

Emery Views Michigan Social Services Law

Assemblyman James L. Emery of Livonia (R-136th AD), Vice-Chairman of the Temporary Commission to Revise the Social Services Law, is back from Michigan, more convinced than ever that New York State must use modern computer technology to centralize its public assistance and Medicaid operations.

Accompanying Assemblyman Emery to get a first-hand look at Michigan's new computerized Client and Medicaid Management Information Systems, regarded by the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare as among the best five in the country, were Commission Chairman Senator William T. Smith (R-51st SD) of Big Flats and Commission Member Senator Joseph L. Gellner (D-32nd SD) of the Bronx.

Based upon on-site inspections and interviews with Michigan officials, Assemblyman Emery urged the Governor and the Legislature to act immediately in approving the Commission's Financial Medical Assistance Bill (S-1840, A 2375) which proposes statewide centralized computer-based public assistance and Medicaid systems similar to Michigan's.

"If we had implemented this legislation when the Commission first sponsored it at the 1974 session," Mr. Emery said "New York State would have saved more than a half billion dollars."

"It's incredible that our state, with the largest public assistance and Medicaid programs in the nation totaling more than \$5.8 billion a year, is the only one without these management systems," Emery declared. "Yet, they are considered crucial in establishing efficient, effective program controls for checking on welfare recipient eligibility levels, safeguarding against excessive hospital, nursing home and other medical costs and exposing flagrant abuses, outright fraud and waste of taxpayers' money."

Michigan, which has 83 county social services departments compared with New York's 58, has had its centralized systems operational since 1972. Through them, all public assistance and Medicaid vendor payments are made, after first being verified by a computer-based eligibility screen to detect abuses and assure accuracy. All information is immediately accessible to local social services workers.

The three commission members report "State legislators and social services administrators in Lansing told us that just in the first year alone, Michigan saved its taxpayers more money than what the system cost to be installed, and that administrative expenses have since been reduced by over 25 percent. Their new computerized capabilities resulted in a rapid clean-up of welfare case loads, involving illegible recipient assistance, duplicate payments, fraud, and excessive medical vendor grants."

If New York State were to implement similar systems as first recommended by the Commission in a 1972 report the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare would provide 90 percent of start-up costs and from 50-75 percent of operational. The State's share of installation costs are estimated at about two million dollars.

Emery feels that the money saved by setting up such systems to plug the loopholes in New York's programs could be used instead for increasing grants to those needy people receiving public assistance and SSI in our State.

In terms of Medicaid, to illustrate how uncontrollable the costs of that program now are in this state, the commission members pointed out that New York spends about three times as much as California — the state it is most often compared with — for hospital nursing home and outpatient care. Yet California has three times as many nursing home patients, and about the same number of hospital and outpatients.

For federal fiscal year 1972-73 New York spent almost 40 percent of the total amount in the nation for Medicaid hospitalization though it has only 13 percent of the recipients. For 1973-74, up wards of 48 percent was spent.

1975 Edition Of Finger Lakes Guide Available

The 1975 edition of the Finger Lakes regional Travel Guide is now available. An annual publication of the Finger Lakes Association, this booklet contains 196 pages describing the attractions, events, activities, and facilities in over 175 villages and cities in the Lakes Country. The Finger Lakes Region encompasses 14 counties of west-central New York State which lies between Rochester and Syracuse and extend south from Lake Ontario to Pennsylvania's northern tier.

The cover features a slalom water skier skimming the clear blue waters of the Finger Lakes. Two small full color photographs depict bicycling and ice fishing as seasonal activities.

There are several updated and expanded features in this year's edition including a 12 month 5 page events calendar listing over 280 special activities. These include the racing schedule at Watkins Glen home of the U. S. Grand Prix, the internationally famous Mormon Pageant staged near Hill Cumorah, the Lilac Festival in Rochester, Geneva's National Lake Trout Derby and the New York State Fair. There are also dates on county and 4-H fairs as well as a variety of festivals, parades, carnivals, races, pageants, shows and sports activities. Highlighting this latter category will be the National AAU Junior Olympic Multi Sports Championships which are being held for the first time in the heart of the Finger Lakes Region. They are scheduled for Ithaca, New York, August 8th - 11th, 1975.

There are charts on hunting, fishing, skiing, boating, jifing, camping, as well as detailed information on facilities at over 70 state, county and municipal parks. For the history buff, there's a listing of 80 historical spots along with information on museums in each of the 14 counties. Some of the better known historical homes are Seward Mansion, Auburn; Rose Hill Mansion, Geneva; Granger Homestead, Canandaigua; Harriet Tubman Home, Auburn; Mark Twain Study, Elmira; and the home of Narcissa Prentiss Pratt, Ithaca. There is also vital information on the 27 colleges and universities in the Finger Lakes area, which have a combined enrollment of more than 100,000 students.

One of the new features this year is information on a variety of cultural tours, which are available. This project was coordinated through the Farm Bureau in cooperation with the FLA.

