

In Our Opinion . . .

Some Random Reflections On Law Day Designed To Irritate Stuffed Shirts

Politicians will do many things to get votes and satisfy public whims, and one of the things they do which satisfies an influential group, and which doesn't cost money, is to declare May 1, "Law Day."

The lawyers then get together, give awards and make speeches. Most of the speeches are absurd because they are based on false assumptions.

We propose to examine some of those assumptions.

WHAT IS LAW? A binding system of rules of conduct, most people would answer.

What is the law not? The best answer comes from a story told about Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. He shared a ride to the court building with a young attorney one day, and as they parted company the young man said solemnly:

"Do justice, Mr. Holmes."

"Son," said Holmes, "my business is not to do justice. It is to apply the law."

The moral: Law is not justice, truth, honor, or sense. Law is rules and procedures. Understand that, and you will never become disillusioned by the law and lawyers.

LAW DAY, according to the bar-association publicity, was devised as an answer to the Communist nation's May Day celebrations. There, the bar association stops.

The truth of the matter is that people have been celebrating around the first of May for centuries. Communism's May Day, in the Catholic church's view, was a response to Mary's Day.

Mary's Day, moreover, was a response to pagan celebrations—dancing around the Maypole, and all that.

Literary historians report that in France and Scotland as early as the 16th century, festival plays contained a lead character called "Robin des Bois" (Robin of the Woods) or "Robyn Huid," which means the same thing.

Read your modernized collection of Robin Hood tales—not the TV series—and try to find someone who had less respect for law enforcement officers and clergymen than Robin Hood.

Well, that's where Law Day really comes from.

THIS IS A government of laws, not of men, say the lawyers and the grammar school civics texts.

Not so. A nation may have a fine constitution, but that is no good if the man at the head of the government sets it aside.

It takes more than law to make a place fit to live in. What it takes is men behaving themselves, not because they fear the law's punishment but voluntarily.

Even a community with bad laws can be good if the men are good. We are a government of men; laws are secondary.

GO TO ANY first-class college and see how government is taught. Legalism in government courses has as much status as the "four humors" has in psychology or J.G.C. Brainard in poetry.

"Behaviorism" is what's being taught. How do voters make decisions? What economic class pays the biggest chunk of taxes? Who gets the benefit of government expenditures? Who gets little? Who really wields power in a community—the mayor or the biggest land development company?

To the legal mind, the process of passing a law begins when a person drafts a bill in the hopper. To the modern student of man, the process begins when a person or group who can command the legislator's respect, either over a drink or on the picket line, makes his needs known.

The "behavioralists" appear to have the more sensible approach.

THE RICHARD SPECK murder trial required far more time for the selection of a jury than for the actual taking of evidence and the arguing of the case.

Something like 600 persons were called before a dozen Peoria residents could be found to serve on the jury.

Either there was something wrong

with 98 per cent of the adults of Peoria, or there was something wrong with the law, the lawyers and the judge.

We vote to acquit Peoria.

"A MAN IS innocent until proven guilty," they say.

Not so. Truth is not the same as law, although they may overlap. A man is guilty when he commits the crime. A trial doesn't decide whether a man is guilty; rather, it decides whether the prosecutor has accumulated enough evidence, under the rules of law, to warrant punishing the accused.

The fact of man's guilt is entirely separate from whether or not he is convicted legally. This is why many truthfully guilty persons are released from prison because of law court decisions.

The old saying should be amended to read: "A man can't be punished until he is proven guilty under such restrictions of evidence and procedure as the law and the men who interpret the law shall deem necessary," or something like that.

POLITICAL and philosophical differences divide the members of the Michigan Supreme Court, as evidenced by the 4-4 or 5-3 decision which have split the court along, or near, party lines.

Getting candidates for the State Supreme Court to disagree on those differences, however.

The typical candidate is content to repeat thousands of times: "I will interpret the law without fear or favor." The typical candidate gushes these bland generalizations and insists, in the face of all the evidence, that the court post isn't or shouldn't be a political post.

Ask a challenger, in particular, what decision he would have made in a case, and he won't tell you. Ask him what he thinks about reapportionment of county boards of supervisors, and he won't tell you.

The candidate gives reasons having to do with "ethics" or says he can't comment on a case he may have to judge.

We think there's something wrong either with "ethics" or the legal profession or our system of selecting Supreme Court candidates in Michigan. It seems silly that we can get candidates for Congress or governor or the Legislature to discuss issues, but not court candidates.

Whatever the fault, the public can't hear a word of discussion of the political and philosophical differences between Supreme Court candidates. The public has to elect its top jurists in Michigan on the basis of name, party endorsement, or the endorsement of other candidates.

Law Day seems a good time to register a protest against such nonsense.

AS A GROUP, lawyers are more verbose than even newspaper editors; lawyers take their ethics the way a fundamentalist preacher takes his religion.

Although they are good to have around, law and lawyers are by no means as essential to the preservation of democracy, freedom, Christianity, human dignity and free enterprise as Law Day prayers will imply.

And yet law and lawyers are not all bad.

In the same way that athletic teams give awards to a player who is the "most improved" in a year, the law ought to be considered for a similar award among the professions.

Hardly any group has done more intramural soul-searching about the services it is giving its clients than the legal profession, although they get sore when an outsider criticizes them.

And so on the feast of Robin des Bois, amid the sounds of prayers on one shore and military parades on another, and with all sorts of picketing going on in between, we pause to wish the national, Michigan and Oakland County bar associations a happy Law Day.

Judgment affirmed, with costs to the detractors.

Quincy, Ill.
9503-Bump
De 6107

INSTRUCTION BALLOT.

Instruction Ballot. In all cases stamp a cross (X) in the circle under the name of your party or the best candidate. If you desire to vote a straight ticket, making further need be done. If you desire to vote a mixed ticket, make a cross in the circle under the name of the candidate you desire to vote for. If you desire to vote for more than one candidate, make a cross in the circle under the name of each candidate you desire to vote for. If you desire to vote for a candidate who is not on the ballot, make a cross in the circle under the name of the candidate you desire to vote for. If you desire to vote for a candidate who is not on the ballot, make a cross in the circle under the name of the candidate you desire to vote for. If you desire to vote for a candidate who is not on the ballot, make a cross in the circle under the name of the candidate you desire to vote for.

TOWNSHIP OF FARMINGTON.

	REPUBLICAN	DEMOCRATIC
Name of Office	TICKET.	TICKET.
Voted For	☐	☐
For Township Clerk	[] JAMES L. MOYLE	[] FRANK M. STEELE
For Township Treasurer	[] M. AUGUSTUS WHITE	[] HARRY W. MOORE
For Highway Commissioner	[] J. MADISON GREENE	[] CLYDE McDERMOTT
For Justice of the Peace	[] CHARNET WOLCOTT	[] JOE G. FRANCIA
For School Inspector	[] HUDSON WILCOX	[] LORENZO G. PIERSON
For Member Board of Review	[] ISAAC BOND	[] CLOVES STEELE
For Constable	[] HORACE A. GORDEN	[] JAMES W. HATTEN
	[] J. MADISON GREENE	[] CLYDE McDERMOTT
	[] C. FRANK WHITE	[] CARL F. HATTEN
	[] ALBERT LANSCHKECKER	[] JOHN MOHANEY
	[] HENRY SCHROEDER	[] ALPHRUS ANGELL

In Old Farmington Souvenir of the Polls

From the souvenirs of Mrs. Orville Taggart, a 50-year resident, comes an early day Farmington Township election ballot. Actually, it was acquired from a nearby antique shop and Mrs. Taggart has no idea of who its original owner was. On the back is the notation: "April 4, 1898—the first ticket I voted. Twenty-one years, 10 months, 11 days." But no name. On the ticket itself, two names trigger instant recognition, and longtime residents of Farmington will recognize many others. John Hatten had an advertisement for his hardware store on the first page of the first Enterprise. His descendants are still living in the community. Isaac Bond, an off-elected member of the school board, did much toward the growth of the educational system in the early days of the township, and for him Bond School is named. Part of his family, too, still resides in this area.

WE'RE INTERESTED in old photos of Farmington—old scenes, old basketball teams, anything that will enlighten the town's newcomers and recall memories among the old-timers about how Farmington lived and looked in the past.

Public Letterbox

SCHOOL BOUNDARIES

To The Editor:

One of the biggest problems in education today is the overcrowded classroom. Farmington is fortunate to have largely avoided this problem despite rapid growth and limited funds.

This has been accomplished by a careful placement of schools for long-range growth and the temporary interim placement of students in facilities that have not yet reached maximum utilization. This, at times, creates minor inconveniences for families whose students are assigned to other than the nearest school. This inconvenience certainly dwindles in significance when viewed, in terms of the accomplishment of reduced classroom size and the resulting higher quality of education.

Parents who have informed themselves as to the community's total educational needs will recognize that boundary changes are necessary if the community is to attain its educational objectives.

These parents will devote their energies to such fundamental school district problems as supplying adequate educational facilities, proper financing to maintain existing programs and encouragement and development of new educational programs needed by the community.

Mrs. L. LeGros for Farmington Area PTA Council

CLEANING UP

To The Editor:

Now that the beautiful grass is up and the trees are in foliage and all the spring flowers are up, let's remember to clean up these yards and pick up all the rubbish in the rear yards, where the children play. On State Street once again, we have to remind certain householders of their obligation to their neighbors who have to look at old cars, tin cans and junk strewn around — a good place for rats to hide. Let's keep Farmington beautiful and green and homey.

A NEIGHBOR of 22 Years and a Taxpayer, Too

Looking Back in the Files

5 Years Ago

MAY 2, 1962
Township Hall
Several contractors have now picked up plans and specifications for the new township administration building which has been put out for bids. Architect Charles Hannan reported this week.

Site Request
The Sisters of Mercy Province of Detroit have offered to purchase an 8-acre parcel of land in the Village of Woodcreek Farms owned by Mrs. Lucille Dean.

