

editorial opinion

It's time to face facts in fight against crime

Cold-blooded murder is the ultimate tragedy in our civilized society.

We pride ourselves in being above such barbaric acts. But we aren't.

With callous egotism, we point our fingers at other segments of society and deny that their problems are ours. But they are.

READING OF DAVE JONES' murder leaves us frightened and with an empty feeling of helplessness in the pit of our stomachs.

His murder was too close to our psychological homes. He was too much like us. A clean living resident of Farmington Hills, the 31-year-old Southfield businessman's life was cut short by a bullet in the back.

Now we want to be cheated out of life. But Dave Jones was, and so was his wife, Catherine. What is going to happen to start another life without the man she loved?

Just about every day, we read of some Detroit resident being murdered. But that's different, we tell ourselves. We're good neighborhoods, tucked safely away in the suburbs.

But we aren't safe.

THE LESSON from Dave Jones' murder is that every segment of society must be willing to deal with the problems which plague us.

Many persons fool themselves into believing they can move away from crime and deprivation. They sell their city houses, yank their children out of school and run. Some persons have repeated the fateful act two or three times.

It doesn't work. Crime is still with us.

Everyone should be outraged over Dave Jones' death; everyone should be outraged over every murder in our society.

But instead of throwing up our hands in desperation, we should be willing to turn our faces to the storm and make a firm commitment to fight the problem.

THE COMMITMENT we make should be a sane one, based on solving the dilemma peacefully rather than resorting to irrational, vigilante acts.

It's about a 10 per cent error

The State Board of Education recently purchased 120 metric scales to use in metric training kits for teachers. Out of curiosity, the board's metric expert, Wayne Scott, put a kilogram balance on the scale and found it was about 10 per cent off.

What happened was that the manufacturer was told that a kilogram is about two pounds. So he made all the scales to show a kilogram as two pounds. As any modern student knows, a kilogram is 2.2 pounds, and so the scales were all 10 per cent off.

The distributor replaced the 120 wrong scales with accurate scales at no extra charge to the state.

So if your new metric scale shows a kilogram equaling two pounds, even send it back to the manufacturer. He won't be surprised.

Voluntary change seen from Kenya

Nairobi, Kenya, Wednesday Nov. 3—the day after the American election.

Here in Nairobi, it is 8:30 a.m. The winter rains came late in Kenya, but last night they finally arrived driven on a brick wind and accompanied by thunder and lightning. The jacaranda tree flowers, improbably deep purple, are scattered all over the red mud. In the glare of the warm morning sun, the election returns from America are just beginning to come in at the United States Information Agency library on Government Road.

My mind goes back to Michigan, where it is 10 a.m. Michigan time probably cold, coldly dark, and where those same election returns are beginning to come in.

I have never been able to suppress the sense of awe I feel on election nights. The myriad of people—rich and poor, white and black, suburban and urban and rural—of the greatest democracy on earth have finished voting. It's a simple act for an individual, just pulling a lever, but collectively the sum of those acts constitutes the most remarkable voluntary transference of power in the world.

It happens so quietly in those early morning hours, while the tide of returns starts in the east and runs quickly now through the midwest and out to the last states of California and Washington. Sitting there, tied by the tube or the radio to the network election reporting services, I can hear the soft swish of power created, shifted, balanced. So soft, so still, so delicately final.

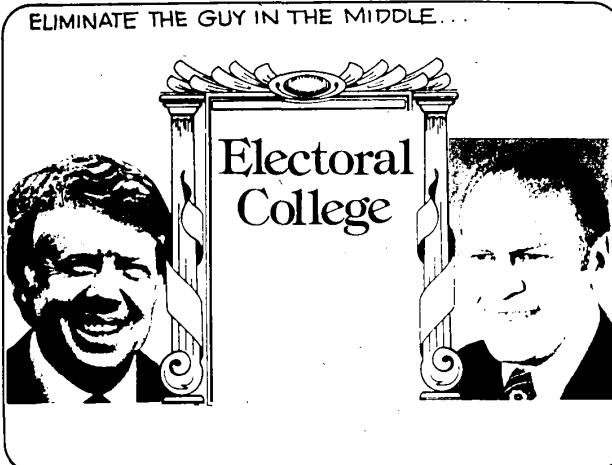
IN NAIROBI, the crowd in front of the USIA of-

We're a strong country and an intelligent people who should deal with challenges rather than escape in fear.

Fear is corrosive and only feeds the negative forces in our society. Yet Americans have become more and more used to pandering to fear. It dictates where we live, what kind and how much we will pay for a house and where we go for entertainment.

In a very real sense we are cheating ourselves out of life. We may still be breathing, but every day we're coming closer to leading an emotionally, physically and psychologically deprived existence. Let's stop before it's too late.

STEVE BARNABY



The voters don't need a middle man

You may think the presidential election is over. You may think Jimmy Carter has been elected the next president of the United States.

Even though Jimmy Carter has received 51 per cent of the popular vote in this country and pulled two million more votes than Gerald Ford, he has not yet been elected president of the United States.

The president of the United States is not elected by the people but by the presidential electors in the Electoral College.

WHEN THE AMERICAN people go to the polls to pull a lever for the next president of the United States, they are not in fact voting for a man but for a slate of electors which had previously been chosen by political conventions in each state.

The slate of the candidate who pulls the highest number of votes in each state becomes the presidential electors and is able to vote for the president of the United States.

Under the Constitution, the members of these slates are not restricted or limited in voting for the person whose name appears on the ballot. They are free to vote for whomever they please and in the history of the country, some presidential electors have not voted for the person to whom they were committed on the ballot.

