The Rochester Courier Journal
Official newspaper of the Rochester diocese

Father Gillis Says:

Good Riddance To Modern Man

On August 16th last year, just after the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, an editorial, startlingly entitled "Modern Man is Obsolete," appeared in The Saturday Review of Literature. It was of unusual if not phenomenal importance. Expanded and published later as a book, it had a wide circulation and doubtless has done much to form opinion about the consequences of the bomb.

Father Gillis

I should not care to say that the writer of the editorial, Mr. Norman Cousins, who is also editor-in-chief of the publication in which it appeared, has our Catholic view of the nature of man. He shows little if any acquaintance with the doctrine of man as a supernatural being. But he does at least see the all-important fact that man if never before was quite find an answer to the question "What is man?" He says: "While the dust was still settling over Hiroshima, he was asking himself questions. The biggest question concerns the nature of man."

* * *

It's a pity that Mr. Cousins has to say—for himself and for others—that man finds no answer to that question. That fact is strange to us. We have the answer to the all important question, on the first page of the catechism. With us, really all of five years before the deluge. Prophets and kings have desired to know and have not known it. For "prophet" I suppose we should say in our time, "philosophers," and for "kings," say "rulers and leaders of men." Even the child could ask them, "What's the good of knowing anything if you don't know what's on the first page, in the main catechism?" At that the child would be repeating Socrates but neither the child nor the "prophets and kings" will be aware of that fact.

* * *

The child continues: "I know all that. The Sisters in school and the priests in church tell us. And they tell us too that if anyone asks how we know it is answer that Jesus said. "Out of the mouths of babes" comes wisdom, but the learned and sophisticated refuse to become as little children. So they remain benighted.

But one thing they know, as Mr. Cousins points out: they know that what he calls "materialistic man" is done for. To tell the truth that man didn't last long. He appeared not a century ago. He came in with the theory of evolution, and he goes out even before the theory has been abandoned. So we have the anomaly of man trying to live on a materialistic theory after he has learned that the materialistic theory doesn't work.

* * *

Mr. Cousins points out that the basis of Darwinian evolution, the "survival of the fittest" found its "most overstretched interpretation in Mein Kampf, with its naked glorification of brute force and the complete worship of might as right." "Overstretched" perhaps, but to me it seems that Hitlerism is the logical outcome of Darwinism. When Darwin spoke of "the fittest" he meant, as he himself said, the strongest, the most cruel, the most relentless. Darwin, being a gentle soul, was horrified at the thought of what might be done with his theory. What he feared might be done was indeed done in Germany where undiluted Darwinism, popularized by Haeckel, took firmer hold than in England. Hence came Nazism-[illegible]

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So it may well be that it is not "modern man" who is obsolete, but "materialistic man." If so, we may rejoice. Man is not by nature materialistic. God didn't make him that way, and God never intended that man should make himself over again in the image and likeness of a brute.

* * *

So, good riddance to "modern man." Let's get back to ancient man, very ancient, the most ancient man as he came fresh from the hands of his Creator. That man had a soul as well as a body. His soul was no mere animating principle. It was — it is — the seat of intelligence and free will and hence of morality and religion. If man finds out what he was in the beginning, what he should be, what he is in spite of the temporary vogue of materialistic theory, the atomic bomb may turn out to have been a blessing very much disguised. The shame and the pity of it is that it took such a tremendous shock to awaken man to what he really is and what he is doing on this earth.

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The Yardstick

By Rev. Geo. A. Higgins

Catholics in Labor Unions

The Pittsburgh Catholic, long noted for its intelligent and progressive stand on social and economic problems, recently ran an illustrated breakdown of the membership figures of American trade unions. For readers of this column, the most interesting feature of the story was its reference to Catholic participation in the labor movement.

Father Higgins

The writer's figures are admittedly subject to correction, but he's probably close to the truth when he estimates that four out of every six American Catholics who are gainfully employed belong to a bona fide trade union—as contrasted with the figure of about one out of four or five for the general population.

All sorts of morals can be drawn from these significant figures. They ought to embarrass some of the liberals who persist in caricaturing the Church as a reactionary element in American society. They ought to console and gratify those pioneer American Catholics who have labored so diligently to popularize the teaching of the Encyclicals on the value of trade unionism.

They ought to be a salutary caution to those benighted individuals, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, who delight in villifying the American trade union movement as a subversive or Communistic agency. But, perhaps more important than anything else, they ought to be a challenge to Catholic trade unionists themselves.

God forbid that American Catholics should ever isolate themselves as a sectarian political bloc within the trade union movement. Let them continue to work together harmoniously with their fellow-unionists of whatever faith. Let them approach their union and its problems with that same open-hearted spirit of cooperation for the common good which prompted Cardinal Gibbons to forestall the condemnation of the Knights of Labor.

