

FR. HENRY ATWELL

Toward Tomorrow



April showers bring May flowers. We've been told. We are all weary of blizzards and downpours and anxious for springtime freshness.

The increasing tensions in our cities and in the political arena present a quite discouraging outlook, too.

So even a lonely bright dandelion will give us a bit of badly needed cheer.

We have to face up to the fact, however, that there are no dandelions of hope for millions of people on earth today.

Gary MacEoin, whose articles used to be published in the Courier, has recently written a book "Revolution Next Door, Latin America in the 1970s" published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston Co.

I've met Mr. MacEoin several times and he was always a quiet dynamo, small of stature but packed with information, common sense and a crusader's conviction that action is imperative lest we take an accelerating and irreversible direction to chaos. His book about Latin America says people there are quite likely already swirling that way. Much of the blame he places on our nation's secret and massive intervention.

John C. Bennett, editor of Christianity and Crisis magazine, predicts "that the next Viet Nam will be in Latin America." Bennett says MacEoin's new book "is a well-informed and fair-minded guide to the major facts we must know." And that expresses my thoughts about the book, too.

A great number of Americans think of Latin America as the land of manana, sombreros, marachi bands and frequent changes of government.

More accurately it is a vast land of close to 300,000,000 people, most of them on the brink of starvation, living in slums far worse than anything imaginable in the United States and teeming toward a 600,000,000 population within 25 years.

MacEoin documents U.S. involvement in Latin America, not just economically through control of world

prices and markets — as in copper, coffee, oil — but also politically and militarily through the Central Intelligence Agency. CIA policy invariably, and secretly, supports the Latin American chiefs who use our money, weapons and advisers to stamp out anyone who calls for justice — so the poor get poorer while the rich get richer, but the poor are no longer content to wait for manana.

A Jesuit magazine in Chile, Mensaje, described the new mood: "A big and steadily growing majority is becoming aware of its power, of its misery, and of the injustice of the political, juridic, social and economic order to which it is subjected; and this majority is not prepared to wait. It demands change — a rapid, profound and total change of structures. If violence is necessary, it is ready to use violence. It is the mass of the people that seeks to acquire power in order to bring into being an authentic 'common good.' Logically, this mass which wants 'revolution' takes its inspiration from the only revolutionary ideology within its reach — Marxism. To deny that fact is to close one's eyes to a very obvious reality. Year by year, the population of Latin America grows by millions, but who are these millions? They are millions of men who suffer from malnutrition, who lack all education, who shelter in disgraceful shacks."

That was written ten years ago. Two events since then have added another focus for the inevitable revolution. These two events are the Vatican Council and the encyclical of Pope Paul "Populorum Progressio." A priest of our own diocese, Father Daniel Tormey, will soon head south of the border to join our diocesan missionary team in LaPaz, Bolivia. Knowing him as I do, I am sure he will choose the hazardous side, to identify himself with the poor and oppressed in the slums of LaPaz.

Marxist Communism is no longer the only alternative for those who seek a total revolution in Latin America today. The Catholic Church is rapidly becoming another revolutionary factor there.

So, Father Tormey, "Adios and right on!"



FR. PAUL J. CUDDY

On The Right Side

FROM A TROUBLED, INTELLIGENT MATRON . . . "I've been reading a lot, mostly Andrew Greeley, Hans Kueng, Harvey Cox and Bishop Pike and conclude my doubts run in heavy circles . . . I have decided to take instructions in the X Faith . . . Recently when I visited a nearby church I started to talk to the priest after Mass, saying I was thinking of starting back to church in his parish. He told me to see the secretary to make arrangements for envelopes. If, through your column and discussions with fellow priests, you could put in a word for personal attention to strangers, perhaps a few less sheep would wander. Maybe my ego needs are too great, but I was really angry at this man's response . . ."

DEAR MRS. Z,

I suppose I know as many priests intimately as the average priest, and quite candidly I have found few ready for canonization. You recall the requirements: superlative virtue, undoubted orthodoxy, a couple of miracles. Nevertheless most of the priests I know are really very good men, more concerned about their people than their people realize. But as with all men, good and bad, we priests have our faults and sins. The seven deadly sins, Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Envy, Gluttony and Sloth, do not cease to struggle within priests at ordination. Most priests I know recognize their sins; regret them, go regularly to confession in penitence; and occasionally even conquer some of them. Think how frightening it would be to be unconscious of any personal sins or failures! Sins and failures do tend to keep us humble.

Your Father Envelope Pusher may be as insensitive as Archie Bunker. But I think most people consider Archie not so much as being malicious but as being just a plain thickhead. It would be my guess that Father E. Pusher is a fair administrator, who keeps the church in good repair, the plumbing working, the bills paid. His sermons should be pretty dull but orthodox, and he probably regards his

assistant quizzically, and vice versa. He probably has a highball before supper (Father Ed Ball of Geneva used to translate "highball" into the Latin "Altum Pilum", to the delight of his listeners); and he probably spends more time watching the ball games than keeping abreast of theology or reading the English edition of L'Osservatore Romano. But in his own way he is sincerely concerned about the whole parish, and serves his people conscientiously.

What is hard for the sensitive is to accept the fact that a priest has to be concerned about the whole parish. Few priests have the gift of special attention to each individual person. The late Father Thomas Connors of Blessed Sacrament could; and my own Father Curtin of Clyde. But these were exceptions.

I abhor the mentality which equates the Church with the priest. I am a Catholic because I believe with my whole being that Christ established the historic, visible Catholic Church as His living Presence on earth, "to teach, to govern, to sanctify and to save all men." So says the Catechism. So affirms the Council's document on "The Church." If most priests and bishops and theologians were thugs and lugs, overbearing and pleasure-loving — thank God they are rare today, although history indicates we've had them by the barrel — I should still love the Church and claim her as my Mother, my Home, my Teacher, my Family; and as Christ's Mystical Body.

Consider St. Thomas More! He succeeded that dreadful Cardinal Wolsey as chancellor of England. He knew Wolsey inside and out for what he was: brilliant, able, ambitious, avaricious, power-hungry, worldly: a disgrace to the Church. Because he died before Henry VIII declared himself head of the Church in England, Wolsey died a Catholic rather than an Anglican. Had he lived, he probably would have capitulated to his earthly king. Yet Thomas More, with full knowledge of the iniquities of this churchman and others like him, went cheerfully to the block rather than apostatize. He loved The Church!

In This Issue

THE COURIER-JOURNAL PROUDLY INTRODUCES THREE NEW WEEKLY COLUMNS

In This Corner



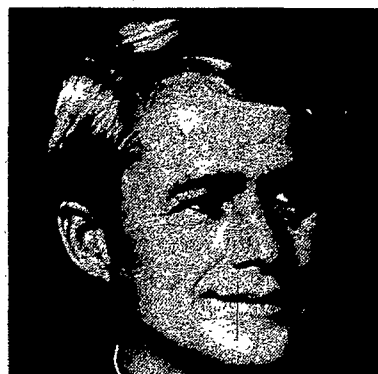
George Beahon

What Do You Think?



Charles Randisi

The Open Window



Fr. Louis Hohman

The Good News