

Editorial

**Treating the Symptom
But Not the Cause**

Several bills before the State Legislature will permit the sale of contraceptives to children under 16, the age limit set by present law.

Such bills have been introduced before and met little legislative approbation but this year support is being generated from outside sources: According to Religious News Service, Abe Levine, state commissioner of welfare, and the State Council of Churches have announced support of such proposals.

Levine favors the amendment so the New York City welfare district can offer "full family planning services." He says his proposals "accurately reflect contemporary social conditions and program needs."

The Council of Churches takes a similar stand on the bill although it leans more heavily on the spread of venereal disease as one basis for its position.

The council stated: "We are deeply concerned about the alarming increase of venereal disease among all ages and all levels of our society . . . It is obvious that education and continence are the most viable ways of avoiding venereal infection." (Editor's Note: Amen).

But, the council statement continues, "If one is educated, incontinent and under 16, there is little to prevent the spread of infection. The social as well as personal cost of the epidemic proportions of the present levels of venereal disease suggests that it would be wise to make prophylaxis more readily available."

The statement also referred to the birth control aspect and said, "While one may decry the personal decision of so many of our young to engage in premarital sexual activity, one can also regret the probably sad future of those children conceived as the result of that regrettable moral decision. For their sake, wisdom dictates that, as much as possible, the next generation be protected from the moral failures of its parents."

We feel that this last sentence, if carried to its logical conclusion, would sanction the end of the human race for what generation of parents has been without moral failures? Probably not the one making today's decisions.

Much of the argument seems to have a patina of logic but it rests on a flimsy foundation. We agree with the State Catholic Committee which sees such bills as:

1. An interference with parents' rights, since they would permit young children under 16 to purchase contraceptives without their parents' knowledge.
2. Spreading VD since all contraceptives could be purchased and foams, jellies, etc. would promote contact and spread of disease. Only prophylaxis would in any way impede the spread of VD.
3. A positive promotion of illicit intercourse between young children.

We also see the bills as destructive of family life and as a promotion of promiscuity.

We agree that the venereal disease problem is major, sad, and complicated. But must people constantly seek remedies that have given rise to the cliché "bandaid approach?" Saying that because venereal disease is widespread we must let even pre-teens purchase contraceptives is somewhat like using perfume instead of taking a bath. VD is a result, not a cause and if we merely concentrate on it, the cause will blossom in some other social aberration.

Although most of our criticism is directed at those who have made the easy way out popular, we also must note that a large part of this problem rests with parents who have let the moral training of their children slide.

It is easy to project this social disease into some other area, say impoverished or slum or "the city," but that is fallacious. VD is everywhere and the predicament it is presenting has in a large way been created by a generation that has grown afraid of its own children, that has secluded itself in creature comforts that has fought wars instead of safeguarding the peace.

Opinion

**'Profound
Thank You'**

Editor:

I would like to express our gratitude, at this time, to the Courier-Journal for the excellent coverage we received in the Feb. 21 issue. On behalf of the board of directors of the Association for the Blind, the staff and myself, a profound thank you! A most important and special thank you on behalf of the blind who honor us with their presence here at the Association, and represent a significant constituency in the greater Rochester community.

The quality of the writing and the photography were indicative of the most professional and sensitive publicity we have received in any of the area media during our recent open house or, for that matter, for the past half century of The Association's work with the blind. The Courier-Journal is to be commended for so accurately informing the public of the Association's changing image. The change cannot be credited to The Association alone, however; those who happen to be blind, themselves, deserve capital credit for proving that blindness is not a handicap, simply an inconvenience.

Again, our heartfelt gratitude to the Courier-Journal for the concern and integrity that their excellent coverage reflects.

William E. Divers
Executive Director
The Association for the Blind
422 Clinton Ave. S.
Rochester

**Recommends
Book**

Editor:

The Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation is making available the book that has been asked for over a period of 14 years, a book about Cardinal Mindszenty.

Mindszenty the Man by Dr. Joseph Vecsey, as told to Phyllis Schlafly is an eyewitness story of his crises and confrontations. Dr. Vecsey became the chief religion writer for Radio Free Europe in Munich after his escape from Hungary in 1952. His personal friendship with Cardinal Mindszenty began at the age of 10 and after his ordination he served as secretary to the Cardinal and presently edits a newspaper for Hungarians in Europe.

Through this warm and human book you will come to know the Cardinal as a person and learn why he had the courage and stamina to defy the Nazis and resist communism, in spite of imprisonment, torture and a mock trial. The late Bishop

