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Voice vote carries day

Legion leaders blast Panama treaty

President Carter's Panama Canal treaty is facing some stiff opposition from veterans' groups across the country, and Farmington area members of the American Legion are no exception. "We're against it," said Ben Kokko, Commander of the Groves-Walker Post 346 in Farmington. "The majority are in favor of the national position against the treaty."

Although about 40 of the post's 184 members didn't take a formal vote on the subject, no one spoke in favor of the treaty during a recent discussion, said Kokko, a Farmington Hills resident.

At the county level, opposition was formally voiced. "We're against giving the Panama Canal away," said Charles Currie, a Farmington Hills resident and Commander of the 18th District, which covers 21 posts in Oakland County.

"We discussed it as a group, and we

took a voice vote," said Currie. "In this case, there was nobody for it," he explained. About 200 members were at the meeting, he said.

Currie personally backs the state legion's position as stated by Vernon L. Henrichs, department commander of the American Legion of Michigan.

THE LEGION of Michigan is diametrically and unalterably opposed to President Carter's giveaway of the Panama Canal," said Henrichs. "It is interesting that many Panamanians, especially black Panamanians, oppose the giveaway. They fear their civil rights will be in danger without U.S. protection."

"Our concern on this issue is not only in keeping with our national security position, it is in line with our concern for civil rights."

Currie agrees with Henrichs' description of the Panamanian govern-

ment as a total dictatorship.

"In my opinion, I would rather have it in friendlier hands than it is now," Currie said. Referring to the Panamanian leader Omar Torrijos, Currie added, "He's pro-Russian in my estimation."

Currie also is convinced that the Panamanian government won't wait to the year 2000 to take over the canal zone, as the proposed treaty specifies.

"They've got these big oil tankers going through there now, and the Panamanian dictatorship just can't wait to control them," he said.

Currie also believes President Carter should listen to public opinion. He estimates public opinion at 10-1 against the treaty, although other polls

have reported a 50-50 division on the subject.

"He should listen to the public," Currie said, "and he already signed the treaty, and we don't think that's right."

The treaty is subject to Senate ratification, and the American Legion is urging rejection of the treaty.

"We're asking all members and anyone else who is against the treaty to write their senators," Currie says.

The national organization passed a resolution reiterating the legion's 17-year stand against any treaties that would lessen U.S. sovereignty in the Canal Zone.

Variety show on tap at Finnish Center

A Finnish variety night, "Illanvietto," is scheduled for 8 p.m., Sept. 27 at the Finnish Cultural Center at 3829 Eight Mile in Farmington Hills.

The Detroit Cultural Center and Finlandia Male Chorus will present the program, featuring many Finnish performers including the Finlandia Strings, the St. Johns Lutheran Octet, and the "Hojakot" Finnish folk dancers.

Soloists include Pirjo Erickson on the Kantele, the ancient instrument of the epic poem "Kalevala"; Ralph Mannisto accordionist; Kalevi Kouvahuime baritone; Eino Jutila; Cathy

Leinonen; Carol and Don Reinholm; Fritz Putkela; and Margaret Lane.

The audience will join in singing the well-known folksongs and two portions of the Bicentennial Pageant presented last year will be featured.

Tickets are available at the door, and proceeds will be used for the benefit of the sponsoring organizations.

Organized in 1966 to promote and preserve Finnish culture in to Detroit metropolitan area, the Finnish Center Association has a 2,000 families membership. For further information, call Edward Haappa at 542-3942.

Hills Pvt. is Marine clerk

Marine Pvt. Catherine Burrell, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Burrell, 27634 Wellington, Farmington Hills, has completed the personal financial records clerk course.

Pvt. Burrell, a 1977 Harrison High School graduate, joined the Marine Corps in March.

During the eight-week course at the Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, N.C., students were taught the fundamentals of military pay and allowances. They studied the preparation and maintenance of military pay records, computation of military payrolls and the rules and regulations governing the military pay system.

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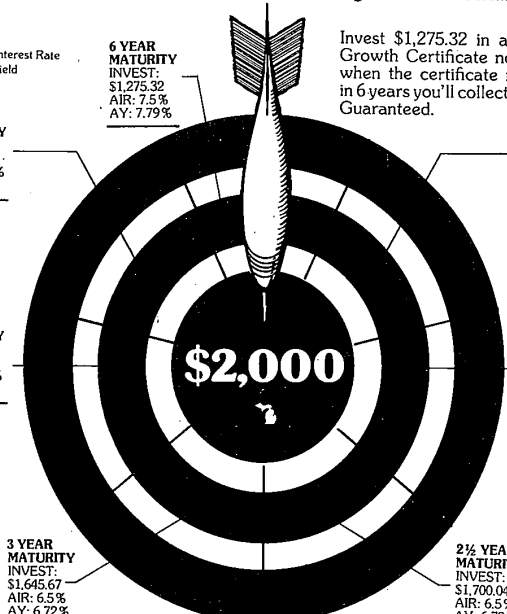
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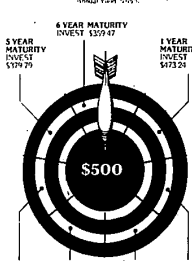
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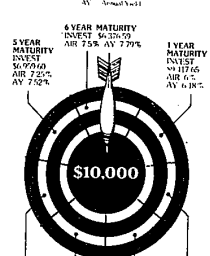
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