

FR. HENRY ATWELL
**Toward
Tomorrow**



Most of us are increasingly aware that our poor little planet is almost polluted to death.

Pictures taken by our astronauts as they look down from space show the earth as a beautiful blue gem set on a velvet cushion of utter blackness.

Pictures taken here on earth, however, show junkyards of old automobiles, mounds of trash and garbage, oil-slicks on rivers and oceans, burnt forests and vast areas of land gorged and eroded from strip-mining, and everywhere, broken glass, empty cans and litter, litter, litter.

Earlier this month, the first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment opened in Stockholm, but promptly got bogged down by politics — the Chinese saying America is the world's worst polluter by its intensive bombing of Vietnam.

The Stockholm conference, nonetheless, is at least a first step for the nations of the world to protect us from global ruin. Two recently published books, in absolute contradiction to each other, address themselves to this subject.

One book, "The Limits to Growth," is a report to the prestigious Club of Rome of the predicament of mankind. It is the result of two years of study by an international team of researchers of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Its thesis is summarized in a quotation of UN Secretary General U Thant in 1969:

"I do not wish to seem overdramatic, but I can only conclude from the information that is available to me as Secretary-General, that the members of the United Nations have perhaps ten years left in which to subordinate their ancient quarrels and launch a global partnership to curb the arms race, to improve the human environment, to de-fuse the population explosion, and to supply the required momentum to development efforts. If

such a global partnership is not forthcoming within the next decade, then I very much fear that the problems I have mentioned will have reached such staggering proportions that they will be beyond our capacity to control."

We might add to Mr. U Thant's litany of problems even more immediate ones: the insecurity of employment, inflation and other economic instabilities, urban blight and sprawl, loss of faith in institutions such as government, church, or in any other traditional values.

The book "The Limits to Growth" says we possess a quite limited supply of resources — air, water, minerals, food potential, and we are using up these resources at an exponentially accelerating rate. Mother Nature, like old Mother Hubbard, will soon find her cupboard bare — and "soon" can mean by the end of this century or soon thereafter, within the lifetime of the youngsters alive today.

Another book, "The Doomsday Syndrome: an Assault on Pessimism," is a flat denial of "The Limits to Growth." This other book, by English author John Maddox, predicts a beautiful new world about to emerge when science solves all those problems which Mother Nature fails to cope with. Professor Maddox says all human activity is really so puny and inconsequential that there's hardly much hazard to the environment anyway.

I think most of us can see for ourselves that we're rapidly making a mess of a world God made beautiful.

We can't just leave it to delegates in Stockholm to preserve our planet, we have to do our part in our own backyards too, and along highways, and on picnics. One person remarked recently he'd like to have his children able to live in "a world that does not make one want to vomit." That's a very minimum goal — But how horrible if we don't get even that far!



FR. PAUL J. CUDDY
**On The
Right Side**

From Fr. V. Longo, Italian Franciscan missionary in Japan:

"In June I leave for Italy. There is the election of the new assistants to the Father Provincial, and I must go as representative of this mission. This year we will have also the election of the Superior of this mission; and I hope this will be a good occasion for me to be relieved of this job I have been keeping from 1942. I feel so tired."

COMMENT: We all gaze in awe at the generosity of those who "give up home and father and mother" and all for the Kingdom. But rather than gazing in awe, it is better to do something for the missionaries: who need bed, board, health care, prayers, cash and encouragement.

From Brother Ignatius, SVD, once at Conesus.

"I was delighted to receive your letter. Thank you for remembering me. And thank you also for the Mass intentions. As Bishop Noser is away I gave them to Father Bus, our Provincial. Both pass them on to needy priests. He was glad to have them and he gave me the extra which you included for me. I can use it for a new cassette for my recorder . . . I got involved in spreading devotion to Our Blessed Mother and in trying to spread the good news I got some slides and a taped commentary and have a recorder, projector and screen. It seems that something is wrong because the voice fades. Was told to get a new tape . . ."

COMMENT: Brother Ignatius is a native of Clyde; and was in the first graduating class from the parish school. He was home for the glorious golden anniversary of the first graduating class in 1965, and the alumnae speaker was the illustrious Dr. Alice Foley of Nazareth. Extending the Kingdom needs not only preaching and celebrating Mass and sacraments. It includes keeping machinery in repair, stomachs fed, missionaries and flock

kept healthy. It includes houses, huts, beds, jeeps, wells, chickens, cows, plants, vines . . . Sometimes I am able to send gifts and Mass stipends to the Missions which are a great help to missions and to missionaries. Friends may wish to write to: Brother Ignatius Di-Santo, SVD — Catholic Mission — P.O. Alexishofen — Territory Papua — New Guinea.

From a contemplative monk of great common sense:

I had written to him from Auriesville commenting that the retreat was terribly theological and intellectual, but not soul stirring. He wrote: "Speaking of Jesuits, we had speakers from Fordham. One was George Maloney, who spoke on the Jesus Prayer in connection with Eastern Religions. He was very good. He and another Jesuit, also from Fordham, lectured here a while back, and were astounding in their deep, traditional, contemplative if not mystical approach to spirituality. If the Jesuits have men like these, things can't be too bad."

COMMENT: It is a curious Order which contains Fathers Dan Lyons, Dan Berrigan, Cletus Healey and Albert Bartlett. I have rarely met a Jesuit that I have liked; but I have rarely met one that I have not admired . . . Recently Jesuit Father Tom Green of Sacred Heart Parish, Rochester and the Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines (Fr. G. is a Jesuit I like as well as admire), gave a retreat to the Sisters of the Hornell Area. One Sister taped his conferences, and I borrowed one on prayer. In the silence of the night I sat back and listened, and was impressed by its practicality. In a side remark he said: "One of the best books for discernment of spirits is the "Screw-tape Letters by C. S. Lewis." I had re-read the book 5 months ago and was so well impressed with it I got four extra copies to give away. If a book is good, share the wealth. Any convent wanting to borrow the tape on prayer, write to: Sister M. Scholastica, RSM, St. James Mercy Hospital, Hornell, N.Y. 14843.

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Father Paul J. Cuddy

Father Cuddy is Chaplain of St. James Mercy Hospital and author of the Weekly Courier-Journal Column ON THE RIGHT SIDE.

See Fatima, the ornate Cathedral at Seville, the Cathedral at Toledo, the great monastery at Seville.

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