

Fear God, Stop Stealing

Cagliari, Sardinia — (RNS) — The Roman Catholic bishops of Sardinia, at a meeting here, issued a joint pastoral letter calling on the people to cooperate with authorities in a campaign against bandit activity which has plagued the island.

They also sent a telegram to Pope Paul, thanking him for a recent sermon which called attention to the problem.

The Pope's sermon had deplored "organized crimes of robbery, blackmail, kidnapping and terrorism" and urged the public to oppose such crimes.

The bishops echoed the Pope's statement in suggesting that part of the blame for the increase in bandit activity might be due to "the rapidity of modern communications" which offers "news shows, pseudo-artistic spectacles and performances often of immoral content emphasizing the criminal aspects of life."

Public authorities and the people must "affirm the necessity of a return to the fear of God," the pastoral letter said.

Competition Proves Healthy for Public School

By MONSIGNOR EDGAR MCCARREN
(Part 3 of a Series)

The truth is that there is ample reason to believe that competition in education works as it does in other areas of American life — it improves the product. Every improvement in public schools tends to motivate improvement in non-public schools, and vice versa.

The truth is that the public schools can say to the non-public schools what Hertz says to Avis: "The harder they try, the better we get."

Yet, the belief that a strong non-public school system weakens support for the public schools has a superficial plausibility. Such an attitude is rarely expressed openly, and it dies hard. What are the facts?

Factual Evidence

Consider New York State. The Catholic school enrollment alone (more than 800,000) is larger than the public school enrollment in any one of the per-

centage of the states. Yet the per-pupil expenditure for public school children in New York was the highest in the entire country. In fact, according to the most recent United States Office of Education statistics, the New York State per-pupil expenditure in average daily attendance was 50 per cent higher than that of the State of California. New York's expenditure is also far in excess of that of other states. In fact, New York has the highest per-pupil expenditure in the nation.

Furthermore, a survey by the New York State Education Department showed no correlation between the presence of a non-public school and the defeat of local public school budgets. In addition, an economic analysis has shown that the "reduced number of pupils that a local school system must provide for apparently creates a higher local capacity to finance expenditures" (Social and Economic Factors in Public Education by Jerry Miner, Syracuse University Press, 1963).

It is sometimes alleged that New York State lags behind some other states in educational

expenditures relative to the income of New York State residents. Statements such as these do not take into account the very large total investment in education in New York State. In order to obtain the true relationship between income and educational expenditure, the annual investment in the huge numbers of children attending non-public schools in New York State would also have to be estimated.

Competition is Healthy

Many talk as though they would prefer all children to attend the public school or college so that all education would be state-owned and state-controlled. Yet, American traditions disapprove of monopolies in business, in politics, or in religion. Americans do not want one party in politics, or one company controlling the manufacture of automobiles. The best thing that ever happened to Macy's was Gimbel's; the best thing that ever happened to General Motors was Ford and Chrysler.

Why should there be uniformity in education? It is in schools and colleges — in the world of ideas, above all — where there should be no monopoly, no possibility of easy, centralized control.

In a recent issue (Winter 1967) of the Harvard Educational Review, an article by Newman and Oliver underscored the current threat of educational monopoly, especially in view of the way the school monopolizes the time of the student:

"Schooling has a virtual monopoly on youth's time and energy, possessing the power to suppress the quest for individualism through extra-school activity."

In addition to psychological dangers, the monopoly carries as a second major threat its potential for creating cultural uniformity, destroying diversity in points of view, in styles of life, in standards of taste, and in underlying value commitments — there are a number of forces at work in modern Amer-

ica — mass media, the publishing industry, national curriculum development programs, and professional educators — which combine (however unintentionally) to produce overall institutional similarity.

In view of these sentiments, it was not surprising to read in the Saturday Evening Post (April 23, 1966) an article advocating a system of privately managed schools which would be obligated to accept a cross-section of the population.

"Without this kind of diversity," the writer said, "education could never attain real excellence." In this context, it should be remembered that the Catholic school has historically and typically tended to embrace a broad socio-economic mixture of pupils, precisely because its enrollment was not limited to a local neighborhood but rather drew students from a relatively large surrounding area.

