

The Church In Politics

The Vatican ruling announced this week which forbids Catholics to vote for communist candidates raises the age-old question on the relationship between Church and State.

Critics of the Church can be expected to brand the latest Vatican decree as ecclesiastical interference in political affairs.

Is it true, "The Church should stay out of politics?"

Actually it can't stay out. It penetrates every aspect of a Catholic's life — his attitude toward personal integrity, education, family life, professional duties, labor relationships and politics.

If the Church is to be restricted to the sanctuary, if its authority extends no farther than the Communion rail, then it ceases to be the Church with divine authority to guide its members in saving their souls.

Catholics do not live in a vacuum. They live in the same world as other humans do and their response to God's will in the concrete problems of daily life will determine their eternal destiny. Catholics, therefore, look to their Church for guidance.

The Church, through its hierarchy, is in duty bound to chart the boundaries beyond which sin lies. The boundaries leave broad fields of freedom and room for differing political opinions. History is witness to the fact that Catholics are found in opposite camps — Republicans and Democrats, Whigs and Tories, in right wing and left wing and center parties.

Freedom, however, has its limits; without them, we have anarchy.

The Vatican action of this week, therefore, safeguards freedom by throwing the influence of the Church in favor of democracy by blocking communist gains.

Democracy everywhere is threatened as long as men anywhere are enslaved by Kremlin tyranny.

Catholics in America have a consistent reputation for firm loyalty to the U.S. constitution which prohibits any religious test for political candidates.

If anyone has violated this fundamental American tradition it is that critical segment of citizens who question the integrity of "a Catholic senator" or "a Catholic president."

If a Catholic is elected president he will not be "a Catholic president." He will be quite simply the "President of the United States." Denominational adjectives, as a boast or a barb, are certainly not in accord with the spirit of our nation's constitution.

But this hypothetical Catholic who is president will still have the right, as he had as an ordinary citizen, to look to his Church for moral guidance.

To deny him, of any citizen, this right is to restrict the Church to the sanctuary — the very same restriction Hitler drew in Nazi Germany and the same restriction still enforced in communist countries. Again history is witness to the fact that those who limit the Church's freedom are the same tyrants who seek to destroy all freedoms.

The Church-State question, therefore, is not solved by either a total-separation or hand-in-glove alternative. The true solution lies midway — each free in its own sphere — the Church free in its role as moral guide and the State free to rule in accord with the constitution which respects the God-given rights of its citizens.

Teenagers-Told

Rebel Against Pagan Web

Boston — (RNS) — A prominent Redemptorist priest urged Roman Catholic teenagers here to resist "a web of pagan trends" endangering youth's individuality.

The Rev. Joseph P. Manton, C.S.S.R., of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Basilica here was keynote speaker at the second annual Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Youth Congress for some 1,500 delegates.

A popular figure with teenagers, Father Manton is known as "the golden voice of Mission Hill" because his weekly novena services have drawn some 12,000 worshippers to the Redemptorist basilica each Wednesday.

The keynote speaker stressed that youth's spirit of individuality and independence is a "tremendous potential" for good.

"If you must rebel," he told the delegates, "then rebel against the false values so many young people are swallowing today — the musical garbage, the paperback trash, the know-it-all swagger and smart, sophisticated way of

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By REV. HAROLD GARDNER, S.J. (N.G.W.C. News Service)

In the magnificent motion picture made from the even more magnificent play "The Diary of Anne Frank" there is a scene in which Dr. Frank and his family and friends, who have just moved into their hideout from the Nazis in Amsterdam, settle down to spend the first day in utter silence, for fear that any movement of noise in their cramped quarters will betray their presence to the men in the factory underneath.

The fugitives have not yet worked out the routine and ingenuity of hiding away the silent hours, and so they all sit rigidly upright and read through the whole blessed day. Anne Frank records in her diary that "on that first day I read through the whole of 'The Tale of Two Cities.' I think it is the saddest story I have ever read."

Little did Anne know that her own diary, to be recovered some years later, was to be in turn one of the saddest and at the same time most glorious accounts of Jewish heroism under the Nazi persecution.

Think, though, what the two long, weary, fear-ridden years would have been for the Franks and their fellow Jews if they had not had books to occupy their time and their minds.

And think what the millions of Jews and others in the Nazi and communist concentration camps would have given (and would today give) if only they could lay their hands on books, as a means, if nothing else, to assuage the terrible boredom that must have felt as though they were seeping into the very marrow of their bones.

It's almost impossible for us to imagine a world without books. They are one treasure in the riches of our civilization that we simply take for granted — though, of course, not all books are gold; some are dross.

But what would our lives now be if there had been no books; books carried to school, books read and studied at home, books for our entertainment and for our continuing intellectual growth?

