

**Editorial**

# Contraceptive Bills Need Attention

After liberalized abortion was passed by the State Legislature and drives to repeal the new law became hot and at times vitriolic, many legislators complained that they had had little or no guidance from anti-abortion groups until after the vote. They felt that they had to make judgments on such a sensitive issue without much of an idea as to how disagreeable such a law would prove to be.

Now legislators, facing a spate of bills that would permit sale of contraceptives to children under 16, are openly looking for response from those who oppose such an idea. They undoubtedly are hearing from proponents of such a measure and legislators must pay heed to their constituencies. So all who view such bills with distaste must act with haste. Two have already been released by the Senate Rules Committee.

These bills, S 6119 and S 6120, make it possible for children of any age to purchase contraceptive condoms and permit condoms to be sold inside and "outside" a pharmacy. The State Catholic Committee explains that "outside" presumably means in vending machines.

The State Committee has called attention to another bill now before the Assembly, A 4798-B, which proposes lowering the age of majority from 18 to 14 for medical care. The committee, in scathing language says, "This bill would assist the pro-abortion doctors and hospitals by allowing them absolute discretion in performing abortions on young girls."

This bill, says the committee, marks "a drastic change in the area of medical consent for minors. This bill would permit young and innocent children of 14 to be treated in non-emergency cases without their parents' consent."

Charles Tobin who made the committee statement says that emergency treatment can always be given. The new bill permits non-emergency treatment on the say-so of a 14-year-old, under whatever pressure is applied.

On this page, the Courier-Journal is printing the names of all representatives from this diocese. We advise all readers to make known their views on these matters now. The legislators will appreciate hearing from you and society will be the better for it.

## Time For Appraisal

Addressing the 70th National Catholic Education Conference in New Orleans, Mrs. Mary Reed Newland, in typical female wisdom, has managed to see the other side of the world's best-known rule, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Mrs. Newland asked, "How can you love your neighbor as yourself if you don't love yourself?"

True, there are many of us who love ourselves no matter what we do, who, at least subconsciously feel, "I can do no wrong."

Still there are so many others who never gauge their own worth, who never realize what splendid creatures we are, that we all are lovable in God's eyes, and that we can perform immense good for the world and our fellow travelers.

So take a good look at yourself and learn to enjoy it. You may be giving your neighbors a break.

## A Good Sign

When the head of a country deems it necessary to go on national television to account to the public for wrongdoing within his administration, it is evident that there is plenty of good left in the United States.

True, it is possible that parliamentary governments might have fallen with the weight of Watergate but in those situations a great deal of politics is involved. Here the President is directly responsible to the electorate and when the members thereof get concerned enough he darn well better step up and explain.

# Pastoral Council Discussed

By BARBARA MOYNEHAN

Established April 1971, the Pastoral Council Formation Committee has spent its time formulating philosophy and organizing to be "a 17 member organism for consultation, composed of representatives from all sections of the People of God, to give assistance and advice to the bishop in pastoral matters."

They have completed the draft of a constitution for the Pastoral Council, which is now making the rounds of the Priests' and Sister Councils, the Interdepartmental Committee and the regional coordinators for input and approval.

However the organization and purpose as described in that constitution are not sitting well with some leaders in the diocese.

Last week, the draft was the subject of discussion at the monthly Priests Council meeting.

Msgr. George Cocuzzi, former president of the Priests' Council who began working on the constitution in January when his term on the senate was up, has proposed an alternative constitution based on a large regional membership, and the view that the Pastoral Council will be purely a research body to meet only once a year or when called on by the bishop, and not "another advisory council."

"I fear an advisory body as is now suggested would only give the bishop another privy council to contend with," said Msgr. Cocuzzi in a lengthy presentation to the priests.

The role in governing the diocese of the two councils is not a new question. Msgr. Cocuzzi, a self described, "clerical chauvinist," has often maintained that the Priests' Council, according to Vatican II documents, is an arm of the bishop to assist him in governing his people.

After much discussion with comments from Sister Mary Ann Binsack, religious education coordinator at St. John the Evangelist, Humboldt Street, and member of the formation committee since 1971, a committee of three council members was established to analyze the conflicting philosophies.

The three council members who will work in consultation with the Formation Committee and other advisory committees of the diocese, are Fathers Joseph Brennan, rector of St. Bernard's, Richard Tormey, pastor of St. Stephen's, Geneva, and vice president of the senate, and John Mulligan, co-pastor of St. John the Evangelist of Humboldt Street and Priests' Council liaison to the Formation Committee.

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