

The Church: 1970

Sell Out? For What?

By Fr. Andrew M. Greeley



In recent columns I have been severely critical of the tactics of the New Left both in the nation and in the Church. A number of correspondents have writtenirate letters suggesting that I have become "conservative" and have "sold out to the Establishment."

To begin with, no organization as inefficient as the Roman Catholic Church can possibly be thought of as having an "establishment," and if I have "sold out" it was obviously at an invisible price. For I have the same position in the official Church now as I did 16 years ago—assistant pastor — about the lowliest form of humanity available to any member of the white race in the United States. It is most unlikely that I will have any different position 16 years hence.

But the conservative charge is more serious for, apparently to the fevered minds of the New Left, anybody who is concerned with actually accomplishing social change is a conservative. Only those who pursue tactics which have been demonstrably counterproductive are to escape the conservative label. You are either a Kamikaze radical interested in self-destruction (or in "liturgical gestures" alla the Berrigan brothers) or you have sold out.

This is of course patently absurd yet it is understandable. Ours is an extraordinarily frustrating time for those wanting change both in the Church and in the larger society. The situation seems to be getting worse all around us and we are apparently powerless in the face of deterioration.

Thus, American young people realize they can be drafted to fight a war which they detest by a government which not only despises them, and thinks it should get re-elected without their support, but which also is apparently convinced that one of the keys to re-election is precisely its hard line against the young.

And the young people in the Church realize that the Church is governed by men who are not selected by the rank and file and who are in no way responsible to it. In addition, many of them either do not know what large numbers of their followers think and feel or, if they do know, simply do not care.

Under such circumstances, then, the young ask themselves, "What can we do?" and the most obvious answer is that they can do nothing, not at least by themselves. This is such an outrageous discovery that violence of one form or another seems to be the only adequate response.

And herein, I think, is the basic weakness of the New Left, religious or civil. It seems singularly innocent of awareness that the moral righteousness of a cause has never at any time in human history guaranteed victory for that cause. As Saul Alinsky has quite concretely put it, "You can't win without allies," and, my enthusiastic young friends of the New Left, the only place you're going to find allies is among the silent majority; you will not find allies by engaging in precisely that sort of behavior which is most likely to antagonize them.

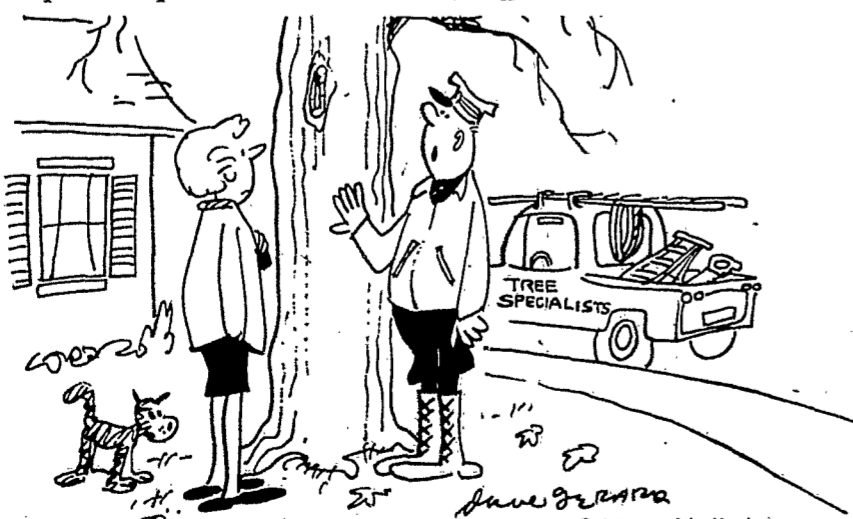
There are a large number of Americans dissatisfied with the war in Vietnam, with heavy taxation, with incompetent governmental bureaucracy, with leadership that does not tell the truth, with the directionless drift which has characterized the United States since the assassination of John Kennedy. Youth has no monopoly on such dissatisfactions.

Similarly, in the Church it is not just the young who are dissatisfied with the quality of ecclesiastical leadership but what the young clergy don't seem to realize is that the silent majority is dissatisfied not merely with the top level leadership but is dissatisfied with them, too.

But, the response comes, "You can't change a system in which the leadership is a self-perpetuating clique." Such a statement is nonsense. Of course you can, but you can't do it by quitting, you can't do it by copping out, you can't do it by forming factional caucuses which are designed to be permanent tiny minorities, you can't do it by insulting people, and you can't do it by insisting on ideological purity.

You can only do it if you have allies. If you have enough allies, then there is no reason why the Church will not in the future return to the traditional method of selecting its leadership (and it's worth noting, by the way, that two popes in the sixth century said it was immoral for a bishop to be chosen by any other method than the election by the laity and clergy of his diocese).

Somehow or other, I don't think this is really either a "conservative" or a "sell-out" position. It is rather a suggestion for strategy and tactics that have a chance of winning but then that is, I think, the last thing in the world that the New Left wants. For, if they should win then they would have to exercise responsibility and that would end all the fun.



"No, ma'am, it wouldn't be covered by Medicare!"