If it is true that we are to fear the man of one book, it is even more true that we should pity the man or the woman without books. Perhaps there is a profound symbolism in the fact that when we are pondering the plight of the conjugal person marooned on the desert island, we always ask what books he might best have with him.

In the United States, books and esteem for them have been our heritage from the beginning of the country's history.

We need only recall in passing the passion for reading among the Puritans and the concern of the colonial farmers in the South to keep their libraries well stocked with the latest imports from Europe. College libraries began to grow almost as soon as prototypes of Mark Twain's sat on one corner of the educational log and faced the pupil on the other.

Despite this early tradition, however, all is not well with books today among us. It would be out of tune in our bookish shortcoming, but the fact is that despite our almost universal literacy, we are not the world's greatest book readers.

Part of this, obviously, stems from the fact that we devote so much time to other media of entertainment — the radio and TV, newspapers and the movies. But it also springs from the fact that books are not as available in this country as they are in many another.

It has been estimated, for instance, that if we had as many public libraries as Finland in proportion to population, we would have about 77,000 libraries. We had 7,477 in 1950.

Further, even with the public libraries we have, plus bookmobile services and all other adjuncts to make reading widespread, at least 27 million people live in rural or non-rural areas where they do not have ready (if any) access to books. This lamentable situation was finally faced and steps taken toward its rectification when the Federal Library Services Act was passed in 1956.

This authorizes a Federal appropriation of \$7.5 million a year for five years to be matched by the states, to bring books to the thus far bookless.

In this continuing campaign to provide instruction and information to the American public, to the end that citizens everywhere may be better able to exercise their democratic duties and

Religious Reading Urged



Sacred Heart Academy students Peggy Taylor, left, and Patricia Hanna browse in school's library. This week, April 12 to 18, is being observed as Library Week.

The author of this article is literary editor of America, the national weekly review published by the Jesuit Fathers. He is widely known for his original writings and his literary criticisms. The article was written for the April 18 issue of America and has been made available at the same time to the Courier Journal.

privileges, National Library Week was instituted last year. It was sponsored by the National Book Committee, in conjunction with the American Library Association.

Its purpose was to stimulate interest in libraries, to inform the American people of what they actually have at their service, and to emphasize the general importance of reading.

From March 16 to 22, 1958, more than 5,000 villages, towns and cities observed the week. Community projects centered around it, radio and TV stations featured it, and the result was splendid. For one thing, libraries all over the country chalked up record circulation figures during the observance, and incidentally, why our culture is thought of abroad as being so predominantly materialistic. Foreigners are rarely told of the religious character of so much of our publishing.

Every Frenchman or Turk knows that we publish Alcey Spillane; but how many have ever heard that the Bible is still the all-time best seller among us?

SERMONETTE

By the REV. JAMES D. MURPHY
"Book Fool . . ."

Death is not a popular subject. Even on Ash Wednesday when the ashes are rubbed across our forehead in the sign of a cross to remind us of our origin and our destiny, we don't like it. And the sermons we hear make no more lasting impression than yesterday's TV western. How much time do we spend in meditation on our own death?

If we want to win friends and influence people, then we had better not be injecting the note of death in our conversation. Now we know that death is even more certain than taxes. Yet we keep pushing the idea into the back of our minds; it will be all too soon when it gets here.

We know that it is the one portal that we must pass before we can hope to enjoy that happiness which God has prepared for those who are faithful to Him.

Anything that is necessary before we can be with God cannot be something so terrible. What is more the good God has promised us that just the same as He will give us the grace to meet with every temptation and trial of our lifetime He will also give us the grace to meet with the difficulties of death.

It is possible that you may be president of the United States someday but the probabilities of this becoming a reality are quite slim. And so you need not prepare yourself to undertake such an office. It is possible that you be the Chairman of the Board of General Motors some day but again the probabilities of this coming into your life is negligible and so you need not prepare for this office.

It is not only a possibility and a probability that you will die someday. It is an absolute fact. Since we know not just at what moment it will happen this makes it necessary to be prepared at all times. If you are not, then it may be said of you as it was said of the man in Holy Scripture: "Thou fool, dost thou not know that this very night do they demand thy soul of thee." Luke 12, 20.



Joseph Breig's Column Cuba Peril

Dale Francis, perhaps, did more than any other American to expose the tyrannies and atrocities of the Fulgenzio Batista regime in Cuba. But now Francis is expressing grave fears about the future of Cuba under Fidel Castro, who overthrew Batista.

Francis, editor of the Lane Star Catholic and special writer for our Sunday Visitor, is well known in Cuba. He went there immediately after the revolution in January, and later made a return visit.

