

On Fr. Berrigan

When Jesuit Father Daniel Berrigan went underground last April instead of entering jail to serve the three year sentence he had received for destroying government property in Catonsville, it was argued that he was running away from a duty, was afraid of punishment, would hurt the peace cause he had bravely championed and would eventually look ignominious when captured by the law.

But each passing week of this fugitive's eluding of the FBI produces evidence that Father Berrigan is as clever at exposing his mind and spirit as he has been in hiding his body. He has not "copped out" but has found a new vocation, it seems, to be "a criminal for peace," illegally resisting the judgment of a federal court to proclaim by his refusal to surrender that he believes "the courts have stopped their ears against our cry for justice and peace."

Father Berrigan is making more copy from underground than he did when he walked in the open. Prominent publications like the Saturday Review, Christian Century, Village Voice and the New York Times Magazine carry his statements and articles almost weekly. Newspaper interviewers, led to his hideouts with cloak-and-dagger tension, broadcast statements of his philosophy of dissent.

What is Father Berrigan up to? He answers: "The whole ethos of this campaign is not to save my skin but to test a new political level of existence. I would hope new actions outside the law would create larger and larger communities dedicated to larger non-violent resistance. We simply must offer alternatives to the slavery and killing done in our name."

In another statement he has gone even further: "We reject the automatic continuum between crime and punishment, that a good man to prove he is a good man must accept his punishment. This acquiescence may be politically irresponsible because by capitulating you may strengthen the forces of evil you first confronted in your action."

Father Berrigan's abhorrence of the war finds massive and intelligent support on every level from housewives to senators, collegians to bankers. But his despair for our judicial system and his contempt for the principles of justice which he calls "political oppression" do not register.

His claim in a recent sermon in a Methodist church near Philadelphia that "it is impossible to remain a Christian and abide by the law of this land" is closer to a call for physical action than the measured moral rebellion he has been espousing. It equates his style of disobedience with Christ-likeness.

Berrigan believers who admit that he probably went underground by impulse as much as by design say: "Once more the Berrigans are a step ahead of us and teaching us." But his own insecurity in his new role is reflected in this confusing quote: "It seems to me to live in jeopardy is the form of the future that is most practical now. The sign of the future lies in separating ourselves from those dependencies which keep the present permanent. Of course part of the blindness of the present is inability to see signs of the future."
—Fr. Richard Tormey

The Battery's Down

Is New York City really a fun city?

Data recently obtained from its police department by the American Jewish Congress would indicate that it is anything but — at least as far as religious facilities are concerned.

In 1969 there were more than 1,000 attacks leveled against institutions such as churches, synagogues, religious schools. These included 633 burglaries, 356 vandalisms and 50 arsons, according to the Jewish group as reported by Religious News Service.

A new state law which goes into effect next month will authorize restitution in some cases involving young vandals and will hold parents accountable in others.

Whether that will stem such crimes remains to be seen but even the best results possible will still leave the "big apple", as another generation, musicians called New York City, with plenty of blemishes.

A public relations executive says that hard core pornography is so rampant in downtown Manhattan and the people so injured to it and other unpalatable situations that the Church may be overlooking the prime area in the world for missionary work.

Central Park is so unsafe that it is a target for jokes, sick as that may sound, and dope is so available that the words of the old song "The Bronx is up and the Battery down" sound like psychedelic lyrics.

There are more strikes than you can shake an injunction at, prices are as high as the humidity, smog is thick, skins thin and even Chicago cleaner.

So where's all the fun?

—Carmen Viglucci

Courier-Journal

On the Line

How a City Was Spared

By Bob Considine



About this time, 25 years ago, a group of officers and gentlemen met in secrecy deep within the recesses of the Pentagon and decreed indiscriminate death or maiming for the people of all ages and status in the Japanese port cities of Hiroshima and Kokura.

The supersecret atomic bomb — not even MacArthur, supreme commander in the theater of war in which it was to be used, knew of its existence — had been tested July 16, 1945, on the New Mexico desert near Alamogordo. It had yielded the equivalent of a blast from 20,000

tons of TNT, just as Enrico Fermi, one of its fathers, predicted.

Now it must be dropped; hence the meeting of the target board in Washington. The original targets for the A-bombs would have been in Germany. But Hitler was dead and the Nazis were defeated three months earlier.

Why Hiroshima? Well, the Pentagon group chose it because it was a port city on Honshu and was believed to be the headquarters of a large Japanese army group then bent

on making the big final stand against the encroaching Americans.

Why Kokura? Kokura was a steel-producing port on the Inland Sea, Kyushu. Moreover, it was shaped more or less like a saucer and thus the bomb, if dropped low enough over the center of the city, might be intensely more effective because its several malevolent powers would be contained, compressed, amplified by the surrounding hills. Maybe everybody in Kokura would be killed.

Everybody.

If for some reason Hiroshima could not be the victim of the first bomb, then the secondary target would be Nagasaki. If Hiroshima or Nagasaki was hit and Japan surrendered as a result, Kokura would be spared. If Japan did not surrender, however, Kokura would get the second bomb. If something happened to prevent that bombing, and Hiroshima had already taken the first bomb, Nagasaki again would be the secondary target.

