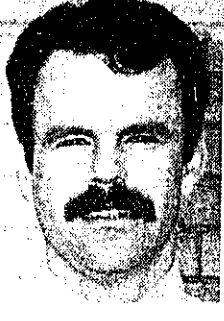


PEDALING AROUND

Ayatollah vs. Tisch

By Mike Eliasohn



A chilling thought, isn't it, that the Ayatollah Khomeini could decide who our next president will be.

If the American hostages came marching off the plane a day or two before the election, it would certainly boost President Carter's chances for re-election. It now appears, however, they won't be released before election day.

If it weren't for the Ayatollah, Carter might not have been even the Democratic nominee.

Remember all the talk about a year ago about how the Democrats were going to dump him in favor of Ted Kennedy? Then the Americans in our embassy in Iran were taken hostage and Carter's popularity soared. His popularity didn't soar that long, but it was long enough for him to dim Kennedy's chances of getting the nomination. The Massachusetts senator's own blunders did the rest.

Now if Carter could just get Fidel Castro to agree to take the prisoners and mental patients he sent over here back to Cuba prior to election day.

Since writing last week's dissertation for this space about the three major ballot proposals, I have done some more reading.

I am less confused, but still plan to vote against them.

The more I read about the Tisch Amendment, the scarier it becomes. I mentioned that college tuition might be subject to public referendum and since then read in Michigan Farmer magazine Robert Tisch does indeed intend college tuitions to be included in the provision requiring a public vote, apparently by statewide referendum, since it involves state institutions.

The need for voters within a village, school district, etc., to approve increases in everything from school lunch prices to parking meter fees to dog license fees if Tisch passes is less

certain but likely.

According to the Citizens Research Council of Michigan, Tisch "does not amend the present constitutional provision which requires that local units of government obtain simple majority approval of the voters for any new tax or tax increase beyond that authorized... as of Dec. 22, 1978. However, the broadened definition of 'tax' in the Tisch proposal... to include user charges, fees, etc., could be construed to include voter approval of each..."

Tisch supporters like to cite what happened in California after Proposition 13 was approved, which slashed property taxes there.

Unfortunately, the situations aren't comparable. California state government had a \$5 billion surplus that it distributed to local governmental units to lessen the impact. California's economy was booming with or without the proposition and Proposition 13 did not have a restriction on increases in user fees. Californians are apparently now paying for many services they once received "free" through taxes.

Beyond my specific objections to Proposal D, my general objection to all of the tax proposals is that they are too complicated and try to do too much.

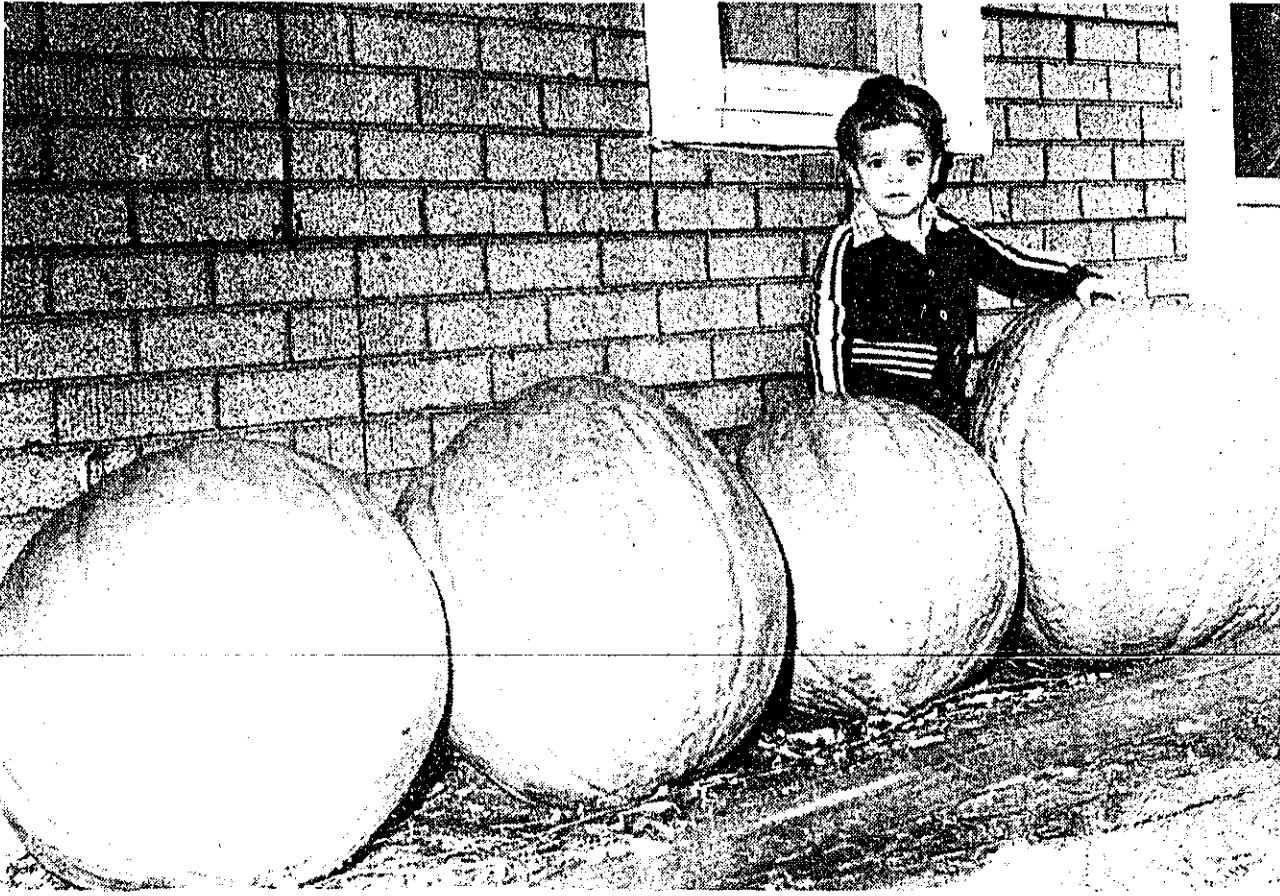
If part of the problem is that the Headlee amendment approved two years ago didn't do what it was supposed to do in terms of limiting state spending and property tax increases, why couldn't we have had a few simple amendments on the ballot to eliminate the shortcomings?