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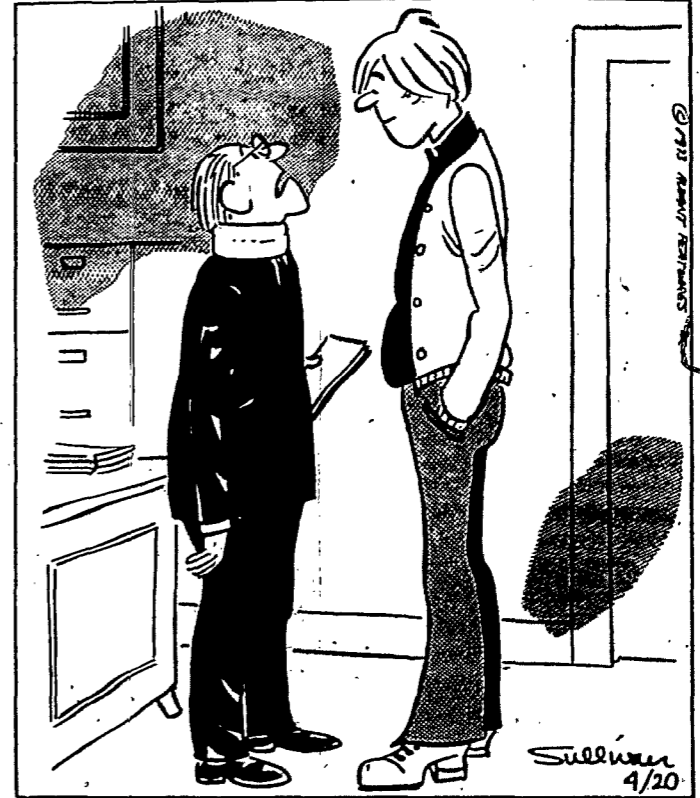
Carmen J. Viglucci
Editor

Rev. Louis J. Hohman
Episcopal Advisor

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Courier-Journal



"DO ME A FAVOR! FOR THE DURATION OF MY WHIPLASH, GET RID OF THE PLATFORM SHOES!"

McNulty of Buffalo has written the appendix.

This story of faith and hope is a treasure to read, reread and give to your friends. The book contains 40 historic photographs beautifully reproduced and makes the modest price of \$2 insignificant. It is a pleasure to see the book appearing on the shelves of some of the local stores.

Mrs. I. B. Newberry
160 Azalea Road, Rochester

**Children Should
Be Protected**

Editor:

Re: "Sex Education Program Described," [Courier-Journal, 3/14/73].

Contrary to the allusions being created by the popular "sexperts," a true Roman Catholic education WAS a PRUDENT education in sex when I went to school. Of course, those were the days when educators and religious assisted parents in guarding the right of children to be protected from the snarls and snares of the devil, from the dangers of sin and the near occasion of sin; when responsible adults protected children from exposure to tasteless, vulgar, immoral movies, books and people and introduced them to morally and spiritually uplifting art, music, literature and example.

I think children have a right to have their purity, chastity, modesty and privacy guarded by responsible adults. Children have a right to a truly Catholic education that stresses loyalty and obedience to Our Holy Father, an understanding of what is meant by the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, to be taught to seek God's mercy and to dread His just punishments, a horror of Hell, a devotion to Our Blessed Lady, the Angels and the Saints. Children have a right to be protected from the teachings of papal dissenters within the Church until they have the background to cope with it, to be protected from the condemned modernist heresy of On-Going Revelation and exposed to an intensive study of God as He has revealed Himself to man. I've never agreed with anything I've read that Dr. Guerinot has said but believe me, when it comes to children's rights, I'm a mother jaguar protecting my young!

"Sex problems, such as venereal disease and unwanted pregnancy" have not been caused by an "appalling ignorance" of basic facts about sex but rather, by an "appalling ignorance" concerning the enemies of salvation.

There are so many excellent booklets I would like to recommend to readers who seek expert opinions examining different points of view. The

"Superstition of Sensitivity Training" by Dr. Dietrich von Hildebrand is a marvelous essay pointing out the evils of human engineering, "Group Tyranny," totalitarian intrusion into the souls of other people, computer mentality, abolition of privacy, etc. I will be happy to let anyone who drops me a note know how this booklet can be obtained.

Betty Jean Lindsay
170 Hampden Road
Rochester, N.Y. 14610

**Charity Begins
At Home**

Editor:

Until everyone in his diocese has all their social and economic ills solved, until he has spent every last penny to do this and until every orphan in our orphanages has a home, I believe he has an obligation to us, and only us. Charity begins at home. It would make more sense to me for him to take up a special collection and send it to my community to help our people, on fixed incomes, to pay for their staggering payments on our state mandated sewer. This and many other problems are magnified many times throughout the diocese, as we all know. I urge all Catholic concerned citizens to take the money they would give to special collections for anywhere but the Rochester Diocese, and give it to local agencies to be used by us.

Amnesty, to forgive past offenses against the government. Then must we also forgive those locked up in our prisons for crimes against federal laws or offenses? I personally feel that these inmates might be less offensive to our society than the traitors who fled our country under the guise of being conscientious objectors.

How about a few special collections for the returning veterans in our diocese? How about a few extra tears for those who gave their lives for us fighting communism and money for their families or relatives?

I conclude that we must help, to the last penny, our own needy. We must fill our homes with our orphans and not bring them from overseas. When all this has been accomplished then I will be the first to donate as much as I can to others.

Al DePorter Jr.
34 Kendall Street
Clifton Springs, N.Y.

Opinions to the editor should be addressed: Letter to the Editor, Courier-Journal, Richford Building, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604. They should be no longer than 1 1/2 pages, typed double-spaced. Names and addresses should be included. The paper reserves the right to edit all letters.