There were even plans for the third A-bomb, which was not yet assembled. If neither of the first two knocked Japan out of the war, the third one was to be dropped on already-riddled Tokyo. The number of lives it would claim was considered secondary to its potential terror effect. It would be dropped on the darkest available night and its searing light, from a detonation point perhaps 10,000 feet over the capital, would have been seen by perhaps 40 million startled human beings.

The Hiroshima bomb fell on schedule, Aug. 6, 1945, caused 130,000 casualties and devastated 90 per cent of the city. Japan reeled but would not quit. The Kokura bomb was wheeled into the belly of a B-29 and took off from Tinian three days later. One hour before the scheduled drop, a reconnaissance B-29 reported that visibility over Kokura was perfect at the prescribed bombing altitude of 30,000 feet.

But in that hour the wind miraculously changed. The smoke from a neighboring Japanese city which had been fire-bombed by the 20th Air Force the night before blew over Kokura and hung there like a thick lid. The crew of the bomb-carrying B-29 was under strict orders not to drop unless there was a clear view of the target. The bomb was too costly to trust to a bombsight.

The B-29 droned back and forth over Kokura for 59 minutes. There was wild but still dangerous ack-ack. Several obsolete Japanese fighters tried to climb high enough to attack, but couldn't. Then the aircraft commander was told that 600 gallons of fuel were trapped behind a faulty valve. He gave up on Kokura, flew to Nagasaki, found an opening in the overcast, dropped, and killed or wounded about 80,000. That was enough for Japan.

A week later, an American team drove into Kokura and made a breathtaking discovery. The Japanese had moved most of their American POW's into that city a few weeks before, by pure chance. We would have killed them, along with the Japanese, in the last hours of the war they had somehow managed to survive.

The Word for Sunday

Of Knowledge And Wisdom

By Father Albert Shamon



Sunday's readings introduce us to another book of the Old Testament, the Book of Proverbs. Why not read a chapter a day? Solomon is supposed to have written Proverbs. Maybe that is why it puts such a high premium on wisdom.

When Solomon became King of Israel, he was young and Israel was a great nation. One night God appeared to Solomon and said, "Ask what I shall give thee." Imagine, just ask! Anything? Riches — wealth — honor — long life — anything? What staggering possibilities! Yet Solomon chose what perhaps neither you nor I would ever have dreamt of. He asked for wisdom and understanding so that he could rule Israel well. That was all — just wisdom. God gave him that and with it came all other things besides: riches, wealth, honor — and a long life too. No wonder Solomon wrote that "wisdom is better than rubies."

What is wisdom? It is more than the native intelligence God gives each of us. It is even more than the knowledge we acquire by study, observation and investigation. Yet some think knowledge is the answer to everything. For instance, they think if there are sex problems, sex education will solve everything. From childhood we are indoctrinated with this little goodie: get knowledge and you'll get everything.

But all the knowledge in the world is useless if we do not have wisdom. Wisdom is the ability to use knowledge aright. Expressions like "wise up," "put him wise," "get wise" mean only one thing: don't act like a fool. One can have intelligence and knowledge, but if one lacks wisdom — if one cannot relate his knowledge to life — he can still be an emotional and spiritual infant.

The Jews in Sunday's Gospel had intelligence. And after having listened to Jesus and witnessed His feeding 5,000 with five loaves, they had knowledge. Yet the very next day they acted like fools. They couldn't put two and two together. They quarreled among themselves saying, "How can he give us his flesh to eat?" and they ended up leaving Jesus.

Our universities are crawling with these unwise intellectuals. Not only have many professors

rejected Christ; they have rejected sanity.

Father Andrew Greely, professor of higher education at Illinois University, in a stinging article on irregular intellectuals branded them as "a coterie of self-assured, intolerant thinkers who have manufactured and propagandized an illusory concept of America."

"They have compassion for the poor, the black, especially the drug addicts, terrorists, arsonists, rioters, Russians, Chinese and Viet Cong," he wrote. "But they find it difficult, if not impossible, to experience compassion or sympathy or even understanding for the United States of America, and particularly for its middle-class and working-class citizens — especially if they are over 30."

"They approve of dissent provided it is their kind of dissent. Mayor Lindsay's mistakes are to be defended and sympathized with. Mayor Daley's mistakes are to be used to continue the myth that he is a monster — even though Lindsay was able to win support of only 45% of the city of New York, and Daley 75% of the city of Chicago (including in excess of 85% of the blacks of that city)." Claiming to be wise, they became fools (Rom. 1:18).

Intelligence is God's gift to each. Knowledge comes from study, wisdom from experience. If a man lacks knowledge, let him study. If a man lacks wisdom, let him practice his faith and ask God for it in prayer and by the sacraments. For wisdom has built her house. The wisdom of God is Christ. The house He has built is the Church. And He has set her on seven columns — the seven sacraments.

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