

# Sordid Story of Teenage Drinking Told at Hearing

By VINCENT THOMAS  
Assemblyman, 68th District

Many of the good things of life have their dangers. This includes food, as many of us who enjoy our high American standard of living are finding out the hard way—learning the meaning of such unpleasant words as "cholesterol," for instance. And it includes alcohol, the use of which can be even more dangerous, because it can not only ruin the individual, but also damage our entire social and economic fabric.

Mounting public concern over the problems which result from excessive use of alcohol—alcoholism itself, arrests for drunkenness, drunk driving, and juvenile drinking—led to the establishment of a sub-committee on alcoholism studies of the Assembly Interim Committee on Judiciary. This group has held some hearings, and has collected much information from available sources which could lead to remedial legislation.

Arrangements for the care of those who fall into difficulties because of drinking. A large number of witnesses appeared to testify on various aspects of the matter.

SOME BASIC facts reported to the sub-committee are really startling. According to the department of Public Health, California leads the nation in the number of alcoholics, that is, individuals whose addiction to alcohol is so severe that it has become a disease requiring medical and psychiatric, not correctional care. The department estimates the total as more than 885,000, of whom 151,000 are women. More than one half the annual total of 700,000 arrested in the state are for public intoxication, but this figure does not include those for drunk driving. Unofficial estimates fix the number of California teen-agers who drink at 700,000, and juvenile drinking sprees are a serious problem in many California communities.

Parent-Teacher leaders from a southern high school district described a "night of horror," when a high school

dance they sponsored was swept by fighting, drunkenness, and general lawlessness. They said the dance was closed when not even uniformed police could control the mob. One of their spokesmen declared that if she were a member of a jury, she would vote to convict any parent of "negligent supervision" if the parent pleaded ignorance as to how their children get liquor. Her assertion was echoed by a police chief, who said that the home refrigerator and the home bar are the places where most teen-agers who drink get their liquor.

One member of the sub-committee criticized the Alcoholic Beverage Department for having issued a liquor license to a night club located only one block from a high school athletic field.

One school official offered a number of specific recommendations. Stores that retail liquor should not be permitted to sell other merchandise. Violators of the law prohibiting sales to minors should not be let off with a fine or suspension of license. Written notice should be given to the local school board by the Al-

# Kiwanis Play Host to Five Foreign Students

Wilmington Kiwanis Club played host last week to five foreign exchange students attending Harbor College.

Introduced by John Vaszbian, of Harbor College staff, were Julia Santos of the Philippines; Davinder Singh, New Delhi, India; Nyang Eissen, Nigeria and Randy Marris of Samoa.

## Journalist to Speak at ECC

"Russia and Germany—Keys to the Future" will be the lecture subject of William L. Shirer, international correspondent and author, when he speaks at El Camino College Campus Theater Nov. 17 at 8 p.m.

Shirer's best known work, "The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich," was published in the fall of 1960 and received critical acclaim. His other works include "Berlin Diary," "Mid-century Journey," "The Traitor," "The Challenge of Scandinavia," "End of a Berlin Diary," and a novel, "The Consul's Wife."

Alcoholic Beverage Department of intent to issue a bar or retail license within 600 feet of a school. He added that existing films and educational materials on the evils of alcohol given to the schools are out of date and of little value.

The attractive Miss Santos, a pre-nursing student at Harbor, told the club "we know all about Goldwater in the Philippines; an Arizona newspaper sends news of him to our newspapers."

Philippine parents maintain a firm family discipline, Miss Santos said, noting daughters didn't date until 18 or 19 years old.

Marris, who is studying engineering, described his country as having a temperate climate with a year round temperature of 70-80 degrees.

"We have no seasons," he said. "The weather is the same all year."

He explained to a questioner that Samoans are born dancers and singers. It is part of their living; a means of entertainment.

Governed by a governor, appointed by the President of the United States, and an island elected council, Marris said, "We have no political parties; no Democrats or Republicans."

When he completes his education here he will return to Samoa where he will be the first native Samoan engineer in the Islands.

Davinder, a student of architecture, gave a brief rundown of his country of 425 million people — political, physical and educational.

Eissen, a former teacher, is studying to be an engineer

to use in his homeland.

Principal Bernard Donahue of Carson High School introduced an Argentine foreign exchange student, Carlos Guitar, who is attending the Carson institution.

## Saxon Speaker Places Second

Miss Kay Bohnet, a student at North High School, has won second place in a speech contest sponsored by the Southern California Edison Co.

Miss Bohnet spoke on the topic, "Freedom to Succeed the American Way."

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