One proposal I do feel voters should approve is the 1-mill Tuscola county levy for bridges and county operations.

The 1-mill that has been in effect since 1971 has enabled the Road Commission to replace or rebuild 99 of the county's decaying bridges. It would be a shame to deny it the half-mill needed to complete the job.

As for the other half-mill of the proposal, for county operations, our county commissioners are not always "pearls of wisdom," but I don't think they can be accused of throwing money away.

Tuscola county has the lowest millage for operations of any county in the state and the handwriting is on the wall that revenue from Lansing and Washington next year is almost certain to be less.



GREAT PUMPKINS -- Two-year-old Brad Whittington doesn't have to wait for a visit from the Great Pumpkin. He has his own, grown by his parents, Don and Tracy Whittington of Englehart Road, Cass City. The biggest weighs 111 pounds.

Erla seeks to unseat Russell on county board

Voters Tuesday will have a choice between a Republican and a Democrat for county commissioner from District 2.

The Republican is Royce Russell, seeking election to his second two-year term, and the Democrat is Richard (Dick) Erla.

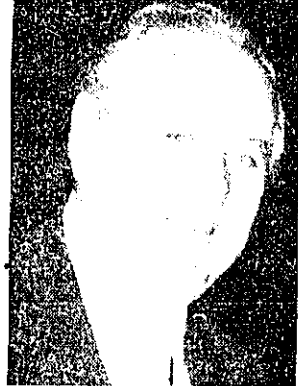
The district consists of Elkland, Elmwood, Ellington and Novesta townships and the portion of Kingston township east of Kingston Road.

In District 5, which includes the rest of Kingston township, all of Kingston village and Wells and Koylton townships, the only candidate running is incumbent Democrat Margaret Wenta of Fostoria.

Russell, 55, of Green Road, Gagetown, was Elmwood township treasurer for 18 years before being elected commissioner in 1978.

Commerce, and has also been a member of numerous other organizations.

He and his wife, Christine, have two children.



Richard Erla

Both candidates said they will vote for the 1-mill levy for bridges and county government operations.

The Chronicle asked each of them to predict the county's financial future, and they both agreed a lot depends on how the public votes on the county millage and the state tax reform proposals.

"The way things are going, it will probably be a tight budget and if elected, we'll have to roll up our sleeves and cope with it," Erla predicted.

Passage of the Tisch Amendment, Russell predicted, "could make things quite interesting as far as the county is concerned." The future of federal revenue sharing will also have an effect on county finances, he pointed out.

Both candidates were asked what cuts in county spending can be made if that becomes necessary.

"That's really a hard one, because I think it's going to take a lot of work by members of the board on where the cuts will be made," Russell responded.

If and when it becomes necessary to make cuts, he explained it will be necessary to analyze each county department as to its workload, as making cut-backs will mean laying off personnel.

Erla's response was similar, that if spending reductions are necessary, it will be necessary to evaluate each department and then decide.

Both candidates expressed the hope that cuts may not be necessary.

The final question is whether additional county office space is necessary should funds be available for its construction.

Proposed has been construction of a two-story plus basement addition onto the rear of the courthouse annex, with a rough estimate of the cost being \$600,000.

A county building authority has been established,



Royce Russell

On the board, he serves as chairman of its equalization committee and as a member of its building and grounds and departmental control committees.

As commissioner, he is also a member of the board of directors of the Thumb Area Commission on Aging and Thumb Area Consortium.

Russell is a cash crop farmer. He is a member of the Farm Bureau, Tyler Lodge, F & AM, and an elder in the First Presbyterian church in Cass City.

