



By Philip H. Power  
Publisher

# OBSERVATION POINT

## Party Tax Solution To \$\$ Problems?

One reason our politicians are perpetually in trouble is that they're geared toward solving problems. Solving problems is difficult if not impossible when you go at it by the traditional method -- i.e., identifying the problem, analyzing, developing alternative solutions, testing them and so on.

The way to solve a problem is to look at it as an opportunity and use one problem to demolish another. Take the twin problems of (a) whether Michigan should have a presidential primary, for which there seems to be some popular demand, and (b) how our political parties (especially the Democratic, now \$9 million in the red) can finance their campaigns.

The wheelings and dealings of politicians are too dreary to be reviewed here. Besides, according to one colleague of mine who specializes in solving the problems of the world, they're all wrong. Only partly in jest, he offers this suggestion:

**THROWING TRADITIONAL** approaches to the hot winds, the perfect way out is to hold a presidential primary but charge each voter a \$5 fee, the funds to go into the national committee treasury of the party in whose primary he votes.

The advantages are multitudinous:

- Joe Blow on the street gets to cast a direct vote for the candidate of his choice. With an investment to protect, Joe will take his politics more seriously instead of succumbing to television images.
- The state can rake off enough to cover the cost of the election, at a great savings to the general treasury.
- The political parties not only get out of debt but can build up a big enough kitty to run their '72 campaigns.
- The problem of "cross-overs" is virtually eliminated. No Republican would have spent \$5 to vote for Gene McCarthy over

Lyndon Johnson in the 1968 New Hampshire primary; no Democrats will vote for John Ashbrook over Richard Nixon if it means building the GOP fund.

**THE IMMEDIATE objection from Democrats, in particular, is: What about the poor people who can't afford \$5 to vote? The objection is totally phony.**

Right now, most Observerland districts in the Democratic Party have an "open delegation" rule for the state convention: Anyone can become a state convention delegate (and these chaps pick the national delegates who nominate the presidential candidate) either by being an elected precinct delegate or by buying a \$5 membership in the Democratic Party. Political power is for sale.

Precinct delegate elections aren't costly, but the serious delegate has to invest some time circulating his petition and, if there's competition, ringing a few

doorbells. Time is money, and that time is worth far more than \$5.

Moreover, the real cost of exercising power is not the \$5 party membership; it's the cost of spending two days at a state convention, half of which are in Detroit, the other half in Grand Rapids, and that means hotel bills, mileage, even time off from work.

Thus, it would be fairer to the poor to charge them \$5 to vote in

a presidential primary than to have them incur the costs of attending a state convention. Let us hear no more crocodile tears for the poor from those who oppose a primary.

**AND IF THERE** are politicians who are truly concerned about a poor person's inability to scrape up the \$5 fee, let them put the poor to work for the party, addressing envelopes, tacking up posters, sweeping and painting the party headquarters, and then

pay them in a certificate that could be redeemed for a party ballot in the primary.

His plan, to be adopted, may require changing the 24th amendment to the Constitution which prohibits a poll tax.

I don't know whether the whole idea is legally feasible, but it merits some consideration among armchair philosophers. It's probably too logical, however, to be seriously considered by politicians.

Tim Richard writes

## Orchard Ridge Paper Causes Its Own Woes

College journalists carefully study the first amendment, guaranteeing freedom of the press, and cite it whenever the college trustees and administration attempt to crack down on a wild student paper.

Unfortunately for young journalists, courts are reluctant to protect the campus paper's rights for fear of meddling in internal college administration. Moreover, since the college typically owns the newspaper's office and would have to pay off any libel suits, it's easy to argue that the students don't own the paper anyway. But enough of this legal fol-de-rol.

**WHAT BRINGS** the college paper's vulnerability to mind is the problems faced by the Recorder, student publication at the Orchard Ridge Campus of Oakland Community College. Some trustees would as soon eliminate it, but the majority has voted to put the Recorder on probation, whatever that means.

The Recorder has attractive makeup and some good typography, but on balance it's a bad paper, and its badness appears to be the deliberate policy of Editor John David Smith and his staff.

Oh, it has been worse, to be sure -- like the time a couple of

years ago when it published a 16-page edition that included 14 pages of essays about an anti-war march in Washington, one page of sports and one page of campus news that was nothing but administration handouts. These days, at least, the Recorder staff knows there's a campus.

**A MAN ARRIVING** from Mars, knowing nothing about the Orchard Ridge campus in the hills of Farmington Township, would still never guess that it was in a suburb of Oakland County and that the enrollment is 90 or 95 per cent white by reading the Recorder.

In the news columns of the 24-page Feb. 7 issue, for example, there's not a picture of a white OCC student except on the sports page.

There are, however, pictures of Andrew Pulley, the black Socialist Worker vice presidential candidate; two pictures each of Black Panthers John Jerome Huggins and Alprentice "Bunchy" Carter; and several pictures of the Wayne County Jail -- in a publication that doesn't serve Wayne County.

