

Group homes for retarded merit our support

"Why can't these retarded be kept in a state institution where they will be safe and under professional care?"

"My property values will drop if there is a group home for the retarded on my street."

"What about the safety of my daughter?"

"They're putting a business operation in a residential zone."

Like a telephone recording device, the opponents of neighborhood group homes for the retarded make up the same arguments.

Most communities have been touched by the ongoing effort of the state Mental Health Department to place persons not severely retarded in the kind of neighborhood settings that bring the rest of us happiness.

We can answer the tired arguments with logic and with first-hand experience.

LOGICALLY, GROUP homes provide a specific benefit for retarded persons.

The home-like family setting allows a retarded person a chance to grow more as a human being than would be possible in a state institution.

Community living gives them every chance to progress to their maximum potential — regardless of what it may be. It's the American way.

That's the humanitarian argument.

A state Mental Health Department employee made an insightful observation last year: Retarded persons "are more like us than not like us. They have feelings, needs and goals, just like we do. Their potential for growth and learning is hindered and limited when confined to an institution — just like ours would be if we were 'put away.'"

"The goal is not to become normal or independent. The goal is to give the opportunity for growth

and to secure the human rights of mentally retarded people to live in the community."

IF TAX MONEY is your chief worry, consider that group homes' cost per resident is usually about 40 percent less than the cost of maintaining a resident in a state institution.

Before 1974 when the state mandatory special education act became law, retarded persons over 18 didn't have schools to attend. State institutions were the only answer.

Most retarded persons need some supervision outside a state institution. A group home provides supervision in addition to an improved chance of learning.

In group homes, residents can take advantage of the little things others take for granted: helping set

the table for meals, making their beds, dressing themselves.

WE HAVE FIRST-HAND experience with both institutional living and neighborhood group homes.

Last month, an editor from Observer & Eccentric Newspapers spent 25 hours — eating, sleeping and therapy time — with 33 men in a state institution.

Then he spent a similar period with six retarded persons in a group home.

The differences in achievement were obviously in favor of the group home.

We don't contend all state institutions should be closed.

But we did prove to our own eyes that the state Mental Health Department's direction of humanizing the environment for retarded persons is positive and sound.

Sweet nightmares



Mmmm, sugar, sugar, sugar, sugar, sugar

John Smith thought of himself as an average American, and indeed he probably is.

One day at breakfast, he poured himself a bowl of cereal and laced it with sugar.

Lunch was a hot dog, grabbed on the run. He poured on catsup and sugar.

His main course at dinner was a pot pie, to which he added sugar.

Not enough vegetables, he figured to himself, so he opened a can of peas, heated them and poured on sugar.

Before going to bed, he had a snack of crackers and cheese. On the cracker he added a dash of sugar.

NEXT DAY John stopped at friend Al's house for lunch. They had a small pizza, purchased at the grocery store and quickly heated in the oven. John laced his with sugar.

For dinner John decided on fresh fish. He liked them rolled in bread crumbs and fried. Into the bread crumbs he poured some sugar. To enhance the flavor of the fish, at the table he added tartar sauce and sugar.

The third day he decided on soup at lunch. He opened an envelope of spring vegetable, emptied it into a cup, poured in sugar and added boiling water.

"Gotta have something more substantial than



that," he said to himself and made a sandwich. On the lunchmeat he sprinkled sugar.

One of his favorite vegetables at dinner is creamed corn. He warmed a can and added sugar. He was also having barbecued ribs that night, so he spread the sauce on the meat and sprinkled on a heavy dose of sugar.

"GOTTA WATCH my weight," he said to himself next morning as he looked sideways in the mirror.

"I'll have just a salad for lunch," he thought. To liven the flavor, he added Russian dressing and a giant dollop of sugar.

"M-m-m, chicken soup," he said that evening, looking on the pantry shelf for a can. He poured the soup into a saucepan, added an equal amount of

water, sprinkled on some sugar and warmed it to boiling.

Beef was the main course. John liked to give the beef some zip by dipping it into a little Old Style Sauce. He spooned some sauce onto his plate and added sugar.

AT THIS POINT, you no doubt think John Smith not only has a sweet tooth but is a wee bit daft.

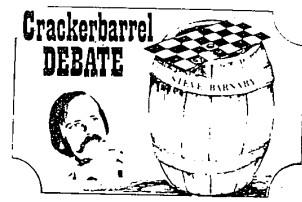
You would be wrong. John Smith is an average American.

But in telling you about about four days in his life, I altered the details a trifle. John didn't really add all that sugar to his food.

The manufacturers added it. The reasoning is that consumer taste panels liked the recipes with sugar in them. It's not recorded whether the manufacturers told the taste panels which recipes were laced with sugar.

"Woof," said John's beagle Sherlock. John took out a couple of prepared burger-like cakes of dog-food wrapped in a cellophane envelope. He cut open the cellophane and broke the doggie burgers into Sherlock's bowl.

