



INDIANS

Chief Sitting Bull, in the Blackfriars' production of "Indians," is David Runzo, a teacher at Rochester School for the Deaf. The Arthur Kopit play is scheduled for three performances, Oct. 30-Nov. 1, at 8:30 p.m. in the Xerox Square auditorium. The center ring of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show is the scene of the action, which, in the author's words, is "a nightmare panorama of Buffalo Bill reliving his life and trying to work out where he went wrong."

Teachers' Course On Puerto Rico Open to Public

City residents interested in the history and culture of Puerto Rico are invited to take an evening course offered by the City School District.

"An Introduction to Puerto Rico," will be taught by city school district personnel as an in-service course for district teachers and administrators. The public, however, is invited, free of charge. The course begins on Monday, Nov. 2, in Room 203 at Monroe High School. Sessions will be from 7 to 9 p.m. The class will meet eight times.

Those interested should contact Eberhard Thieme at the Board of Education, 325-4560, or call the Community Affairs Office, 325-4560.

Organization Seeks Anti-Drug Workers

A special orientation meeting designed to solicit a volunteer community action force to work toward the prevention of drug abuse in the Perinton area, will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 27 at 8:00 p.m. at the Johanna Perin Elementary School, Potter Pl., Fairport.

Sponsored by the Perinton Narcotic Guidance Council, the meeting is open to all parents, educators, students and interested citizens.

The Perinton Narcotic Guidance Council was established at the Aug. 25 meeting of the Perinton Town Board, as authorized by an act passed by the New York State Legislature creating authority at the local community level to form community groups to organize and combat the increasing drug

Ten Mercy Seniors Commended

Ten seniors at Our Lady of Mercy High School have been awarded letters of commendation for scholastic achievement in the National Merit Scholarship Program.

They are Deborah Dooley and Margaret Meng of Our Lady of Lourdes parish; Mary Jo Gerhardt and Caroline Tallmadge, St. John the Evangelist, Rochester; Anne Maracle, St. Salome; Mary Beth Metzger, St. Cecilia; Mary Ellen O'Connor, Queen of Peace; Julie O'Grady, St. Thomas the Apostle; Mary Rodeheffer, St. Boniface; and JoAnn Tierney, St. Thomas More.

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A REPLY ON ABORTION

STATE SENATOR THOMAS LAVERNE SPOKE OUT ON THE QUESTION OF ABORTION IN A FULL PAGE ADVERTISEMENT IN THE CATHOLIC COURIER-JOURNAL OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1970. THE ROCHESTER RIGHT TO LIFE COMMITTEE HAS PURCHASED SPACE TO RESPOND TO THIS ADVERTISEMENT. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO REPLY HERE TO EVERY POINT MADE, BUT WE FEEL THAT SEVERAL AREAS SHOULD BE DISCUSSED.

THE SENATOR'S STAND

He stated, "I voted for repeal of the State's abortion law at the last session of the State Legislature."

"I chose repeal over the alternative reform. . . ."

Mr. Laverne did not mention a third alternative, which was to vote against both repeal and reform and thus retain the law which was then on the books. That law allowed abortion to save the life of the mother. The present law allows what has been termed "abortion on demand."

He further said, "I believe that abortion repeal should stand until such time as any abuses are uncovered."

We interpret this to mean the he would try to correct any abuses of the law, but otherwise would continue to favor abortion-on-demand, which is what this law allows. If this is so, then only by electing those committed to repeal of the present law, can we end abortion on demand in our state.

HIS REASONS FOR SUPPORTING REPEAL

"I did so because the criminal sanctions against abortion did not prevent abortions and had spawned a serious public health problem."

The same can be said about the laws against speeding, to cite but one example. Both laws have a deterrent effect, however, and no one advocates the repeal of laws against the latter. Also, many people tend to equate legality with what is right and therefore laws do have a definite teaching value.

