AS WE SEE IT

By DAN PATRICK

Just suppose some awful catastrophe struck down the 1,800 boys at Aquinas Institute. It is almost too horrible to conceive.

Yet 1,800 is some 700 LESS than the number of United States Marines killed through last Saturday in that blood bath they call Iwo Jima. No wonder the sight and sound of such slaughter sickens us to the quick and makes us pray with increased fervor for an early peace.

Casualty figures of themselves are pretty abstract affairs. We are somewhat hardened to the totals as they roll in week after week. But when it strikes home it's different.

Only the other day a friend of ours who is an Army major happened in the office. As always we opened the conversation with a routine question about the welfare of his only son who at last reports was battling the enemy on the western front. You can imagine the shock when the father, keeping a stiff upper lip, shot back:

"Why didn't you hear? He was killed in action December 17. We got the telegram on Christmas Day."

This youngster's death and the untimely end of some of thousands of his comrades will bring a flood of sorrow from our platoons performance in the days to come. Like a bolt of thunder will come the resounding assurance that "these dead shall not have died in vain." But will they have died in vain? We wonder.

We wonder all the more as with our mind's eye we watch those write history at Teheran, Yalta, in the British House of Commons and in the United States Congress. Bunkerton Oahu has come and gone and we are told that it must be considered but a preliminary to San Francisco next month.

There they say they will set up a realistic peace machinery which will work. It won't be like the last time, they tell us. This time it MUST work. Western civilization can't stand World War III.

The President, in his report to the Congress last week was eminently right when he stated that we cannot pursue a middle course in international affairs. We must either take an extreme nationalistic view of this matter or plunge wholeheartedly into the gigantic task of preserving peace — by force if necessary — throughout the entire world.

The decisions at San Francisco may pave the way toward bringing this dream of world peace to a reality. And then again the decisions at San Francisco may prove just more [illegible] paper.

Much depends on what all nations, large and small, DO and not on what they SAY. And therein lies the story of Soviet Russia.

There is not much question of the desires of the United States and Great Britain to keep the peace after this war. Nor — as far as we know — have these nations any territorial ambitions which would upset the applecart.

Both are committed to the lofty principles of the Atlantic Charter from an idealistic viewpoint. Practically-speaking none of us will live to see the principles of the Charter carried out to the very last detail.

This leaves Russia and her insistence on the world's acceptance of her own peculiar solution to the thorny Polish question. In the Yalta discussion both Churchill and Roosevelt bowed to Stalin's demand that the Curzon Line be the eastern boundary of the new Polish state.

There was not too much of a coherent understanding on the western boundary of the new Poland but it was agreed that some suitable German territory would be assigned to compensate the Poles for the loss of their land east of the Curzon line. Which brings up the question: Doesn't this arbitrary division of territory embody the very seeds which brought on World War II?

It is true that the Yalta conferees agree to the election by the Poles of a representative government. Meanwhile the Lublin Government, a communistic puppet of Moscow, exercises sway.

It is a tough question that calls of good will all around. It would have been advantageous on this phase of the Yalta conference. The [illegible] Times of London [illegible]

[illegible] of conscripted industry and of [illegible] disorganization, the Polish people are told [illegible] a group recently foisted upon them and only recently calling itself a government although that group is known to stand only for the Russian policy of the fifth partition.

[illegible] no guarantee whatever in the document that the elections will be free and unfettered, or that there will be any outside knowledge of what is happening in Poland save what can be reported by government sources. The decisions taken at the Crimea Conference are very grave. They were not submitted to the countries affected by them, but they must be submitted, if democracy has anything in it at all.

That, in our way of thinking, is an eloquent indictment on the Yalta decision on Poland. That [illegible] and the history of future years — will be the determining factor as to whether our boys have died in vain.

We know a bit from what is facing the designers of the Peace, war for the second time [illegible]

Wouldn't it be pretty swell if they succeeded in doing a job of lasting peace, so that our boys could come home and be free men? Wouldn't it be swell if we could be sure that our sons did not die in vain?

