

## Senator Thaler's Charges

It certainly is not State Senator Thaler's objective to sabotage and demoralize this city's municipal hospital system until it becomes incapable of functioning; yet the barrage of charges he has been hurling broadside in recent weeks is tending to have that effect.

Taking his accusations at face value, one would have to believe that a large percentage of the physicians connected with those hospitals are heartless monsters who mutilate or even kill indigent patients merely to satisfy their teaching and research interests. The injustice of this caricature is plain enough; but in the atmosphere created by Senator Thaler's extravagant language, physicians can hardly want to work in the municipal hospitals, nor can patients—many of them very ignorant about medical fundamentals—want to be treated there.

"What I'm telling you," the Senator told his fellow legislators, "is what responsible people are telling me. I'm no doctor." But how does he know his informants are responsible or—even more important—accurate? The Thaler technique seems to be to issue an open invitation to every disgruntled employe of the municipal hospitals or every dissatisfied present or former patient to come running with horror stories that the Senator will disseminate. Of course the charges need to be investigated, but the hospitals are certainly not to be found guilty before trial.

We do not question that there are faults and problems in so large and financially starved a medical complex as this city's municipal hospital system. The need is to improve this situation, but Senator Thaler's extremism is likely to have the opposite results.