

FR. HENRY ATWELL  
**Toward  
Tomorrow**



Our always loving and ever loveable Vice President, Spiro Agnew, was designated as our nation's Father of the Year. He took the occasion of this latest honor to blast the news media for not calling the north Vietnamese our "enemies" when reporting the continuing war in Indochina.

He thinks reporters are soft on Communism if they don't remind Americans over and over that the north Vietnamese, like all Communists, are our "enemies."

After all, and the Vice President is eminently logical in this, if we forget who our "enemies" are we're liable to stop wanting to kill them — and how can you continue a war that way.

Just before Agnew's Father's Day reminder about our "enemies," a soft-spoken, mite-of-a-man, Jesuit Father Paul Mayer was in Rochester to report on his recent visit to Hanoi where he saw for himself the remarkable achievements of our nation's stepped-up bombing program.

American military spokesmen have talked quite a bit lately about our new "smart" bombs which operate either by laser beam or television to pinpoint accuracy.

Father Mayer said he saw hospitals, schools, homes, rural hamlets — all of them in ruins from direct hits by American bombs.

He also saw victims — women and children — who are doomed to survive in agony as a result of U.S. anti-personnel bombs which pepper people with steel or plastic needles.

Father Mayer and three other Americans with him went to Hanoi after meeting north Vietnamese peace conference delegates in Paris. While in

northern Vietnam, they toured rural areas, several cities and villages, as well as Hanoi and Haiphong.

Costal villages are systematically shelled by U.S. Navy ships far out at sea, so villagers never know when to run for shelter.

Father Mayer also had the opportunity to speak with eight American prisoners who told him they thought the increased bombing by sea and air would probably stiffen the resolve of the north Vietnamese and thereby prolong the war rather than shorten it.

Father Mayer has an understandable sympathy for people who suffer. He was born a Jew in Germany and came to the United States as a refugee from the Nazi terror in 1938. He later became a Catholic and a Jesuit priest. Many of his family and friends died in Hitler's death camps. He said, "We can't just enjoy this summer like other summers — while people, thousands of people, are suffering and dying from our bombs.

Agnew would be quick to remind us, however, that these people are our "enemies." What else can we possibly do except bomb them into oblivion? How else can you win a war?

Maybe Jesus once gave us a possible alternative.

"You have heard," he said, "that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. . . . You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil. But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also."



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

On June 13, the feast of St. Anthony, columnist Cliff Carpenter had an article in the Rochester D and C, entitled: "If You Had \$1 Million, What Would You Do?" The article was occasioned by a student publication of the Frederick Douglass Jr. High School, sent by a Miss Elizabeth S. Brown, which featured the concern of the students toward vandalism in the schools. While Mr. C. found the feature edifying, what more caught his eye was a survey of responses given by the Junior High students to: "What Would You Do If You Had \$1 Million?"

The replies expressed little concern for the good of others. They were typical of our wounded human nature with those tendencies toward evil which we know as the Seven Capital Sins: pride, covetousness, lust, anger, envy, gluttony and sloth. Samples included: "Buy a mansion, a pool and a color TV." "Live it up," whatever that means. "Buy a motorcycle." "Buy clothes, get a mini-bike, and put the rest in the bank." "I'd give some to my mother, then I'd go straight to New York and to the stores." One said he would hide the million; and one wrote she would give it to the poor.

About the most selfless man I've ever known was my first pastor, Father Curtin. Over 35 years ago I asked him: "Father, what would you do if you had a million dollars?" With a twinkle he said: "I suppose I'd be like everybody else, and try to get another million!" I knew him well, and know he would have given most of it to the Missions, where he believed the greatest good for Christ's Kingdom was being done. He would have used some for the needy of the vicinity, and he would surely have spent some on the Catholic Press for spreading the Faith. His comment: "I would probably be like everyone else and try to get another million," was his ironic recognition of the grip of avarice in every man's fallen nature.

People involved in Church planning talk much about "priorities." The question is: "What are the priorities? and "Who decides them?"

Thus, suppose I won a million dollars

in a sweepstake. Probably the Inner City Groups would demand a large slice, because of their strongly felt convictions regarding priorities. The Don Bosco House for the disadvantaged, founded by Father Bauer, might well consider itself a worthy priority; and so could the debt-burdened Notre Dame Retreat House and the Cenacle. So might CARE, which objectively is an especially worthy priority; and the Propagation of the Faith, and our South American Missions. So could the foundations for: Cystic Fibrosis, Cerebral Palsy, Cancer, Heart, Arthritis. Indeed, culture lovers might well consider Nazareth Center of Performing Arts the number one priority. And I doubt that the financial directors of the Diocese, Mr. Ritzenthaler and Father Moynihan, would reject a gift of half a million as a less weighty priority in the scale of values.

It seems to me that while priorities should flow from objective needs and values, frequently they are arrived at from the subjective interests of individuals and the sometimes less than laudable pressure from persons involved in their own particular enthusiasms.

About five years ago at an institute I listened over coffee to a fiery cleric speaking with anger about the "smug, middle-class Catholics and their reluctance to go down to work in the Inner City," which was his own particular work. I remonstrated: "But these people have obligations to their homes: to their children and families and jobs." He retorted: "They're just smug. No spirit of Christ." A few months later he was off to Austria or Switzerland on a skiing trip with friends, a pleasure beyond the reach of most of the "smug" whom he held in judgment.

What would I do if I had \$1 million? I should like to be put to the test. And while I might be "just like everybody else, try to get another million." I do hope that the million would be distributed according to the spirit of the Gospel.

And you? "If you had \$1 million, what would you do?"

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