



FR. PAUL J. CUDDY
On The
Right Side

Dear Dr. Troup,
I just read your letter (Courier-Journal, June 9) expressing distress at my views of the April Conference at Xerox Towers on The Patient, Death and the Family. Let us be friends! I am optimistic that our dialogue will bring good. In this response to your letter the Hegelian dialectic may well apply: viz. thesis, which brings forth antithesis, with the evolution from both to form a good synthesis.

The Conference thesis was: a compassionate care for the physical and emotional needs of the dying patient and his family, but limited to this world. I propose the antithesis, viz.: a compassionate concern about life after death — God, heaven, reunion with loved ones, which concern was omitted from the Conference.

And the synthesis? Of the conference I wrote: "The lecturers were illustrious men; illustrious in their professions, in their humanity and dedication... but they need an illustrious shot of Faith and Hope".

The lecturers did manifest an admirable concern about tranquility in the case of the dying: tranquility for the patient, for relatives, for the doctors, nurses and aides who care for the dying person. Yet I think the lecturers' exclusive preoccupation assumed that death brought personal extinction, annihilation of the individual. I do not cavil at non-believers who have no Faith in eternal life or in God who rewards the good and punishes the wicked. (I have often speculated on the speculations of non-believers about the eternal fate of Hitler.)

But is it not reasonable that a Conference on death should include regard for the convictions, the motivation of the largest section of the audience? There were persons of many religious faiths: clergymen, seminarians, nuns, believing doctors, social workers, nurses, teachers. I do not think it is unreasonable to expect more than a nod to belief in God, in the here-after to such an audience.

To illustrate the thesis, playwright Robert Anderson gave a moving account of the five years of dying of his greatly

loved wife. I listened intently, waiting for some word of courage and comfort for the dying and heart-sick husband, derived from prayer, from faith, from any words that even implied life after death. I heard none and wondered: "Did I miss them?"

It so happened that Mr. A. came to the cloakroom just as I was leaving it. We were alone. I stopped and said: "May I ask you a blunt question, Mr. Anderson?" "Of course," he replied. I said, "I was moved by your talk on the death of your wife, but tell me, in all these years of dying, did religion enter in at all?" He paused thoughtfully. Then he said: "Well, now, no. It really didn't."

I continued: "Was there no discussion of life after death, of prayer, or immortality?" He replied courteously: "No. There really wasn't." With a gusty sadness I said: "Good heavens! I just can't conceive of preparing for death without considering God, or prayer, or immortality."

Two thousand years ago St. Paul was hauled before the Council, a body composed of Sadducees who denied man's immortality, and the Pharisees who affirmed it passionately. St. Paul proclaimed the Resurrection of Our Lord, and our expectation of life after death. The Council fell into great debate (Acts 23).

In somewhat of a parallel, the conference lecturers were Sadducees. Most on the benches were believing Pharisees. And from the thesis of the Sadducees and the antithesis of the Pharisees, I do hope a healthy synthesis will evolve. This is it: the thesis of physical and emotional care and comfort for the dying bring the antithesis of concern for man's immortal destiny, to produce the desired synthesis: viz. a compassionate concern for the total person, man's body and soul.

I want you to know that I did not get many things out of the conference. But I am offering an addition: the strength of religion admired by Mr. Anderson, shared by most of the audience, and accomplished by faith, grace and reason. With such a Synthesis your conference will have been the cause of great good.

May to Head
Housing Forum

Mayor Stephen May will moderate a Housing Forum, titled **Decent Housing: Everyone's Basic Right**, being sponsored by the YWCA of Rochester and Monroe County in cooperation with the City's Housing Week observance on Thursday, June 24, at noon in the YWCA auditorium, 175 Clinton Avenue N.

A panel of five housing experts, including Urban Renewal Director Robert Spellman, will discuss the question, "How can Monroe County best solve its housing crisis?"

