

The Role of Laughter ... Don't Underplay It

By JOHN DASH

Lloyd Hubbard, who stars with a beaver in one of the most recent Rochester Gas & Electric commercials, was once "thrown off the stage of an area "Catholic" theater production by a priest when he learned Hubbard wasn't Catholic and thinks that the only way for an actor to face life these days is with a laugh.

Hubbard, who calls New York City his home, was recently in town directing an area theater effort and visiting friends.

"People today don't know how to laugh," he said. "The problems of the world keep them from laughing. And in the (acting) business, if people don't laugh at themselves they can find themselves flat."

The 60-year-old former Rochesterian cited being upstaged by a beaver that relieved himself at a crucial moment in filming the R G and E commercial as an example of a ludicrous event that could send an ordinary actor into a funk.

Hubbard belongs to "The Funny Face Brigade" an organization of character actors modeled loosely after England's "Uglies"

Standing at 5 feet 4, holding his teeth in a Terry-Thomas grin and smoothing down his bald pate, he calls himself a "type."

Hubbard recalls auditioning for a selzer commercial which required the actor to pretend to take a fizzy tablet off a shelf, place it in a glass of water, wait for it to bubble and then drink. A fellow actor, he says, walked into the audition and, rattled when told what to do, swallowed the tablet and forgot about the water. "After the audition he came out all upset; but I told him 'Don't worry, they had 120 auditions for that job today and they'll remember your name.' Sure enough, he was the man they hired."

During the 1950s Hubbard took the role of a priest in "The Dry Martyr" a fictionalized story of Cardinal Mindszenty, which was staged at Aquinas Institute. The script called for the recitation of the Our Father. "Nobody ever told me our Lord's Prayer was different from Catholics," Hubbard says, recalling the awful moment when the rest of the cast stopped with "from evil" and he alone carried on in priestly robes with "for thine is the kingdom..."

Marriage Topic Of CEDAR Group

Auburn — "Should young people consider engagements or marriage prior to military service", and "future-in-laws" were two of the questions discussed by the Seniors participating in the recent convocation at CEDAR offices.

Monthly convocations for Juniors and Seniors participating in the five-parish CCD program for high schoolers have been held at CEDAR offices, and taken various forms from speakers, panels, discussions, and film presentations.

The current theme dealt with problems of marriage preparation and discussion group leaders included Mr. and Mrs. Gino Alberici, Mr. and Mrs. James Duffy, Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Murphy, and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Rath.

JOINS BOARD

Washington, D.C. — (RNS) — Msgr. Marvin Bordelon, director of the U.S. Catholic Conference's International Affairs department, has joined the U.S. State Department's Inter-American Advisory Council, a group composed of citizens from outside government.



LLOYD HUBBARD

One of his proudest moments occurred recently while filming a scene at the U.N. "I was sitting in the back seat of a two-chauffeur limousine, flanked by two bodyguards, playing the role of an ambassador, when a woman looked through the car window and called to her friend. 'Look, there's Harry Truman'."

Cancer Unit Plans Daffodil Festival

Thousands of daffodils will brighten the Rochester area on Friday and Saturday, April 14 and 15, when the American Cancer Society, Monroe County Unit, sponsors the second annual Daffodil Festival to help raise funds for cancer research.

Fresh daffodils, 75,000 of them flown in especially for the occasion, will be presented to the public by hundreds of volunteers stationed at strategic locations throughout Rochester and surrounding Monroe County towns during the two-day event. On Thursday, April 13, local merchants, banks, restaurants, hotels, and other places of business will display fresh daffodil bouquets to kick-off the Festival.

Mrs. Frank H. McConville is general chairman of this project, assisted by Mrs. J. Warren McClure of Pittsford.

The daffodil represents the flower of hope, and with hope brings a sense of renewed life to this cause. Volunteers hope for a token donation from everyone receiving a daffodil.

Contributions realized from the Daffodil Festival will go toward research... the great hope



Mrs. McConville and Mrs. McClure

of finding the cause of cancer and developing a cure for this disease. Currently American Cancer Society has \$15 million worth of approved cancer re-

search projects that are awaiting funding. Contributions will also help support local education programs and service to cancer patients.

A Report: Religion in China

Does any religion exist in China? What kind? How much, if any, "underground Christianity" continues? To what degrees are Confucian, Buddhist and Taoist traditions from China's long past preserved in Communist society?

Many Westerners hoped they might be illuminated by President Nixon's historic February trip to China. That does not seem to be the case, but a closer look at the thought and manner of the modern Chinese offers indirect clues.

The Nixon trip itself renewed interest in China's religious situation among Western Churches. And the surge of American consciousness of China is bringing sharper assessments of how and why traditional faiths have been upstaged under Mao Tse-tung.

On the political level the omission of religion on the public agenda during the Nixon trip is hardly surprising. It was the first official and direct contact between the U.S. and the People's Republic of China and the Peking leaders are no doubt sensitive to the subject.

American newsmen with the President were not given free rein to interview men and women in the streets of Peking and Shanghai; no chance was given to check on clandestine churches or Taoist shrines in the vast reaches of China.

