

May 27 In History

1920

The Gregorian chant practice children once endured in American Catholic Schools was the result of a resolution passed this week by the International Gregorian Congress, meeting in New York City. A. Caminetti, Commissioner General of Immigration, stated that cooperation of organizations like the National Catholic Welfare Council, civic organizations and authorities of the public school system is necessary to prevent Communists and Anarchists from turning immigrant aliens into dangerous radicals. Father Noonan, president of Marquette College, Milwaukee, scored both Socialism and abortion as being direct violations of natural law.

1945

The Dionne quintuplets celebrated their 11th birthday. The Communist Party was official-

ly re-established in Berlin and the story concluded: "The entry of American, British and French 'token occupation forces' into Berlin . . . has been postponed for the time being." Bishop J. H. Scharlman of the Diocese of Peoria, and the area deanery of Catholic women recorded their opposition to peace time conscription. The bishop stated that the draft is "detrimental to the religion and morals of our youth."

1960

Paul Blanshard told a national meeting of Baptist ministers in Rochester that a true Catholic cannot be a good American. The theme of the meeting was: "The Things that Make for Peace." Charles Karl of Elmira won first prize in the National Hibernian Essay Contest; and Miss Suzanne DeKaddo was named "Girl of the Year" in Geneva.

The Church: 1970

Doctrinaire Liberals

By Fr. Andrew M. Greeley



There are two fatal weaknesses in the thinking of the doctrinaire liberal: He believes in simple solutions and he is willing to impose these solutions on others.

Thus, recently the doctrinaire liberal thinks he has discovered a connection between the pollution problem and the population problem of the United States. As Dr. Paul Ehrlich, the author of the irresponsible book, "The Population Bomb," puts it, "If we don't do something dramatic about population and environment and do it immediately there's just no hope that civilization will persist." And Donald Aiken comments, "The government has to step in and tamper with religious and personal convictions, maybe even impose penalties for every child the family has beyond two."

HEW Secretary Finch implies that no American couple should have more than two children. Sen. Packwood wishes to revoke tax exemptions for any children in addition to two. Enthusiastic students sign solemn pledges that they will have no more than two children to stop the pollution of the world.

Most of this is utter nonsense. Pollution is a serious problem in the United States today, indeed, far too serious a problem to be seized upon by the manic simplicism of the New Left but there is no real evidence that the present level of population expansion in the United States will necessarily make the problem any worse. As demographer Ben Wattenberg, puts it,

"Lake Erie, the Hudson River, the Potomac are ecological slums today. If the U.S. population did not grow by one person over the current 205,000,000 Americans these bodies of water would still be ecological slums. These waters and any others now threatened will be decent places only if men and women are willing to devote resources to the job. This is not a function of population growth but of national will.

"It should also be remembered that pollution occurs in the under-populated places as well: in Sydney, Australia, today, in medieval Europe and in ancient Rome."

Wattenberg further comments, "The critical facts are

that America is not by any standard a crowded country and that the American birth rate has recently been at an all time low."

Wattenberg thinks that population is a "cop-out," a magic solution for all the environmental and social problems that we face today. "What is wrong and dangerous, and foolhardy is to make population a crisis. Doing so will simply allow too many politicians to take their eyes off the ball. When Explosionists say, as they do, that crime, riots and urban problems are caused by the population explosion, it is just too easy for politicians to say, 'sure, let's stop having so many babies' instead of saying, 'let's get to work on the real urban problems of the nation'."

And when men like Senator Packwood and Dr. Aiken wish to intervene in the decisions of married couples about how many children they are to have and justify their intervention on the grounds of an imminent pollution crisis based on overpopulation, they are letting their liberal moralistic inclination to impose virtue on others blind them to the nature of reality.

One can of course expect that if the secular liberals are engaged in such nonsense the Catholic authoritarians will not be far behind. Thus, I was recently asked after a lecture, by one terribly eager young clergyman, "Doesn't the Church have to change its teaching on abortion because of the pollution problem?"

Indeed, those who think that overpopulation is what is destroying our environment (instead of the venality of business and corruption in American government) might want to ponder other methods of population control such as the antiseptic disposal of unwanted infants or the elimination of people over sixty. There have been other societies which have seen nothing wrong with killing the very young and the very old and surely the argument in favor of "liberal" abortion bills which permit a human being to be killed when it is 25 weeks old could be stretched easily enough to include, say, a baby 25 weeks after it has been born or a retired person, say, 25 weeks after he is retired.

On The Right Side Thoughts After Kent State

By Father Paul J. Cuddy



WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE KENT STATE COLLEGE AFFAIR?

By "the affair," do you mean 1) the rioting of the students; or 2) the action of the National Guardsmen; or 3) the death of the four students?

LET'S START WITH THE PROTESTING STUDENTS.

No one contests the right of legitimate protest. Youthful mobs can be gaily and harmlessly vivacious; or they can be dangerously exuberant, especially if full of booze or pot; or they can be utterly vicious.

Life (May 15) reports: " . . . some 3,000 of Kent's 20,000 students had rampaged through that town for two nights, smashing windows and setting the ROTC headquarters afire. Then on a bright Monday noon, students and troops formed skirmish lines, the students flustering back and forth across the sloping campus in response to the bayoneted thrusts of the soldiers . . . Unaware that Ohio, like a few other states, permits its Guardsmen to load live ammunition, the students did not stop pelting the troops with stones, sticks and abuse, even when the soldiers lowered and aimed their weapons . . ." By some queer logic, Life called the deaths of the four unfortunate youths "murder."

