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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 on the 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 misstep 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 the 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 flaws 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 agenda.

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

ABOUT the biggest news of last 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 reading of papal encyclicals my major leisure time activity, but this particular one was of unusual interest. It was unusual in that it 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 1955-56. 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 backlash of angry Catholic votes they expected to materialize

against anyone who dared venture into the tender area of birth control.

Curiously, such a backlash did not develop. Sure, some people were against the bill; but not that many. Todd's courage in tackling a tough problem which politicians had been trying to steer clear of brought him a lot of national acclaim.

The interesting part of this whole episode lies in just why everyone was so anxious to stay away from birth control. It represented the outcome of years of painful soul-searching by the Church on what is clearly the most pressing problem of our times.

At the time Todd was working on the bill, there seemed to be two major points of view about the issue, both of which were wrong.

(1) The pro birth control people blamed the Catholic Church for "an unreasonable insistence on standing in the way of developing a policy for coping with the most serious problem we face." [Such people insisted that Catholics were implacably hostile to any birth control at all, for anyone of any religion, and that they would do everything they could to defeat any politician who dared to interest himself in the issue.]

Such a point of view ignored two key facts.

First, the best evidence available suggested that nearly one half of U.S. Catholics were practicing birth control methods not strictly approved of by the Church.

Second, that thoughtful Catholics in this country and, indeed the hierarchy in the Vatican were devoting considerable as serious as it was painful to the issue. In effect, the problem lay—and still lies—in the conflict between a theological position which disapproves of certain methods of birth control and the observed fact of world starvation resulting from overpopulation.

Somehow, the pro birth control people couldn't get it through their heads that Catholics themselves were as concerned and anxious about the issue as non-Catholics.

(2) The anti-birth control people accused those who

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.

The crucial concern of those interested in developing a policy on birth control had nothing at all to do with what Catholics alone or the world did or did not do. At the heart of the dilemma faced by the Church was one that would have to be sorted out internally, by the Paul Todds of this world, for 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 reason, that they should explore the issue with care, that to talk about birth control was political suicide.

Todd 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.

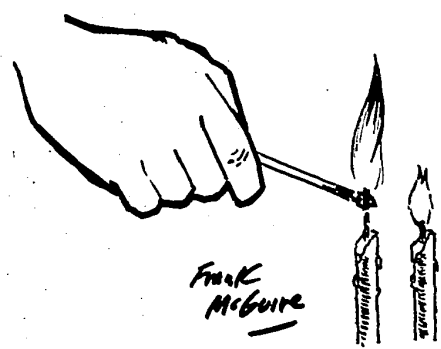
With the publication of the Pope's encyclical, the concern which has motivated serious Catholics the world over has now come out in print. Whether the Pope's message on this subject will be the last word is a moot point.

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 taken much of the misunderstanding and emotion out of the debate.

That's an important step forward.

Garden City-Westland Observer

Two Years and Growing Strong



Letters to Editor:

Sees Duplication In Facilities

Editor: In the Feb. 15 issue of the "Observer" there is an article about the 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 duplication of books and periodicals, professional staff, and physical plants. The greatest benefit would be to the high school in providing facilities far 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 regarding financial and supervisory matters. 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 of all the schools and the district library are completely 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: Comment is warranted on the article, "The Teachers' Speak," in last week's Livonia Observer by R. D. Stephenson, 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 competitive with other professions. Or if he is a full time employee, paid for 12 months, two and one half months of paid vacation is certainly a compensatory factor for lower annual salaries. In fact, I suspect that those entering the profession are drawn to it at least in part by this excellent perk below only that of the engineering profession. This is not too surprising considering the engineer's higher academic requirements (140 semester hours for a Bachelor's degree versus 120 to 124). Average monthly starting salaries paid to graduates with Bachelor's and Master's degrees in 1965 were, as follows:

Bachelor's Degree Ave. Start Salary: 1. Engineering, \$5321; 2. Accounting, \$5513; 3. Sales Marketing, \$5259; 4. Bus. Advertising, \$5250; 5. Liberal Arts, \$5118; 6. Prod. Manager, \$5568; 7. Chemistry, \$5885; 8. Math. Stat., \$5556; 9. Econ. Finance, \$5550; 10. Other fields, \$5330.

Master's Degree Ave. Start Salary: 1. \$7522, 2. \$6573, 3. \$6704, 4. \$6888, 5. \$6493, 6. \$5665, 7. \$5882, 8. \$5681, 9. \$5698, 10. \$5955.

The beginning salary of Livonia teachers with a Bachelor's degree is \$5339, those beginning with a Master's degree earn \$5373 per month.

The argument will be made that teachers must "live the year around." Certainly, this is a truism but then should they not work the year around for the competitive annual salaries they desire?

By far the greatest percentage of our property tax dollar goes for education, approximately 70% of which pays competitive monthly salaries. I hold that Livonia teachers are well paid and that the LEA should find another windmill to tilt.

Keith B. Termant
Livonia

Where Is The Ice?
Editor: In the tradition of the late publisher, Paul M. Chandler, I have admired your editorial comments on problems great and small, as they relate to Livonia.

It would be appreciated if you could determine the answer to this simple question: Why is it the Livonia Parks and Recreation people send out long activity lists, including a list of ice skating rinks, which are not maintained?

