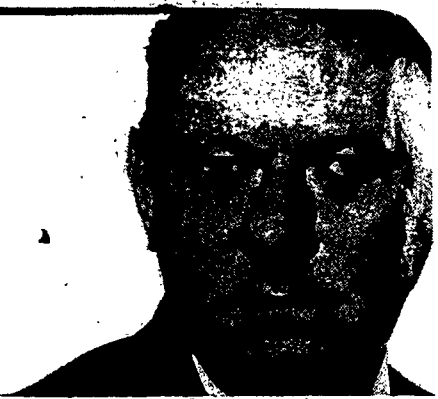


BOB CONSIDINE

On the Line



Marriage is, or was, a sacred pact signed in front of preacher or politician. Some of its ancient phrases have corroded, mainly "... until death do you part." Also, "... in sickness and in health" has taken something of a battering in recent times. "Change Partners and Dance" seems to have replaced "Oh Promise Me" as the theme song of marriage American style. We recently attended a beautiful wedding at which the mother of the bride sat between two ex-husbands while the father of the groom and the groom's mother, long divorced, had nothing to say to each other. Untogetherness.

All of which is a clumsy way of saying that this (July 20) is the wedding anniversary of the lady I'm married to. I never fail to marvel over how casually we met. How did you happen to meet your wife? Was it that enchanted evening you saw a stranger across a crowded room? Did she accidentally sit down on your lap while groping for a seat in a darkened movie house? Did your mother convince you she was the girl for you? Was it arranged by the National Rifle Association?

Unions that sometimes endure a wondrous lifetime can be as accidental or coincidental as a brush of rickety flying May flies. I once knew a girl who dialed a wrong number, got a reporter friend of mine on the phone by mistake, fell into a conversation with him, and they were married the next week. She divorced him after a time because he liked to make loud pig squeals at cocktail parties, but was soon remarried. She married a Reno cab driver who drove her to court to pick up her divorce papers.

Of course, most marriages are predictable. They knew each other as kids in school or in the neighborhood. They won the 3-legged race at the PTA outing. He was the only boy on the block who didn't mention her braces. She was the only girl around who didn't laugh at his big ears. And so they were married.

Millie and I were married because the State Department needed a team

to play in the Government Tennis League in Washington, D.C.

That may need a little explaining. I was working in the Treasury Department (where else?) at the time and held a couple of cheap tennis titles around that area. My partner (it was a doubles league because of the high incidence of cardiac cases) was Clarence Charest, who had won the National Veterans singles title at Forest Hills, a remarkable 1-armed player who later became Solicitor General. We made a shambles of the league.

Anyway, somebody at Civil Service told me there was a clerk's job open at the State Department, which was not represented in the tennis league. I borrowed a nickel and called State, figuring that if I got the job I could stimulate some interest in getting State to field a team. To make a short story abominably duller, I got the job and formed the team.

A couple of days after reporting for work in the Division of Communications and Records, a girl named Millie Anderson came to work, clean from Kansas City. Which is how we met. Pure chance. She could have stayed in Kansas City and maybe have married Hal Boyle. I could have bought an apple with that borrowed nickel and never have made the phone call. Chancy as that.

We moonlighted at George Washington University at night, taking courses in what the dear old professor from the Washington Star insisted was journalism: and delving into the golden preserves of Prof. Douglas Bement's course in creative writing.

Then Shirley Povich gave me a job on the Washington Post, and Bill Tilden gave me \$100 for writing some publicity handouts on a pro tennis match he had with Karel Kozeluh, "The Rubber Czech," and with that bounty, Millie and I were married at old St. Mary's in Annapolis by a nervous priest who apparently believed that my sister's newborn baby — a bawling guest at the wedding — was ours.



FR. PAUL J. CUDDY

On The Right Side

Father James Dutton is an Englishman, about 50 years old, who served in the Fiji Islands with the RAF during WW II. While making a retreat there under an old island missionary he received his vocation. "Going, therefore, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them ... and teach them to observe what I have commanded you" came to him as a personal call. He answered it and is today a priest of the Fiji Islands.

Father Dutton was a friend of the late Father LeVeque, who was a friend of Father Joseph Gaynor. Through Father Gaynor, who was my valued assistant in Clyde, I became a friend of Father Dutton. There is an old joke about a parson who made a strong appeal for funds to his parishioners. A man said to him: "Parson, you always said that religion is free as water." The parson replied: "That's right, friend. But it costs money to pipe it in." My sympathy goes to Father D. and other fund raisers. Fr. D. wants to be back in his missions, but is presently in this country to raise funds "to pipe religion in." A month ago I wrote to him and enclosed a copy of OTRS article: **If I Had One Million.** He replied:

"It was good to hear from you; and thank you very much for the Mass offerings. As a matter of fact the help you give in this way is a great help because many of our priests in Fiji receive little or nothing from us to live on and the Mass offerings are a God-send. I have made so many promises to priests and sisters in the Fiji to help where I can; and I am glad always of any stringless gifts because, then I can help them and this gives them great encouragement.

"Money is tight this year and worse, so many of the people have given away the idea that the Church needs missionaries and missions. Anything that is worth-while seems to be a sort of reproach to them and so they ridicule it and deny it's need or use. They damn well ought to be sent to the missions for a spell and share some of the poverty. Even from the humanitarian point of view they would see what the Sisters and priests are doing for people who a hundred years ago were

cannibals of the worst type. Let me quote from the Fiji Islands' Prime Minister who spoke on the occasion of Brother Lamberts Golden Jubilee of Religious life. (The P.M. is a Fijian.) "In bringing to the Islands the word of God, in the practical application of Christ's teaching in their daily lives, in their devotion to education and in other fields of service to our people, and in the personal example of their lives, missionaries such as Brother Lambert have inspired and enriched these Islands. Without such men I doubt we should have found among us the tolerance, the good will and the understanding which are the foundations of our independent nation ... "I enjoyed ON THE RIGHT SIDE again. I know what I would do if I had a million. Here are a few of the first things I would do...

1. Provide a good priest I know with \$2,000 for his little mission church.

2. Provide a Ford truck to another fine priest who is training men and their wives in agriculture and basic technical training for men, and home economics, sewing and baby care, nutrition and so on. He needs the truck.

3. I would help the Sisters of Compassion in Suva to finish their building for the incurably sick and old people.

"And there are a thousand and one small things I would do. What a sad thing to know that such wasted effort has gone on in your wonderful country in building new convents and schools and even seminaries, and now they are not being used. Must go now. Do pray for me. I will not forget you in my prayers and will always be grateful for your help to our mission, and for standing firm in the Faith that came to us from the Apostles."

* Any who wish to write to him can address: Father James Dutton, St. Mary's Rectory, Mount Washington, 403 Grandview Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15211.

I like his "damn well" exasperation, which flows from his great love of the Church, and the Church's mission of compassion, sanctification and gospel.

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