the ghetto, a breed of kids who have grown up so much to give us, but are given so little of life to lead that some of them, give up.

They have nothing at home, and they sit in schools where white teachers don't know how to teach them; and when they think ahead, they see nothing.

THE TROUBLE for the City of New York starts when these kids give up. Mindless, desperate, often drugged for want of heroin, they are the ones who are out stealing all over this city. And if we keep making these kids give up, as a walk through any junior high school shows you, we will be hiring 5,500 more policemen from

now to forever.

Perhaps, right away, we can open clinics and give heroin to addicts so perhaps they won't hide in alleys or behind staircases and wait for women with purses. Perhaps properly funded rehabilitation centers will work — the upstate farmers always vote against giving the city any money — and perhaps we can hospitalize and cure addicts who are criminals. Narcotics is at the bottom of 60 per cent of the crime in this city.

Perhaps these immediate moves will help. But always use the word "perhaps." Any man who claims he has an immediate, outright solution to the crime problem is a liar.

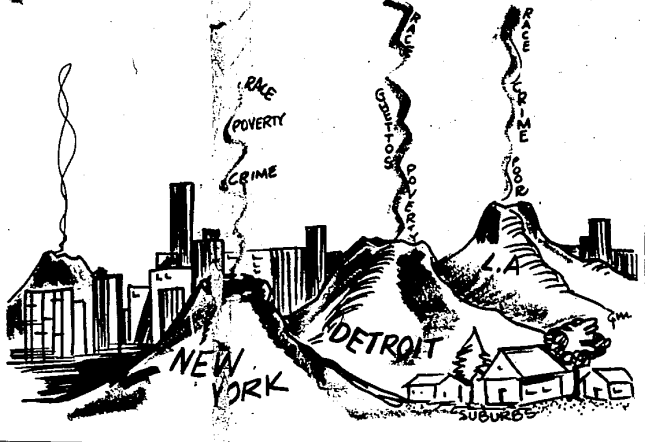
Mention jail to these young people we worry about; particularly mention jail to the youngest of them; and they look at you and they laugh. Jail is a place they want to be able to say they came from.

And so they steal, these young guys do. Steal cars and purses and they steal in the daytime and they steal at night and they steal on the street or they come into your apartment and they use a knife or a lead pipe or even a gun.

They steal with the same absence of feeling that a union leader has when he makes sure blacks do not get work; that white merchants have when they sell defective goods at immense prices to bewildered black people; that a plainclothesman has when he takes money from a narcotics splorer or a policy numbers man.

And then these kids step out, which is street talk for going on a holiday, and they come into drug stores and liquor stores with pistols shaking in their wet hands and the clerks behind the counters have heart attacks and enough of them get slugged and shot to keep a city of eight million living in various degrees of fear.

NO ONE ESCAPES THE 'LAVA'



Tim Richard writes

Farmington To Get Prompt Election On Single City

Farmington will vote Nov. 4 on whether a single community shall be a single city.

Farmington is a single postal area, a single name area, a single recreation district, a single library, almost a single school district, a single chamber of commerce, a single Jaycees organization.

You name it, and just about everything in Farmington is consolidated except the municipal governments.

FARMINGTON'S consolidation election is the first one called by the new State Boundary Commission. It acted on the petition of a group calling itself Citizens For a Better Farmington.

That group wanted a fall election rather than one next spring or summer, as advocated by the committee of the four governmental units which wanted more study.

Farmington's municipal governments have already been studied exhaustively for more than a year by Michigan State University's Institute for Community Development and Services. Indeed, one of the petty criticisms of the MSU study was that it was lengthy. But it was a thorough study, a factual study, a well-reasoned and a coolly-written study. It recommended consolidation.

You can study a thing so long, but at some time you have to act, or else you'll wind up revising your original study because it's out of date. That's the general drift of what the citizens committee seemed to be saying when it opted for the fall election.

THE MOST INTERESTING thing about the citizens committee is that its leaders are fairly young and new, with no ties to the locked-in political prejudices of the old-timers.

We hope the citizens committee will take a leading role in campaigning for a "yes" vote Nov. 4 simply because they lack the old-timers' biases. It's obvious to anyone who bothers to look at a map that Farmington's city, township and two villages should have been consolidated into a single, new city 10 years ago. One hardly needs to argue it.

To some city dwellers, however, the township is a bunch of new (ugh!) people with a lot of road problems and a weak administrative structure that they want the city to help them pay for.

For some township dwellers, on

the other hand, the city is a decaying old farm town that's not going to grow, grow, grow and boom, boom, boom, and it wants to latch onto the township tax base one way or another.

The new people on the citizens committee don't share those biases. They ask: What's good for the whole community? Not: What's the other guy trying to gain at my expense?

WHILE THE CASE for consolidation is easy to make, coordinated industrial planning, coordinated industrial recruitment,

coordinated renewal, coordinated public safety, to begin with—no one will deny that the actual administrative process will be complex. But that's the work of a charter commission and the new city council. It shouldn't be worried to death at this point.

And so the citizens committee is to be praised for requesting, and the State Boundary Commission for granting, a moderate length of time for a campaign and a Nov. 4 election date.

The Farmington community deserves that sort of prompt, businesslike action.

There's A Victory When Legislators, Schools Cooperate

School taxpayers in Livonia and Westland can thank their legislators in Lansing for saving them from a \$1.4 million financial dilemma in the 1969-70 school year.

It happened this way: The State Board of Education solved the Nankin Mills School district, sending 60 per cent of the 3,300 students to Livonia and 40 per cent to the Wayne Community School District.

The cost will be roughly \$1 million to Livonia and \$400,000 to Wayne, plus a \$200,000 Nankin Mills deficit split the same way. Neither school budget could stand the blow without help.

WHAT HAPPENED at this point was a classic case of representative government, of local officials working with state legislators on a problem that could be solved only by cooperation.

The key figures locally were Livonia Deputy Supt. Rolland Upton and Wayne Community Schools Supt. Harry Howard.

In Lansing, the key legislators were Reps. Marvin R. Stempien (D-Livonia) and Vincent J. Pettipiece (D-Westland).

Upton and Howard rolled the snowballs for Stempien and Pettipiece. In this as in most other cases, it was important to have expertise in both operations, the rolling of the snowballs and the throwing.

Senate. He was helped quietly by Sens. Lorraine Beebe (R-Dearborn) and George W. Kuhn (R-West Bloomfield). They were under tremendous pressure from the GOP powers in the chamber, but they did what they could do.

IN THE HOUSE, the Stempien-Pettipiece force grew. It was joined by Reps. John Bennett (D-Redford) and James Tierney (D-Garden City). There were others from outside the area.

"We got good bipartisan cooperation from not only the financial people, but from those working in education in the Legislature," said Stempien.

The group crossed party lines, defeated the forces in the Senate headed by Sen. Charles O. Zollar (R-Benton Harbor), chairman of the State Appropriations Committee who was concerned with the size of the total package, and won a resounding victory for taxpayers here.

In effect, the Stempien package—including a building fund credit beyond 7.07 mills levied locally—will save Livonia taxpayers four mills, or \$4 for each \$1,000 of assessed valuation. These are dollars, not promises.

IT IS A RARITY even in Lansing for legislators of a specific area to get together regardless of party to solve a local problem. The Livonia-Wayne episode was a classic example.

—Observer Newspapers



This Is The Week That ...

Update Jerusalem

By Don Hoenshell

LANSING—Of course this isn't local, but that problem is academic since you would like Robert E. Voges and Robert E. Voges would like you.

He is one of the best wire service reporters in the world, a reformed pitch player who owns a wit so dry it crackles.

Voges is in the clutches of the Associated Press in Lansing, a post he has enjoyed since he interviewed Menzies on the possibility of setting type in lines rather than letter by letter.

Or something like that. So along comes the new Liberty magazine with a blockbuster on student dissent and violence. To make a point, the authors pointed up a wire service story datelined Jerusalem telling of violence in the time of Jesus.

Voges pasted the top of the phony story on a piece of paper and deadpanned a wire service editor's reply from Farmington, N.Y. There follows the magazine

version, then Voges' equally phony instructions to the reporter:

JERUSALEM (UPI)—A demonstration led by Jesus of Nazareth today broke into an uncontrollable mob that rampaged through town smashing windows and setting fire to several buildings.

Scores of bystanders and rioters were injured before police restored order. Seven demonstrators were arrested.

More than 500 followers of Jesus were believed involved in the march, which began near the Temple and moved toward offices of Roman occupation authorities.

According to bystanders, Jesus carried a placard calling for an end to slavery and discrimination against minorities.

Simon Peter, public relations officer for the militant group and one of those arrested, promised further violence.

This report is only the beginning of our protest against centuries-old

wrongs inflicted on minorities in Israel," he told a reporter. "Don't be surprised to see blood flowing on the cobblestones of Jerusalem."

According to a spokesman for the occupation authorities, the group is believed to be demanding not only expulsion of Roman troops but integration of Samaritan children into synagogue school. Elimination of closed-housing ordinances that separate the tribes, and repeal of the Sabbath laws offensive to surrounding nations.

And it goes on.

VOGES' INSTRUCTIONS:

"Downhold detail on local disturbances. Need roundup for overnight covering waterfront, including fire bombing in Rome. Check police on guy named Nero who plays a fiddle. Need full name, age, address of militant leader. Question windows smashing. Glass hasn't been invented yet. Get better quotes from top guy for overnight send using press agent. "Foreign Desk, NY."

Of course, student dissent is a critical problem of our times. The technique of using history to cast understanding on the present is not a new one. There was no sacrilege intended.

It was all fun and all pure Voges.

SENSE 'N' NONSENSE

Tradition that a young swain asks his girl's father for her hand in marriage has generally disappeared and with it goes the last chance for the old man to say something funny, like: You take her hand and you'll take the rest, too.

Whom goes there, said he, for he had went to night school.

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Don Hoenshell, Editor