Socalled "confessional" or sectarian trade unions would be alien to the American tradition and would unquestionably do more harm than good. And the establishment of sectarian blocs or factions within existing secular unions would be almost as disastrous.

Catholics have an obligation to their union and to the general welfare which is more compelling than that of their fellow-unionists. They have an obligation, arising out of what should be their fuller understanding of the principles of social justice as expounded in the social encyclicals of recent Popes, to keep their unions looking forward — looking forward to the complete fulfillment of the demands of justice and charity.

But the fact remains that Catholics, as such,

Catholics ought to be "radical" trade unionists—radical in the sense that Pope Pius XI was radical when he insisted that labor be given a partnership in management, profits, and ownership; radical in their unceasing efforts to eliminate every semblance of racial discrimination from trade union practices; radical in their willingness to spend themselves in organizing the unorganized workers of the nation. (Let's hope, for example, that Catholic trade unionists will rise magnificently to the CIO's recent challenge to organize the workers of the South to bring them the blessings of unionism.)

Trade unions are a necessity for the protection of the workingman. They're that, to be sure. But they're more than that by far. They're an indispensable element in that system of organized cooperation for the general welfare which the encyclicals propose as an alternative — the only Christian and human alternative — to free competition on the one hand and to be baneful curse of statism on the other.

Organized cooperation for the general welfare, if it's anything more than a pretty phrase, implies that labor's function goes far beyond the limits of traditional collective bargaining. Labor is to be given a partnership with the other organized economic groups in society in planning for the economic welfare of its own industry and eventually of the nation as a whole. It's to have a voice in determining wages, prices, quality, output and those other elements of economic life which, in orderly and intelligent combination, add up to the general economic welfare of all of us.

Four out of every six Catholics who are gainfully employed belong to a union. . . . Thank God! But that's only the beginning of our job as Catholics. Let's work and pray for a bigger and better trade union movement which will eventually perform that function in society which it has a right and a duty to perform for the common good.

AS WE SEE IT

Spilled Milk and Hunger

By DAN PATRICK

If any additional evidence is needed relative to famine conditions in Europe, the Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit has furnished it with his graphic description of the nearstarvation he witnessed in Poland.

We would suggest that you read and reread that article on page one of this issue. We would especially call it to the attention of such diverse groups and individuals as:

Those men who spilled more than 1,000 quarts of milk over the highway near Rochester the other day.

Those women who whimper over the fact that they can't get nylons and are forced to stand in line for this and that scarce article.

Those people who bewail the lack of butter and beer.

Those people who begrudge the shipment of needed grains to Europe with the blind sentiment that those Europeans who are starving should take care of themselves.

And the great many individuals who waste huge amounts of food with little thought of the consequences of such wastage. What a feast the starving people of the world could contrive from our garbage cans!

Let's get back to the spilled milk over which we all should cry.

For more than a week, the Rochester area has been the center of a milk strike. Most people have managed to get some milk and, up to this weekly inclosure, no violence was reported.

A dealer who has not signed a contract with the striking union was bringing milk to his plant the other day when some twenty men jumped on his truck and poured the 1,000 odd quarts over the highway.

Who these men were has not been established—officially at least.

But wherever they may be they should hang their heads in shame over the commission of a wanton act which ordinarily is a felony in the eyes of the state. In these times of starving people, such an act becomes more than a felony and borders on something akin to a sacrilege.

We are not attempting to analyze the issues at dispute in this strike. Nor do we question the right of labor to strike. But you can examine the papal encyclicals on labor from top and bottom and nowhere will you find anything that condones violence in a labor dispute.

To our mind, the destruction of an essential food product is violence in its lowest form.

We most would like to take issue with those who minimize the hunger threat in Europe and those who admit it but feel its solution is none of our business.

It is very much our business both from a moral and political viewpoint.

The vengeance of a wrathful God could very well descend on an American nation which closed its ears to the cries of the starving and its eyes to the sight of the dying in these critical days.

Aside from that, we might as well consider the political factors involved in feeding Europe. There seems to be general agreement that Communism is sweeping Europe like a prairie fire. And that fire is raging far beyond Mr. Churchill's "iron curtain."

One of the most potent weapons against the onrush of this force is food. The people who are caught in the middle of this struggle must eat and when a man is hungry he doesn't particularly care about the source of his food.

Should that food come from the Democracies of the west, then those starving people will have faith in our form of government bolstered. Right now it must be wavering badly.

On the other hand should the Communists ravage to feed those hungry, there will be every reason to expect them to veer toward "Mother Russia" as they love to term the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe.

The war in Europe ended a year ago through the victory of Allied arms.

The battle for the peace must be fought with food and unless we do our share we are just as negligent as if we had delayed the shipment of arms to our men in the fighting fronts during the war.

