

This Is The Week That

... By Don Hoenschell

They're turning on the fog machine, folks, so watch closely or we'll all miss the delightful charade of the struggle over state aid for nonpublic schools.

Cut through the clouds tossed up by everyone with an opinion and the issue is this: M-O-N-E-Y.

The fact that all schools—public and nonpublic, K-12 through graduate school—all are in trouble seems to have escaped the pros and the cons.

Public schools have asked for \$70 million more in state aid. The nonpublics, through the Committee for Educational Freedom (CEF), have asked for a package totaling \$21 million.

THESE, THEN, ARE the immediate dollars schools of all kinds in the elementary and secondary grades say they need next year. What of the year after that and the year after that?

Let us check the state constitution: "All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for their equal benefit, security and protection."

Nothing about public versus nonpublic schools there, folks.

"No money shall be appropriated or drawn from the treasury for the benefit of any religious sect or society, theological or religious seminary; nor shall property belonging to the state be appropriated for any such purpose."

How about them apples, nonpublics?

However: "The legislature shall maintain and support a system of free public elementary and secondary schools as provided by law. Every school district shall provide for the education of its pupils without discrimination as to religion, creed, race, color or national origin."

There's nothing there to prevent the state from aiding the nonpublics. The state already shells out dollars for auxiliary services, a euphemism which means the nonpublics are already getting state aid.

The Civil Bill of Rights gives education money to students—to learn how to fly airplanes, to learn meat cutting, or to go to Michigan State University, or

How To Say Nothing With Great Feeling

Traditionally, newspapers are supposed to blister political candidates who use a lot of words to say nothing, who offer no clear criticism of the incumbent and no clear policies of their own.

It hasn't worked. Politicians are still vague.

So rather than cuss the mental flab of a particular politician, this writer will pass on to other Observersland politicians a rather well-done piece of political puff from the recent Livonia primary.

All you have to do is substitute your own name and office you are seeking. You will run a nauseating campaign, but you may pick up 3,000 votes.

Here's how:

"TODAY THERE are many things which are properly of concern to all—. Daily we are confronted with various painful aspects of growth. You selected—as your home for many reasons, but there is no guarantee that our community will continue to be a good place to work, to do business and to raise a family."

(Dig that stuff about "community" and "growth"—great in words these days.)

"Growth, then, is the real issue in this election because growth can be only one of two things, progress or problems. Your vote in this election, then, is the choice between these alternatives."

even Notre Dame and Alma College.

SUBURBAN legislators have been wrapping themselves in the constitution. The separation of church and state? Egad, we already exempt churches from the property tax, and not even the purist church-state separation advocate would suggest repealing it.

The school principals said the other day the bill would encourage the formation of schools by bigots and other undesirables if the state committed itself to aid for the nonpublics.

Anybody who would start a school these days for any reason has got to be off his rocker.

Of course there will be teacher strikes in the spring and that, too, is against the law. Some nonpublic schools will cut out grades and tuition costs to parents will be increased.

Some districts will make the days hideous with their cries that the pinch will cause half-day sessions, that bus service will be curtailed, that lunch programs will have to be abandoned.

We have a practical problem being argued by unqualified philosophers.

Suddenly, schoolmen become lawyers interpreting the constitution, legislators talk ponderously and endlessly about the legal implications they don't understand as a means to get off the hook.

There are lawyers arguing education and political realists debating philosophy. It's the old fog machine at its best, wondrously again masking the issue.

WHAT MICHIGAN MUST figure out is how to meet the crisis in education, whether to raise taxes to provide more of the same—or perhaps better—for children, or cut out some of what we've got so that more can be served.

It figures that the public schools are against the bill, but it doesn't mean that they are against Catholics or Lutherans or any of the others.

All it means is that, at the moment, there is not enough money to go around to do what the public wants to do or have to do. It's as simple as that. M-O-N-E-Y.

(So far, our man has dealt in generalities. He figures you now want the specifics so he gives you more generalities disguised as specifics. Watch the punchy sentences.)

"GROWTH THAT is truly progress can be secured only by leadership."

"Leadership that recognizes that at progress means building roads, not roadblocks."

"Leadership that recognizes that growth is accomplishment and accomplishment, in turn, is a function of harmony, not pugnacity."

(Delightfully clever: The opposition's "roadblocks" and "pugnacity" are never spelled out; indeed, the opposition is never directly accused.)

"When elected you, you have my pledge that my administration will represent accomplishment, not excuses, and that I will continue to be the servant of only one vested interest—the U.S. Citizen."

That will be quite a trick. You see, under the U.S. system of government, one can be a citizen only of the nation. There is no such critter, under our laws, as a "citizen" of a city or township. But it's a good thing to say when you're running a vague campaign.

—Tim Richard

From the Publisher's Desk— OBSERVATION POINT

By Philip H. Power

No, I don't have the slightest idea how long the Detroit newspaper strike will go on.

That's just in case someone decides to ask the inevitable question.

Time was when I speculated about when the strike would end just as much as anybody.

I would go to our Circulation Manager, Fred Wright, and ask him what he had picked up from his contacts in the Teamsters Union downtown. Or I would repeatedly bug Tommy Thompson, the Managing Editor, to call his cronies at the Free Press to get a new reading.

Then I would weigh what they said, look sharply and penetratingly into a crystal ball I keep in the lower left drawer of my desk, and issue A Judgment: Five weeks.

Wrong. Another Judgment, then: Three weeks.

Wrong again. After a while any reputation I might have had as a prophet began to suffer. So did my pocketbook, after a series of ill-advised wagers with Fred Levine, our Classified Ad Manager, who makes a point of knowing things before anyone else.

