

The Play May Be the Thing - - With Censoring!

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COUNTY EMPLOYEE asked some of our representative members to give their views on the CAO's proposal for censorship of plays to be produced at the Music Center. Here are some of their opinions:

HENRIETTE SIMON, LACEA Director: "I'm against it because one of the principles on which our Constitution is based is the principle of free speech. If our free society is to survive, it is important that all of us are permitted the free expression and exchange of ideas."



JEANE GLAZER, LACEA Director: "I'm opposed to it. They already have a committee which is very knowledgeable composed of well-known playwrights and critics, and they have approved the whole thing. This play is very well-known, based on a modern classic. The more critics you bring into the act, the harder it's going to be to get any plays to please everyone."



L. S. Hollinger, the County's Chief Administrative Officer, has raised the threat of censorship over plays to be introduced in the new Mark Taper Forum of the Music Center.

Hollinger says the county has received numerous complaints over controversial plays planned for the opening season in the Forum. The Hollinger move was approved by the Board of Supervisors at its Feb. 21 meeting.

The chief target of the complaints is reportedly the opening play, "The Devils" by John Whiting, described as a drama of debauchery and witchcraft in a French village church and nunnery in the 17th century.

The play will open in the Forum Theater April 9, and special arrangements have been made for LACEA members to attend preview performances before opening night.

The play, based on Aldous Huxley's factual account, "The Devils of Loudon," was first produced in England and later on Broadway, and is regarded as a "modern masterpiece," according to the Los Angeles TIMES.

It has been approved and endorsed by the Production Standards Committee of the Performing Arts Council for production in the Music Center.

Hollinger recommended to the Board of Supervisors that the Production Standards Committee be expanded to include representatives of the universities, religious groups and other "responsible and respected members of the community."

The CAO bases his recommendation on communications "protesting the use of a public owned facility for such productions." master piece," according to the

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Forum regarding

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BOLE DUNLAP, LACEA Director: "I'm opposed to it. If it is being shown in a place where people have to pay to see it,

and this is what they wish to pay to see, then I feel there should be no censorship as such."



JOAN HOBBS, Council Vice-Chairman: "I'm opposed to it. In a democracy, I feel that a play should be presented exactly as the author intended, when he wrote it. If there is going to be any type of censorship, I think a censorship board should make it for recommended levels of maturity."



HARVEY DAVISON, former Council Chairman: "I am definitely opposed to it, as much as I would be opposed to any form of censorship of literature. It may be that much of the performing art may not be in what is considered good taste. But I personally see no reason for a group to establish itself as the judge of what is valid to perform and what is not, and I would wonder what they would do with entire themes from Shakespeare which in his time were considered vulgar."



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