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Roads or responsible life style?

EDITORIAL PAGE

A landmark conservation confrontation seems to be taking shape in Petoskey. Call it the battle of the bypass, or the battle for responsible land use and life style.

At issue is construction of a multi-million-dollar bypass around the town. Some business and, perhaps, secular interests want a road built that will zip around the town, from south to north. They contend the summer traffic congestion, along Little Traverse Bay, is no longer bearable.

And they may be right.

But Mary Lou Tanton and her troops say bludgeoning the landscape is less bearable. And they have better solutions.

Briefly, the proposed bypass corridor would cut easterly off US-131 south of Petoskey, curve north around town and reconnect to highway US-31 north of town. It would slash through about seven miles of wildlands, including cedar swamps and wetlands, cross the Bear River, at least once, several smaller streams and leave a swath of concrete through what is said to be some of the best farmland in the region.

There is no denying the drive through Petoskey and Bay View can be nerve shattering. At times it is clogged with traffic. And, of course, every driver is playing footsies with the accelerator and brake, panting to escape the pack. Once they hit the north edge of town, at the M-119 Harbor Springs cut off, they yearn to slap the pedal to the medal. But, whoa!, the Conway-Oden bottleneck is just ahead. Then there's the creep through Alanson.

Ain't there no justice? What's a person to

do, spend his whole time "up north" at idle speed?

Well, the fact is most of those drivers aren't racing to catch the next ferry at the Straits. They're not even headed for Tinsel Town (Mackinaw City). They are local folks, running errands, shopping and going to and from work. Or they are folks traveling to, not through, Petoskey and vicinity.

Traffic surveys, Tanton points out, have found that Petoskey is the destination of 85 percent of the cars.

So, she asks, why not upgrade some of the existing county roads around Petoskey for local traffic, educate people to buy a loaf of bread when they go to the market for milk, instead of making two trips that day, slow down and get a working public transit system in place? She dares suggest that 35 mph is plenty fast enough to drive through town.

Really!

At 35 mph, Tanton explains, a road can carry far more traffic than it can at, say, 55. Because braking distance is far shorter at 35 than 55, far more cars can use the same stretch of road. And, whattaya know, it is more fun and there are fewer accidents.

Too much of the north country's resources have already been squandered on highways built for 85 mph traffic (the required federal standard, we are told). The resources that remain become more finite with each construction season. Lets bank them.

And, hey! slow down. Drive less. Enjoy it more.

If the Mary Lou Tanton's have their way, the folks in Petoskey will show us how.

End of the Migration Era

By John H. Tanton

HERE seen to be more people on the move now than ever before. In Europe, applications for asylum have increased many-fold. In the new Germany, well over 200,000 immigrants are expected this year. Yet this may actually be the end of the age of migration.

Similar situations in other members of the European Community (EC) have brought forth governmental declarations that theirs are not "countries of immigration," as well as stringent proposals to modify statutes and procedures for controlling entry into the country. Europe, after all, is a very densely populated area.

We all know about the tremendous unrest in Russia and Eastern Europe which, as some predict, could shake tens of millions of people loose from their moorings. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees lists 18 million refugees worldwide. According to some authorities there are, in addition, about 20 million people in Africa who are displaced within their countries by natural or political causes. All of this occurs against a

background of constantly increasing human numbers. The world population increases at about 10,000 per hour, 250,000 per day, 90 million per year. Freedom House, in its annual survey of freedom around the globe, reports that three-quarters of the world's 5.4 billion people live under conditions that are either "not free" or "partially free."

In China, where the government has set the official poverty level at an income of \$38 per year, 50 million people have incomes below the 10 cents a day this amounts to. The push side of the migration equation is clear, and pressures are steadily increasing.

On the receiving side, however, defenses are going up. All across Europe, discussions are being held on how to control immigration, with calls for a common migration policy for all 12 EC countries.

Of the 160-plus countries that belong to the UN, only three admit any appreciable numbers of legal immigrants. The United States takes perhaps 1 million per year (including in that count a low estimate for the illegal alien flow), Canada receives about 150,000, and Australia about 125,000. These total about 1.25 million

immigrants a year - out of a pool of perhaps 3 billion or more people worldwide who could improve their circumstances immensely by migrating to one of the three immigrant-receiving countries. We need to keep in mind that the pool of potential migrants is increasing by about 80 million per year. And 90 percent of the net increase of 90 million each year is in the less-developed countries.

To keep the math simple, assume that about 3 million people worldwide are willingly received as immigrants each year, out of a pool of about 3 billion potential migrants. That's 0.1 percent. Even this flow - large in the view of the receiving countries, and small in comparison to the possible demand - is producing a

marked reaction in the receiving countries and generating calls for strong controls. It seems highly unlikely that tens of millions of people are going to be able to pull up stakes and move elsewhere.

Conclusion: The vast majority of people - the 99.9 percent - will have to bloom where they're planted. They will never be able to solve their personal or societal problems by moving away from them. The motto for the New World Order will have to be: "Stand and Fight," not "Cut and Run." The age of migration is at



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an end for all but the tiniest fraction of the human race.

Sadly, the few who are able to pack up and leave are often the very ones on whom their fellow citizens most need to rely for social change - those with some education and a view of a better future, those whose dissatisfaction can energize them to help bring about the changes that could make life more acceptable at home. If these people leave, how will change ever come?

It seems only a matter of time until the US, Canada, and Australia

join the other 160 members of the UN in deciding that they already have enough people - other considerations notwithstanding. Would-be immigrants then will have to look within their own countries for solutions.

Paradoxically, the possibility of emigration now forestalls the development of this constructive attitude.

John H. Tanton is founding chairman of the Federation for American Immigration Reform in Washington.