So I stopped speculating.

A LOT OF people have suggested that we at Observer Newspapers are happy that the strike has run on for so long.

We aren't.

Any decrease in the sources of news and information available to the public hurts us all, and that includes us at Observer Newspapers. For we are in the business of bringing news to the public, and we feel that the more news made available the better served is the public.

Further, we're not really in competition with the News or the Free Press. They specialize; as they should, in international, national and state news. News of Detroit.

They don't concentrate on news about Livonia or Plymouth or Farmington or Redford Township or Westland or Garden City.

We do. So the News or the Free Press are really very different from our newspapers, and we're sorry to see them shut down.

Of course, there is some competition between us for ads. We like to get ads; they bring useful local shopping information for customers in our area, and they help keep us out of the red when the profit and loss sheets come out.

But we're happy to compete with the Detroit papers for the ads while they're publishing. We'll be happy to do so when they resume work at some date in the future.

THE ONLY PROBLEM that we've run into is fatigue.

With bigger papers, we have more pages to produce for our twice-weekly editions. So the people who work in our production shop have a big job to do. They've done it well, but they're getting tired.

Big papers mean a lot of articles to put in. Our news staff has tried to bring you beefed-up news coverage of your local community, and we've put together a special series of international, national and state news round ups to help fill the gap left by the Detroit papers. But this, too, is a lot of work.

The same applies to the advertising staff.

We're all doing our darndest to bring you the most complete, interesting and up to date papers we can. We're doing it during the strike, and we'll continue to do it after the whole thing has been settled.

I DON'T HAVE the faintest idea of whose fault the strike is. It's customary always to blame the unions for a strike, and this tendency is particularly strong when it's newspapers that are being struck. After all, usually the main source of information about newspaper strikes is through other newspapers.

What I do know is that both unions and management are sorry to see it take place.

However, being sorry to see a strike take place and actually working out a settlement are two different things. And it's particularly tough when there are many many different unions involved (11 at the News alone), some of which are angry at each other.

But in the meantime, we at Observer Newspapers intend to keep doing our level best to keep the people in Observersland fully informed.

When you come by any of our offices, though, please, bring some coffee to help keep us awake. We need it.



For Ted Kuckelman

Life A 'Fast-Moving Agenda'

It will be hard to imagine the Westland Chamber of Commerce without Ted Kuckelman, who will leave March 31 as executive secretary of the group he helped organize in the spring of 1964.

His 79 years on earth have been like a "fast moving agenda," a phrase he used without restraint at chamber meetings and in the group's literature.

Ted Kuckelman, who seems to have the energy of men half his age, is resigning—but not retiring—on the advice of his doctor who told him to "slow down."

BUT ANYONE WHO knows Ted is sure that the advice will be taken with a grain of salt by Kuckelman, whose lifetime spans the birth of modern day machines—such as cars, radio, television, aviation, which were just dreams or science fiction tales when he was a youngster.

To emphasize what he has seen and experienced during his lifetime, Ted pointed out to this writer that about half of the country's employees are working in industries whose products were not even in existence a half-century ago.

He doesn't remember the exact year but he can recall the public's reaction on the introduction of the first refrigerator.

It was in a Dayton, Ohio, hotel and Ted said of that event: "Looking at the refrigerator was like looking at an elephant with two tails at a circus. I can see it, but I still don't believe it."

The chamber started out in the spring of 1964 with Ted; a single member, Virgil Gagnon, and \$36 in the bank.

Today, the chamber has grown to more than 256 members and a solvent treasury.

SUCCESSING HIM will be

Mrs. Virgil (Harriet) Gagnon. It was pointed out last week that the idea of a local chamber of commerce was born in the Gagnon living room four years ago.

The Gagnons have been active in the community's civic, political and business life for many years.

Mrs. Gagnon brings with her many contacts in the community and we are sure she will continue to guide the chamber to greater growth.

But local businessmen and city officials will miss Ted and his "fast moving agenda."

—Leonard Poger

When Doors Are Closed, 'Executives' Are Hurt, Too

On a number of occasions, Observer Newspapers editorial writers have criticized our city councils, township boards and school boards for holding what they call "executive sessions."

We have contended that they are really "closed-door sneak meetings from which the press and public are barred."

The following editorial, reprinted from the Nov. 28 Niles Daily Star, tells succinctly what can happen when our elected officials insist on being executive-sneaks:

"ABOUT 18 MONTHS ago, the Sturgis Journal ran a strong editorial denouncing a 'closed door' policy by the hospital board in that city."

"The Journal suggested that decisions were being made in secret by the board, and that those decisions affected private citizens of Sturgis."

Sense And Nonsense

It seems that all of the letters received from our Democratic friends carry the six-cent stamp bearing Franklin D. Roosevelt's face. The mail from our Republican friends has a stamp bearing the face of Theodore Roosevelt. We wonder how that bi-partisan neutrality occurred with Lawrence O'Brien, a master of patronage politics, serving as Postmaster General in Washington.

While all of the state senators are holding investigations of a variety of topics in Lansing and Detroit, who is going to investigate the senators?

The Senator McCarthy who have graced our television sets in the past years should have the first name of Charlie. But they could never beat Edgar Bergen for show biz talent.

CHUCK MATSON

- Group Insurance
- Health Insurance
- Pension Plans
- Life Insurance
- Annuities

NEW YORK LIFE Insurance Company

17000 West 8 Mile Road, Southfield, 366-9480

When Name-Dropping... mention us, people will know you have good taste.

Hillside Inn

41661 Plymouth Road

Plymouth, Mich.

Dinners 5:00-11:00

Lunches 11:30-3:00

CLOSED SUNDAYS

OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS