

# Hogan's column draws readers' ire

Editor:

I'm surprised a man of Hank Hogan's high learning could write as he has about the handicapped (Dec. 1). Handicapped people are greater than 10 per cent, I can assure you.

I am a handicapped person, a member of MPVA. Men like you are what puts many programs back. Why did you not write of \$271,000 wasted by Congress on trips? Or millions on airplanes by ex-President Nixon? Or \$180,000 used for lead pencils in Washington?

Most handicapped are without jobs, without funds, and live way below poverty levels. You speak of cost of buses. So what? Congress gives a million to study sex habits of some animal in some country.

No handicapped or blind persons are asking for handouts—just a place to park. I will report any person I catch in a handicapped parking zone. Big fat women with four children can walk a few feet further.

Live the life of a blind or crippled person one day. Tell me how it feels. Just remember: 2.5 per cent of all families have veterans or handicapped persons in family.

ROY COFFMAN, Warren

Editor:

I want to correct some of the inaccuracies so profusely displayed in Hank Hogan's article. He said the population of the handicapped is less than 10 per cent of the total population. This is false. Recent studies have shown that the figure is about 12 per cent and growing every day.

A handicapping condition cuts across all social, economic and racial barriers. The greatest handicapping condition is not polio, cerebral palsy or any other chronic condition. Instead, consider old age.

Regarding the parking issue, Mr. Hogan probably has not seen handicappers using the parking slots provided for them because some able-bodied persons have taken them.

Hogan wrote one thing semi-accurate regarding the public transportation systems. The lifts for the large line-haul vehicles do cost roughly \$10,000 apiece. What he failed to inform readers was that the cost, averaged over the vehicle's life span of 12 years, comes out to less than \$200 a year.

The reason Hogan has not seen handicappers using the regular bus system is not because they don't want to but because they can't. When black people in 1955 were saying "we will

not sit at the back of the bus any longer," the handicapped were saying, and are still saying, "we can't even get on the damn bus in the first place."

ROBERT RYAN, Coordinator for the Handicapped Human Resources Department, Lansing

Editor:

Hank Hogan's column, "One worthy but small lobby costs everyone a lot" (Dec. 1) seemed to need a great deal of research before he attacked the handicapped or even wrote the column.

Hogan has informed the public about a small percentage of the handicapped population. In the United States, we have a total of 29.3 million handicapped individuals with chronic diseases and impairment and 24 million handicapped school children. This totals up to 53.3 million, far from the 10 per cent of the nation's population.

There are two million who are deaf, 13 million with hearing problems, 6½ million mentally ill and 5½ million who are severely mentally ill, 500,000 with multiple sclerosis, some 14,000

persons who obtain occupational injuries each year and some 100,000 deaths caused from occupational injury.

Some 44,350 persons become blind each year. There are 3.2 million disabled veterans, as reported by the Veterans Administration. This does not include cerebral palsy, polio, burns and systolic fibrosis.

If he had read the law, he would find these handicapped parking spaces are reserved for those with a medical doctor signs a statement attesting to the fact that the driver is handicapped, or the person is transporting a handicapped individual.

When he talks about ramps or lifts on buses, he says the cost is \$10,000. A lift costs \$5,000 to \$8,000 and is covered by the federal government.

In the U.S., we have a total of 12 million handicapped individuals who have been rehabilitated and are ready for employment. If they had a bus with a ramp or a lift to get them to work, here in Michigan 30,014 handicapped are ready to be hired.

GERALD T. HARRIS, Director-publisher Michigan Handicapped Newspaper, Taylor

Thursday, December 22, 1977

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## Inflation to cause slowdown next year

The economic outlook is for more of the same—at least through the first six months of 1978, a savings associations economist predicts.

Inflation will remain in the overall six per cent range, the unemployment rate will hold fairly steady at near seven per cent, housing starts will run about 1.8 to 1.9 million units and mortgage money will be slightly harder to get and a bit more expensive, said Kenneth Thygeson.

Thygeson is chief economist for the United States League of Savings Associations. The league is the primary trade organization serving the \$460 billion savings and loan business.

Savings associations are the nation's chief source of residential mortgage credit.

"We'll continue to see wide variations in the economic forecasts covering the next six to nine months," Thygeson said. "There are just too many uncertainties for anyone to 'fine tune' a projection."

Thygeson said the uncertainties include "a federal budget which batters on the uncontrollable, concerns over the future course of monetary policies, the possibility of changes in command at the Federal Reserve and the Office of Management and Budget, a declining U.S. dollar in the inter-

national markets and questions about tax legislation."

The league economist warned, "The basic economic forces remain inflationary."

That basic inflationary trend will make mortgage money a little tighter next year, Thygeson said.

Short-term money market rates will be more volatile in 1978," Thygeson predicted, "and that will put some strains on savings funds."

Much of the money savings associations lend to home buyers comes from deposits families and individuals make to their savings accounts at savings and loan associations. Therefore, any savings slowdown affects the mortgage market.

Thygeson said savings gains next year at savings and loan associations will total "about \$10 billion." Savings this year are expected to total approximately \$5 billion.

Consequently, Thygeson continued, "we'll see a modest slowdown in mortgage lending." Mortgage demand, however, will continue at near record levels, Thygeson said. A strong demand coupled with somewhat less available money means that mortgage rates will range from nine per cent to 9.5 next year, he added.

## I-275 Rest area open

Holiday travelers joining the thousands of motorists who drive I-275 in Wayne County will be able to use a new rest area off the northbound lane.

The safety rest stop, which opened last week, is the first to be constructed on the busy freeway that bypasses metropolitan Detroit on a north-south course through Monroe, Wayne and Oakland counties. Another rest area on southbound I-275 near Carleton is expected to be ready for use in January, said a spokesman for the Michigan Department of State Highways.

The northbound haven is located just west of Westland between the inter-

changes with US-12 (Michigan Avenue) and M-153 (Ford Road).

Built at a cost of \$158,000, the heated, tiled building offers rest rooms, lavatories with tempered water, electric hand dryers and a drinking fountain. A travel information board is mounted on an outside wall.

The I-275 bicycle path adjacent to the northbound freeway passes through the rest area.

Landscaping of both I-275 rest areas will be done next year. Picnic tables and grills will be added in the spring.

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