

The Observer Newspapers

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SERVING THE RICH NORTHWEST Wayne County and South Oakland County Suburban markets with a group of affiliated newspapers in Livonia, Plymouth, Farmington, Redford, Garden City, Westland and the Township of Plymouth, Farmington and Redford.

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Picture Brighter for PCHA

Things are looking better for the Peoples Community Hospital Authority, the publicly-operated hospital facility which includes Garden City and Westland among its 23 member communities.

In the past year or two, the PCHA has been in a receiving end of some bad publicity. But the newspaper business being what it is, a governmental agency or a public official gets more attention for a mistake in official duties than the positive accomplishments.

Although things are looking up for the hospital authority, the situation of operating a \$17 million system is still not perfect for the simple reason that the hospitals are run by people and people are not perfect.

Being a public agency, supported in part by property taxes and having a board of directors meeting in open and public session, gives the authority's opponents a tremendous advantage in outlining its faults.

But the very existence of critics (and

there will always be legions of those) doesn't necessarily mean that there is any serious flaw within the authority or its administration.

But the freedom of speech allows many irresponsible statements to be made by misguided public officials.

In addition, the PCHA has an excellent, built-in advantage which allows the citizens in its member communities to express concern about the hospitals for the very reason that the hospitals are publicly supported.

But since last fall, a number of events have occurred which indicated that considerable improvements have been made and more on the way.

Now, with all of the past legal problems apparently resolved, the PCHA now has an excellent opportunity to live up to the bright potential of public service it can offer the communities.

—LEONARD POGER

From the Publisher's Desk

OBSERVATION POINT

By Philip H. Power

A BOUT the biggest news of the week was the publication of an encyclical letter by Pope Paul VI which, among other things, discussed the problem of birth control and the Church's attitude toward the population explosion.

I don't normally make the rounds of papal encyclicals my major leisure time activity, but this particular one was of unusual interest. Its pronouncement on birth control represented the outcome of years of painful soul-searching by the Church on what is clearly the most pressing problem of our times.

It also represented a field in which my old boss, former Congressman Paul H. Todd, Jr., of Kalamazoo, had a decisive impact as a freshman lawmaker in 1965-66. He was the originator, author, promoter and chief strategist for the first bill ever passed by the United States Congress dealing with the problem of population growth and birth control.

The law in effect, gave explicit Congressional approval for use of U.S. foreign aid funds to support voluntary programs of maternal and child health, child nutrition and birth control in countries abroad.

Curiously, the substance of this law paralleled closely one of the points made in Pope Paul's encyclical: That governments, being aware of the problem of overpopulation, have the right to take action "by favoring the availability of appropriate information" and "by adopting suitable measures," which must be, however, "in conformity with the moral law."

The ironic twist to all this is that when Todd was trying to think out the substance of his bill, it seemed as though every politician in Michigan and in Washington was telling him to lay off on the politically touchy subject of birth control.

"Absolute suicide," said one high-ranking Michigan Democrat.

"Total madness. Stay as far away from it as you can," said another.

Of course, these politicians were worried about the back-lash of angry Catholic voters they expected to materialize

were trying to do something about the problem of overpopulation with something that at times sounded suspiciously like "an attempt to destroy the Catholic religion."

Here, again, there was a key fact ignored by those who got emotional on the subject of national socialism.

The crucial concern of those interested in developing a policy on birth control had nothing at all to do with what Catholics around the world did or did not do. Accepting the dilemma faced by the Church as one that would have to be sorted out internally, the Paul Todd of this world focused his attention on the human problem of making birth control information available to those who wanted and needed it.

If Catholics, or others, chose not to be interested in birth control questions, that was their business.

It was out of these two misconceptions held with equal firmness on either side, that much of the fear and mistrust developed. And it was in this climate that politicians concluded, without really bothering to explore the issue with care, that to talk about birth control was political suicide.

It had the sense to see beneath each opposing position in this debate and to propose a solution that was acceptable to all.

He had learned the crucial lesson of politics: In order to get something done, don't just get mad. Try instead to explore the other guy's position. You may learn something, and you will get things done.

With the publication of the Pope's encyclical, the concern which has motivated serious Catholics the world over has now come out in print. Whether the Pope's message on this subject will be the last word is a moot point.

The key thing is that the Church is making a serious and open effort to come to grips with the birth control problem. This step, alone, is enormously important, for it has the effect of the mis-understanding and emotion out of the debate.

That's an important step forward.

—ROBERT E. FATHMAN
Farmington

Editor's and Master's degrees in 1965 were, as follows:

Bachelor's Degree: Ave.

Stari, Salary: 1. Engineering, \$551; 3. Sales Marketing, \$523; 4. Bus. Advertising, \$520; 5. Liberal Arts, \$518;

6. Prod. Manager, \$561; 7. Chemistry, \$585; 8. Math. Stat., \$556; 9. Econ. Finance, \$550; 10. Other fields, \$530.

Master's Degree: Ave.

Start. Salary: 1. \$752; 2. \$657; 3. \$670; 4. \$688; 5. \$649; 6. \$653; 7. \$682; 8. \$681; 9. \$689; 10. \$651.

In the Feb. 15 issue of the "Observer" there is an article on the third Senior High and another on a new library. The two sites are only one and a half miles apart. I propose that the School Board and the Library Board coordinate their efforts and build the new library as a part of the school.

This would avoid needless

dissipation of books and periodicals, professional staff, and physical plants.

And the school in providing

facilities for superior to an ordinary school library. The library would benefit by the availability of volunteer student clerical help, and the savings in costs could be used to augment the collection of books.

Certain practical problems

remain to be worked out re-

garding financing and sup-

ervision, but I'm sure they

are not insurmountable. How

about a comment from the two Boards?

—ROBERT E. FATHMAN
Farmington

Editor's NOTE: There are several legal problems involved in this suggestion.

First, the schools and

district libraries are com-

pletely separate units and

operate under different state

legislation. Their taxes are

levied in different manners

(the schools by a vote of the people, the library by the City Council and a vote of the Township residents).

The school library and the

District library also have

different functions.

Teachers' Salaries Are Competitive

Editor's NOTE: Comment is warranted on the article, "The Teachers Speak," in last week's Livonia Observer by R. D. Stephon, Executive Secretary, Livonia Education Association. Such comment might be headed:

An Engineer speaks:

Livonia teachers are well

paid. If one considers the

teacher a seasonal employee,

his salary is quite competi-

tive with other professions.

Or if he is a full-time em-

ployee, paid for 12 months,

two and one half months of

paid vacation is certainly a

compensatory factor for low-

er annual salaries. In fact, I

suspect that those entering

the profession are drawn to

it at least in part by this ex-

tended vacation. Reducing

Mr. Stephon's figures to a

monthly average based on a

19/2 month period for the

average teacher, the result

is that teacher com-

petitive ranks below only

that of the engineering pro-

fession. This is not too sur-

prising, considering the en-

gineer's higher academic re-

quirements. (140 semester

hours for a Bachelor's de-

gree vs. 120 to 124) Average

monthly starting salaries

paid to graduates with Bach-

elor's degrees are as follows:

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