

# Wayward journalist finds tips from hither and yon

A few thoughts from a wayward journalist returned from hither and yon.

Ronald Reagan has got to take a trip to the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia. He may discover what benefits are derived from those nasty old liberal make-work programs he's been railing against for so many years.

Back in the depressed '30s, FDR reclaimed a bunch of Blue Ridge acreage after it had been raped by the lumber barons. Erosion was rampant, the animals had moved out, and not even the hill dirt farmers could make a living.

It was a land that even James Watt couldn't have ruined.

Roosevelt marched in with the Civilian Conservation Corps, that army of unemployed Americans. Its members planted trees and shrubbery, and soon the region was replenished. Since then, millions have enjoyed the beauties of this region which once had been a wasteland.

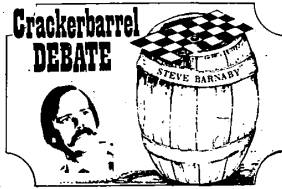
MICHIGAN SURE could take a few hints from the kindly folks of Virginia when it comes to making tourists feel at home. Seems that everywhere you go, a smiling face is there to greet and inform.

Virginia, in what had to be one of the few intelligent Bicentennial projects, built a number of very sophisticated tourist information centers.

Each one has a display of artifacts featuring that region's history and development. A short film is featured as well as hundreds of pamphlets and maps. And just in case you had any questions, employees were available (and very anxious) to answer.

A big surprise happened at a little motel in Charlottesville. Without being asked, the innkeeper produced a map and explained the how-to and where-of the whole place. Haven't been treated like that for a long time.

ALSO LEARNED that the folks over at Green-



field Village could take a lesson or two from the group which runs Colonial Williamsburg. The guides, craftsmen and the rest of the employees overwhelm the tourist with helpful information and sheer kindness.

Best were the courteous guides who were well-versed in their subjects. Sometimes when touring Greenfield Village one gets the impression the guides barely memorized their subjects, and some couldn't care less.

Michigan might have some terrible unemployment problems. But for a real lesson in poverty, get off the Pennsylvania Turnpike around Pittsburgh and take a look.

Entire towns built around factories which have since closed down are wallowing in poverty. Dozens of persons just stand around on the street corners with nothing to do. Don't bother looking for the nice parts of town in these spots. They don't exist.

I TOURED a lot of famous persons' homes this year. The best of the lot were Presidents Eisenhower's and Thomas Jefferson's.

Enough for this week. Back to serious business next week.



**Tim Richard**

## 'University-industrial complex'?

A generation ago, President Eisenhower warned us of something sinister called the "military-industrial complex."

Today we are hearing of something nice which could be called the "university-industrial complex."

The thinking seems to be that Michigan universities, particularly the Big Three — the University of Michigan, Michigan State and Wayne State — are being under-utilized as stimuli to economic diversification.

This theme runs through a report on "The Future of High Technology in Michigan." Putting it together for Gov. William Milliken was his executive assistant, Robert Law. If the name is familiar, it is because Law was a state representative from the Livonia-Westland district for three years.

Other familiar names are in the report: Michael Blumenthal, former Bendix president and current secretary, now president of Burroughs Corp.; William Agee, Bendix chairman; Max Fisher, Detroit Renaissance; Paul McCracken, economic adviser to presidents; Harold Shapiro, University of Michigan president; Dale F. Stein, Michigan Tech president; and others of merit and note.

THEIR REPORT cites two famous examples of how a partnership between academic and industry can bring economic benefits to a region. One is Michigan's economic base of durable consumer goods manufacturing has so little prospect of providing many new jobs in the future, perhaps we had better have a look at this "high-tech" stuff.

Route 128 is the nickname of an industrial semicircle around Boston with 209 industrial plants in operation and 17 under construction.

The attractions: Availability of engineers and scientists; nearness to research facilities at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Harvard University, Boston University and other pillars of scholasticism; an atmosphere of community cooperation and acceptance; and easy financing, among others.

Research Triangle Park has attracted more than two dozen businesses, government agencies and non-profit research organizations with a combined annual payroll of \$250 million. The three corners of the triangle are Duke University in Durham, the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and North Carolina State University in Raleigh.