He and his wife Betty, the present Elmwood township treasurer, have five children.

Erla, 56, of 4633 Huron Street, Cass City, qualified for the ballot by receiving enough votes as a write-in candidate in the August primary.

He is president of Erla's Inc., the Cass City supermarket and meat packing operation, which has been in existence since 1953.

Erla ran unsuccessfully for state senator in 1960 and for the constitutional convention in 1962.

A Navy veteran, he has been a member of the American Legion for 35 years.

He is a member and past president of the Cass City Rotary Club, past president of the Cass City Chamber of

A YES VOTE FOR TUSCOLA COUNTY PROPOSITION I
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X marks the ballot

Voting "yes" may mean your vote doesn't count.

In Tuscola county, there are only two governmental units where paper ballots will be used Tuesday.

In Sanilac county, the situation is the opposite. Only Mariette village and three or four townships use voting machines or punch cards. In the rest, paper ballots are used.

In the August primary, an estimated 10-15 percent of county ballots were spoiled because they were incorrectly marked or electors tried to vote for candidates

in both parties.

To try to prevent that from happening again, a citizens committee has been formed in Sanilac county to educate the public in how to mark paper ballots correctly.

Some "no-nos," according to the committee, include writing "yes" or "no" in the boxes for ballot proposals, marking ballots with a check mark or slash or marking the box to vote for a straight party ticket and then voting for some candidates in the other party.

The only mark that can be counted on a paper ballot is an X inside the box.

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Either way, he'll get it in the end.

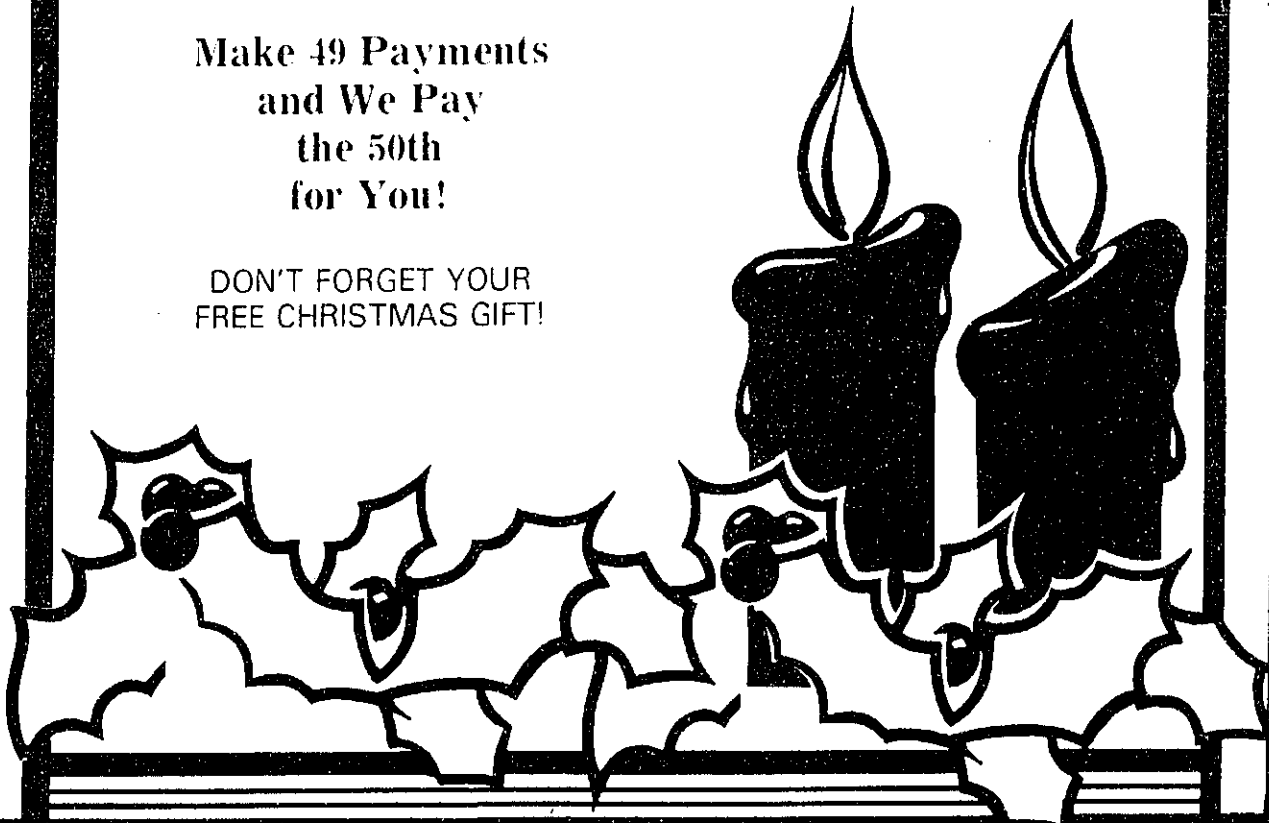
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