Shlawassee Paving
A heavily traveled section of Shlawassee St. between Power and Orchard Lake Rd. will be paved this summer to eliminate what has been a continual drain on City DPW crews to keep the present asphalt road in repair.

Conference Leaders
Farmington took a big step toward the league title when they downed defending champion Southfield to the tune of 10-4. In beating the Jays, the Falcons snapped a two-year Southfield jinx which saw the Falcons lose four straight games.

10 Years Ago

MAY 2, 1957
College Proposal
The Clarencville School Board at its regular meeting Thursday evening approved a resolution to take part in a special study being conducted in the northwest Wayne County area regarding the need for establishment of a community college.

More Paving
Officials of the Oakland County Road Commission reported Tuesday that a contract has been awarded for the widening and surfacing of North Farmington Road from 10 Mile to 12 Mile Roads and that construction work is expected to begin immediately.

Muskie for Pitar
Musical instruments for use on tiny Pitar Island in the Pacific Ocean made famous by the H.M.S. Bounty are being collected this week by members of the Clarencville Seventh-day-Adventist church.

15 Years Ago

MAY 1, 1952
Machines Invade
A total of ten voting machines have been purchased by the Farmington Township Board. It was announced following a special meeting of the Board held Saturday afternoon at the Town Hall.

Bids Open
A motion directing the architects to proceed with advertising of bids for the new elementary school and addition to the high school was approved by the Clarencville Board at its regular semi-monthly meeting held Monday evening.

Falcons Loss
Farmington High School's baseball team suffered its first loss of the season last Friday when it was defeated by Walled Lake 5 to 3 in an inter-Lakes conference game on the Farmington diamond.

Dairy Farm Tip
Offshoots in milk are a year-around problem but may often become worse in the spring, according to Don Murray, Michigan State College extension dairyman. A few simple precautions will help to insure a high quality product.

Vocational 'Area' Plan On Ballot

On June 12, Farmington school district voters, along with voters in other Oakland County districts, will decide whether to levy up to a half-mill for an area vocational-technical education program.

Here is the first of two articles provided by the Oakland board on what the proposal is about.

What is the "area concept?"
The "Area Concept" of vocational education is based upon the philosophy that all persons who can profit by instruction should have an opportunity to enroll in vocational education programs of their choice. This concept requires that the attendance area be of sufficient size to insure adequate enrollment.

Such programs are operated so that students retain their identity with their own home high school, acquire their general education, participate in extra curricula activities, and graduate from their home high school. The Area Concept is based upon the philosophy that programs and facilities are available to all residents.

How many students are likely to be served in the area centers?

The facilities that have been contemplated will serve 1,360 full-time students. In the eleventh and twelfth grades there were 26,096 students as of the fourth Friday 1966. On a shared time basis, ten percent of these students could be served in the area vocational centers.

Will students be channeled into "dead end" programs? Can students in the area vocational programs earn credit acceptable to college?

The Superintendents Task Force Committee on Curriculum and Program point out that these programs should not be viewed as terminal. Credit toward college entrance depends upon the program to be pursued in college.

How will students be selected for these centers? Will the students have a choice of programs?

Counselors at both the home high school and area centers will assist students in their decisions to choose vocational courses. Individual preferences and aptitudes will determine placement.

What types of students will be served in these area centers?

Primarily the eleventh and twelfth grade students of Oakland County who desire vocational education. In addition, the Vocational Education Act of 1963 specifies that there should be opportunity programs, that is programs for students with learning difficulties, vocational programs, and pre-technical programs offered in the centers. There must also be provision for retaining and job upgrading of out-of-school youth and adults.

Will all facilities be of the same size, and have the same offerings?

Facilities will be planned to serve the number and interests of students in the vicinity. Size and programs can be expected to vary accordingly.

What is the average class size?

Class projections have been made on a basis of twenty to 24 students.

How many of these area centers will be constructed in Oakland County and where will they be located?

The recommendations of the Oakland County Vocational Education Committee of 29 are that a center be constructed in each of the four quadrants of the county.

What can those centers accomplish beyond what can be done in the existing high schools?

The area centers would provide the variety of courses and sophisticated equipment and facilities necessary for the equitable education of all students in Oakland County.

Is there a danger that these centers will end up as either a program for the highly talented or a school for discipline problems?

To prevent this from happening a provision has been structured into the organizational pattern. This consists of two advisory committees; one composed of superintendents and the other composed of representatives of business, industry, and labor.

The committees will make recommendations to the intermediate board of education regarding curriculum and programs.

How do these centers differ from existing high school facilities? Are they a costly duplication?

The centers are complementary to the programs offered in the local high schools. Programs or facilities that are best handled in the local high school will not be duplicated. Kinds, variety, sophistication and cost of equipment and facilities that are anticipated for the area centers could not be duplicated by individual high school districts.

What happens if we want to offer a vocational program in our own district and the area concept is in effect?

The State Department of Vocational Education remains responsible for aiding local schools to implement individual programs needed at the constituent level.

The Farmington Enterprise

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