This Mother's Day marks the opening of another food drive under the auspices of the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States. Each and every one of us has the opportunity to make a significant contribution to this campaign and stop the rampage of starvation.

Which?

Only one life for me,
One death its close,
When will that hour be?
Only One knows!

Only one soul is mine,
Endless its life,
Heaven or hell its home
After the strife.

Only One Eye sees all,
One Judge of Man,
Earth's judgments pass away,
God's never can.

One life, one death, one soul,
Eternity!
All saved or lost for aye!
Which shall it be?

Friendly Fire

No International complications will arise out of the attack on one of our planes over Vienna. . . . Fortunately it was friendly Russians who did the shooting.

And furthermore they were using Lend-Lease planes. That makes it almost as though we were shooting at ourselves and how could the Russians be blamed for that?

They may have thought it was Franco circling in to buzz the Eiffel tower.

French Leftists expect France to attack any moment . . . Even if they have to start it themselves.

The Bishop's Appointments

MAY

1 Wednesday — Mercy Guild Luncheon, Powers Hotel — 1:00 P. M.
Anniversary Banquet of Ancient Order of Hibernians, Seneca Hotel—7:00 P. M.
2 Thursday—Mercy Sodality Reception, Our Lady of Mercy High School—3:00 P. M.
St. Theodore's, Confirmation—7:45 P. M.
3 Friday—Low Mass for St. Monica Sodality, St. Patrick's Church—8:00 A. M.
Holy Redeemer, Confirmation—7:45 P. M.
4 Saturday — Address to Regional Convention of Newman Clubs, Hotel Buffalo, Buffalo, N. Y.—6:00 P. M.
5 Sunday—Low Mass for Polish Holy Name Society, St. Joseph's Church—8:30 A. M.
St. Casimir's, Elmira—Confirmation—2:00 P. M.
St. Patrick's, Elmira—Blessing of Jubilee—4:00 P. M.
St. Joseph's Hospital, Elmira—Nurses' Graduation—7:45 P. M.
6 Monday—St. Joseph's Hospital, Elmira—Low Mass for Nurse Graduates—7:00 A. M.
7 Tuesday—Golden Jubilee of St. Cecilia's School, New York City.
8 Wednesday—Nazareth College May Day, Low Mass and Benediction—9:00 A. M.
Nazareth Academy, Senior Play—8:30 P. M.
9 Thursday—Immaculate Conception, Confirmation—7:45 P. M.
10 Friday—Mercy High School, Senior Play—8:15 P. M.
11 Saturday—Low Mass for International Federation of Catholic Alumnae, St. Joseph's Church—12 Noon.
Pugilist Federation Dinner of Welcome to Returning Service-Men, Powers Hotel—6:30 P. M.
12 Sunday—Low Mass for Rochester Council of Catholic Nurses, Old St. Mary's Church—8:00 A. M.
Solemn Mass "Coram Episcopo" and Sermon, Community Chest Campaign—Sacred Heart Pro-Cathedral—11:00 A. M.
Pontifical Vespers, World Sodality Day—Sacred Heart Pro-Cathedral—4:00 P. M.
St. Stanislaus, Confirmation—7:45 P. M.
13 Monday—Community Chest Campaign Dinner, Chamber of Commerce—6:00 P. M.
Bishop's Choirboys, Finals—8:30 P. M.
14 Tuesday—St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City—Sermon for Centenary of the Sisters of Mercy.
16 Thursday—Annual Banquet of Rochester Sodalities, Immaculate Conception Auditorium—8:00 P. M.
Camp Sonnin Marie Corell Party, Columbus Civic Center—8:30 P. M.
18 Sunday—St. Philip's Church, New York City—Sermon, Silver Jubilee of Msgr. William Kelley.
20 Monday—Retreat, St. Bernard's Seminary—7:30 P. M.
21 Tuesday—Retreat, St. Bernard's Seminary.
22 Wednesday—Retreat, St. Bernard's Seminary.
23 Thursday—Pontifical Mass, Nazareth Academy May Day—9:30 A. M.
Retreat, St. Bernard's Seminary.
24 Friday—Retreat, St. Bernard's Seminary.
St. Helen's, Confirmation—7:45 P. M.
25 Saturday—Pontifical Mass, Sacred Heart Academy—Feast of St. Magdalene Sophie—9:00 A. M.
St. Agnes High School Banquet, Powers Hotel—6:00 P. M.
26 Sunday—Low Mass, Sacred Heart Academy—8:30 A. M.
St. Patrick's, Confirmation—1:00 P. M.
May Day Exercises, Our Lady of Mercy High School—2:30 P. M.
St. Ambrose, Confirmation—8:00 P. M.
27 Monday—Villa Maria Academy, New York City—Commencement Address.
28 Tuesday—St. Monica's, Confirmation—7:45 P. M.
29 Wednesday—St. Louis, Pittsford—Confirmation—7:45 P. M.
30 Thursday—Low Mass, First Communion Day, Sacred Heart Pro-Cathedral—8:30 A. M.
Solemn Mass "Coram Episcopo"—Golden Jubilee of Rev. J. Emil Gadell, St. Peter and Paul's Church—10:30 A. M.
St. Mary's of the Lakes, Ontario—Confirmation—3:00 P. M.
St. Mary Magdalene's, Wolcott—Confirmation—4:30 P. M.
St. Michael's, Lyons—Confirmation—7:45 P. M.
31 Friday—St. Margaret Mary, Confirmation—7:45 P. M.