This is the case for the encouragement — not the extinction — of the non-public school. American traditions of freedom of choice, freedom of religion, cultural diversity, pluralistic society, and healthy competition all point clearly in this direction.

Next week: "Do Catholic Schools Really Promote Segregation?"



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Joseph Breig

Waiting for Sanity to Return

People who announce that they no longer are Catholics leave me with a feeling of baffled wonder rather like that of a small boy watching his elder brother stalking out of the house after a quarrel with his parents, slamming the door and vowing never to return.

I mean to say, nothing can change the fact that no matter how irritating and cantankerous they may be, one's mother is one's mother and one's father is one's father, and so it will be to the end of time and beyond.

If this is true of physical relationship, it is a thousand times truer of spiritual relationship.

"Unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," said Jesus to Nicodemus, a Pharisee and a ruler among the Jews, who came by night and saluted Christ as a teacher from God.

But how, Nicodemus wanted to know, is rebirth possible? "Can a man enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born again?"

Jesus replied, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not wonder that I said to thee, 'You must be born again.'"

"The wind blows where it will, and thou hearest its sound but dost not know where it comes from or where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Another time, when somebody informed Jesus that his mother and his brethren were seeking him, he made the same point about the primacy of spirit:

"Who is my mother... my brethren?" Then, indicating his disciples, he said, "Behold my mother and my brethren! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother."

When Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" the answer came from Peter: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus responded:

"Blessed art thou, Simon bar

Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to thee, but my Father in heaven. And I say to thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church."

I suppose I am being annoyingly elementary, but I am trying to say what my faith is like. It is not a matter of habit, or convenience, or comfort, or position, or nationality, or any other earthly thing. It is supernatural.

I believe in the Church for one root reason: because God gives me the gift of believing. In baptism, the Spirit breathed faith into me. I was blown upon by the wind of which Jesus spoke to Nicodemus.

Nothing, therefore, can destroy the serenity at the core of my being. It is not a passive or negative or placid thing; it is a living, luminous certainty about immortality, and about God as my creator-Father, my redeemer, and my most intimate friend despite my terrible unworthiness.

The faults and sins in the Church do not disturb my total conviction that it is a thing divine, directly decreed and inflamed by God in Christ. How could they — seeing that my belief has survived even my own iniquities?

My faith, I am confident, would remain utterly unshaken even in the impossible eventuality that all other Christians on earth without exception — priests, people, bishops, pope — were to rend the skies with one unanimous howl of repudiation of the Church.

I would simply assume that some weird universal madness had seized upon Christendom, and that to me, incredibly, had been given the astounding mission of being the Church until sanity returned.

Dutch Catechism In U.S. Edition

New York — (RNS) — Only one translated edition will present the original form of the controversial "Dutch Catechism," according to sources at Herder and Herder, New York, American publishers of the English-language edition.

An executive of the publishing house said that all other translations in German, French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, have been postponed to await the final decision of Vatican officials who are considering suggested changes.

Only the English-language edition, which will appear without a special English-language imprimatur, will be based on the original text, he said.

He added that the revisions under discussion for other editions do not relate to the "removal of doctrinal errors" but to the "addition of things which some people think should have been included."

The imprimatur originally given to the English translation by Bishop Robert F. Joyce of Burlington, Vermont, has been withdrawn, Herder and Herder reported. They said that the book will be published on Oct. 31 with a notice that the original Dutch edition had an imprimatur from Bernard Cardinal Alfrink, Archbishop of Utrecht.

In Burlington, Bishop Joyce confirmed that he had withdrawn his imprimatur, because of "an agreement between the Holy See and the Dutch bishops that translations would not be published until changes would be incorporated." He said that he would give his imprimatur to the next edition of the book, which will include the changes approved by the Vatican.

Herder and Herder books, which are printed in Vermont, customarily bear the imprimatur of Bishop Joyce.

The first printing of the book will have 75,000 copies and will be a selection of at least four major book clubs, Herder and Herder reported. Large orders have already been received from the Catholic Book Club conducted by America Magazine, the Thomas More Book Club and the Bruce Publishing Company's Catholic Literary Guild. Since the controversy arose over the text, it was reported, at least one Catholic book store has doubled its original order to 500 copies.