BUT THE GUARDSMEN FIRED LIVE AMMUNITION!

Columnist Cliff Carpenter, erstwhile South American traveler with Bishop Hogan, wrote on Kent, from a report by student Jean Stewart of Rochester. It is a sad combination of many unfortunate things. But it helps to understand the final explosion:—

"The Guardsmen were shoved back against a fence. . . . They panicked. . . . Some fell to the ground and fired. They thought they were in danger from the size of the mob . . . I don't think so, but the important thing is that they thought they were. Many were just kids doing their duty, scared and tired from lack of sleep. We blame the governor and the university president for pretending things were under control when they weren't and for not shutting down the university . . ."

BUT THEY USED LIVE AMMUNITION!

Well, do you think rocks, bottles and bricks are unlive ammunition? It's a mystery to me that those who are trying to keep sanity and order in America: the police, the FBI, Sheriff's men, the various Guards and State Troopers, are so frequently publicized as the BAD GUYS.

Quite clearly I hope that any

friends of mine who are involved in people and property protection will be adequately equipped to do their job against mobs, hoodlums and arsonists, kidnapers, murderers, and the mentally unbalanced.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE DEATH OF THE FOUR STUDENTS?

Sad! And sorry for their parents and their friends. Sincerely sorry for the Guardsmen who were euechered by the mob into an impossible position, and who have gotten shady reporting from most of the media I have seen or read.

Don't you think the Guardsmen who are the peer age of the students acted about as rationally as can be expected in a terrifying situation? Re-read the LIFE description.

When men and women join a mob even from mere curiosity, they become part of the mob. If you join a mob of lynchers out to hang a Negro or a College President, and the Sheriff's men come in to protect the pursued victim, what do you expect the law men to do? You are part of the mob. It's the mob that's out to do the lynching. If you, as a mere curious person, are hurt or killed in the melee, it's a pity. But what do you expect? Have you some other solution?

The Morriss Plan

Text Evaluation Worrisome

By Frank Morriss



I'll be happy if I'm proved wrong, but I don't expect much of true substance to result from an evaluation of religion texts being carried on by the U.S. Catholic Conference Department of Education. I base my pessimism on the limitations imposed upon itself by the committee doing the evaluating — namely, a decision to consider the books only from the point of view of their educational effectiveness.

To explain further, the committee will study only texts bearing an imprimatur and will accept such as a kind of Good Housekeeping seal of approval for these catechism's orthodoxy. Unfortunately, that is letting the imprimatur take the buck which should be this committee's, or some committee's.

The bishops whose names are attached to these imprimaturs would certainly be the first to insist that their seals do not, like a federal inspection stamp on a side of beef, guarantee that the texts are doctrinally wholesome, but only that they contained nothing perceivable to their delegated censors as contrary to faith or morals.

About the only thing likely to deny a book an imprimatur from somewhere would be outright and specific denial of some article of faith, or, as in the case of the Dutch Catechism before its revision, a statement from the Vatican that there were in fact errors to be corrected.

Some years ago I wrote a review of the scandalous book by Father Charles E. Curran that brought him the notoriety which earned him a seemingly irre-

movable spot at the Catholic University. I mentioned the fact of the book's imprimatur, which brought a rebuke from the Bishop involved, who protested that this made it appear that he in fact approved of this book.

In reality I had mentioned the imprimatur to be fair to Father Curran, to acknowledge that the book could not be said to be openly heretical. The Bishop was actually right—he was standing on the fact that the imprimatur does not mean a book is good, that it is not harmful to the faith of its readers, that it is wholesomely orthodox. While there may be many bishops, to their credit, who would withhold their seals from a merely questionable book, still there are enough options open to an author and publisher to allow them to get an imprimatur somewhere. It is, as I say, only rare cases in which there would be nowhere to turn in order to get the seal.

What parents are looking for is an investigation that will determine whether most of the texts being used today do in fact teach their children the truths of the faith—whole, entire, and without adulteration. The texts can be as educationally effective as anyone would want, but if what they are educating in is not the faith of the one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church then these texts are worse than useless—they are positively dangerous. Parents want to know if their children are being given a stone in the place of the sustaining bread of Catholic truth.

In this regard, what is omit-

ted from the texts can be just as significant as what is included. If for example the fact of sin and eternal punishment is all but ignored — as they certainly are in some of the texts — then the child is being misled rather than taught the faith.

Just as dangerous are some of the philosophic and psychological prejudices behind these texts. Lectures, for example, promoting the "Come to the Father" series are heavily biased toward the existential understanding of learning as opposed to the conceptual. This psychology borders on denying the fact that a child is a rational animal, capable of ideas and understanding.

When teachers and parents are told by the "Come to the Father" lecturer, "Today, we are materialists to a great extent, and again this is good. The secular world is here to stay; the secular city is our way of existence. One of the Protestant theologians at the University of Chicago knew creation as metropolis, the secular city as God's new creation. Some of you are familiar with Harvey Cox on this" — when, as I say, such things are said with apparent approval, Catholics should immediately be on the alert. For this type of orientation, as popular as it is, and as imprimatured as it may be, is still extremely dangerous to faith. It is dangerous because it is biased not only against man's true nature but against some of the basic implications of Christianity.