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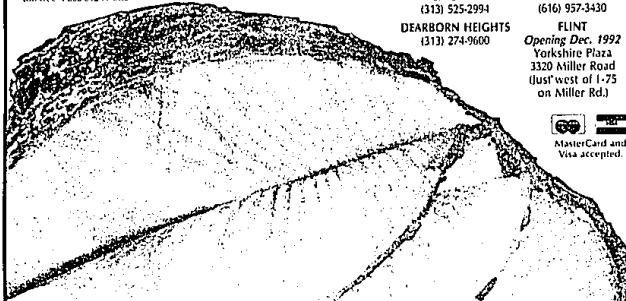
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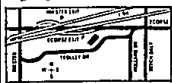
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MORAL PERSPECTIVES



REV. ROBERT
SCHADEN

Years ago no-mad tribes of people would come together in the desert and seek to rid themselves of their problems. They did it with a goat. They would touch the goat, believing that their troubles would go into the goat. In turn the goat was chased off into the desert and presto; the problems were gone.

Scapegoats, however, are not a thing of the past. We still use them extensively. Although they come in a variety of shapes, sizes and names, there is one variety that is especially popular. They are known as elected officials. Their names are not important, nor for that matter, is their party affiliation. The one qualification is that they be elected. From that moment on we can rest assured that either the problems we decry will all go away, or in the event that they do not we will at least have someone to blame.

They may be the beauty of having elected officials at any level. Whether they are local, state or national, our problems are now for them to fix. We chase them off to the dead — and if they fail, we will know whose fault it is, why this or that.

If we do not like the economy, it is up to them to fix it. If we do not

have clean air to breathe or clean water to drink, they will simply have to do something about it. If we have an epidemic the likes of AIDS, it will be for them to find a solution.

If we have tossed in the values that make life meaningful for us and those we touch, it will be the responsibility of these elected officials to recover them and bring them back to us. They will be the ones to fix an educational system, to restore law and order, to bring justice to corners in which it has not been known for some time. They will be the designated hitters, expected to produce at least a triple on just about anything that we may choose to throw their way.

There is, of course, one hitch in all this. We want them to do the job without inconveniencing us in the least. This is what scapegoats are for. It was for this that they were born, and for goodness sakes, it is for this that we elected them.

Our tribe, the American people, and on a wider scale yet, the human family, has a number of formidable troubles piled in front of the goats. I wonder if down deep we are really as glib as those folks in the desert. Do we really believe that they can fix it without us? Do we really believe that the economy can be fixed to everyone's satisfaction without a price? Can we expect any administration to be powerful or resourceful enough to undo the en-

vironmental messes of our land without exacting the cost of a lifestyle change from just about everyone who lives on it?

Can there be hope for our nation to continue to be a catalyst for people while creating enemies? And can we realistically stop creating enemies, if we insist on using their lands, their forests, or their other resources to preserve our way of life, ever to their detriment?

The power to do all of these things that goats can fix. In fact, donkeys and elephants cannot do it either. These are things that fall to all of us together. Officials can be leaders, but they can't fix problems.

To listen to local talk show comments, some hosts and callers alike are already gathering to send off the goat. Those who are disgruntled with the choices of Nov. 3 are hope to be proven correct. They already have their goats poled for the desert. Those who are gloating believe that the troubles will float away as the new terms of office begin.

Hopefully, there are enough in a third group who are wise enough to realize that scapegoats are no more effective when they emerge from an elective process than when they are chased into the desert. This is the group that can admit to where they may be a part of the problem and who are willing to join in becoming a part of the solution.

OCC campus holds college night for juniors

An opportunity for high school juniors and their parents to talk directly with Oakland Community College faculty and staff members is scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 3, at OCC's Highland Lakes Campus.

The free-admission College Information Night for Juniors will

run from 7-9 p.m. in the campus Student Center Arena. OCC faculty and staff will be on hand to give the students and their parents a chance to find out about career planning, paying for college, programs of study, university transfer, admission and registration, counseling, student ser-

vices and more.

"It's never too early for high school students to start planning a college career," says Kenn Urban, Highland Lakes Campus admission recruiter.

More details may be obtained by phoning the college at 360-3135.

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