

On the Line

A Frustrating Age for U.S.

By Bob Considine



Has there been a more frustrating American age than the one in which we wallow? Please make way for the historian who can give a reassuring answer to that question.

Until he makes his case, however, consider the available evidence that we may very well be the most baffled boobs spawned since the Declaration of Independence.

• We are 210,000,000 strong, have most of the money in the world, possess enough awesome weapons to overkill the peoples of even more populous nations four or five times. But we can't or won't beat small bands of ragtag, North Vietnamese and Viet Cong. They kill us on a dozen fronts of their choice, and spit in our eye at the round green table in Paris.

• We simply cannot persuade the peanut-sized government in Hanoi to tell us the condition of 1,400 Americans we forlornly list as captured or missing in action; who's alive, dead, sick, well, brainwashed or stir crazy.

• We sit by TV and watch American-built and -paid-for Jordanian tanks and troop carriers being prevented from moving in against a handful of Palestine Arab commandos holding three plane-loads of parched and suffocating hostages.

• We stand still for the takeover of campuses, the blowing up of public buildings, the sniping at firemen bravely trying to put out blazes set by criminals, and the murder of policemen by groups and organizations whose total membership could hardly fill a hotel room. But they are treated sometimes more sympathetically by courts and righteous committees than were the 12 Apostles.

• We preach democracy like the Word of God, but pour countless millions of dollars into the project of propping up several quite reprehensible dictators abroad. We treasure freedom of the press at home but shrug off its abuse in most of the rest of the world.

• We seriously debate about the exact date when we will pull out of Indochina — to the comfort and amusement of the patient enemy — but never get around to explaining why we went there in the first place.

• We have lost more men killed and more men wounded in Vietnam and elsewhere in Asia than we lost in the war that won independence from Britain, plus a few other wars that shaped our destiny as a world leader. But we've never identified Vietnam as W-A-R. Or even called it a "police action," as we called Korea.

• We spend money on, say, a federal tea-tasting committee. But a profound report on the nature and scope of the civil war between the American whites and blacks went unprinted for some time, because of lack of committee funds.

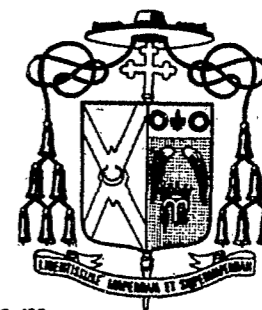
Editor's Note: — With this edition, the Courier-Journal will conclude discussion of the political ad concerning abortion in the Sept. 9 issue.

On Sept. 16, this paper printed two letters protesting the ad and noted it had received five protesting phone calls. On Sept. 23, we printed two letters for and two against the ad and noted that we had received seven other protests and four other defenses of the ad.

This week we received letters from the following in favor of the ad (all based on moral rather than political reasons): Father G. Stuart Hogan, Miss Olive LeBoo, Mrs. Ronald Dutt, Mrs. H. Lahr, Ruth Nilsen. Two other signed messages favored the ad. Mrs. Mary Martin of Auburn found the ad in "poor taste" but mainly disagreed with a previous letter-writer's description of the fetus in the bucket as a "pail of gore" instead of a baby. Mrs. Joseph A. Spencer protested the ad as did one telephoner.

The views of the candidate who paid for the ad, Howard A. McGee, and his opponent, Sen. Thomas Laverne, appear on Page 2A.