The exact procedure now that the slate of electors in each state has been chosen is that they

shall meet in their respective states and vote by ballot for president and vice-president, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves.

THE VOTE WILL then be sent to the seat of government of the United States and opened and counted by the president of the senate in the presence of the two houses of Congress.

If no person receives a majority of the votes the House of Representatives shall elect the president from the three candidates receiving the highest votes. The house shall vote by state and each state shall receive one vote.

It looks like Jimmy Carter will receive 297 electoral votes or a little more than 55 per cent of the electoral votes even though he received only 51 per cent of the popular vote.

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Eccentricities

by HANK HOGAN

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If Ohio had not gone to Carter by fewer than 10,000 votes, and one other small state as well

even though Carter won by more than two million votes, the next president of the United States would have been Gerald Ford.

THE PRESENT SYSTEM of electing the president of the United States allows the people's will to be thwarted.

In 1876 Samuel J. Tilden beat Rutherford B. Hayes by more than 250,000 votes, yet Hayes became the 19th president of the United States because he received more electoral votes.

In 1888 Grover Cleveland received more than twice as many votes than Benjamin Harrison, but Harrison became the president of the United States because he polled more electoral votes.

We talk of ourselves as a democracy, but the people do not elect our chief executive.

It is about time that the people of the United States make the decision that they want to elect their own president. There is no excuse for the Electoral College to exist.

Besides being an unneeded middle man, the Electoral College takes away the opportunity of one person, one vote, in electing the president because it allows all the votes for a losing candidate in each state to be washed out.

The system worked this year, but it came close to not working. Our Constitution must be amended to allow for the direct popular election of the president of the United States.

An end to stalemates and other views

Random reflections on the 1976 election campaign

STALEMATED GOVERNMENT may come to an end at two levels.

A Democratic president, Jimmy Carter, will have a Democratic Congress. The Oakland County executive, Republican Dan Murphy, will have a Republican majority on the board of commissioners.

No more will we have one branch of those governments pointing the finger at the other. No more will a legislative body pass a politically motivated proposal and dare the executive to veto it.

Instead the voters will have a single majority party at which to point the finger. That has to be an improvement.



Tim
Richard

WAS THAT ESCH? I've known and covered Mary Esch, the GOP candidate for U.S. Senate this year, since 1968, and I've long thought she was Michigan's brightest and most creative mind in the congressional delegation.

But frankly I didn't recognize the Mary Esch I

saw in the '76 Senate campaign. Half his campaign seemed based on the busing issue, and he sounded more like a Bob Hueter than Mary Esch.

Ironically, the Mary Esch who was ranting against busing this year was the same man who was so very slow to sign the discharge petition to force out of committee HR 620, the constitutional amendment to ban cross-district busing.

The senatorial candidate used his family in this campaign in a way he never used them when he was 2nd District congressman.

The new Mary Esch seemed to gloat when Don Riegle got smeared by the Detroit News over his 1969 love life. The old Mary Esch would have held his nose at that kind of tactic.

I really missed the old Mary Esch.

IT WAS A PAGE from a George Orwell novel, where folks were taught that "love is hate" and "war is peace."

The horrors of the future world came to mind when I read what the public relations counsel for the little lobby said after voters passed Proposal A to ban throwaways.

The PR man for the little lobby accused those who wished to ban throwaways of running a "negative" campaign.

What did Orwell call it? "Doublethink."

THE SUPPORTERS of Proposal A spent \$125,000.

The opponents organized as the Committee Against Forced Deposits, admitted after the election to spending \$1 million to \$1.3 million—about 10 times as much as the supporters. To that you have to add whatever Chatham Supermarkets and National Can Co. spent for the same purpose.

Any way you cut it, the "anti" spent the supporters 10-1. Yet Proposal A won.

During the campaign time after time, folks would say: "Every time I turn on the radio, there's a commercial against Proposal A." They would express fear that the throwaway ban would be defeated because of the sheer bombardment of little lobby propaganda.

But when I'd ask the people if the commercials were influencing them, the answer invariably was: "No, they got me angry."

It appears then that the public can be trusted to think its way through an issue, and a well-financed special interest has a tough time buying an election.

FOR THE THIRD time, Michigan voters have rejected amending the state constitution to allow a graduated income tax.

The first two times, the question was posed straight. This year, the Michigan Citizens Lobby tried to sell it by rigging the rates so that 85 per cent of the population would get a tax cut and the other 15 per cent would have to pick up the tab. Still the public wouldn't buy it.

So let me now say publicly what I've been saying privately for 10 years: Voters will never buy a graduated state income tax until the rate gets higher—maybe seven or eight per cent. Right now it's only 3.9 per cent, and it doesn't really hurt. When the tax rate starts to hurt, a graduated income tax will be as easy to sell as apple pie.

Observation Point

by PHILIP H. POWER

Five is big and growing, attracted by the sound of loudspeakers hooked up to the radio returns on the Voice of America.

There are some Americans there, intensely concerned about what's happening back home. But there are more Kenyans in the building, some interested in what's going on in America, others drawn by the blare of noise, simple curiosity.

Certain kinds of events—World Series games, assassinations and election night returns—draw Americans together in a shared tribalism subtle and as real as any African tribe. For an American far away from home, such events pull you together with the tribe, sparking a fierce sense of pride, bringing an urge to explain and bring to life the deep and uplifting experience of our system of democracy.

I STAND IN the middle of a crowd. Fifty, sixty Kenyans stand shuffling around me, eyes interested, full of questions.

Who will win? Why don't you know right now who's won? Is there much vote fraud? What's the difference between Ford and Carter? Between Democrats and Republicans?

IN NAIROBI, the crowd in front of the USIA of-

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