On The Right Side

The Strife's Not O'er

By Father Paul J. Cuddy



In 1948, Dr. Tom Gallagher, fresh from the U.S. Navy as a medical doctor, came to Sampson during its final years as a post-war temporary college. Sampson is 15 miles south of Geneva and belongs to the Ovid parish. The doctor was a twinkle-eyed, dark, pink-cheeked New Yorker in his mid-twenties. He was a Catholic with a deep intelligent faith, and a devotion worthy of his forebearers. I have often smiled to recall his youthful disdain, common among medical men in the military service, for the "gracious bedside manner." After a year at Sampson he did further studies, became a skilled orthopedist, and married a beautiful Science teacher at Nazareth College, Margaret DePrez.

I was the Catholic chaplain. He was the doctor. We were both young, both unmarried, and our interests were sympathetic. It was natural that we should become good friends.

One day we were discussing medical ethics. He remarked: "In medical school I was invited to assist at an abortion. I refused. An old professor said to me: 'Young man, you are wise. The first one is always hard. The rest are easy.'"

I admire the Abortion Blocks

in the same way I admire Hitler and Stalin and Mao Tse Tung. They share with these cold blooded men a basic principle, namely, a callous indifference toward the sacredness of human life. I admire these male-factors, not for their wickedness, but for their energy, persistence, genius for brainwashing, and for their getting results. Hitler considered the Jews a blight to the Nordic body. He destroyed them. Stalin and Mao considered anti-Communists unhealthy for the Communist social body. So they destroyed them. The abortionists consider the unborn children as beings without rights. So they allow them to be born or to be destroyed according to the decision of the babies' mothers.

By dint of carefully prepared and executed brainwashing, the Abortion Blocks have stultified the consciences of millions. Abortion was once a proposal so horrible that normal men would have arisen, outraged. They would have worked with a mighty zeal to protect innocent life. They would not have been defensive. They would have been firmly on the attack against abortionists.

Today, what do we see? Nor-

mal men's minds dulled into an apathetic little concern. In the antithetical spirit of anti-Christ, so vividly presented in Robert Hugh Benson's LORD OF THE WORLD, the Abortion Blocks are singing the hymn: "The strife is o'er; the battle done. Now is the victor's triumph won..."

The strife isn't over in my books. Here is a letter sent this week to many legislators, both for and against the wide-open Abortion law, and to Governor Rockefeller.

"The abortion law sanctioning death to unborn children has passed. I abhor it. Be assured I will encourage everything possible to keep this blood-letting law before the eyes of the people. Many of us will be grateful to legislators who will work to reverse this law. A professor in a famous medical school commented to one of his students regarding abortion: 'The first is very hard. The rest are easy.' I ask your consideration."

This is just one of a continuing series of reminders to legislators, that many silent citizens do not consider "the strife is o'er, the battle done" with the Abortion Block. Will you join the battle?

The Morriss Plan

Cardinal's Logic Faulty

By Frank Morriss



The only question is, just what would Cardinal Suenens consider "final"?

I refer to the apologia he has made regarding his latest adventure into confrontation with Pope Paul VI's decision that celibacy shall be retained and that the matter is therefore closed to further discussion. Cardinal Suenens refuses to accept this, but excuses his latest call for debate on the matter thus: "There is nothing irreverent in such openness. I consider it quite compatible with the respect due to the Pope, to whom it pertains to make the final decision."

So you see, all that apparently remains for Cardinal Suenens is that point of finality. It is highly doubtful, however, that anything short of the changes they want would bring the Belgian churchman and those who think like him to admit the matter is closed.

The Holy Father has issued one solemn encyclical ("Sacerdotalis Caelibatus"), several major statements, and many minor ones presenting and explaining his decision that celibacy be kept and that it therefore be removed from the realm of speculation. Some of the reasons Cardinal Suenens doesn't consider these statements as being decisive and final are most interesting. Summarized, they indicate a fundamental difference of opinion as to the nature of the Catholic Church's structure and government.

Surfacing in the Cardinal's recent statements is the theological opinion being advanced by "progressive" spokesmen such as Fathers Bernard Haering and Francis X. Murphy, both C.S.S.R., and others that a

change could be most harmful to the Church's life. Cardinal Suenens has not yet given any argument to convince us that celibacy is simply part of that normal life of the Church and apparently rests upon its acceptance by priests and people themselves, rather than upon duly appointed and elected Church authorities.

His casual admission that the Pope does have final say in the matter legally and technically, but not in the practical realm, must call into question either Cardinal Suenens' ability to be consistent or else his sincerity.

For his actions, as I have suggested, indicate he will not in fact accept any decision as final other than one that will see celibacy decided by what he calls collegiality and co-responsibility.

Christ told a parable about two sons who are asked by their father to do a bit of work in his vineyard. One of the boys resents the idea, and in fact refuses. But he apparently repents or at least thinks better of his refusal, and does in fact report for work. The other son immediately answers "yes" to his father's request, but he never shows up. Christ made the point that it is not what one says that determines obedience, but what one does.

The words of Cardinal Suenens as to the Pope's having the final decision on celibacy are not very convincing, since the Cardinal is acting as if the Pope really doesn't. What good does it do to say in words that the Pope can decide, when in practical application you will not accept the most clear and decisive statements from him.

True, celibacy is technically a disciplinary matter. But the Holy Father has pointed out that it is a law that goes to the very heart of the Church's functions, and he has said that a