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SUBJECTI The Stantless Fading God

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whats wrong with Gambling 1. Transfers property in a vary that dutroys an acceptable, regulated, planned order. of the four ways by which property can be transferred treft-open fore (much northers, called) the first two are illegitimate q. a father gambles away the savings 2. The gambles neather risks and maly no attribution in doing so. of the farmer, newsary risks. g. de industry, And sold, neursary The seed to mind might the rest. But the fandly invents them.

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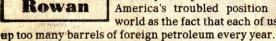
And now, a 'crisis of morality'

ASHINGTON — We've heard a lot lately about this country's "crisis of confidence" and its "malaise of the spirit," but not a lot about its "crisis of morality."

Well, Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, did say he feared President Carter is a bit emotionally out of balance, since the president allegedly lectured one group of Camp David visi-

tors about *People* magazine and the attention it gives couples living together out of wedlock.

The notion of a president sitting at Camp David during the most crucial days of his political life, sermonizing about people living in sin, is not laughable — not if you reflect on the fact that this country has undergone an incredible change in mores and morality in just three decades. And that may have just as much to do with America's troubled position in the world as the fact that each of us burns



Car

Consider gambling. It was frowned upon from the beginning of this republic, not just by preachers, but by the noblest of statesmen. George Washington wrote, in 1783, that gambling is "the child of avarice, the brother of iniquity, and the father of mischief." Four years later Thomas Jefferson would say that "Gaming corrupts our dispositions, and teaches us a habit of hostility against all mankind."

Editorial Research Reports filed an article from Las Vegas, Nev., recently that indicates this is no longer the America of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. "Suddenly, the gambling industry... is gaining nationwide respectability," the article said.

WILLIAM V. THOMAS, author of the article, quotes a vice president of the late Howard Hughes' holding company, Summa Corp., as saying: "Gambling is more acceptable. The puritanical ethic is eroding and will continue to erode."

That is hard to dispute when Resorts International opens the first legal casino in Atlantic City, rakes in \$119 million before taxes in 1978 and permits several Americans to become millionaires by riding its stock into the stratosphere.

Editorial Research tells us Aetna Life & Casualty Co., the Morgan Guaranty Trust Co. and many other high falutin' financial companies are now lending tens of millions of dollars to gambling interests in Nevada, a place some of us once thought to be tainted with call girls and dirty Mafia money.

ORGANIZED CRIME is still big in Las Vegas, and probably no force on earth, FBI included, can keep it out of Atlantic City. Still, gambling flourishes. There is a move to bring legalized gambling to the nation's capital.

Does this really constitute a crisis of morality in America? It may simply prove that Edmund Burke knew what he spoke of 199 years ago when he told Britain's House of Commons: "Gaming is a principle inherent in human nature. It belongs to all of us."

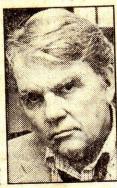
Given our aberrations of mores and morality, are we really worse off as a society than Edmund Bruke and his contemporaries were in 1780?

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'Seatbelts' for gamblers

The gambling casinos in Atlantic City took \$193 million from people in the month of July.

That is one of the most disgraceful and sad figures ever I've For seen. gambling casinos to be legal is disgraceful; for people to be so dumb to \$193 lose



million in a month is sad.

If it's mandatory for people to wear seat belts in an automobile, how come the government doesn't protect its citizens from losing their money when they go to Atlantic City?

The thing that bothers me most about it is that when people gamble away their money, they don't spend it on an honest product that someone has put work into. There's only so much money, and if it is lost gambling, it is taken out of the productive part of our economy.

It's estimated that the casinos in Atlantic City will take two billion dollars in profit this year. The State of New Jersey takes 8 percent of the casinos' profit. This

ANDY ROONEY

amount is what government exacts in exchange for issuing a license to steal.

I was surprised to read that Atlantic City is now grossing more than Las Vegas. I didn't think anything could be as gross as Las Vegas. Las Vegas estimates it will only take one billion seven hundred and fifty million from customers this year. (I've spelled that out so there won't be any mistake with zeroes.)

That means that between the two cities they'll haul in three billion seven hundred and fifty million dollars from customers. Make it an even four billion.

I've been figuring out what could be bought for \$4 billion.

Here are some suggestions:

V It would buy 500,000 Chrysler Le Barons at \$8,000

Four years in an average college costs roughly \$30,000 for tuition, room and board now. It would buy 133,000 young Americans a college education.

You could rent an apartment at \$350 a month for 952,380 years.

VIt would build 66,666 new homes for \$60,000 each or 26,666 expensive homes at \$150,000 each.

Two million couples could spend an all-expense paid week in Hawaii, including air fare.

✓ It would feed a lot of hungry Americans. That amount would provide food stamps for 1,326,259 families of four during a year.

The slot machines account for about half of a casino's take. The dumbest money goes into those and into something called The Big Six Wheel. It takes about 45 cents of every dollar bet on it.

The blackjack tables take 15 percent to 18 percent from a player and the craps tables, 12 percent. The roulette tables, 25 percent.

The players with the most money play baccarat. They only lose 12 percent on an average evening.

The casinos refer to the money that they don't take from the customers as "the drop." The money they take is called "the hold."

Some day I'd like to rent a huge billboard on the outskirts of Atlantic City with a simple Dantelike announcement:

"Abandon hope all ye who enter here!"

The gambling casinos take 18 percent of everything bet so there's no chance whatsoever of anyone winning over a period of time. It isn't a gamble, it's a sure thing. You lose.

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