WASHINGTON

Facing Argentina Facts

By TOM ROGERS

Washington — Despite the unfavorable "press" that Argentina has been receiving in certain quarters in this country there are certain facts that cannot be dodged.

For one thing the largest investor in Argentina is not the German colony but the huge holdings of the far more diplomatic British. The British own at least 50% of Argentina's railways and take from Argentina over one-third of her products.

The United States ranks second in foreign holdings in Argentina—and far ahead of the German money that has been so publicized.

And as one veteran down there observed: ". . . I might even add that the Peron election reminded me of one of those conducted by an American political machine like Boss Crump's or Frank Hague's or Ed Kelly's . . . and the bigotry that defeated Smith is far more deadly to a country than a student riot. People were jailed and that was wrong; but since when were we ever unsullied lilies in this U. S. A.?"

Argentine military aggression — except possibly against Paraguay, which is strictly a prairie — is a military joke. The country has the population of New York State and most of it is busy on the world's largest ranches, farms or packing houses.

That population, incidentally, is less than one-third that of neighbor Brazil and comes to about one-seventh that of the entire continent.

Foreign traders here estimate that the recent removal of government restrictions on exports to Argentina will result in a $200,000,000 increase in shipments of American goods into that market in the next three years.

How soon the pick-up in shipments to the Argentine will come depends upon the availability of goods and shipping space. The demand is there for both capital and consumer goods, and Argentina has over one-and one-half billion dollars in gold to pay for it.

(Did some one just mention the Soviet loan? The British loan? The French loan?)

Many foreign traders in New York regard Latin America as our only really big market that is completely attractive. With more than $4 billion in gold and exchange balances available, Latin America is our only really big market that has the ability to pay for her imports; the others must borrow from us in order to buy from us on any substantial scale. And Argentina normally would vie with Mexico, Brazil, Cuba and Venezuela as our best market in Latin America.

While the $200,000,000 represents a sizable figure in pent-up Argentine needs for American goods, foreign traders believe that this sum is probably much smaller than it would have been had we maintained the same sort of commercial relations with Argentina over the last few years as we have with other Latin-American nations.

Unable to purchase goods here, even to the extent to which we supplied other Latin-American nations during the war, Argentina has taken a leading part in promoting inter-hemisphere trade with the aim of making other countries as independent of the United States as possible.

And underscore this: Brazil has supplanted the United States and Great Britain as Argentina's chief supplier. Those who know of the resources of the famous ABC countries (Argentina, Brazil, and Chile) know full well that if they are ever organized economically, they will play merry hob with the economics of this country, the British Empire, and the planned Russian economic and political empire. There is more potential wealth in South America than on any continent or in any area on earth.

What some people are asking now is this: has the attitude of Mr. Braden and some of his friends in politics and the press merely driven the Argentine leaders further away from us? His American trading, facing the facts as we must, lost out to Argentine trading in Latin countries?

We must realize, as the British have long been aware, that these countries have a common language, a common Faith, and a common culture. We must realize that they are on the rise. We must realize that we shall only maintain that lead if we settle our affairs at home and continue to beat the world in our best field: that of technical "know-how" or the results of science applied on a mass basis for the benefit of mankind.

These are the facts that we must face. The talk of war dangers in a nation the size of the state of New York as opposed to a nation with the terrible responsibility of the atom bomb is absolutely Winchellian—or ridiculous.

One Man's Opinion

By WALTER KIERNAN

International News Service

Kindly turn the pages for funny stuff. . . . I have my serious moments.

What I wanted to say was . . . Did anybody detect any particular signs of reverence among the statesmen of the world in the Holy Week-Passover week?

Here is a period in which the little people acknowledge the greatness and the wonders of God.

Here is a period when most men are brought to the realization. . . . and accept it willingly. . . . That without God they are nothing.

But that humbleness doesn't show anywhere in the minutes of the Security Council.

They are still unwilling or still too short-sighted to see. . . . Not Nations. . . . But the one world God created . . . and then divided.