To ask the question, "Does any religion exist in China," is to open a linguistic Pandora's box. Just what does the word "religion" cover? Historically, religion in China includes Confucianism (though some call this a philosophy), Buddhism, Taoism, folk religion, Islam and Christianity.

While a constitution grants freedom of religion, an all-out campaign against all inherited faiths was launched when the Communist forces came to power in 1949. Charges of religious persecution abounded in the West and many, many Christians—a small minority numbering about 6 million in the mid-1940's — are believed to have perished. But as Dr. Richard C. Bush pointed out in an authoritative 1970 book entitled "Religion in Communist China," there was no religious persecution from the Maoist perspective.

Chairman Mao wrote in the 1920s that the state system, the clan system and the supernatural system were causes of the subjugation of the people, who had indeed known less than freedom under centuries of emperors.

Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism were identified with old clan and feudal ways. Christianity was treated as part and parcel of foreign imperialism. Since Christian churches were foreign-founded, they required special handling. The first step was to oust the missionaries. This process began in 1949 and took several years.

Dr. Bush said that in 1948 there were 5,496 Catholic foreign missionaries in China. Before the end of 1950, half had left voluntarily or met death. The total was less than 40 as 1955 approached; in 1956, 16 priests and 11 Sisters remained and 14 of the men were jailed. Eight Sisters taught in a Peking school for children of foreign diplomats until 1966, Dr. Bush reported.

Protestant missionary ranks dwindled even faster. For example, only two of the 1,027 missionaries from continental Europe remained in 1953. The last of 1,294 from Britain left in 1953. By the Spring of 1953, Dr. Bush said, only 10 foreign Protestant missionaries were in China and eight were in prison.

The expulsion of missionaries did not mean Christianity folded immediately. In some cases, native-led churches continued until 1966 when the Cultural Revolution led by the militant Red Guard brought public Christian activity to a halt.

In retrospect, there is almost common consent the Chinese Christians had not been prepared by the missionaries to carry on, especially not in a hostile state. Deacon Gotfred Rekebo, a Norwegian medical missionary who spent a dozen years in China, recently recalled that the mission compounds, hospitals and schools simply had no boards of local Chinese to keep them running when the foreigners left.

Today, few persons seriously believe Christian missionaries will be allowed to re-enter China in the near future. Father John Loftus, formerly in China with the St. Columban Foreign Missionary Society, advised realism: "The Communist do not want missionaries, and 'the Lord alone knows how long the Communists are going to be in power in China.'"

Have Christian congregations survived? Some reports indicate a few. In late 1971, Father Wang Ki-ting, vicar general of Peking for the non Vatican-related "Association of Patriotic Catholics," said a Mass in the Church of the Virgin Mary. A few Chinese, some tourists and Italian diplomats attended. China,

watchers said the Mass was permitted in an effort to win Vatican recognition of Peking. Father Wang said 2 million people belong to the patriotic association.

(Courier-Journal columnist Bob Conidine visited the Church of the Virgin Mary, talked to its pastor, and reported on the conversation in the Courier edition of March 8).

As Christianity was experiencing the wrath of Chinese Marxism, so were Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism. Each was curtailed after 1949 but struggled along until they too felt the "revolutionary fire" of the Red Guard. The reasons for Maoist opposition to Buddhism, which venerates the defied Buddha and Taoism, which in some expressions is a compound of alchemy and meditation, are more readily evident than is antipathy to Confucian thought.

Confucianism, in fact, is not considered a religion by the Chinese Communists although it places strong emphasis on obedience to the will of heaven. Confucian practitioners are frequently agnostic. They have no specialist priests, no religious dogmas. In philosophical forms, a stress on the perfection of society and political stability might not be unuseful to Maoists.

But Confucianism had emerged into a state cult and come to epitomize the slave-owning feudal society which Chairman Mao wanted to destroy. The effort has evidently succeeded in large measure. However, as late as 1969, vigorous attacks by the Red Guard indicated that attempts to re-

vive the ethical teachings of Confucius were stirring.

In 1957, Chairman Mao noted that religion could not be abolished by government decree or repression. He hoped for education in anti-religious ideology. The blood that flowed in 1949 and again in 1966 seems a severe kind of instruction, but among the living masses of Chinese the abolition of traditional faiths has apparently been accomplished by re-education. Some would say the process is one of substituting the state and Maoist teachings for religion.

Given Chairman Mao's youthful condemnation of the cult of Confucius, Father John C. Haughey, S.J., writing in the March 4 issue of America magazine, finds it ironic that the chairman has allowed a cult to grow up around him. Still, Father Haughey says that it is characteristically Chinese to "endow a man with celestial stature. They did so with their emperors, their sages and Confucius himself." The thought of chairman Mao summarized in the Red Book can be seen as serving as scripture for the new cult.

Dr. Bush feels that of all the religious movements of China Buddhism is the best equipped to "survive a period when all external, institutional expressions" are impossible. He makes this judgment on the fact that meditation is the "heart of Buddhist practice and its primary discipline." The major difficulty for Buddhism, he continues, will be in working out some way to transmit the discipline of meditation to young people.



"APRIL ISN'T THE BEST TIME TO BE WANDERING THROUGH HERE!"