

Letters

School Survey Seen Lacking

Editor:

The survey which is expected to clarify the future of Catholic education in the Diocese of Rochester makes no mention of either "special education" or "vocational education". Can the lack of such education be responsible for the presence in public or non-Catholic schools of more than 50 per cent of Catholic children? I have reason to believe that Catholic children need and deserve such education.

Why? All children are individuals with each of the specific needs and wants that individuals must have, in order to be happy and not out of joint with the rest of humankind. Many children have talents that must be discovered and trained at an early age. Maria Montessori, the international educator, claimed that all children about the age of 3, have capacities, unique to that age, for music and art.

Unless such talent be harnessed at that age, the child's advancing years with their certain distractions will tend to crowd out his incipient genius. Can't Catholic schools of the future promote such talent? Will there be no special Catholic schools for the slow-learning child separate from those for the gifted? Is there no expectation for the future that Catholic schools for the mentally retarded will expand?

If correct diagnosis prove a child to have poor vision or partial or complete deafness, is there no Catholic School in the Diocese of Rochester for him to attend that will take care of his "special" training?

"Vocational education" has no place in the survey. Why can't a Catholic high school shaped to the purposes of "Edison Tech" be set up to serve those young Catholics who neither need nor want the wholly academic type of education the present Catholic school system seems to favor? If parents send their children to Catholic schools to learn how to live, why can't they also send them to learn how to make a living?

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"NOW I ASK YOU — WHAT KIND OF POOR, DEMENTED SOUL WOULD COME INTO A CHURCH AND STEAL THE PULPIT MICROPHONE?"

Albany Wire

There is little time left, this session, and the pace of the legislative action is beginning to show it: longer sessions; more bills up, passed and on to the governor; an element of rush, hurry, hurry on the hill. For example, this week both houses met on Thursday for a full day's work . . . normally debates are scheduled Monday through Wednesday only. Also, there was no Easter recess except for Good Friday.

If things aren't wound up by April 18, they will not meet the week of April 20 (Jewish Passover) but return April 27 to finish and adjourn. As you can see, that means only a few full debate days left.

AID TO EDUCATION

Right now the education aid bill is in the governor's court. He continues to say he doesn't want a new, long range program (this, he says, is why he opposes the Speno-Lerner Tuition Aid plan which provides aids to parents on a sliding scale to help meet tuition costs of secular subjects taught in the non-public schools. It's patterned after the Scholar Incentive Program, and meets constitutional tests under both the First Amendment of Separation of Church and State and the Blaine Amendment of the New York State Constitution).

As yet the governor has come up with no alternative and parents groups are continuing to press strongly for Speno-Lerner. Exactly how hard they are pressing is evident here. Legislators say they have never seen such an outpouring of mail, visits, telephone calls on behalf of any aid bill in their memory. Continued emphasis and contact is the only way we can be sure legislators will vote for aid to non-public schools this year.

One point worth noting: should the governor come up with some alternative plan of aid, it must be acceptable to the parents groups. Because they have put the pressure on the legislators. And since it's not a party issue, the governor cannot command votes in the legislature (even though he's a mighty persuader).

WELFARE HEARING

The Catholic Committee appeared this week at the joint Senate-Assembly Social Services hearing to urge repeal of the 20% co-insurance provision of the present Medicaid legislation. The last legislature passed a bill requiring the medically needy to pay one out of every five dollars worth of medical bills they get. In effect it reduces their aid by 20%.

It is called an "administrative monstrosity" by health commissioners, doctors etc. who believe it will result in less

care rather than more money for care. Its aim is to cut Medicaid costs. Any saving would be more than offset by the administrative costs (so says state Health Commissioner Wyman) and fewer doctors willing to accept Medicaid patients (they have to collect the \$1 from their patients and the \$4 from the State.) The complications, also, will discourage families from getting care thus creating greater social problems in the future.

The bill has some chance of passage, though many upstate legislators oppose it.

COUNT

You may not believe this but the current count of bills entered in the Senate is 9,029 and in the Assembly 6,522 as of Mar. 24. Bills signed into law as of that date by the governor: 84. That's a long, long way to go.

The Slot Man We Invite Your Comment

By Carmen Viglucci



The greatest news story ever written was done in eight words:

"God created heaven and earth and all things."

This simple yet powerful sentence evokes the familiar feeling "I wish I had written that."

Yet in one sense I'm glad it wasn't in the *Courier-Journal* first.

Here's what we might hear:

A new theologian: Just how does this statement apply to today's crucial issues.

A traditionalist: I don't think it's the function of a diocesan newspaper to meddle in theological matters.

Woman reader: I wish you'd lay off that heavy stuff and print more recipes.

Old reader: You should stop pandering to the younger generation.

Young reader: You should stop pandering to the older generation.

TV bug: Why wasn't it on television?

Second TV bug: I'm glad it wasn't. They would have preempted "Edge of Night".

Industry leader: Did he patent it?

Up-to-date layman: You won't find that kind of stuff in the NCR.

Second up-to-date layman: Where did you steal that from — the NCR?

All of which leads us to the crux of this column. Accepting criticism is part of the daily

routine of a newspaperman. It's not overstatement to say that no matter what you do someone will take umbrage. It's not even safe to defend motherhood these days.

Objectivity is the Holy Grail of the good journalist and when he achieves it he leaves himself open to criticism since he will have aggravated everybody on all sides of every issue.

Recently one reader wanted to know why we haven't printed "the other side" of the abortion issue. This is a fair question. If we were a secular paper we would, of course, be remiss if we didn't tell both sides of every issue.

Things aren't that simple for a Catholic newspaper. We have to be involved with the moral aspects of this particular issue and there are no two sides. Abortion is premeditated murder.

It goes against a newsman's grain but here is a case where objectivity must come in second.

A Jehovah's Witness I know says it best.

"Here is a case where the Christian, even an elected official, must put his faith to the test. His Christian duty must come before all other responsibility and he must act accordingly. Opposing abortion is a fine way to be a witness for Christ."

With a new *Courier* in circulation I can't close without inviting your comments and, yes, criticisms on it. So no matter how you react, whether it be with gales of laughter, a favorable smile, a pout, indignation, or clear, helpful advice.

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