There were two weekends recently that were perfect for ice skating and so off we go to the rink nearest us at Bryant Junior High (Oakman north of 81st). The "rinks" were snow covered and useless. So we went all the way to Plymouth Township to skate at the County Park at Hines Northville Road. That was the weekend of Feb. 4 & 5th. Then, another weekend we tried again to find a Livonia rink at Ford Field, which we were led to believe was maintained by the Detroit Parks and Recreation Department. Again, just a lot of snow covered space.

So I paid 35 cents to let the kids skate at the Redford Golf rink, which is maintained by the Detroit Parks and Recreation Department. Doesn't it strike you as

strange that with all the grand millage we voted to acquire land for park sites, construct swimming pools, playgrounds etc.—that we can't keep one ice skating rink going? There is something fishy going on with our Parks and Recreation budget money and it is beginning to smell.

It would be great if you find out what is wrong. I've written a note to Councilman Milligan too. I am concerned with higher taxes and less to show for them. Thanks for your time and any effort you can spend to get to the heart of this.

Roy A. Clark
Livonia

Ed. Note: Please, Mr. Clark—understanding brings support. Please understand the crew involved in this has been overworked and they are understaffed. They had a hard time building up a base for a rink—and spent most of their winter trying to do this. Next year Mr. DuFour of Parks and Recreation has included in his budget appropriation to purchase blue clay to dump on the sand thereby, building up a better base for the outdoor rinks. Also, try next winter. We hope to have artificial rinks which will be much easier to maintain. Stay with it Mr. Clark—it can't get worse—it can only improve.

Cars Better In City Than Horses
Editor: A few weeks ago there was a "letter to the editor" in the Observer concerning the City Council proposed ban on riding horses on Livonia public streets. The writer, a horse lover, commented that she had never seen horses perform some of the stunts drivers of some cars do.

Well, I've never had cars do some of the things that horses do either. I've never had a car drop a load of manure in my driveway and I've never had to chase runaway cars down the parkway in front of my house (never ride in front of their own—just the neighbors) and leave ruts from the cart wheels and piles of manure.

I've never gone outside in the morning to find cars eating my shrubs and lawn. Please—Livonia is a city now. Let's keep the horses where they belong—in the country. I'll certainly vote for any Councilman who will keep the horses off our public streets.

Horse Lover
Six Mile Road
Livonia

OBSERVING the Scene . . .

By MYRA CHANDLER

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Hey, ladies if you are somewhere between 40 and death, as the song goes; if you are trim, and have a fair share of pep, this is your year.

There are several femme fatales who are setting the pace, paving the way for you. This will long be known as the year of "glamour hits the 40's (would you believe, 50's).

With five days soaking up N.Y. and as many Broadway shows, it was delightful to see the cutie in her budding teens and early twenties taking a back seat to the full-blown (not a trace of fading) lady more than a stone's throw away from 40.

What was even more delightful was to meet these elegant and thoroughly active women on my side of the footlights and find out how really good they looked. Oh, a line or two—sure—for character. But they were such a truly, happy lot. Enjoying their work, their success.

The answer I guess—they were old enough to be smart enough to know how to enjoy success.

My favorite was Angela Lansbury as Mame. She was trim, full of fun, humor and great songs. Next to the lead song "Mame"—my favorite is "Open A New Window"—if you can get to New York I recommend the show. But if you can't, the sound track of the music is fun and will give you a lift (if you are over 40, that is).

Our visit was geared to the opening of the new Broadway show "Sherry," an amusing musical take-off of the "Man Who Came to Dinner." Eileen Boze of The Observer, is "my sister Ellen" to Byron Webster who plays the part of Noel Coward and has a perfectly marvelous song, "Au Revoir." He is a natural born mimic and does a proposal duet with the lead character that should surely bring him a Tony award for supporting actor next season.

Onstage and off his friend Eddie Lawrence as Harpo Marx is fun, light footed and pure entertainment. Eddie is also a composer and an artist.

In fact all of Byron's friends, we had occasion to be with this week, gave us a wonderful insight into the world of the theatre. This business of entertaining people—you and me—taken very seriously by these people—and no amount of hardship or inconvenience is too great to accomplish portraying a good part—writing a good piece of music—a good song—or a dance arrangement—please us. They may rush to the newspaper and read the review before the headlines or the stock market—but they accept whatever happens to them, never stop hoping—and what I think is the best about them, generally, they are not afraid to live and never give up.

The male lead in "Sherry" is Clive Revill and brings a most sassy Alexander Wolcott to his audiences.

Again, the female lead is no tender young thing, she is Dolores Gray, and has seen at least 49 summers, and maybe a couple of extra winters, but can she belt out a song. "Putty in Your Hands" is great.

Incidentally, Lotie Lenya (to further prove my point) several times on stage completely steals the show from Jill Haworth (sweet young thing). Lenya plays the part of Fraulein Schneider in "Cabaret," another great musical, and she must be in her late 60's.

No doubt these ladies take good care of themselves and certainly don't sit up till dawn as we did, in the village listening to a composer-pianist like John Willoughby.

But no doubt, come Monday and reality, feeling like 80 in the shade it will still seem worth it to me—such sweet music—and he has an album, too.

SENSE and NONSENSE

A clergyman named David Noel made a recent talk in this area under the auspices of the Christian Crusade organization. He expounded the thesis that music loved by American teenagers is the result of "infantilism" by "sexually immature and emotionally unstable."

Aw, come on now, Reverend Noel. Have you been listening to that catchy teen students to a point of com- yourself?



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