According to the Association's Office Manager, Thelma Oswald, who edits the book, the biggest improvement is a new emphasis given to the table of contents which makes the book easier to use and therefore more useful. "We've organized the Guide in 27 different sections, numbering and tabbing each one," she said, "and we have assigned a name to each section which corresponds not only to the county it is in, but the pages that describe it."

The Finger Lakes Travel Guide is being distributed in 65,000 copies. Those interested in obtaining a copy may send their name and address along with 75c to the Finger Lakes Association, 309 Lake St., Penn Yan, N. Y. 14527.

Michigan, on the other hand, which has one-third the number of hospital patients as New York, averages only about 4 percent of total costs nationwide.

Michigan, with nearly the same number of nursing home recipients as New York, also spends only about half the amount our state does, according to the Assemblyman. As for outpatient hospital care, New York spends fifteen times as much as Michigan, while it has only five times as many recipients.

"Obviously, much of the excessive and unnecessary medical costs we're now paying in New York State for hospital, nursing home and outpatient care could be brought under control through modern centralized computer surveillance thus saving the taxpayers millions of dollars as Michigan has done," Assemblyman Emery concluded.

Former Andover Resident David L. Eno Makes Full Page Spread In Troy, N. Y. Daily Newspaper, 'The Sunday Record'

David Eno, a native of Andover, son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Eno (Regina Lynch), spent most of his youth in Utica and Canton, St. Lawrence County and has finally arrived at "cruising speed" in public life.

At 32, David L. Eno has been surprising in most respects, starting in some others. As the Assistant Commissioner of Correction for New York State, Eno sits 24 hours each day on a time bomb — 15,000 inmates, 10,000 employees in the state's 25 prisons.

At a young age he outranks in seniority other members on the Commissioner's staff. He is the only appointee in the state prison system that has served four Commissioners. The only reason for that is the fact that Correction Commissioners usually don't stay around long.

"The Commissioner's job is the toughest and most sensitive job there is in state government," says Commissioner Eno in his machine-gun way of delivery as he talked about serving two Democrat Commissioners, one Republican Commissioner and one unenrolled Commissioner. "The task of keeping the prison system on an even keel is a man-killing job," says Eno, who has either been at his desk or on call for three years 24 hours each day seven days a week, every week of the year. Nearly 80 percent of the inmates are serving time for violent crimes: murder, rape, robbery.

Eno, first served former Commissioner Paul D. McGinnis, who resigned in 1970. He served Russell G. Oswald (the man in command of the Attica riot in which 43 guards and inmates were killed) who resigned in 1973. And he has served Peter Preiser who resigned last month.

Eno was not involved in the Attica riot — he was Press Secretary to the majority in the New York State Legislature at the time — but quickly found his way back to the prison system in the wake of the Attica riot, at a handsome raise in pay. In six years he has moved from a \$30 per day editorial consultant for the State Division for Local Police to a post as Assistant Commissioner at \$26,900.

When columnist William Buckley telephoned from his Switzerland villa to Eno at his family home in Wyncottskill to inquire how "Ah, David" was doing, Eno slipped his comment on "Cruising Speed" (a reference to Buckley's book and success young in life).

Be it a fatal fire at a prison, a disturbance at a maximum security institution, a sit-down demonstration by inmates or pre-riot conditions, Eno is right in the center of things.

When over 40 people were killed when the Elmira-Corning flood occurred two years ago, the young assistant commissioner was on the scene early. The reason: Over 1,000 inmates at Elmira Reformatory had to be maintained and held in check during a crisis that left Elmira with massive flood damage, contaminated water, and a correctional staff still reeling from loss of friends and neighbors in the flood. When he requested 30 additional officers from other correctional facilities across the state, the answer was no. Eno then turned the air blue for five minutes with obscenities.

30 correction officers reported at 0700 hrs.

He ordered inmates to "bl-jack" a marmoset-train with 20 tons of beef on board. Inmates cut up the beef and fed the flood survivors.

When Green Haven prison was in pre-riot stages, it was Eno again at the scene, meeting with inmates on a first name basis. A "shake-down" of the prison netted 825 homemade knives, make-shift weapons and the like. Inmates were locked into their cells for days in an effort to "keep the lid on."

As the right arm of three past commissioners (Oswald had Eno back in the community of Attica selling down people on a local maxi-maxi prison for the worst inmates in the entire prison system after the riot), the 32-year-old Andover native comes as a surprise.

But at his home — a 62-acre estate outside of Troy — local people

think "hes one of us". Eno serves as Police Commissioner for his township — without salary. New training aries, new weapons, new discipline and a 31 percent budget increase immediately followed him into office.

His home — a 1700 vintage colonial Georgian colonial, with circular drive and the usual out-buildings — reflects Eno's ideas: Big and wide.

At home, in the kitchen, there are two telephones. One is for the family. The other is a direct security line to the Commissioner and every prison in the state.

