

OBSERVATION POINT

From London: U.S. Suburbs Break Down Classes

By Philip H. Power

LONDON — The revolution is on its way. It's coming nearly 20 years after it hit America, but that just makes it easier to chart.

Suburbanization. You see it everywhere here.

Shopping centers, just like Wonderland or Westland — although with characteristically restrained British names — are replacing the countless small specialty shops. It's actually possible to find a grocery store in London that stays open past 8:30 p.m. and (wonder of wonders) on Sunday.

New towns are rising from placid country villages. Towns like Livonia and Garden City, towns with names only local residents had heard of before — Slough, Croydon — now becoming big-time economic units.

It's a set of developments almost exactly paralleling those in America and with the same two fundamental causes: money and transportation.

ON THE ECONOMIC front, the English worker is discovering for the first time in his life that he is moving into the middle class. Although wages here are much less than in America, the cost of living is less, and workers are taking home more in their paychecks each week.

This means that he and the missus can at last think about buying a house, even if it means a semi-detached one, instead of

renting a one or two bedroom flat. It means they can now think of moving to one of the suburbs instead of staying in the grimy, noisy working-class sections of London.

The big problem, as it is in America, is tight money. You can't get mortgages here, and home construction is even slower than back in Michigan.

TRANSPORTATION, traditionally, has meant buses or trains in England. Cars were regarded

as belonging only to the rich.

But now that workers are getting more money, they can afford to get a car, almost always on the installment plan, which is called "hire purchase" or (more accurately, perhaps) "the never-never."

And once a worker gets a car, he can live in the suburbs and drive to work or get his wife to drive him to the railroad station.

Gas is astonishingly expensive, over 50c per gallon, but the cars are small and use little of it.

And the English have even started to build some decent roads, including a few well-engineered expressways. The normal English country road — complete with high hedges on either side, narrow lanes, blind curves, and maniacs driving sports cars — continue to be exercises in homicide. But the main roads are quite good.

ALL THIS SOUNDS much like what happened in America just after the war. And it is.

But there's one big difference. Class consciousness.

The English are conscious of class distinctions in ways that Americans never could be.

A friend told me a story about his grandmother, a lady of wealth and high class, who was being driven by her chauffeur through the English countryside around 1920. Passing a man working by the side of the road, she tapped the glass and ordered the car stopped. Then, rolling the window down, she leaned out of the

car and said, "Common man. Common man. What o'clock is it?"

If that happened in America, the lady would have gotten back, at minimum, a lot of very rude language.

In America, the suburbs with their very high rate of mobility have done much to cut down class distinctions. But England, with her deeply ingrained sense of class, may well wind up with suburbs as rigidly classified as my friend's grandmother.

R.T. Thompson writes

Hats Off To A Girl Who Wouldn't Quit

We doff our hats today to one of the bravest souls in Observerland. A person who became paralyzed from the waist down at the age of two but has refused to allow that handicap to keep her from doing almost everything.

We are referring to Alice Wonnacott, 19, who resides on Pickford Ave., in Livonia, and who is anything but an average person.

Most of us afflicted with such an ailment, at the time when they were just starting to walk, would have given up. Most parents would have, too.

BUT NOT THE WONNACOTTS and their daughter. Despite the fact she couldn't walk by herself, Alice discounted all talk of "it can't be done" for the motto

"It can be done and I'll do it."

She became an excellent student in grade school, thanks to the full cooperation of her teachers and her parents, went through junior high with top grades and then continued that type of scholarship at Stevenson High and now at Wayne State.

In between, she devoted her attention to athletics, principally swimming and the sports available to persons in wheel chairs.

Then last weekend, she reached the pinnacle. She swam for the United States in the world Para-Olympics meet in England and won three gold medals for first places.

ALICE WON in the backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle, beat-

ing the best women swimmers in the games from all parts of the world.

This type of competition to Alice was just as strong as any the United States encountered in the Olympic Games in Mexico City last fall.

But we'll guarantee that none of the winners in the Mexico Games were any prouder of their gold medals than the brave Livonia girl.

She is the toast of persons in all sections of the world today and she definitely is the toast of Observerland.

Once again, we doff our hats to a gallant, brave girl who has successfully overcome a handicap that would have spelled "end" to many.



ALICE, Handicapped But A Winner

'This Is The Week That ...'

Hare HAS To Keep Going

By Don Hoenshell



JIM HARE, Who Has A Hurrah Left

What keeps Jim Hare going? Pride, probably, and a sense of history. He's Ted Williams trying for that tape measure homer that will keep him in the record books. But, most of all, Hare lives with his responsibilities.

When he goes, he will hundreds of men with families who have installment loans to pay off.

At the Hare picnic the first step is the table with the balloons and leis for the kids. Patti Knox and Mary Ann Gialak are selling \$1 tickets on a color television set. There is political talk.

THAT DAY the papers told of GOP opponents for Hare, Weldon Yeager, a little-known House member, and Senator Emil Lockwood, well-known and a pal of Gov. Milliken. Lockwood is formidable.

