



Skull Session

Dennis Fraction, who coaches the Mt. Carmel parish team entered in the CYO high-school basketball league, watches his players fight it out on a checkerboard at Lewis Street Center. The game, a step in a CYO youth development program, illustrates "attack and destroy." Fraction said he hoped, however, that it would give his players "some sort of understanding that winning isn't everything," and "We hope they will reflect this in life in general."

Defining 'Death' Debated

By MARTIN TOOMBS

In New York State, it is possible to be "dead in every way except legally," according to Dr. Richard L. Burleson of the Upstate Medical Center. A definition of death is really a determination of the time when a doctor may legally declare

a patient dead, he said.

Burleson spoke as a panel member discussing a bill presently before the state legislature that would declare death of the brain as the time of death, instead of the current definition, when the heart

stops beating. The debate was sponsored by the St. Thomas More Lawyer's Guild at the Academy of Medicine in Rochester March 11.

Burleson, a transplant surgeon, at the center in Syracuse, emphasized many problems due to the current law, while noting that "if there is a question about life, the person is alive." He labelled current practice "an affront to the dead patient" as the "corpse" is left on machines and not buried. "To maintain this charade," Burleson stated, "can cost \$1,000 a day."

He noted circumstances under which the present law could actually cause death. He said that sometimes a doctor is afraid to put a person on a heart-lung machine "because he doesn't want to be stuck with dead patients on machines." He doesn't agree with them, he said, but some doctors do feel that way. He also pointed out that while machines are being used to maintain an "ex-patient" they can't be used for someone still living.

Burleson cited the reluctance of some doctors to cooperate in organ transplants, for fear that they will be accused of taking organs before the patient has died as another reason why doctors need a specific rule for determining death.

Father William B. Smith, a professor of moral theology at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, asserted that the law should not be changed because of uncertainty in the medical profession. Citing the decision of the American Medical Association not to state that death of the brain means that the person is dead, he said that "it is inappropriate for the legislature to legislate in law a determination of biological fact which the medical community as a whole has not yet endorsed or even deemed necessarily ripe for legislation."

Harold Hirsh, M.D., a professor at the Howard University Medical School and a law graduate, asserted that brain death should not be written into the law as the moment of death because of the unreliability of the EEG (electroencephalogram) in determining the cessation of brain function, and because medical opinion may change in the future.

Father William Donnelly, chaplain at Monroe Community College, spoke in favor of the proposed law, referring to the principle of the right to discontinue "extraordinary means" to prolong life.

Chemung Agency Sets Hunger Walk

Elmira — A Walk for Hunger has been scheduled for Sunday, April 11, by a task force of Chemung County's CROP. Sponsored by the Inter-faith Social Action Group, the walk will raise funds to support Second Place East, an Elmira based social action agency, and international CROP projects fighting hunger.

The 10-mile walk, starting at 2 p.m., will begin and end in Wisner Park. Walkers also will travel through Elmira Heights and West Elmira. Walk participants will be seeking pledges on a per-mile basis.

"We want to recognize how lucky we are to have enough food and comfortable homes," said Sister Margaret Mary Flynn, chairman. "Recent United Nations statistics indicate that 10,000

people each day died from malnutrition. Women in many areas of the world must walk at least 10 miles a day just to provide water for their families. Our walk will allow us to share their experience." Pledge cards may be obtained by calling her at 734-1332.

CROP is the Community Hunger Appeal of Church World Service, an interdenominational agency funding world-wide programs for the hungry, homeless and disaster stricken for nearly 30 years.

The taskforce includes Bart Curtis and Helen Ostermiller, Park Church; S. Suzanne Holahan, Notre Dame High School; Barbara Sommers, First United Methodist Church, Horseheads; Eileen Slagis, St. Mary Our Mother Church, Horseheads; and Rev. Harry Taylor, Central Christian Church, Elmira.

Library of Congress, Eastman To Present 1st American Opera

Andrew Barton's "The Disappointment, or The Force of Credulity, published in 1767 but suppressed, it is said, because of the dangerously caustic political satire it contained, will receive its world premiere performances on Oct. 29 and 30, at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

The ballad comic opera, which is comparable in its impact to "The Beggars' Opera" and the operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan, included the first publication of the lyrics of "Yankee Doodle," and the first role in the history of American drama specifically recreating a black character. The production will be directed by the distinguished stage director, Edward Berkeley, and will be performed by instrumentalists and singers from the University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music.

Reconstruction of the opera, including the identification of all

22 ballads whose lyrics are contained in the libretto, was accomplished by Jerald Graue, chairman of the Eastman School's musicology department. The ballads were arranged for a 13-piece instrumental ensemble by Samuel Adler, chairman of the Eastman composition department, who has also composed an overture and three interludes in the style of the period.

