

LETTERS

Letters to the editor should be addressed to the editor, Courier-Journal, 35 Scio St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604. They should be no longer than 1 1/2 pages, typed double-spaced. Names and addresses should be included. The paper reserves the right to edit all letters.

Demonstration Defended

Editor:

It seems that, in order to keep the Courier-Journal on the middle of the road, your laudable editorial "U.S. Bishops Should Speak Up On War" (4/28/1971) had to be balanced on May 12 by another editorial condemning the May 5 Main Street Peace Demonstrations as "irritating" and "pathetic".

The Courier-Journal, and many periodicals like it, needed more than two decades of American involvement in Indochina before it realized that there might be something wrong with this military adventure that was never authorized by Congress, never approved by the United Nations and that has resulted in more than a million people killed, 200,000 orphans and the displacement of 25% of the population and almost total destruction of the agriculture, villages and forests of Indochina.

Many of the people who "sought confrontation, not collaboration" on May 5, have protested against the war since 1965 or even longer than that. They have written to presidents and representatives in Washington; they have exhausted all conventional political methods and they have organized legal rallies and demonstrations. Their efforts did not stop the war. The superpatriots built your "wall of contempt" and the main concern of the Courier-Journal and its kind was to stay on the middle of the road.

But finally the Courier-Journal produced the editorial "U.S. Bishops Should Speak Up on War". I seriously doubt that you would have reached this position at this late juncture, if it had not been for the ultimate influence of the people condemned in the editorial of May 12.

I believe that real authority will always be respected on the basis of its rational actions in service of the entire society. But that on the other hand governmental power based on militarism and repression should not expect obedience because it has nothing to do with real authority.

Mrs. Wilhelmina Schram
Rutgers Street
Rochester

Keep Fighting Abortion Law

Editor:

Do some modern interpreters of Christ's Gospels stress "love one another" but exclude the First Commandment; Love God above all? Thus, in the name of humanitarianism, the evil abortion law was passed.

The Catholic Church was the anchor of hope for hundreds of thousands of innocents being slaughtered. Our bishops strongly urged that each of us do everything possible to

change the law. We hoped that the slow-moving but powerful Church Militant would come to the rescue of the condemned unborn; through church organizations and funds to counteract the propaganda of proponents of abortion on demand. However, the crisis was already upon us, here and now, as the butchering of the helpless unborn continued — and the Right to Life committees were born.

As the crucial time of legislative debate and vote became imminent, the Pro-Life Group was suddenly attacked by one who would be expected to give moral support, Father Richard Tormey judged us and found us wanting; implying the guilt was ours for failing to solve the problems of society. I am one of the "angry voices, hopelessly wringing my hands, and writing letters berating our representatives" who have betrayed our faith and trust. We "berate" them to repeal the law that leads our youths into temptation by cloaking murder with "legality" and thereby implying respectability.

Some members of our group, in addition to being parents of three, five, and seven children, squeeze out "free" time to be Scout leaders; CCD teachers; to be active in many church organizations, including social action committees; to work for repeal of the Abortion Law.

Thank God our parents and priests gave us higher standards, better ideals, and more faith than the philosophy of Father Tormey. May I suggest, in place of "positive new programs", you consider the return to the old programs in obedience to God's Commandments, being an ounce of prevention and a more powerful deterrent.

Developing a "more compassionate public opinion towards support of unwed mothers," to decrease teenage pregnancies, is unrealistic. Our present compassionate public opinion already has been so effective that illegitimacy has lost its stigma, and sin its significance; increasing unwanted pregnancies. Certainly I believe in God's love and mercy, as well as His forgiveness; but I know His words were truth, not interpretations, when Christ said: "He who will not take up his cross and come after Me, is not worthy of Me."

Mrs. Nicholas Lucarelli
Davis Street
Elmira

Editorial Appreciated

Editor:

Your editorial about alternatives to protest about the abortion law (5/19) was most welcome and sorely needed. If the Catholic community cannot or will not give our afflicted neighbors adequate child-care facilities, proper close-to-home residences for their mentally retarded, competent treatment centers for the alcoholic, for

the mentally ill and for the troubled youth, as well as decent living conditions for the poor — are all these afflicted provided real alternatives to contraception — or, at times, to abortion? Are they always free to choose? I think not.

To put it more simply, I think that even as we do and should call people to heroism, we had better take a hard look at ourselves when so many are unable to respond.

If we really want to be heard, we had better put our compassion, time and efforts, and money where our mouths are. Talk is cheap.

Work in these social avenues should not be dependent upon leadership or even support from our clergy. If some clergy are remiss in these areas of responsibility, it provides no real excuse for the laity's indifference. We have tremendous wasted talents that could alleviate the problems if we assume our responsibilities as citizens and Catholics.

Dorothy H. Forbes
Apalachin, N.Y.

How Many Does She Represent?

Editor:

Assemblyman Constance Cook was one of the legislators voting against the bill for state aid for diocesan schools. She has been quoted as saying "and the increase was voted in a year when we couldn't increase aid to the public schools one iota".

However, she voted in favor of increasing the expense allowances (lulus) for assemblymen and was quoted as follows—"I voted for it and wasn't bothered by it one iota."

Mrs. Cook divided the total amount she was paid by the state by the number of people she claims she represents. "It came out about 30 cents apiece per year for the people I represent," she said. "I think I'm worth more than that to them in Albany."

This statement is highly debatable. How many of us was she representing in regard to the above mentioned items? How many of us was she representing when she co-sponsored and voted for the Abortion Bill?

Mrs. Howard Nye
Newfield

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