

WAYNECAP

'Reaching the Family By Reaching the Children'

By PAT PETRASKE

Talking to Sister Rosario Hughes, director of the Wayne County Action Program (WAYNECAP), is a little like listening to "initials" from the rock musical "Hair." Bubbling with enthusiasm, the Sister of Mercy could write her own little tune on the use of letters as she describes her work in terms of OEO, OED, HEW, PEP, EEA and so on.

But each of these groupings of initials represents an important aspect of WAYNECAP, which administers, conducts and coordinates anti-poverty programs throughout the 607 square miles of the primarily rural county. If funding is available, WAYNECAP can smell it 500 miles away in Washington and has managed to build up its resources from approximately \$250,000 at its inception in 1966 to \$675,000. Congressman Frank Horton recently announced the latest grant of \$21,510 from the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Sharing a large brick building with the Wayne County Public Health Nurses near Lyons, WAYNECAP functions in a handful of offices, yet through "mobilization and utilization" of existing local, state and federal agencies, it provides employment for 240 people and service to 175 year-round children and families and 125 migrant children.

The key to WAYNECAP's success lies "in a close working relationship with local super-

visors and all existing community agencies," explained Sister Rosario who is the only nun sitting as an executive director in the 54 New York state community action programs.

She buzzes around the county in the traditional black habit and notes that "people are used to seeing me. They have no hang-ups because the program has no religious affiliation." After 20 years as a principal in Auburn, Sister Rosario became an employe of the Atlanta University Multi-Purpose Training Center in Georgia and concentrated her efforts on the poverty programs of the South.

Solving the problems of the poor often results in segregation, she observed. She tries to make sure that there are not separate programs for different economic levels. For example, the Child-Family Development campuses in Clyde and Lyons serve the total community, including children of migrant workers, affluent middle class and "aid to dependent children" mothers.

The migrants "are part of the total economy, so they should be part of the total community," she said.

Total family care is one of the main concerns of WAYNECAP, and "reaching the family can be done by reaching the children," said Sister Rosario. An old furniture store converted into a Child-Family Development Center takes children from eight weeks to five years old

The "poor" make up one-third of the WAYNECAP Board of Directors. Another third of the policy-making board comprises representatives from the political sector, including the Wayne County Board of Supervisors, N.Y.S. Division of Employment, the sheriff's department and the department of social services. The remaining portion of the board is drawn from organizations such as the Council of Churches, the bar association, the Lyons school system, industry and the labor force.

A recent resolution by the Wayne and Seneca counties Boards of Supervisors sub-delegated WAYNECAP to administer the Manpower Revenue Sharing Programs for the two counties.

Heading the manpower program is Dan Kane, a soft-spoken graduate of Fordham who keenly feels the joys and frustrations of his job. Job satisfaction comes from being able to find employment for 78 high school students in the county's various non-profit institutions. Under the "in-school" program, the students fit ten hours of work per week at \$1.85 per hour into their schedules. Three schools have a work-study



Photo by Dave Wilbeck

A big sandwich can be a Curt Van Valkenburg at program and give credit towards graduation for those in a non-regents curriculum.

The main problem, however, is that most of the employment is in "dead-end jobs which have no upward mobility," Kane said.

An "out-of-school" program provides jobs for school dropouts

two-handed job, discovered the Lyons Family Center.

for 29 1/2 hours a week. The chances of getting into a job permanently are often slim, although the Newark State School has begun to hire some of the young adults on a full-time basis.

"I've had kids come in and out of the program three or four times," he said.

TOWARD TOMORROW

Father Henry Atwell

Our new vice president, Mr. Gerald Ford, recently told us that our President is a man of great moral strength, that he is an example of righteousness and good conduct, an example we should follow.

Mr. Ford's statement was somewhat of a secular canonization of the President.

The Catholic Church has wisely refrained from canonizing even less controversial personages, usually until a century after their deaths.

There has always been a strong temptation to look for saviors and saints in times of upheaval and crisis.

I cannot recall any previous time in our nation's history when our national vanity has been so repeatedly humiliated. We are in a situation of decline in just about every sense in which such matters are usually calculated — morally, financially, culturally, productively, environmentally, militarily, and ideationally. William Stringfellow, in an article in a recent issue of Christianity and Crisis magazine, says Americans are sullen, despondent, apprehensive, suspicious.

Various recent surveys and polls report church attendance is also on the decline. The national attitude of scepticism has infected church members to the

MRS. NEWLAND TO SPEAK

Mary Read Newland, author and lecturer will speak on "Parishes and Families" Tuesday, Jan. 29, 8 p.m., at St. Ambrose's Dailey Hall, 31 Empire Blvd. Mrs. Newland has written eight books and numerous magazine articles on Christian family life. Her lecture is part of the St. Ambrose adult education lecture series, and is open to all.

point they no longer trust their clergy.

Forty years ago Christians in Germany also faced a national crisis. The full fury of the Nazi era was then still ahead of them. Hitler still appeared as a paragon of virtue. Germans saw him as a great example for them of nobility, purity, dedication to duty. He taught the Germans to be honest, thrifty, industrious. He stressed love of family, loyalty to the nation. He was kind to children and liked flowers. One of his best friends was an army chaplain. He signed a treaty with the Vatican and promised to respect the Church's rights and privileges and told the nation, "The rights of the churches will not be curtailed."

Germany was then in its ascendancy — jobs, production, prestige, power. One noted clergyman of Germany said Hitler was for that nation "a gift and miracle of God."

A handful of clergy discerned the temptation to which so many others were falling. They met for seven days in May, 1934, at Barmen and concluded their meeting by issuing their now famous Barmen Declaration which, among other items, warned Christians against letting the Church become "an organ of the State."

Those few men at Barmen were right. The vast majority of the other German clergy and lay people lacked their foresight and were drawn unsuspecting into the final tragedy of the Hitler era.

History seldom repeats itself but there are often similarities from one age to another. When we today are presented temptations similar to those the Germans faced 40 years ago, we should recall the results of their response. Perhaps we need an updated Barmen Declaration of our own.

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