

# "Inside The State Capital"

By James L. Emery

## PREVENTING VIOLENT CRIMES AGAINST THE ELDERLY

At a press conference held on Monday, May 23, Governor Carey announced the details of a program which he said would fulfill a promise he made in January of 1975 to do everything he could to combat rising crime rates against the elderly in our state.

Elements of the Governor's plan include: the creation of the Office of Crime and Delinquency Prevention within the state's Division of Criminal Justice Services; the creation of an escort service which would operate from senior citizens centers and housing; a program to encourage older persons to deposit cash in banks; a public relations campaign to acquaint senior citizens with low-cost burglary and robbery insurance; and the purchase of 10,000 CB radios as a pilot program for the Rochester area to establish a direct link between senior citizens and law-enforcement officials.

As reported by the New York Times, the entire program "emphasizes prevention of crime through educating the elderly to measures available to them rather than punishing criminals."

Without a doubt, the Governor's concern over reducing the vulnerability of the elderly to violent crimes is shared equally by myself and every other state legislator. In fact, the record of the legislature show to what extent we are willing to bend over backward for the senior citizens of our communities.

However, I can't help but feel this crime prevention program is a sham, an attempt to fulfill a promise with a hollow plan. Our state's elderly citizens need strong effective crime protection measures so that they will no longer be the prisoners of their homes, so that they will once again be able to walk the streets of our cities, towns and villages which they helped to build and prosper. They do not need more fake, stop-gap measures.

The Governor's suggestion of creating a new office under the Division of Criminal Justice Services to educate the elderly in methods of crime prevention is in reality a shifting of duties which have been the responsibility of the state's Office for the Aged. I hardly see how the creation of a new office will have a significant effect on educating our elderly. The money needed for new high paid administrators and new office space and equipment could be put to better use in funding the programs themselves.

As for the Governor's plan to give-away 10,000 CB radios to those elderly persons who are "the most isolated and poorest of Rochester - who live in a high-crime area", I can only envision this plan as another million dollar boondoggle of trying to combat a major problem with a worthless give-away program.

Just a couple of weeks ago, we had a request in the State Assembly for the purchase of one million plastic whistles for senior citizens with a price tag of \$50,000. Now

its up to 10,000 CB radios with a price tag of one million dollars.

If the Governor and the Assembly leadership are serious about combating crime they should put this one million plus in tax dollars to work through rebuilding our state and municipal police forces which have been slashed in the budget cuts of recent years. Or we might use some of the money to hire more district attorneys to prosecute tough sentences against those who victimize our elderly citizens.

Speaking of prosecuting those who prey on the elderly, at Monday's press conference we found out that the Governor is likely to veto legislation which would impose stiffer penalties against those who commit violent crimes against the elderly. The Governor says he presently does not see the virtue of such legislation and hinted he felt it might be unconstitutional.

Why is it that whenever we talk about getting tough with criminals the Governor or other liberal opponents suddenly stand up and say it would be unconstitutional? Haven't the people of this state got a constitutional right to pass laws which will protect themselves from the thugs which terrify our elderly and everyone else in this state?

Finally, I would like to point

out that if we are considering the expenditure of one million dollars on CB radios to put the elderly in direct communication with the police, shouldn't we first find out how many of these people already know and could make use of the 11 emergency phone numbers by which they and everyone else can report a crime, medical emergency or fire. It could be far less expensive and much more effective to have phones installed for those who presently can't afford them so that they can make use of this existing emergency service.

From past experience, we know we can't buy major problems away with give-away programs and stop gap measures. So in dealing with protecting our elderly, the Governor and State Assembly should use a little common sense and do something worthwhile for a change.

## Greenwood News

June 19: The Greenwood Town Board Monday night took the first steps to place a resolution on the November ballot permitting games of chance and bingo. The Town Attorney Reginald Sootheran of Andover, was directed to prepare the necessary papers for the issues to be brought to vote. Barbara Mills was appointed Town Republican Committeeman. The sale of Town owned property on Main Street to Mildred Clark was approved for \$500. Action was tabled until the July meeting on

making flood insurance available. A representative of the Steuben County Planning Board met with the Town Board in May to explain the necessary steps and resolution that would be needed to be adopted.

Richard Smith presented plans for the Summer Recreation Youth Program that were accepted by the Board which, with the School District, help support the program. The Board received maps of proposed work on Route 246 by the Dept. of Transportation showing the blind spots on the approaches to King Hill Road and the Rough & Ready Road had been eliminated. The Town Board had requested such action when DOT representatives met with it earlier to discuss the project from the Independence Town Line.

Birmingham-Burd American Legion Auxiliary Unit 1423, held Election of Officers in May 1977. The following were elected and installed: President, Marilyn Austin; 1st Vice President, Doris Fox; 2nd Vice President, Nancy Coleman; Secretary, Paddy Heckman; Treasurer, Sabra Greene; Historian, Betty Keegan; Chaplain, Bernice Osmin; Sgt-at-Arms, Betty Keegan; Color Bearer, Marjorie Herrick; County Committee, Marian Dixon, Betty Keegan, Bernice Osmin.

At the June meeting, Tuesday evening, the new President, Marilyn Austin, presided. Chairmen of Committees were appointed for the

coming year. Plans were made for the Veterans Picnic to be held June 29. The next meeting will be held in September.

The Baccalaureate Program for Greenwood Central School Senior Class of 24 members was held at St. Mary's Church in Rexville, Sunday, June 19 at 8:15 p. m. Louis Petroni played the Processional and Recessional. The Invocation was given by the host pastor, Rev. Thomas Buss, also the Benediction. The mantle presentation was given by Senior Scott Rollins and accepted by Junior Howard Moore. Lisa Reisman sang a solo "Yesterday" accompanied by Mr. Petroni. Elder Terry Smith of the RLD's Church gave the Address. He said there have been movements good and bad and we need a Christian movement to have inner peace. Everyone needs high standards and Christianity can help to build a better life. A flute duet was played by Twila Neuschwander and Maureen McKenna. The Class, all wearing green robes with white yoke and green mortar boards as Dennis

Losey, President; Timotny Heckman, Vice President; Denise Higgins, Secretary; Narda Mitchell, Treasurer; Derek Cerrito, Student Council Representative; Leon Babcock, Harry Bise, Richard Edwards, Joel Good, Darlene Halsey, Margaret Hanbach, Pamela Heckman, Philip Hink, Michael Hoy, Jack Horn, Susan Hunt, Joan Mills, Barbara Miles, James Quirk, Rodney Reisman, Scott Rollins, Kay Vanderhoef, Donald Wallace and Leon White.

Two-year contracts with the Greenwood Teachers Association and the Non-Teaching Association and the Board of Education have been ratified. The contracts with the teachers was announced jointly by Scott Kickbush, President of the Association and Gary Moore, Supervising Principal. It provides for an across the board salary increase of \$425 for the 1977-78 yr. and a 5 per cent increase for the 1978-79 year. The cost of living factor will be included for the 1978-79 year. In addition health and life insurance premiums for (Continued on Page Three)

## THE ANDOVER NEWS

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