Bishop Hogan's Appointments For October



- 1—"Pastor's Study"—Channel 8, 9 a.m.
- 1—Mass of Holy Spirit and Homily, St. Bernard's Seminary, 5 p.m.
- 2—First Friday Luncheon Club, Rochester Club, 12:10 p.m.
- 2—Mass and Homily in honor of the Sacred Heart, Holy Rosary Church, 9 p.m.
- 3—Mass and Homily, Newark State School, 6 p.m.
- 4—Mass and Homily, St. Mary's Church, Bath, 12 noon.
- 4—Adult Religious Education Lecture, Knights of Columbus Building, Corning, 7:30 p.m.
- 6—Priests' Council, 2 p.m.
- 7—Installation of Bishop Humberto Medeiros, Boston, 4 p.m.
- 11—Nocturnal Adoration Society, Mass and Homily, Holiday Inn, 8:30 a.m.
- 11—Mass for Peace, Legion of Mary, Highland Bowl, 3 p.m.
- 12—Day of Renewal for School Sisters of Notre Dame of St. Margaret Mary's Convent, Rochester.
- 15—Confirmation, St. Mary of the Lake Church, Watkins Glen, 7:45 p.m.
- 17—Election of Superior General, Sisters of Mercy, 10 a.m.
- 17—Radio talk to diocese, WSAY, 7 p.m.
- 18—St. Salome's Church, Rochester, Mass and Homily, 11 a.m. Homily, 12:15 p.m.
- 18—Confirmation, St. Francis de Sales, Geneva, 4 p.m.
- 20—Dinner with Committee for Decent Literature Campaign, Party House, 7:30 p.m.
- 21—Administrative Council, 2 p.m.
- 22—St. Michael's Mothers' Club, Penn Yan, Dresden Hotel, 7:30 p.m.
- 25—Our Lady of Lake Church, King Ferry, Mass and Homily, 100th Anniversary of Parish, 11 a.m.
- 27-28—St. Bernard's Seminary Alumni Reunion.
- 31—Radio talk to diocese, WSAY, 7 p.m.

RACL Viewpoint

A Call to Duty

By J. E. Kohler

On a recent Wednesday morning a few weeks ago, readers of the Rochester "Democrat and Chronicle" were greeted with a headline, "Priest wins in Mass.", or words to that effect. The story was that of the victory of a prominent Jesuit educator, Father Robert Drinan, in the Democratic primary contest for a Massachusetts congressional seat.

The incumbent had been noted for his hawkish views regarding American participation in the war in Vietnam. Last spring Father Drinan became the standard-bearer for a group of Bostonians who felt obliged to challenge a position which they believed to be unrepresentative of a majority of the voters of the district. The results of the primary election suggest that their assessment was probably correct and Father Drinan is expected to win a seat in the House of Representatives in November. Actually, three priests will be candidates in congressional elections but only Father Drinan is given much chance of reaching Washington.

An intriguing question is that of why a primary victory in another state by a priest should be front page news. One could conjecture that an editor was interested in the idea of a priest entering a political contest on purely humanitarian grounds.

Too often in the past the Church's name has appeared on the political scene either in apparent support of a candidate who has flaunted his Catholicism or, else in obvious pursuit of its own temporal or evangelistic ends. For a leading Catholic clergyman to do political battle on a matter of conscience with far broader support than that of members of his own Church is indeed news.

Finding a Christian basis for

Father Drinan's current activities is not a difficult task. In Vatican II's "Constitution on the Church in the Modern World" we find the following statement: "The Church regards as worthy of praise and consideration the work of those who, as a service to others, dedicate themselves to the welfare of the state and undertake the burdens of this task."

Of more concern to most of us who fall short of Father Drinan's dedication should be the statement which precedes that quoted above. It reads, "Let all citizens be mindful of their simultaneous right and duty to vote freely in the interest of advancing the common good."

We should not need to be reminded at this late date that "the common good", and particularly the rights and needs of the underprivileged, should be a matter of active concern for all Christians. We must not forget, either, that the voting machine provides a means for the underprivileged to aid their own causes with which all true Christians should sympathize.

The first responsibility of the voter in any election year is to be properly registered. The registration deadline for the November election is approaching and anyone who is eligible and unregistered should seek out his district polling place this weekend, Oct. 3, 5 or 6, and attend to this detail.

I have an additional suggestion for those readers who believe that some extra effort is justified. The FIGHT Organization will conduct a vigorous registration campaign for city residents Oct. 3-6 and volunteers are needed to provide transportation and other forms of assistance. Anyone interested in joining this effort is urged to call Henry Thomas at 436-9880.

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