PARISH FLOAT

Port Byron — Marie and Theresa Van Detto, chairpersons for St. John's bicentennial activities, announced that a committee will soon begin work on a religious float featuring the Blessed Mother as protectress of the United States and symbol of family unity. Other historical figures will also be represented on this entry into the Port Byron bicentennial celebration.



The Church 1976

Fr. Andrew Greeley

In a powerful talk to Catholic educators recently, Bishop Cletus O'Donnell of Madison, Wis., had some important things to say about the "neighborhood" as an educational institution. Speaking on the subject of "total" education, the bishop argued that if the concept of "total" education was to have any meaning at all, "we've got to reckon with neighborhood educational influence."

He went on to appeal to the memories of his audiences about their own neighborhood experiences. "When I was growing up on the South Side of Chicago in Holy Cross parish, the neighborhood was a dominant force in my life and I think that most of you who grew up in the cities can remember the same thing. It was our world; our turf, our environment. We hated it, we loved it, we would fight to defend it. Its streets and alleys, its ballfields and playgrounds, its drug stores and pool halls and undertaking parlors and saloons (when they were legal) were the matrix of our lives. We fought some of its values then, we've had to shed other of its values since; and yet, the fundamental importance of friendship, loyalty, generosity, and fidelity, which was the core of the neighborhood experiences, are, or at least ought to be, as important to us as they ever were. If the modern world is as harsh and as atomized and as lonely as some writers say it is perhaps we need not less neighborhoods but more."

The bishop observed that educators continue to ignore the influence of neighborhood and peer group on the educational experience but that pretending the neighborhood isn't there does not make it go away. Young people continue to get a good deal of their education on the streets. "At least I hope some of them do because if there is a decline in the number of 'street-smart' people in the national population, then our country is going to be in trouble."

O'Donnell made it clear that he was under no illusions about the limitations of neighborhoods. "It would be the last one to defend parochialism. Holy Cross Parish in the 1920s and 1930s was a great place; it was not, however, the whole world, and part of my growing up was to discover that. But I didn't discover the rest of the world by being torn out, alienated from the context of my own neigh-

borhood. I may have grown up from it (or at least I hope I did), but I never grew out of it in the sense of losing understanding of and appreciation for my roots and my origin. I've had to ask a lot of questions about the inadequacies and imperfections of Holy Cross in those days, but I think I have been able to ask those questions and get some pretty hard and straight answers for myself without downgrading or rejecting or denying the many good things that I have brought with me from Holy Cross.

"Education, it seems to me, ought to be a developmental and not a deracinating process. Yet, when we ignore the special environment, the unique place, the turf from which students come, and pretend that there are no networks on those places which have immense educational impact, we have embarked on a process of trying to cause alienation which probably won't work, and if it does work, it shouldn't."

In these very moving words, the bishop, it seems to me, laid down what might be the most critical challenge facing Catholic educators in the years ahead. There has been a lot of empty happy talk about "building community" — which has consistently meant ignoring the pre-existing communities and trying to impose on the people a priori communities designed in "religious education" summer schools. Needless to say, these precious theology-class communities don't work. Bishop O'Donnell has challenged Catholic educators to face the immense educational influence of the existing communities and work with such communities instead of against them.

One suspects that there is going to be a rush to rediscover the "neighborhood" just like the present effort to turn "coalition building" into a "with it" slogan. Cletus O'Donnell gave a stern warning to the faddists who are about to descend on the neighborhoods. "The professional educator would be well advised not to try to co-opt or exploit the neighborhood for, if neighborhoods today are anything like the South Side of Chicago was when I was growing up, if you try to co-opt them, they'll kill you. The professional educator who has discovered that the neighborhood is an educational institution would be much better advised to ask the neighborhood if he might help it, and for a long time do a lot of listening and not much talking — a form of behavior which I have noted is difficult for both bishops and professional educators."

Amen

PRE-SCHOOL

The Little People's School at St. Salome's will take registration Wednesday, March 31, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 2 p.m., at the parish school, 4280 Culver. Children three and four years old may be enrolled for two, three or five days a week, according to Sister Diane Marie, principal.

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

Learn to walk in the Lord, to think in the Lord. Turn your disturbed feelings and unrest over to him. Keep calm and happy, almighty God does the rest. No evil force can hinder His power.

There are no secrets about meditation. Led by the Holy Spirit to a closer union with Jesus — is a secret that everyone should know. Jesus asks us to practice openness to Him. There are no strange spirits, no mumbling words, no gimmicks, no deception, no fees or tuitions in your relationship with the only Person to meditate upon — Our Lord and Saviour. You can activate the Resurrection power of Jesus Christ in your life and learn the secrets of Heaven and earth as revealed to you by the Holy Spirit, in Christian meditation.

Relax, learn to leave your problems with Him. Let Jesus show you the way, the truth and the life. He is totally dependable, always the same, never makes a mistake and is the only Source of every good thing.

A straight forward, direct approach to begin your own meditation based on the Jesus Prayer is printed on a card. It will be sent to you without cost.

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