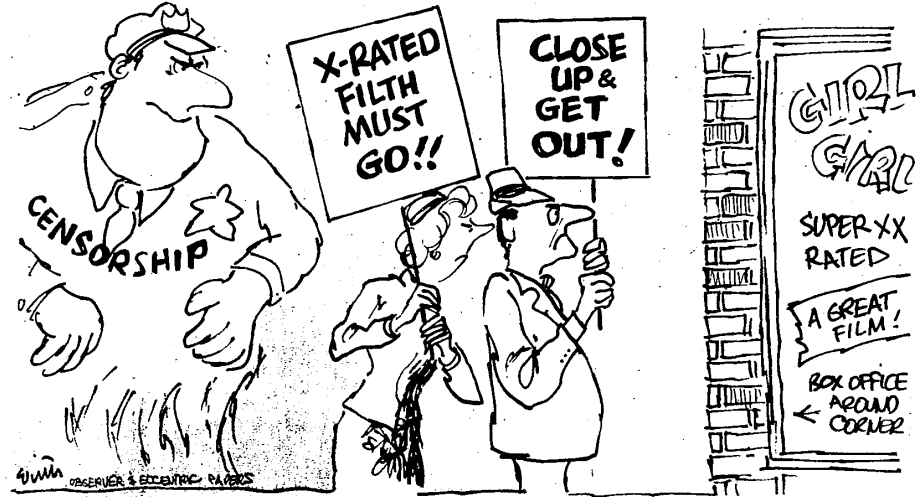
The idea was born in 1956 in the mind of then-Gov. Luther Hodges, later secretary of commerce for Kennedy and Johnson. A private, non-profit foundation acquired and then sold or leased the rural land.

THE LAW committee report suggests the same kind of triangle could exist in the green lines in Detroit.

Areas of great potential for Michigan, according to Dr. Shapiro, are: automotive research (on-board computers, exotic materials, fuel injectors and three-way catalysts); computer assisted design and manufacturing (known as CAD-CAM); computer service (computer architecture, word processing, space solar plant design and solar storage); image processing (for clinical medicine and life science research); macromolecular science (polymers, the basis of synthetics); robotics; and so on.

Nice jobs, if we can get them. As I see the political priorities in this state, however, our money is going into more courts, more law enforcement, more paralegal training. And still alive is the movement to slash property taxes and raid the state treasury, which supports our universities, to get funds for cities and K-12 schools.

Making Michigan a high-tech state will demand not only some dollars and innovation. It will also demand a fundamental change in thinking — away from factories and courts and toward brain work.



## It's a futile battle fighting filthy films

Keego Harbor residents parade late at night back and forth in front of a newly-reopened movie theater, hoping their presence will discourage customers from entering to see the X-rated "Tiny Timmys."

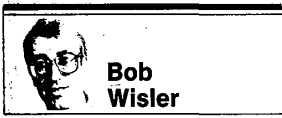
One can sympathize with those who wish to keep their particular corner of the world free from prurience. Yet events of the last few years indicate their struggles will eventually cease under the weight of futility and legal precedents.

STEVEN TAYLOR, an attorney who has made a career out of defending movie theaters specializing in X-ratings, flatly predicts that any attempt to close the Keego theater will fail.

Even further, Taylor boasted to a newsman that he would like to "personally thank" the pickets because they "generated a ton of business. There's no way we could have bought the kind of publicity we're getting."

The theater shows average PG films up to midnight and X-rated explicitly sexual films after midnight Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. One wonders how long it will be before the X-rated movies are playing from 10 a.m. to 1 a.m. seven days a week, as in every other X-rated movie house in the metropolitan area.

Courts in the last 10 years have upheld the individual's right to watch or look at the most graphic depictions of sexual activity imaginable. To render



**Bob Wisler**  
something too obscene to watch, prosecutors must prove in each instance that the material appeals to prurient interest, violates contemporary community standards and is utterly without redeeming social value.