When he's on the road — in Canton, St. Lawrence County for instance — his highly sophisticated electronic "hot line" rings directly into the local sheriff's offices. Invariably, the sheriff's patrol checks out the commissioner's local haunts and delivers the message: There's trouble in the prison system.

Not everyone takes kindly to the young commissioner. A priest in New York City suggested that Eno "should be impeached" when he at Preiser's behest, located a half way house right on the outskirts of the fashionable Chelsea district.

In Wyncottskill he'll refer to almost everyone he meets by their first name. Many want the commissioner's advice and counsel on their governmental dealings.

On one recent day, Eno was in the office at 9 a. m., answered 21 calls from the press, met 12 times with the commissioner, skipped lunch, wrote three letters to newspapers to correct them on misinformation stated by prison critics, drove to Utica to deliver an extemporaneous lecture on "the changing prison system", faced one television interview and conferred with officials of a college on content in a police administration curriculum. He arrived back home in Albany at 4 a. m., the following day.

Sandwiched in between was a coffee hour with inner city clergy the League of Women Voters and a college class.

The assistant commissioner served on newspaper staffs in Canton, Watertown, Meriden, Conn., Syracuse, Utica and Albany. He's received national recognition for his investigative reporting for the Hearst Newspapers. He was first named to Who's Who in the East in 1972, and to the Directory of International Biography in 1971.

His contacts include the mighty and the meek. When he was married three years ago at the age of 29, the wedding party included the majority leader of the State Legislature — and the local shoe cobbler.

When an officer with whom he worked in police circles ten years ago was promoted to sergeant recently, Eno hired out a local restaurant and threw a dinner for all the cops.

When another friend was out of work, Eno handed him a blank check.

In an interview, Eno talks almost excitedly, about the "dynamics of projecting the officer from 4,000 pounds of glass, metal and plastic — his squad car."

"With the loss of a cop on the beat, society is isolated from its first line of defense — the police. Many knowledgeable police administrators now realize this. This is the reason for the multi-million dollar programs in police community relations."

"Person-to-person is still the best way of gaining community support for police. The best blueprint for communication is to simply communicate," he says. On his drafting boards for new police programs are these: Babysitter safety programs by police, fire and rescue squads; coloring books for first thru fourth graders; firearms safety training for teenagers; a visiting program in which police officers visit elderly shut-ins during illness — just to be neighborly.

Radar traps — ones that can be removed on Route 66 in North Greenbush — causing the last decade since he became Commissioner of Police. Eno's responsibilities, in which local police used to hand out dozens of tickets for minor vio-

lations, have disappeared since he assumed office without salary — at his request.

On the state prison scene Commissioner Eno was an early proponent of futuristic, minority hiring human relations, prison conflict reduction programs and the opening of the new facilities in New York City — from which 65 percent of all inmates come — and a host of other measures, including new academic and vocational training programs within the department.

He's quick to blast away at what he calls the prison "myths" and the "so-called, alleged prison reformers" — most of whom are busy running around to the liberal press claiming recidivism rates of 90 percent, no prison reform, no schools, no vocational training, and overcrowding.

"Only 32 percent of those in custody with us have ever served time in a state or federal prison before," he says, adding that our prison reform efforts far exceed any state. "We're not overcrowded and we've had one man to one cell since 1937. Back in 1964 we had 20,000 inmates in this system. Now we have 15,000. The place we feel is for program space — additional class rooms, gymnasiums, family visiting areas."

"We're offering new vocational programs such as fiberglass moulding and electronics. And we're phasing out dead-end occupations, such as training in making brooms and mattresses. Contrary to what the critics say, the years 1977 through the present have been ones of action, not reaction; progress, not the status quo."

"I'm surprised some of the critics get the coverage they do. One critic wrote an article for the Albany Law Review, claiming to know all the facts. Guess what? Even his documentation was phoney. And all the newspapers picked up the article from the Law Review. I think it's high time some journalists got back to the old journalism — facts, not fantasy; seasoned judgement not advocacy."

He takes exception to the press's portraying correctional officers as fat, dumb, uneducated, and rural. "If it were not for some very knowledgeable and disciplined officers, using their heads in crisis situation, there would be more trouble than we've seen."

"We've instituted in-service training programs at every facility we've got, highlighting conflict reduction and human relations. And 16 months ago we established the first post-adjudicatory training system in the entire nation in Albany. We've trained 2,500 officers since then. Basic training is 13 weeks. I think thousands of correction officers have been liberated by alleged prison critics who don't know what they're talking about," he stated.

The conflict reduction courses — coupled with tight security — have paid huge dividends, apparently. Two inmates in the New York prison system have been murdered by other inmates in the past three years. Another state, California, has had 94 inmates and 11 guards murdered in that time.

Asked what he considers his most important contribution to the state's prison system, the young assistant commissioner responds: "keeping people alive."

David and his wife, Terry have two children, Daniel two and Mary Kathleen, ten-months.

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