Not a single story could be called straight news. The article headlined, "Dr. Hill at Credibility Gap" begins: "Central office

administration, under the direction of President Hill, is playing their annual game of misinformation, half-truths and jive, that they call administrative procedures, with the student body of OCC."

**THE BACK PAGE** is devoted to an ad for a forthcoming visit from John Sinclair (Rainbow People's Party; marijuana, etc.). The ad doesn't say so, but it turns out Sinclair's appearance is sponsored by the Recorder itself.

Another ad says "Free Angela Davis." I assume it's an ad, even though it isn't marked "paid political ad." Perhaps it isn't a paid ad.

The classified section has an ad with a cartoon of a nude male. The text: "Got any news??? Join the Recorder."

Four-letter words abound. Personally, I don't object to the words themselves, being a lost cause myself. It's just that they are used so badly. Four-letter words can be very effective if you choose them well and deliver them gracefully, but this Recorder staff doesn't know how to cuss worth anything.

The Recorder's pervading fault is its utter contempt for its readers' intelligence and taste. To use the language of romance, a newspaper needs to woo readers; the Recorder instead practices verbal Onanism, and as a result it's got trouble.

AN ACCIDENT IS TRAGIC ENOUGH... WHY COMPOUND IT WITH INSUFFICIENT ROAD PATROLS?



R.T. Thompson writes

## 'Voice Of Experience' Says Get Police Now

A voice that should know spoke out to members of a neighborhood civic association from Canton and Plymouth townships recently and made a strong recommendation for immediate action on a police department for the two communities.

The voice was that of Col. Fredrick Davids, retired director of the Michigan State Police who resides in Plymouth Township. Davids is now head of the University of Michigan safety division but he still maintains his interest in affairs in the Plymouth community.

The matter of police protection for the two townships has reached major proportions in recent weeks since the Wayne County Board of Commissioners has made known its intention of discontinuing the sheriff's department road patrol. The patrol has been the principal policing unit in the townships.

Davids is well aware of the future of the road patrol since the



COL. FREDRICK DAVIDS

matter was first broached while he was head of the State Police.

"THE TOWNSHIPS were told by the then Board of Supervisors that it was thinking of eliminating the road patrol as an economy measure as many as four years

ago," Davids said. "There isn't any way that court suits will halt the move. They may delay a final action for a while, but the end of the road patrol is inevitable."

Although the townships have been slow in making plans for police protection, Davids urges that steps be taken immediately to form police departments on a small scale and enlarge as land development makes it necessary.

He implied that both Canton and Plymouth townships have been dragging their feet and already are about a year and a half behind in their planning.

Perhaps it would be wise for the two township boards to sit down with experienced persons such as Davids and get the full advantage of their thinking.

**A RECOMMENDATION** coming from Davids should be enough to make the two boards sit up and take notice. Each has been warned that the road patrol services will be eliminated. Each has been told that it can't depend on the State Police for full police protection, but each apparently thinks it is better to cover their heads in sand and hope the problem vanishes.

We know for a fact that the State Police gave the area a bit more than normal service during the regime of Davids. We never were told, but we have a strong feeling that he sort of mentioned to the Redford and Ypsilanti posts that it wouldn't do any harm to have cars in the area most of the time.

Col. Davids still resides in the communities. He has maintained his interest in activities, but he isn't in a position to get special State Police treatment any more. That's why his suggestions are now so important.

## Editorial & Opinion

OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS, INC.

Philip H. Power, Publisher

The Livonia Observer - The Redford Observer  
The Westland Observer - The Garden City Observer  
The Plymouth Mail & Observer - The Southfield News & Observer  
The Farmington Enterprise & Observer



Published by Observer Newspapers, Inc.  
36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, Mich. 48150

Serving the communities of:  
Livonia, Plymouth, Farmington Township, Canton Township, Farmington  
Farmington Township, Redford Township, Garden City, Westland,  
Southfield, Lathrup Village, Bingham Farms.

## Why Overflow Crowds At Games?

By W. W. EDGAR

Although there have been no major uprisings in high school basketball games throughout Observerland thus far this season school officials are flirting with danger by permitting standing room crowds in the inadequate gymnasiums.

Admittedly, it would be difficult to deny any student the right to see his or her team in action but the fact remains that overcrowded conditions, at times, interfere with play.

This is true when spectators are permitted to line up against the back walls -- almost under the basket -- while the player is in the act of trying a free throw.

And again when he comes whirling down the court to attempt a close-in shot.

In some cases the first row of the bleachers is so close to the playing area that the spectators' feet are on the line. This tends to bother the player who comes dribbling down the sidelines -- especially if his team is playing "catch-up" ball.

Emotions run high in these high school games and students yell and scream in a display of loyalty. It wouldn't take much to cause an emotional explosion and bring about an uprising such as caused many of the schools to ban night games.

So, it might be well for the school officials to take a good look and apply more stringent preventative methods.

It may be well to eliminate the first row of seats to give the players more freedom on the court. And it would be well worth while to eliminate standing along the back wall -- virtually under the basket.

Sure, it would cut into gate receipts. But the crowds should be limited to the seating capacity -- with no standees.

Anything more than that is always a gamble.

Is it worth it?