Answering an editorial criticism in the National Catholic Reporter, lay-edited weekly newspaper published in Kansas City, Werner M. Linz, vice-president of the publishing firm, said that its customary to acquire a separate imprimatur for each translation of a book.

Methodists Missions Buy Nun's Art Display

New York — (RNS) — "Survival with Style," a spectacular pop-art exhibition created by Sister Mary Corita and her students at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles, was purchased here by the Methodist Board of Missions.

Originally displayed at the May Day celebration of Immaculate Heart College last Spring, the arrangement of 1,500 cardboard boxes was re-assembled for the first International Congress on Religion, Architecture and the Visual Arts meeting held in New York in August.

Miss Betty Thompson, executive secretary of the communication section of the Methodist Board of Missions saw it and persuaded her board to buy it. It will be made available for further showings at appropriate gatherings.

"Survival with Style" has been variously described as an exhibition, an assemblage and a maze. The insurance shipping manifest lists it simply, "Works of art — 1,500 cardboard cartons."

The boxes are of the corrugated paper variety and are empty. With pictures, quotations, mirrors or just masses of

brilliant color glued to them, they become building blocks for the seven-foot-high exhibit.

Quotations come from diverse sources — from the prayers of saints to the Beatles. Several feet are covered with Wonder Bread wrappers. For Sister Corita, the slogan "Wonder builds strong bodies 12 ways" has theological overtones that the bakery's advertising department overlooked.

Like the pop-culture that it reflects, the exhibit is not built for longevity. Miss Thompson observed.

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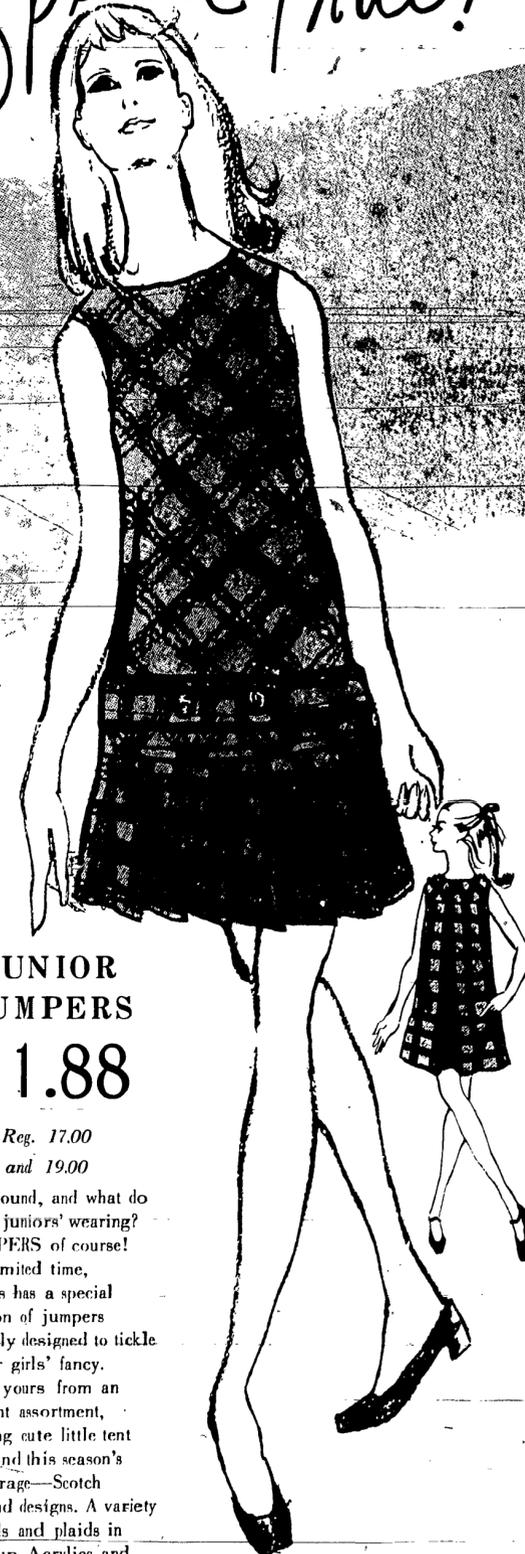
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