With regard to the public health problem the Senator refers to, he quotes several figures:

1. "Last year 350,000 women in the United States required hospitalization after botched abortion attempts."

The Senator stated at a meeting on the evening of October 19, 1970, in discussing incomplete abortion that "most of the cases are self-induced."

Ten percent (10%) of all pregnancies end in miscarriage. With 3.5 million births in the United States each year 10% of this would amount to his figure of 350,000. However, the vast majority of these are spontaneous miscarriages (medical term—incomplete abortions) which do require hospitalization and are due to natural causes (defective egg or sperm. Most are not, as the Senator infers, due to "botched abortion attempts" his words.) To imply that most of these women deliberately tried to end their pregnancies is medically incorrect and grossly unfair.

2. "Estimates of the number of illegal abortions in the United States run as high as 1.25 million. . . ."

Dr. Andre E. Hellegers, a Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Georgetown University, notes that this estimate is based on a 1934 study which drew its data from case histories given by 10,000 women who attended the Margaret Sanger Birth Control Clinic in New York between 1925 and 1929. "I leave it to your imagination," Dr. Hellegers has commented, "how representative that group must have

been of the United States in 1925. To give you some highlights, 45.1% were foreign-born, 41.7% were Jewish and 26.1% were Catholic (attending a birth control clinic in 1925-1929). . . . I doubt that any first-year student in an epidemiology course could get past the first semester if he attempted to draw conclusions about the United States from a sample such as this."

The fact is that no one really knows how many women have illegal abortions annually, and no reliable method has been developed to find out. Simply stated, the illegal abortionists have not yet published their figures.

3. "More than 8,000 women died." This figure is taken from a book by Dr. Fred Taussig of St. Louis, titled, *Abortion—Spontaneous and Induced*, which was published in 1936 — 34 years ago. Robert E. Hall, M.D. is a former President of the Association for the Study of Abortion and an advocate of abortion on demand. He feels that a figure of 5,000-10,000 abortion deaths yearly is certainly not correct and that the total number is probably no more than 500. He comments, "Even the 'unskilled' abortionist is evidently more skillful and/or more careful these days than when Taussig compiled his figures."

The figure of 500 deaths per year is also supported by other sources. At the International Conference on Abortion held in Washington in 1967, and attended by proponents and opponents, there was general agreement that criminal abortion deaths did not exceed 500 per year for the entire United States. Therefore, we see that Mr. Laverne's figures for criminal deaths are, at least, 16 times greater than the recent more reliable figures.

Any number of deaths, whether they be of the mother or of the unborn child must, of course, be deplored. However, deaths due to criminal abortion have not been eliminated by the new law. In New York City alone, five deaths due to criminal abortion had been reported as of October 17, 1970. This is in addition to 5 other deaths resulting from abortions (4 done in hospitals) under the new law in that city. We have been informed by the New York State Bureau of Vital Records in Albany that the upstate New York abortion and mortality figures will not be released until approximately mid-November.

AS A CATHOLIC LEGISLATOR HOW COULD YOU SUPPORT A POSITION CONTRARY TO YOUR CHURCH?

The Senator quoted Cardinal Cushing in his answer to this. However, he did not quote him completely. We have, therefore, supplied the editor of this newspaper with the complete text of the Cardinal's statement on abortion. This is printed on page 16-A of this issue. We urge you to read it. It does not, in our opinion, justify either Senator Laverne's use of the quotation or his vote for abortion on demand.

The Rochester Right to Life Committee welcomes members of all faiths. It is non-partisan and endorses no candidates for public office. It has supplied Senators and Assemblymen with information on abortion in the past and will continue to do so. This advertisement was purchased by the members of the Committee because it was felt that the Senator's statement on abortion was not completely accurate.

We do not feel that the Senator deserves the implication he mentioned in his own advertisement. We do believe, however, that on the issue of abortion on demand, he has been misguided, and that his vote on this bill was not in the best interests of society.

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