

### Mental Health Commentary

# Federal Cutback Endangers Health Centers

By DePAUL CLINIC

The economy policy of the Nixon Administration has stirred outcries of protest from those who have been and those who hoped to be beneficiaries of governmental financing for their favorite health and social service projects. Those of us in the mental health field who have been funded by various levels of government have been subjected to increasing fiscal insecurity in the last several years. In Monroe County, the community mental health services, administered by the County Mental Health Board, have been subject, as is everyone, to the dilemma of rising costs without a concomitant increase in public funds. Thus, there is a greater reliance on fee for service income.

The President's adjusted budget request for 1973 reduces the funds available for community mental health centers and the proposed 1974 federal budget eliminates all funding for these centers. This is a changed policy regarding the federal government's commitment to the mental health service delivery system of the country and is viewed with dismay by Dr. Harold Miles, director of the Monroe County Mental Health Services. He points out the high rate of mental illness, mental retardation, alcoholism and drug abuse in this country and the inadequate funding for the services needed to deal with these problems which "have been short-changed in the funding process of local and state governmental units, and, for that matter, of voluntary health insurance plans and of general hospitals."

The federal administration's economies in the mental health field, Dr. Miles states, "must be found in the context of centuries of rejection of these illnesses and defects as unacceptable, manifestations of weakness of the will, unique to degenerates, etc."

The major change in the federal government's policy will be the failure to re-enact the Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services Act of 1963, originally proposed by President John F. Kennedy. This act suggested that a community mental health center be established for every 75,000 to 200,000 people and offer five levels of mental health services. There are presently two such centers in Monroe County and two more have been planned. The CMHS Act will expire in June of this year. So, will the plans for the two additional mental health centers in this county.

In addition, there will be no new funds for CMHC staffing, grants, alcoholism project grants, drug abuse programs, and no new grants for children's services, training and research.

The president states that the Community Mental Health Centers program "has attained its original objective and does not need further federal assistance."

Sen. Edward Kennedy complained that if the president's policy is followed, the mental health centers program will be canceled. The poor, particularly, will be affected since 42% of mental health center patients are on welfare and 64% have family incomes under \$5,000. Only 12% of mental health centers' costs has been covered by health insurance.

## St. Salome's Sets Plans for Pre-Schoolers

Registration is scheduled from 9 to 11 a.m. and from 12:30 to 2 p.m. at the St. Salome's school office for the Little People's School, a private pre-school program for 3 and 4-year-olds.

Children may be enrolled for two, three or five days a week for the school to begin in September 1973. Classes will be at St. Salome's school at 4280 Culver Road and further information is available at the school office. Call 467-7593.

The school is not limited to St. Salome's parish.

### FUND A FARMER

Catholic Relief Services-USCC is helping small farmers in the developing nations to produce better crops. You and your organization can aid CRS in furnishing Third World farmers with vitally needed farm implements. Here are a few items that are needed: heavy-duty wheel-barrows — \$30 each; shovels — \$36 a dozen; rakes — \$42 a dozen; hoes — \$12 a dozen; machetes — \$18 a dozen; and here's a big one: a roto-tiller (7 1/2 h.p.) — \$750 each.

### SERVICES RENDERED

The global aid programs conducted by Catholic Relief Services-USCC for the past 30 years have earned for the organization the title of "America's Good Samaritan." During the 1972 report year, these programs reached an estimated 20 million impoverished men, women and children without regard to race, creed or color. Supplies and services rendered by CRS-USCC for this period were valued in excess of \$138 million.

### CARMELITE BENEFIT

A pantry shower for the Carmelite Monastery on Jefferson Road will be a feature of the April meeting of Court our Lady of the Cenacle, Catholic Daughters of America.

Easter packages for residents of three nursing homes also will be prepared at the meeting, scheduled for 8 p.m. Tuesday, April 17, in St. Philip Neri school hall.

### ANNIVERSARY PARTY

The Holy Name of Mary Society of St. Stanislaus Church is planning a 25th anniversary celebration for Saturday, May 12. The group was organized in 1948, with Father Henry Adamski, now pastor of St. Casimir's, Elmira, as moderator.

Mrs. Raymond Budnik, president, reminds members that the reservation deadline is May 1.

See the beauty of "Early Spring" in Letchworth State Park at the



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