

FR. HENRY ATWELL

Toward Tomorrow



Nations, like people, have their good days and their bad days, days to be proud of and days of shame. Our nation is now at a moment that would make any decent person blush in shame.

I speak of what our government is doing at Harrisburg, Pa., where three priests, one nun and three lay people are under trial.

Whether they are guilty or not, that I leave to a jury to determine, after hearing all the evidence of the case. If guilty, they will understandably have to pay the appropriate penalty.

Why then is this a time for shame?

Two years ago in a Senate committee meeting, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover announced that two Roman Catholic priests, Fathers Philip and Daniel Berrigan, were the "principal leaders" of "an anarchist group" plotting to kidnap presidential adviser Henry Kissinger and bomb heating pipes in Washington.

Not until six weeks later were any formal charges made — and then, strangely, Daniel, though accused by Hoover as one of the principal leaders, was not on the government's list, and then, still later, two more names were added, bringing the total to the present seven — and even more strangely, there was no mention of any kidnap-bomb conspiracy, but simply the very vague charge that they conspired "to commit offenses against the United States."

Several national publications, including Life magazine, said the government tried in an incredible and unprecedented action to "leak out" letters said to be the evidence against the accused conspirators — to build up public opinion against them.

All the accused admit that they are vigorously opposed to the American war in Vietnam so the whole trial seems to turn out to be the govern-

ment's way to shut them up and scare others from similar anti-war protests.

But what about Hoover's accusation in the Senate? A lesser man would be open to a charge of libel for such accusations. Why was Father Daniel Berrigan not indicted, as he was one of the principal leaders? Why was the kidnap-bomb accusation watered down if Hoover was indeed correct to begin with?

But these really are not the questions that disturb me most.

I wonder why haven't the lawyers of our nation asked these same questions loudly and clearly? What purpose is there in having any lawyers, any judges, any juries, if the nation's chief police officer, Hoover, can publicly denounce someone prior to trial and not be held accountable for what he says?

I wonder why I myself am really only mildly discontent with the whole sad and shameful episode.

Have I, too, slid into that apathy which enables one to survive with simply a shrug of one's shoulders?

That is why I immensely admire Episcopal Bishop Robert Spear's decision to go to Harrisburg on Wednesday of Holy Week, really just to be there as a friend to those who are victims of such injustice and pray.

It was during another Holy Week long ago that Someone warned that those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. It is a sad day when our government prosecutes those who repeat that warning to us in our time.

And it is especially sad when so many of us swallow it all as if we had no guts, no faith in what Jesus said, no fear of what happens to those who disregard his word.

FR. PAUL J. CUDDY

On The Right Side



The night before the Saturday Snow of 1972 I stayed at Montezuma. Most people have some hobby, like collecting stamps or money. My own is to test the guest room mattress of each rectory of the diocese. Montezuma has second best; an old box spring affair. So I slept ten hours of luxurious, energizing gizing sleep, ready for Auburn which is only 13 miles away. Auburn is honored throughout the diocese for the camaraderie among the area priests. They frequently gather at different rectories for lunch, exchange items of mutual interest, and return to their parishes better able to serve their people. This Saturday they met at St. Alphonsus.

There were 10 priests there, including Pastor Father Wuest, who is on sick leave with angina; and the newly arrived Father Enright, whom I knew as a neighbor at Whitesville. During dinner snow piled up. I phoned the state troopers. A trooper boomed like the voice of Jupiter: "Roads are clogging. Wind blowing. Better stay put." Said I to myself: "Father Walt Kohl can take care of the hospital." Fr. K. of St. Augustine's had had flu twice and became weak as a cat. Msgr. Duffy brought him to our St. James Hospital two weeks before, and our skillful nursing had him ready for discharge, quite recovered.

In the parking lot the motor of my car ran well, but the wheels did not. Sacred Heart Father Billotte pushed, but to no avail. "Fr. Phil, will you drive me to Holy Family in your car? I'll stay there."

AND THE SNOW PILED AND BLEW AND PILED UP THE MORE

Saturday evening Mass at H.F. is at 5:15. Pastor Msgr. J. Sullivan was in Rome installing a friend into bishopric. Father Glogowski was working out plans to house travelers who would be stranded. (He housed 25, including 6 in the Convent.) Father Irving Sullivan, who has a charisma with the sick unsurpassed in the diocese, was helping out. I concelebrated Mass with the new assistant, Msgr. Arthur Ratigan.

For many years Msgr. Ratigan headed Catholic Charities in Rochester. Eight years ago he succeeded Father Frank Mason as pastor of St. Ambrose in Rochester. Last June he astonished his confreres by requesting release from the pastorate and an appointment as an assistant. He said: "I just feel I'm not getting to the young; and a younger man is needed." I suspect that he reached the young as well as most people can.

Just observing Msgr. R. during his homily was a lesson in authentic faith. First of all there flows from him a friendliness which few can communicate. Second, he was explaining penance and used as an opener a theme from Love Story: "Love means never to have to say I'm sorry," he explained that real love is the reverse. We do offend, and because of love we do express our sorrow in many ways. He used contemporary examples, Scripture, theology, and ended with a little poem which he smilingly said was worthy of Archie Bunker. He is patently like the Master, "gentle and humble of heart."

The next day, Sunday, THE SNOW PILED AND BLEW AND PILED UP THE MORE. Of the usual 2,000 people, only 200 were able to come to Mass. I had thoughtfully brought along "Christianity in the 20th Century" by John Harden, S.J., which Fr. Wm. Cosgrove had recommended, and dipped into that. Msgr. R. expatiated on "Decline and Fall of Radical Catholicism" by Hitchcock. Father Sullivan dropped an occasional comment. The TV worked overtime, informing the outside world, past and present. I was anxious to see Masterpiece Theatre's "Queen Elizabeth," which is slow and not equal to "The Six Wives of Henry VIII." After Elizabeth we watched Nixon's trip to China.

After the Nixon trip a pipe from the sink on the third floor froze and burst, (no connection) cascading water down through a bedroom into the kitchen. The faithful parish engineer got through somehow and shut off the valve. So to bed. It was a memorable snowbound Sunday for millions.

Dear Friends of the Missions,

You are cordially invited to join us for the Mass celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith at Sacred Heart Cathedral, 296 Flower City Park, on Thursday, the sixteenth of March, Nineteen Hundred Seventy-Two at 5.30 o'clock in the evening. Most Reverend Joseph L. Hogan, D.D., S.T.D. Principal Concelebrant and Homilist

We take this occasion to welcome our National Director, Most Reverend Edward T. O'Meara, D.D., S.T.D., ordained to the Office of Bishop by our Holy Father, Pope Paul VI in St. Peter's Basilica on February 13, 1972.

Your Missions Office Staff: Father Joseph F. Reinhart, Diocesan Director, and Associates: Josephine Bartolomeo, Mary Mitrano, Vera Trabold, Carmel Barone, Francis E. Mathis

150 years of "love without frontiers"