That makes proving something too pornographic for public consumption legally a very tall order. Almost anything that is possible to concoct between consenting adults goes.

The First Amendment right of freedom of speech is such that all citizens have to accept being exposed to much that is stupid, baseless and conscienceless in order to protect what may be our most precious freedom.

Many American males find the graphic depiction of sex interesting. Otherwise there would not be a billion-dollar industry catering to the taste for the tawdry. The industry recognizes, as H. L. Mencken once observed, "Nobody ever went broke underestimating the taste of the American public."

WHAT ARE the protestors of X-rated films

afraid of? That such theaters attract men who will become lustfully aroused and attack women or children?

Innumerable studies have found that sexually explicit movies do not incite anyone to attack another person for sexual enjoyment or release. On the contrary, such material often satisfies a curiosity or demand for some form of sexual satisfaction.

Perhaps the pickets are afraid that merely average citizens — friends, relatives, impressionable young men — will somehow be changed and perverted by exposure to lurid materials. They must worry that their lives, their neighbors' lives, their children's lives and their community will be cheapened and degraded by the presence of such an affront to their basic beliefs.

It is difficult, maybe even impossible, to say what damage is done to the hearts, minds or souls of those who nurture carnal fantasies.

Yet there is something pathetic about seeing a group of U.S. citizens walking back and forth in front of a movie theater at night in a determined attempt to keep what they believe is degradation from creeping into their lives and then hearing an arrogant attorney belittle their struggle to maintain a sense of righteousness and propriety.

Then one doesn't wonder why the Moral Majority and self-appointed censors find such fertile ground for their pronouncements.

## When Gar sank the British challenger

In a few days the nation will celebrate Labor Day, but few will remember it also marks the 50th anniversary of one of the greatest battles ever fought on the Detroit River.

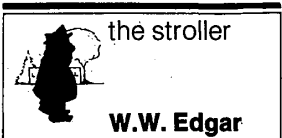
Possibly you won't find a word of it in the public prints, and there will be no celebration on that stretch of the river between the Belle Isle Bridge and the mouth of Lake St. Clair. If you are younger than 65, perhaps you can't remember the wild day.

The climax of the three-day battle came late in the afternoon when Gar Wood, the Gray Fox of Algonac, driving his "Miss America IX" power boat, sent his British challenger to the bottom of the river, dunking driver Kay Don and his mechanic, to keep the famed Harmsworth trophy in the United States.

THE HARMSWORTH trophy, which the British referred to as "a bit of brass," was offered by Lord Northcliffe as a symbol of the world championship on water.

Wood had won it in 1920, when he went to England with a type of boat which surprised the British. He had no trouble bringing the trophy back with him to take a place of honor in the Detroit Yacht Club.

Twice he had been challenged by Betty Varstairs



**W.W. Edgar**

in the name of Great Britain and successfully defeated the trophy. But this was another year, and the drama reached a peak that Labor Day.

Wood had never tasted defeat in any of his "Miss America" crafts, but Don surprised him by winning the first heat on the Saturday prior to Labor Day.

Labor Day afternoon came. The trophy was brought out to the dock. There was fear it would go back to England. Few in the vast crowd lining both shores were aware how far Gar Wood would go to keep it.

his boat to the line, just a few seconds after the gun sounded.

Neither knew they had both been disqualified for beating the gun. As they came to the Belle Isle Bridge turn, Wood, in the lead, crossed the challenger's path, threw a heavy wash and in a few moments left the challenging boat at the bottom of the river. Don and his mechanic were fished out.

MEANWHILE, Gar's brother George, driving a sister boat of "Miss America," slowly finished the course, and the trophy remained in the U.S.

Later Wood admitted that "the Yankee trick" had saved the trophy, but a howl went up across the seas and in many British possessions.

So great was the reaction that the Rolls Royce firm, manufacturers of the motors in the challenger, withdrew from all future Harmsworth competition and had the Detroit River declared unsafe for any future races for the trophy. It was the end of a wild time, the wildest in the history of the race.

It is too bad there isn't even a marker along the course to keep alive the memory of that race in the minds of those who still line the river for today's races.