Other panelists are Melvin Hoover, FIGHT Housing Chairman; Mrs. Alma Greene, Community Volunteers; Victor Vinkey, MetroAct; and George Genzel, President, Webster Human Relations Council.

Mayor Stephen May and Joseph N. Ferrari, President of the Monroe County Legislature, have designated the week of June 20 as housing week to dramatize the county's version of the nationwide housing crisis.

THURSDAY DEADLINE

Remember that the news and photo deadline for the Courier-Journal is Thursday noon for the following week's newspaper.

SPAFFORD AN MD

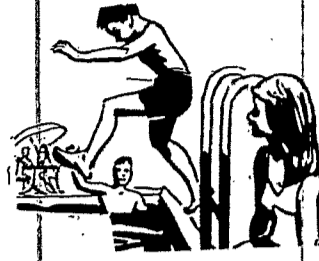
Norman F. Spafford, Jr., of Falleson Road has received the Doctor of Medicine degree from St. Louis University and will intern at De Louge Hospital in St. Louis. He is a graduate of Charlotte High School and Rochester Institute of Technology.

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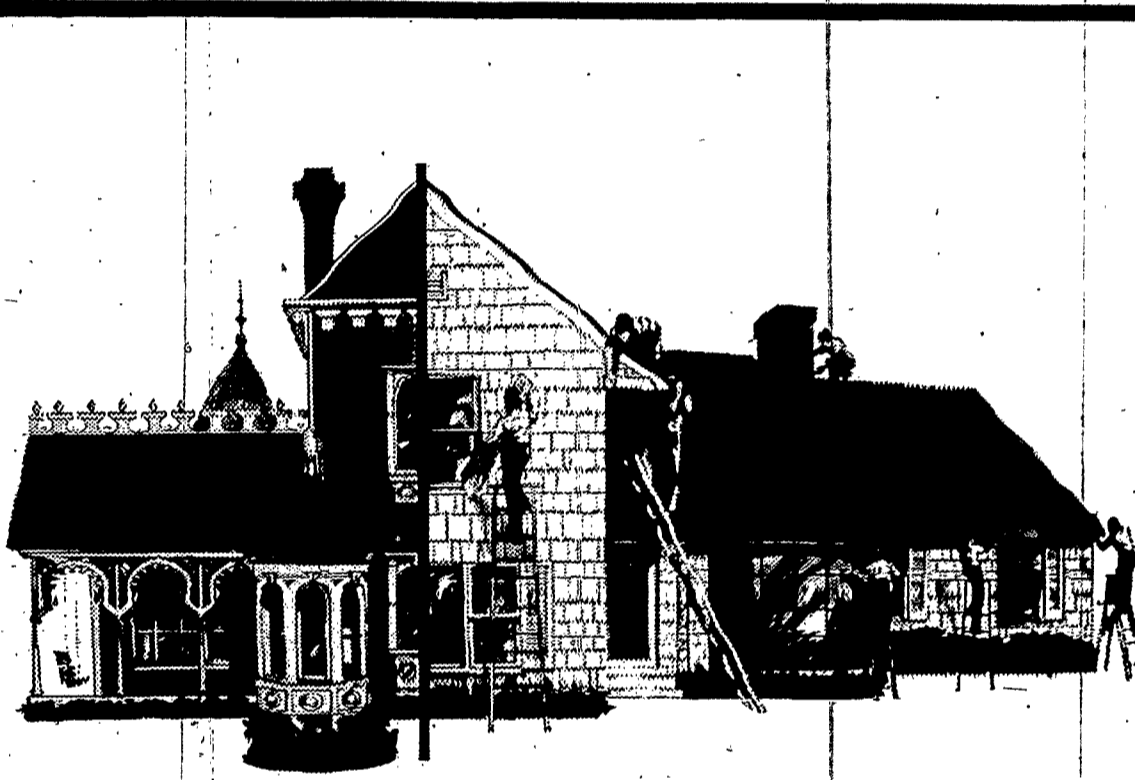
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