"If a Republican has a run for it, it's probably Lockwood," said Patti, vice chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee. Kids were trying to toss bean bags through holes in a box. Other kids were standing in line for hotdogs, pop and popcorn. There was a whirly ride that never did get set up. The kids had fun, however, because Democratic kids normally are hungrier than GOP kids.

There was a shortage of Democratic legislators there. Rep. J. Robert Traxler, of Bay City, staked out a set of tables and pre-

sided for a time over pitchers of beer and pop. A lady from Lost and Found (children's division) brought back his Tammy, 6.

Rep. William Fitzgerald, of Detroit, was telling how Rep. Warren Goemear went on a legislative junket with bundles of fishing equipment and caught nothing but a son did quite well, thank you. Goemear is chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee and embarrases easily.

Traxler had Ed Burkowski, a state central committee member from Bay City with him, and Al Levandoski. Everybody fiasco since the Edward Kennedy of Maine, is coming on strong as the party's candidate for president in 1972.

Democrats are having trouble lining up a candidate for governor to go against Milliken. They figure Atty. Gen. Frank J. Kelley can be scratched since he prefers to run for the U.S. Senate in 1972 against Republican Robert P. Griffin.

THEY ASKED William Ford, former state senator and now the 15th district's congressman, but got a turn-down "because he has too good a future in Congress."

This is talk at Hare's picnic. Hare came back from Denver recently and has a comment on the push for a presidential primary.

"Half the states don't want to change a thing," he said. Kay waits for a pause in the all-politics conversation, waits for a pause like a good wife does when her man is a legend.

"Let's eat, you get a ticket." "OK, let's get one."

James McNeely, Democratic state chairman, recounts how his seven kids preferred to sail on the family boat on Briggs Lake, near Brighton, to going to a political picnic. Sometimes kids forego hotdogs.

Will Jim Hare run again? "At this point, the word seems to be 'go,'" said McNeely.

Look across the forest of 4,000 people and that's why there's got to be a try for another hurrah for Jim Hare.

As there are comic moments even in the tragedy of "Hamlet," so too are there elements of humor in a grim thing like the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti murder investigations.

Law enforcement officials have been made to look ridiculous in their efforts to block information to the public about the case against John N. Collins in the murder of Karen Sue Beineman.

FOR THE MOST part, it is the newspapers and the wire services that are making Prosecutor William Delhey and Sheriff Douglas Harvey look like bores. The television and radio stations are too poorly staffed, their equipment too cumbersome and their personnel too lazy to break the code of secrecy very often.

There is one official source for press information, and it gives little information. So the reporters manage to get excellent tips from lower-echelon lawmen; they get information from California officials; they get tips from the public. The newspapers have worked awfully hard.

When the broadcast newsmen get scooped, they get nasty—many are nasty anyway—and so they try to come back with an interview with a top official who refuses to confirm "published reports" about one phase or another of the seven shocking mur-

Press Getting Facts Despite Secrecy

ders. Sour grapes stuff. The argument in favor of secrecy holds that the case against Collins would be prejudiced if too much information gets to the public. It has a certain limited validity.

THERE ARE, HOWEVER, more weighty arguments in favor of most of what the newspapers are doing.

One is the state of fear that exists among parents and young women in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti as well as in other parts of the nation. In this regard, the newspapers are serving the people, the voters, the taxpayers, and not catering to the whim of some ill-tempered judge.

Second, consider the source of most of the criticism of newspapers.

Most of it comes from professional civil libertarians and lawyers. Civil libertarians are obsessed with defending accused persons. Lawyers — 95 per cent of them — represent defendants whenever they try criminal cases, and so they have a strong bias in favor of

a pro-defense, no-information policy.

In Washtenaw County, they have stampeded the prosecutor, sheriff and state police into taking the same kind of restrictive attitude.

Third, consider the extraordinary amount of time it takes to try a criminal case in the United States. Some lawyers point to the policy of other countries in prohibiting the publication of all but the barest facts of a criminal charge until the trial is completed.

Such an idea should never be considered in this country until lawyers and judges stop dragging out cases for months and even years. The legal business should clean its own dust-encrusted house first, not try to gag the press and keep the public ignorant.

THE NEWSPAPERMEN in Washtenaw County aren't being malicious when they make the legal business look ridiculous by prying out all sorts of unreleased information.

Seven young women have been slain. The public seems to be concerned about safety. The newspapers have this in mind at all times. A Detroit News writer put the question clearly:

"At issue is whether the public has a right to know immediately what is going on, or whether people must wait until officials choose to tell them." Actually, the issue has been resolved. The newspapers are getting the information.

Sense And Nonsense

Story about suburbia discloses that the shopping center is now the town square, and not dad, after all.

An arrangement of nude paintings exhibited by the Friends of the Library aroused a controversy lately in Southfield. Seems some of the residents objected to public showing of "dirty pictures." And so the paintings were shifted to a separate room with a sign placed above the door reading "For Adults Only."

Sign of urbanization, overheard at the miniature farm in Greenfield Village: The lady looked at the goat and asked her escort: "Are those horns made of wood?"

Editorial & Opinion

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