

## OBSERVATION POINT

## Nixon Can Govern

By Philip H. Power

God, it has been said, watches over drunks, little kids, and the United States.

We still appear to be on his list, for Richard Nixon was elected President last week—and he was elected outright, without having to go through the confusion of wheeling and dealing in the Electoral College or the House of Representatives.

I don't personally think that during the campaign Nixon showed himself as good a man to assume the burdens of leading this country during this crisis period as Hubert Humphrey. But I do believe very strongly that if he was going to win the election, it was most important for him to have won the right to govern outright.

**CONSIDER THE alternative.** Neither Nixon or Humphrey could have gained a majority of the electoral votes. George Wallace would have been leering in the wings as the Electoral College met.

There would have been bargaining, perhaps Wallace swinging his strength to Nixon, per-

haps to Humphrey. Deals would have been proposed or at least rumored. Legal questions about the status of dealing with votes in the Electoral College would have flown around.

Probably there would have been further deadlock, with the election going into the House of Representatives. There, the same sorry mess would have been played out again.

End result? Whoever was selected to be President (Nixon, Humphrey, Muskie, a y o n e) would have taken office with a great dark cloud over his head. The means by which he had obtained office would be suspect or at a minimum, unclear. The process of democratic voting would have shown itself inadequate.

In such a situation, he simply would not have had the necessary mandate to govern the country, during a time in which it is crucially important for a president to be able to govern.

That's why I'm happy and relieved that Nixon won it outright.

**THAT'S ALSO** why I can't avoid getting sore at some of my

Democratic friends for their irresponsible behavior on election night.

In various headquarters where Democrats were gathered, it was common to hear people say, "I hope Hubert can get enough to throw it into the House. We'll be able to swing a deal there."

What fantastic irresponsibility! What extraordinary partisan self-centeredness!

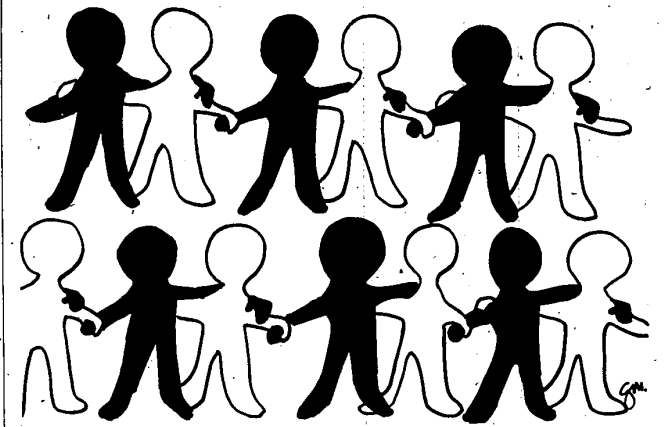
Democrats literally saying they were more concerned with maintaining power than with the underlying question of who could govern this land!

Now not all Democrats were producing this kind of rubbish on election night, but enough were doing it to cause me real concern.

One of the interesting things about the Democratic Party is that it clings to power with a tenacity that is staggering.

But to confuse tenacity in the search for power and irresponsible partisanship is to assume that there is only one party capable of governing in this country. And I don't think that even the most rapid Democrat would admit that this is so—not in our two-party system, which at least has survived this nasty and unenlightening political year.

## OVERALL PATTERN FOR BROTHERHOOD



## What We Can Do

## Kerner Report And Suburbia

**Editor's Note:** This week's guest editor is Dr. William Cansfield, chairman of Livonia Citizens for Better Human Relations. The opinions expressed are his own and do not necessarily reflect the policy or philosophy of the Observer Newspapers. These features are being presented in print in the best interests of the reading public with the hope that a broader understanding of controversial subjects will be achieved.

By WILLIAM B. CANSFIELD

President Johnson's Commission on Civil Disorders, the Kerner Commission, was appointed to find the cause of big city riots. The cause, it reported, lay not in the "big city" as much as it did in the areas surrounding the big city.

Dearborn, Westland, Livonia, Farmington, Royal Oak, Grosse Pointe—these are the areas that are deeply involved in the crea-

tion and perpetuation of the ghetto; and the ghetto is where the action was.

While, according to the Commission's report, "... causes of recent civil disorders are embedded in a tangle of issues and circumstances—social, economic, political and psychological..." the most powerful statement and the most quoted is:

"What white Americans have never fully understood—but what the Negro can never forget—is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it."

