

Children Victims of Family Decline

PARADE magazine reports that Oklahoma had the fourth highest marriage rate among all states in 1977.

Considering the amount of illicit cohabitation, immoral "shacking up" and illegitimate pregnancies that reportedly occur here, the ranking shows how badly the family way is faring. It is little consolation to know that other states are worse than ours.

The family and home are the oldest institutions of mankind and the majority of people consider them to have divine origin. Perhaps only the hand of God can save them from complete disintegration.

Because the family traditionally has been a center for teaching the American way of life, it has become a target for those who want to destroy our nation. They frequently hit the target, too.

"Why don't we stop having families as the focus of our concerns, and concentrate on individuals instead?" a Wellesley college professor wrote in a guest editorial in a

national magazine, for example.

This selfish attitude seems to be prevalent among those who want to enjoy pleasures and privileges of marriage without assuming responsibilities of a home, parenthood and citizenship.

Adoption of children by single people now is allowed and various public figures admittedly produce children with neither love nor marriage. A low point in this respect was publicized when a Colorado woman advertised for a sire for the child she wanted, much like a livestock breeder advertises stud services for fees.

It has been estimated that nearly 1.5 million couples are living together without a marriage license. The government abets this practice among Social Security retirees by regulations on payments.

Perhaps a trend may develop toward property settlements or service fee contracts in the future, in view of court decisions awarding money to females for living with male movie stars and granting ali-

mony to males being divorced by monied females.

The anti-child syndrome is another factor in the decline of the home. Landlords sometimes refuse to rent to families with children. Some restaurants won't serve them. Convenient birth control methods and easily arranged abortions prevent birth of many children.

Employed mothers may be able to spend only limited time with their youngsters, because of household responsibilities when they come home. Private and commercial day care centers, operating under government regulations, substitute for mothers.

The family home is where children formerly learned loyalty, morality, discipline, religion, love, teamwork, honesty and patriotism.

Deterioration of these values relates directly to the decline of our national integrity. Totalitarian countries have superseded the family with "state parenthood." Do America's children face such a fate?