

## REPORTER AT LARGE

# Job as Governor Interesting, but...

BY KEN McCORMICK

Free Press Staff Writer

LANSING—The bulky fellow with a conspicuous limp plunked himself down at my table in the Fielder Room. He set aside his cane, a broad-brimmed hat and a stuffed brief case.

"I've already eaten my dinner," he said. "Just wanted to say hello."

The man said he was in a hurry, but it must have been two hours before he made a move to depart. Meanwhile, he chain-smoked a dozen cigars, never bothering to put them out. He just let them smoulder in the ashtray.

"THIS IS THE most interesting job I've ever had," the man said. "And heavens knows I've had a lot of interesting jobs."

Mr. Justice Harry F. Kelly, member of the Michigan Supreme Court, has indeed enjoyed a number of interesting jobs.

He was governor of Michigan for two terms (1942-1946), and before that he had been Secretary of State, manager of the State Liquor Control Commission, assistant Wayne County prosecutor, and a World War I hero ... he lost a leg in combat.

It seemed rather odd that Harry Kelly ignored his tenure as governor in our gabfest that evening.

Rather, he talked about his days as an assistant prosecutor, days in which he was under police guard, while he investigated the sensational murder of little girl Jerry Buckley.

"I'LL NEVER FORGET those days," he said. "You were there and you know how hard it is to believe now

that there were 29 gang murders in just 30 days.

You discussed details of "those days" at length, how officially protected gangsters brazenly walked into a downtown Detroit hotel and pumped a dozen bullets into Buckley's body as he sat reading a newspaper in the lobby.

As a young reporter ... back in the early 1930's ... you had worked closely with Harry Kelly.

He with a few others was trying to stamp out crime against such odds as acceptance of hoodlums as heroes by a glamor-seeking public.

HE SUDDENLY changed the subject.

He started to talk about his family, recalling a Christmas Eve we had spent together at his home.

Mr. Justice Kelly has six children, one of whom, Brock, is a TV featured player in *See-It Street*.

After the kids grew up, the Kellys sold their big home and moved into an apartment in Birmingham. It's kind of lonely without the turmoil of a large family. But the justice is so busy reading briefs that he doesn't notice the quiet too much.

"AS I SAID," the justice said, "this is the most interesting job I've ever had. It's also the hardest on the eyes.

"But every case is a challenge. You know that you must read thousands of words and then think each point over very carefully if you are not going to make a decision that will be unfair to someone.

"This is a great responsibility. But there's nothing quite so interesting as the law. I'm really enjoying myself."

With that, Mr. Justice Harry F. Kelly grabbed his cane, his broad-brimmed hat, and his stuffed brief case and limped out."