"White society." That's suburban society, for the most part. The Commission speaks to US—suburban residents. The basic conclusion reached by the Commission is, "Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black,

one white—separate and unequal. To pursue our present course will involve the continuing polarization of the American community and, ultimately, the destruction of basic democratic values."

**WHAT HAS BEEN** our present course? In the suburbs it appears to be this:

- We're concerned with the plight of the ghetto, but we're not sure what to do.
- If someone gives us suggestions about what to do, we're afraid our neighbors might not "understand," so we often fail to act.

- We often fail to see our own involvement in the ghetto, in the abject poverty, the hopelessness, and say, "I made it; they can too, if they try." This attitude is in direct disagreement with the Kerner Commission's findings.

- When asked how the "problem" can be solved, we often deny that a problem exists ("There's no problem here, you know, it's 'downtown' where the problem is.")

- If we admit to the "problem," we are sure that time will solve it (when actually, time can't solve anything; people solve problems)

**BUT THIS IS** unfair. To suggest that there is no compassion in suburbia for the people in the ghetto is to deny that thousands of suburban dwellers volunteered services, donated blood, food, and clothing during time of crisis.

The Kerner Commission suggests that another kind of compassion is required, however; a kind of action that is less crisis-oriented and directed more toward long term solution of basic causes of civil disorder.

Here is what might be inferred from the Commission's report:

1. We must support, and actively move toward, common opportunities for all in employment, in education, in housing, and in the attainment of human dignity.
2. We must oppose, actively and publicly—institutions, organizations, and individuals who would deny equality to all.
3. We must actively and purposefully support "compensatory" measures for those who have been denied equality and justice in our society for so long.

4. We must each search his own conscience for traces of racism, for attitudes, ideas, beliefs, and actions that would reflect the prejudices that we harbor.

5. We must reaffirm, in our own minds as well as in the minds of others, the faith that men together can perfect the democratic process, so that "liberty and justice for all" will prevail.

## Leonard Poger Writes

## Nankin Mills Heritage: Lots Of Big Problems

It's too bad the Nankin Mills School District in Westland will be dissolved and reorganized among neighboring school districts.

The way things are going in the smallest district in the state, it would take most school officials several years to clear up the problems.

First, the district in the north-central portion of the city has the highest school tax rate in the state, followed closely by its larger neighbor to the south, the Wayne Community School District.

Second, it doesn't have its own high school and has to send its senior high pupils to Livonia on a tuition basis with the Livonia district getting the state aid income on the more than 500 students.

Third, with virtually no commercial or industrial tax base in the 1.25 square mile district, the homeowners are the only property owners remaining to pay the school bills.

Fourth, the district's 130-member faculty and school board have been negotiating since early last spring on a salary schedule increase. The issue hit a near-crisis on the opening day of school two months ago when the teachers overwhelmingly rejected the board's latest offer. But the staff agreed to continue working without interruption during the continuing negotiations.

Fifth, the teachers and board reached a tentative agreement recently on the salary dispute. In most labor matters, the employees' group ratifies the proposal first and the management takes its action after them.

But now the Nankin Mills Education Association president said that the teachers will not ratify the pay raise until the board does. The board indicated to the staff that it will not ratify the raises until the teachers do.

**IN THE MIST** of all the fury, one wonders if the adults should be sitting in the classrooms getting an education instead of the youngsters there now.

Almost overlooked in the lively history of the Nankin Mills district is the excellent support given the school board and its financial problems over the years by the parents.

They have marched to the voting booths time and again to approve bond issues for new buildings and millage increases for operational purposes.

They paid for quality education the hardest way—through the pocketbook.

But what do they get for their money? The quickest school board meetings in the west.

This is because most of the discussions and many of the

key decisions are handled in numerous closed door sessions with the formal and public meetings handled in less than 30 minutes once a month.

An excellent example of the board's sense of community relations came up last March when the school board president said only that "there is something in the wind" when asked by an Observer editor about a rumor received that the board had petitioned the state school board to dissolve the district and reorganize it among its neighboring districts.

Actually, the formal board action was taken nearly two weeks before at a special session attended only by board members. The results were never disclosed until the Observer phone call forced the issue.

**THE DAY AFTER** the phone call, the district's principals were called into the board office and told the news. Later in the day, a short letter was drafted and passed out to the district's teachers notifying them of the situation.

The previous year, news of a special bond issue election needed for new facilities was disclosed by accident when a school board member was called about another topic.

