

Dr. Carman Acts To Clear Up Misunderstandings

EDITOR:
Observer Newspaper coverage of my recent speech on Parochialism in Livonia has precipitated critical comment both in your Letters to the Editor column and directly to me.

While your reporting was basically factual, quotes out of context have, I think, altered the general tone of my remarks and led to misunderstandings — particularly among people opposing my viewpoint.

In the interest of resolving these misunderstandings and providing more accurate view of my intended general tone, I respectfully request that you publish

parts of the speech dealing with the questions raised.

Kenneth W. Carman, M.D.

"Although the groups lobbying for financial assistance to the non-public schools, particularly the parochial schools, have indicated that the primary reason for the decline in their enrollments has been a financial crisis they have not seen fit to list all of the reasons. Initially, it should be pointed out that there have been decreases in the elementary parochial school enrollments, especially the inner city, but that the senior high enrollments have remained relatively steady if not increasing slightly.

"There is no question that their schools have had increased per capita operating costs due in a large part to the increase

in lay personnel or faculty to staff these schools. This has come about because of a reduction in the contributed services by brothers and sisters.

"In addition, many of the non public schools have lowered classroom size in an effort to obtain quality instruction. At the secondary level, the complexities of education have added increasing financial burdens.

"One of the obvious but often overlooked factors in increasing education costs in the non-public sector, particularly the parochial school, has been the existence of the small and out-of-date school whether it be at the elementary but particularly at the secondary level.

"A survey of some 74 high schools in the archdiocese of Detroit revealed in July of 1968 that the average high school had a mean enrollment of 406 with a mean tuition of \$240.

READERS' FORUM

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There were only four schools out of this group of 74 with enrollments over the 1,000 level. The largest school had an enrollment of 1,325.

"The Thomas Report carried out in Michigan recently indicated that small schools were inefficient, uneconomical and simply could not offer the wide course offerings in which a sophisticated up to date large high school can afford.

"Most educators believe that a modern comprehensive high school must have 1,000 to 1,250 students (even 2,000) to offer all of the necessary classes and program.

of Catholic students were asked to rank in importance their reasons for sending their youngsters to a Catholic or public school.

"It is interesting to note that the Catholic parents sending their youngsters to the public schools gave the following reasons: 1) such schools have more effective and qualified teachers, 2) have more adequate facilities and educational tools, 3) are more conveniently located, 4) provide transportation for school children, and 5) prepare children for college.

Asks Accounting Of School Dollars

EDITOR:
Since education is one of the key expenditures of Livonia or any other city I feel the citizens of each community should be aware of the use their tax dollars are being used for.

The taxes in our city have nearly doubled in the last five years but the majority of the tax payers are content to sit back and let the other fellow worry about the issues.

This to me seems so silly because the housewives will picket a grocery store for increased prices in the store which might amount to a few hundred dollars a year but will let their property taxes increase as much as \$500 dollars a year yet do nothing about it.

I agree costs have risen in the past few years but must we sit back and have the teachers tell us that they will not teach more than 20 students, that the schools have needless amounts of telephones installed in all the classrooms, that our children will go to school three hours instead of six hours on the fact that we must be burdened with other suburbs' children when our own children must be on half days.

Now is the time to act, time is money. In these inflationary times, I feel the school system should be made accountable for its intake of revenues and output of expenditures.

Let's have an annual report for this school year showing school enrollment and the amount of dollars spent for each school. Then maybe we can analyze why some schools are similar grades are varying from an overall average.

Let's begin by having not only the minority governing the majority and the superintendent of schools but the majority as well.

"There are other aspects to this problem which have not been mentioned. The fantastic growth of the parochial school system in the decade of the fifties far outstripped that in the public sector. It has been indicated by many that this growth was uncontrolled and out of proportion to the levels of support. There are many who feel that this building spree was unco-ordinated and without careful long range planning.

"In addition, it is well known that the financial support of churches and church schools have not kept pace with inflation and other cost factors.

"These findings are confirmed by a study by Father Berg at the University of Buffalo, which was completed this year.

"His findings indicated that parents transferred their children from parochial to public schools because they felt: 1) the public schools offered better educational quality, 2) parents have a lower opinion of the need of Catholic elementary schools than do the parents of students attending parochial schools, 3) parents of children transferred to public elementary schools have a greater concern for increasing costs of parochial education.

"It is obvious then that parents send their youngsters to parochial schools principally for religious indoctrination and the infusion of moral values, whereas parents sending their youngsters to the Public Schools felt that such schools offered better educational opportunities."

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