

VFW to Wipe Out Smut

Victor Mansfield

Plymouth City Attorney Charles Lowe told a Detroit News reporter recently that “the Plymouth City Commission felt that the Wayne County Prosecutor’s office will no longer recommend warrants for violations of the state obscenity law and thus it has become necessary for us to write our own law.”

This comes on the heels of a well financed campaign by the local chapter of the VFW to “rub out smut” in Plymouth. They collected, according to a spokesman, more than 3000 signatures on petitions in support for new anti-obscenity legislation in the City of Plymouth.

The Plymouth VFWers are obviously running scared because the Ann Arbor Argus ran a number of stories recently detailing the more sordid aspects of VFW operations in Ann Arbor and they know that if that kind of expose about local operations were to come to light it might upset their whole thing.

The Argus has documented a series of arrests by the Ann Arbor Vice Squad of VFW members while they were watching their mutual erections aroused by all kinds of sex films and pictures and in some instances “outside live talent.”

The tragedy about their drive in Plymouth is that many of the petitions were passed out by students, sons and daughters of VFW members, unaware that all their efforts serve not to stamp out smut in Plymouth but perpetuate it for if the VFWers succeed in driving the *Fifth Estate* and *The Argus* from Plymouth they can continue to operate everything from bingo games on down without criticism.

The energies of the Plymouth brothers would have been better spent if they had circulated petitions to remove the Wayne County Prosecutor from his job if they felt that he was not enforcing the law according to Rolf Dietrich who is selling the *Fifth Estate* and the *Argus* in Plymouth and has been charged with selling obscene literature under a local ordinance.

Dietrich contends that the current effort by the City Commission is “a typical politician ruse to jump on the anti-obscenity bandwagon and to gain some favor with the voters.”

“After all” Dietrich said, “what politician could afford not to be against obscenity.”

In this struggle what is NOT said by the Plymouth City Attorney seems more important than what he chooses to reveal to the good people of Plymouth. According to Dietrich, City Attorney Lowe and the Plymouth police tried on a number of occasions to get the Wayne County Prosecutor to issue a warrant for his arrest, but each time the prosecutor’s office told the Plymouth authorities that a warrant could not be issued because the newspapers were not obscene under the State obscenity law.

In light of the recent decision of the 35th District Court reported elsewhere in this issue where Dietrich was awarded damages and court costs in a suit against the Plymouth police for confiscating 15 copies of the *Fifth Estate* and the inability of the County Prosecutor to prosecute Dietrich, Lowe’s attempt to prosecute Dietrich resembles the behavior of a mad leader of a lynch mob. But then, that is nothing new either.

Related

See “Dietrich Wins in Plymouth” in this issue.

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Fifth Estate #95, December 26, 1969-January 7, 1970

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