Now that the state Department of Public Instruction has started the legal machinery to dissolve the district between the Wayne Community and Livonia school districts, we can now say:

"Nankin Mills is dead—long live the taxpayers."

## Sense And Nonsense

For the past three falls, Westland's Ralph P. Turco has been busy organizing and running the annual United Nations celebration in the community.

Now he has won nomination and election to the Wayne County Board of Supervisors, nary a word has been said about the absence of a UN celebration and parade.

George Wallace has a travel brochure out called "The Alabama Story" in which he cites "the beauty and friendliness found here." He continues: "For industry thrives where people do, and history shows us mankind has found Alabama hospitable since prehistoric times."

Alabama sure has been around a long time, apparently... and some would contend it's still prehistoric.



RUSSELL L. ISBISTER

## A State Mourns Isbister

Few men have made a greater impact on an area in so short a time as did Russell L. Isbister, retired superintendent of the Plymouth Community School District who succumbed to a sudden heart attack on election night.

From the moment he took the helm of the Plymouth school system, he proved himself a dominant leader in the broad field of education throughout the entire state.

His warm personality, combined with the ability to grasp a problem and move toward a solution, established him as a knowledgeable friend, and one who had the concern of the community at heart.

**IT WAS THIS** leadership quality that enabled him to build the Plymouth Community School System into one of the best for a city of its size in the country.

And the fact that the Board of Education saw fit to name one of its newest elementary schools for him is proof of the high esteem in which he was held.

While he became a beacon in the educational field, he also played a prime role in civic affairs. No event of any importance ever was sponsored in the area without his being consulted.

In this role of civic leadership, he was a guiding light in the inception of the Leadership Conferences that have become so vital to the Plymouth community. And it was with his guidance that such things as the Rotary Club Foundation was established.

As Dr. Ira Polley, state superintendent of public instruction, put it, "The world of education has suffered an irreparable loss."

Serving far beyond the call of duty, always with the aim of aiding young people, Russell Isbister has left his mark not only on the Plymouth community, but the entire area.

And while the Isbister Elementary School and the entire school system will always stand as a monument to him, his memory will forever remain green in the minds of those whose good fortune it was to know him.

—Observer Newspapers

## Tim Richard Writes

## Nixon Win Shows Big State Split

It has been a truism for years that there are two Republican parties—one moderate and one conservative—but with the Nixon election the split takes on a strange new form.

The split is geographical: The Nixon wing of the Grand Old Party will hold the White House, and the other wing will run a majority of the state houses and virtually all of the big ones.

The bizarre fact is that the biggest states with the strongest Republican governors were generally the states that failed to back Nixon's bid for the nomination and the presidency. Moreover, while Democrats continued to hold big majorities in both houses of Congress, Republicans boosted their number of governors chairs from 26 to 31, including six of the seven biggest states.

**LET'S TAKE** A closer look at the performances of the two Republican parties in those seven largest states.

New York (43 electoral votes) has had a progressive Republican governor in Nelson Rockefeller for a decade, but this state gave Nixon only a handful of votes when he won the GOP nomination and on Nov. 5 voted for Humphrey.

California (40 electoral votes) has a Republican governor in Ronald Reagan. Nixon failed to get a single convention delegate but carried the state by a small margin in November.

Pennsylvania (29) is on its second Republican governor after some years of Democratic rule. Nixon got only one-third of its convention votes and lost the state to Humphrey in the election.

Ohio (26) has a Republican governor whom it supported as a favorite son at the convention. Nixon carried it.

Illinois (26) is the only Republican state with a foot in both camps. It elected a Republican governor, Richard Ogilvie, this year; supported Nixon for the nomination and gave him a November majority.

Texas (25) voted Democratic for governor and president, but

helped Nixon at the GOP convention.

Michigan (21) has a third-term Republican governor in George Romney, gave Nixon almost as support for the nomination and voted for Humphrey in the election.

**THE TALLY** looks like this:

- The seven biggest states have 210 electoral votes.
- Six of those states (185 electoral votes) have or will have Republican governors; only one (25) has a Democrat.

- Nixon carried only three of those states (92 electoral votes); Humphrey carried four (118 electoral votes).

The inescapable conclusion is that President-elect Nixon isn't on good terms with voters in the biggest states who have elected the most progressive governors.

Nixon's vice president has a reputation for sticking his foot in his mouth in a campaign, but the overlooked fact is that Spiro Agnew was a highly progressive and professional governor in Maryland. Nixon says he'll give Agnew lots of responsibilities in the area of federal-state relations and better. Especially in the big states.

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