He reported that what again was being opened, and photos tapped; that Castro was denying the right to have opposition parties; that promised elections were being moved farther into the future, and that Castro had become a dictator as absolute as Batista.

Francis did not, of course mean that Castro had been guilty of brutal despotism. But he did say that the executions of war criminals were beginning to degenerate into condemnation of political prisoners without proper evidence or trials.

In fairness to Castro, it is necessary to remember that sometimes temporary severe restraint is necessary after a drift into something approaching anarchy. Nevertheless, the Dale Francis report is deeply disturbing.

Especially serious is the charge made by Francis that Castro was allowing known communists to get into positions of power, particularly in the ministry of education — a favorite target of subversive forces. There can be no mitigating of this aspect of the matter; it is profoundly dangerous.

On the other hand, the Cuban correspondent for National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service described such reports as that of Dale Francis as "grossly exaggerated." His estimate was that there is no possibility of a communist takeover in Cuba.

Further, the Cuban Catholic Student Federation showed no hesitancy about supporting the Castro regime. Thus we are confronted with sharply diverging stories on the situation in Cuba today.

It seems to me that at the root of the difficulty is the fact that Castro has won his place in the history and the hearts of Cubans. He can be of tremendous service to his people as their inspiration. But he is betraying his own special mission by acting as head of state. He should give the work back to the hands of a careful, dependable administrator.

Other-wise, there is reason to fear that Castro may himself, unwittingly, undermine his own revolution. Certainly Cubans will not for long tolerate communist subversion; they are a Catholic and freedom-loving people, who detest despotism and godlessness.

Castro is determined that there shall be no counter-revolution or return to power of tyrannical rulers. But there will be danger of precisely that until Castro takes the steps necessary for establishment of good and stable government.

It is a common error to suppose that anyone can do well in political office. The fact is that politics is a highly specialized field, requiring years of experience superimposed on special abilities. Fortunately, good will and even brilliance are by no means enough.

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Making Marriage Click

Father

By MSGR. IRVING A. DEBLANG
(Director, Family Life Bureau, N.C.W.C.)

"I would be the first to admit that women once were second class citizens, but now haven't the tables been completely turned?" Mr. B. M.

You sound a bit like a certain man whose wife was working away from home unnecessarily. One day he held her hand and said calmly, "Dear, you know what we both need? We both need a good will!"

I agree with you, Mr. B. M., that the role of men and women are all confused and knotted. Obviously, both men and women are to blame. There are certain men who force women to do a man's job and, of course, there are certain women who want to play men. That is bedlam and frustration for all concerned.

Let me try in a positive way to rehearse with you some of the facets of the role of man as father. This will involve several columns.

When a man has a long, intimate conversation with God, he will understand that the immense universe is itself an act of fatherhood. In it, he sees God's desire to create, to support, to sustain. In his love-act will God, man's own vocation as a father will appear.

All of a sudden his life takes on new meaning. He has a craving to be a father. A father must have children. He goes about now overcome with his newly discovered secret. He is proud, strong, and confident with the wisdom and strength of this God-given idea.

He scardles and eventually finds the heart of a lady who understands this. She gives herself to him with complete surrender. He likewise gives himself to her. They then concentrate their lives to the Father and become one in their love for each other.

They are equal as man and woman and equally loved by God. But man was appointed by God to be the head. It is to him that this whole project was confided. The child that they will have will be the fruit of their mutual love, but this child will carry the name of the Father.

Daily Mass Calendar

- Sunday, April 19 — Third Sunday after Easter (white), Gloria, Creed, Easter Preface.
- Monday, April 20 — Mass as Sunday except no Gloria or Creed; VII.
- Tuesday, April 21 — St. Anselm (white), Gloria, Creed.
- Wednesday, April 22 — St. George and St. Gerasim, martyrs (red), Gloria, VR.
- Thursday, April 23 — St. George, martyr (red), Gloria, VR.
- Friday, April 24 — St. Fidelis, martyr (red), Gloria, VR.
- Saturday, April 25 — St. Mark, evangelist (red), Gloria, 2nd prayer of Rogation Day; Creed or Rogation Mass (purple), no Gloria, no Creed.
- VR—Notive of Requiem permitted.

Taiwan Question

Miami, Taiwan — Hit tunes are favorite funeral dirges here on Formosa.

"Our Maryknoll mission is only a short distance from the pagan cemetery," reports Father Donald J. Sheehan, M.M., of San Francisco, Calif., "and most of the funeral corteges pass by our gate.

"If the deceased warrants much 'face' and his survivors can afford it, a band is hired to lead the procession.

What is most disconcerting to a Western ear, however, is the music that makes up the band's repertoire. One band, for example, marched past recently playing a loud and gusty rendition of "Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now?"