And then do you know what John Smith did before giving Sherlock his bowl? You're absolutely right. He added sugar.



Brickley preens for an '82 run

He's off and running.

Oh, he hasn't said as much, at least publicly, but Lt. Gov. Jim Brickley is prepping for the upcoming gubernatorial sweepstakes.

The former FBI agent, Detroit city councilman and university president has become one of the most public political second stringers in recent history.

The 52-year-old attorney is hoping, of course, to head off any potential opposition from within the party early in the game. So far his strategy seems to be working.

Most recently, millions of Michigan residents saw him greeting Redford Township's Joseph Subic Jr., former Iranian hostage, at Metro Airport.

It's not unusual for Brickley to show up at such a function until you realize one very prominent Michigan figure conspicuously was absent — Gov. William Milliken.

MILLIKEN IS sticking to the motel summit deal. You remember that little fiasco.

Before the 1978 election, Milliken had designs on retiring from public life. But the Republican faithful panicked, realizing their party's hold on the executive was at stake with Milliken out of the picture.

Adding to their consternation was the scandal surrounding then Lt. Gov. James Darrow. Darrow obviously wouldn't fit the bill as a successor to Milliken's clean reputation.

So Republicans rendezvoused and convinced Milliken and then U.S. Sen. Robert Griffin to stick around.

Part of the deal was to replace Damman with Brickley. But first Milliken had to convince Brickley, then president of Eastern Michigan University, to return to the No. 2 job he loathed.

Brickley had vacated the spot in 1974 after tiring of waiting for Milliken to call it quits.

But the carrot dangled in front of Brickley's political nose was too much to resist — one more term for Milliken and Brickley would be the governor's chosen successor.

From the looks of things, Milliken is sticking to his agreement. The first signs surfaced the middle of last year. Suddenly Milliken press releases were replaced with epistles bearing Brickley's name.

Barely a week goes by that Brickley doesn't surface somewhere speaking out on the issues of the day.

But Brickley's in-house battle, even with Milliken's blessing, will be tough. He is tainted with nearly 20 years of moderate Republican rule administered by George Romney and Milliken.

Voters tend to associate those years with big government spending and an ever-increasing tax burden.

And the state is in a more conservative mood. Enter Farmington Hills insurance executive Richard Headlee — conservative, anti-tax, anti-big government Republican.

ALTHOUGH HEADLEE has vowed a disinclination to challenge Milliken, even penning Milliken a reassurance, that exemption doesn't extend to Brickley.

Headlee, who enjoys the public light and is one of the better public speakers around, would be a more formidable opponent to the soft-spoken Brickley.

Does anyone care to climb the mountain?

Several years ago, while attending a convention in the nation's capital, The Stroller had the good fortune to hear Arch Booth, then the president of the National Chamber Commerce, deliver a speech in which he emphasized that what America needed most was men to climb the mountains.

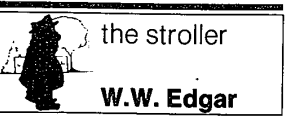
It was a stirring address. He pointed out that while the country faced many problems, some of them difficult to solve, solutions could be found if we had people with the courage and ability to climb the mountains.

The Stroller never forgot the various points Booth made and often times they come back to him as he listens to our national leaders tell of the mountainous problems this generation is facing and the need for American ingenuity to solve them.

ONE OF THE MOST difficult is the sickness of the automobile industry. There was a time when the United States ruled the world in transportation. It was right here in Detroit that Henry Ford started the move that put the world on wheels.

But now the industrious Japanese have taken over as the leading producer of autos and we are still trying to come out with cars that will bring back the leadership.

But how can it be done?



How can America build cars cheap enough to give the imports a battle if it must still pay the high wages of the men on the lines?

It is plain that something has got to give and what it will be—and when—means that we need people who will climb the mountain.

It is the same with energy. We have been going merrily along as though there never would be an end to the flow of oil. We paid little attention to George Romney some years ago when he sounded the warning that we had to get rid of the "gas guzzlers." Folks just smiled and went along building bigger and flashier cars than ever with little thought of the amount of gasoline needed to keep them going.

Now the time has come when we must pay the

price. And he can be paid only if we can find the men to climb this mountain.

WHEN AMERICA was riding high, little attention was paid to preparing for the future. We allowed the railroads, especially the passenger service, to virtually fade away. The old trolley car went the same route. We were so anxious to get rid of them that the time was not taken to remove the tracks from the streets of the cities along the line.

The trend was to have every family be the proud owner of an automobile. First there was one car, then it wasn't too long until we became two-car families and three-car families. There was no thought of the gasoline supply—it could go on forever.

Now we are faced with that problem. And just how complex it is was revealed by President Reagan in his first news conference.

He took the lid off price control which means the cost of gasoline will rise and he hopes the demand will lessen. With less driving there will be a dip in the need for automobiles and the auto industry may linger in its sick state.

That is, unless Arch Booth said long ago we can find the men to climb the mountains.