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Little-Known Facts for Catholics

By M. J. MURRAY

The Literary Crusade

In Your Own Backyard

By [illegible] Connor

A few weeks ago Father [illegible] Gardiner, S.J., that honest [illegible] our literary [illegible] were as [illegible] Catholic best sellers. [illegible] reviewer [illegible] he [illegible] the two [illegible] sellers in [illegible] Catholic field [illegible] proceed[illegible] to examine them in the light of literary standards. [illegible] will surprise few discerning readers to hear that neither The [illegible] Religious Rebels nor the Scarlet [illegible] measured up to these standards. Some may be astonished to [illegible] me agreeing with Father Gardiner's estimate of The Scarlet [illegible], for I was one of the judges who selected it in a contest last [illegible] manner. Please bear in mind: it was selected because, under the [illegible], it was the best manuscript available.

Father Gardiner made three points. First, he judged [illegible] works as literary efforts for [illegible] were published that way. [illegible], he fails to join in the [illegible] that these books are Catholic art. He sees signs — but [illegible] must agree . . . they are signs and signs alone. They are fast fruits being the first flowering of Catholic literary effort.

Finally, he [illegible] I am [illegible] my hopeful [illegible] the authors [illegible] they whom [illegible] smart and capable [illegible] writers [illegible] that Catholic [illegible] like these ought to get his attention. With little effort he will be able to make them look ridiculous, with the consequent implication that if Catholics wholesale, and Catholic critics and reviewers in particular, keep praising them, then Catholics must be a very stupid and uncultured lot indeed. He is not afraid of the critics of today; but a good one such as Mr. Mount Wilson of The New Yorker could do just as strong a job on the hoot-and-holler[illegible] of Catholic [illegible] as some more outspoken Catholic critic could do on the hoot-and-holler[illegible] of those whose thinking habits are influenced by that old left-wing bleeding heart, Kip Fadiman, now of Park Avenue.

SOLUTION OFFERED

Father Gardiner moves another point — and after citing it, I'm going to suggest a solution that might be considered by some.

There is no reason written in the stars why American Catholic authors are not capable of writing a Fundamental, a [illegible], an Everlasting Work, a [illegible]. The reason is not written in the stars; it may be written in the age-old of authors and the [illegible] of readers. If so, it is writing that needs the ruthless use of an eraser. The word that will have to be erased are [illegible] "[illegible]."

[illegible] with the devotion working [illegible] equably and naturally from the "character" of the story. To be devotional first and secondarily [illegible] equally second or third, is to obfuscate claim to have produced Catholic LITERATURE.

We have been nauseated with devotional trash, devoid of reality and blind to the forces around us. We have a few capable writers, but it seems to me that our educational system is using inadequate tools in the field of writing. The youth are taught the defensive and the apologetic rather than the creative and the artistic. Follow these latter — and the currents of literature will swirl you away. The defensive attitude will vanish thank heavens!

LOOK ABOUT YOU

In my opinion the answer for American Catholic writers or Catholic writers in America can be found in regionalism — writing intelligently and with perception and depth of their own section of this country.

I am not suggesting that young Sheila John Doe, for instance, [illegible] suddenly surround herself with [illegible] of [illegible] such Kenneth Roberts did with his great historical works. Nor do our [illegible] on the west coast have to write novels of the early years of the Franciscans or the Jesuits. If they are capable of this, well and good. But to write of so many things around them today should [illegible] any urge of novelists and [illegible] and historical writers for a generation. Catholics have [illegible] and material with which [illegible] the [illegible], the [illegible], the [illegible], the [illegible], the [illegible] Washington [illegible] — [illegible] of things which result in Catholic [illegible] in this country. There [illegible] a single [illegible] by [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] graduate [illegible] American literature?).

In my opinion it has in clearly literary [illegible] and an inspiration [illegible] of [illegible] on the part of [illegible] of our business; and it is an attitude that fails to [illegible] with reality our children [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]