

THE CHURCH 1973 Fr. Andrew Greeley

The Watergate affair is one more example of a fascinating phenomenon of American history: presidents with landslide majorities usually get into trouble.

Franklin Roosevelt was re-elected in 1936 with an overwhelming vote. Shortly thereafter he began his disastrous attempt to pack the United States Supreme Court, and while he was elected twice more, his political power was never the same. Dwight Eisenhower was re-elected by a landslide in 1956, and the steam promptly went out of his never very dynamic administration — complete with such disasters as the U2 and the abortive Paris summit with Khrushchev. Lyndon Johnson had a mammoth victory in 1964, and scarcely was the campaign finished before he was presiding over a disastrous escalation in Vietnam. Within a few months of his second inaugural, Richard Nixon is well on his way toward becoming the most unpopular president since Harry Truman, and perhaps the most unpopular since Andrew Johnson.

Is it just coincidence, or does this phenomenon say something



JUDGE BERGIN

Named Judge

Eugene W. Bergin, first assistant district attorney, was sworn in as Monroe County Court Judge June 29. Judge Bergin was appointed by the governor to fill the vacancy created by the elevation of George D. Ogden to the New York State Supreme Court. Bergin is a graduate of Aquinas Institute, the University of Notre Dame and Georgetown Law School. He is a member of Our Lady Queen of Peace parish and resides with his wife Virginia and four children on Viennawood Drive.

Area Seniors Win Awards In Home Ec.

Four graduating senior girls from area Catholic high schools have won awards in home economics from the R. T. French Company, Rochester headquarterd food manufacturer.

Each girl will receive a \$50 denomination United States Savings Bond and an engraved silver award pin. The recipients are selected by their schools on the basis of their interest and ability in home economics and traits of character, and citizenship.

The recipients are Beta Hilarski of Cardinal Mooney, Margaret Marszalek of Bishop Kearney, Doreen Donadoni of St. Agnes, and Jeanmarie Tedesco of Nazareth Academy.

important about American politics?

A president with a large popular mandate usually forgets that for all practical purposes a win by 60 per cent of the popular vote does not significantly alter patterns of power. Since congressional voting patterns are relatively stable, presidential landslides rarely change the patterns of congressional representation decisively.

The alignment in Congress may be slightly different, but still the power structures, the veto groups, the alliances in the Congress are substantially the same. The federal bureaucracy is unchanged, and the social, political, and economic structure of the country is unchanged. The president may have a mandate (though it may equally be only a no-confidence registration against his opponent) but, as we say in Chicago, his mandate and 45 cents will get him a ride on the Chicago Transit Authority. It carries with it no extra political power (as a landslide would in a parliamentary system) and only a transitory amount of political prestige.

James Madison and his colleagues designed a constitutional system for this country in which the leadership could govern only if it was capable of building coalitions. Whether you have 52 per cent of the popular vote or 60 per cent, the system is still such that you need to have a coalition to be able to govern effectively. But a man who permits himself to be deceived by overwhelming mandates — and most presidents seem incapable of resisting the temptation — is going to neglect the difficult, tiresome, thoroughly unsatisfying task of tending to and maintaining his coalition.

Franklin Roosevelt thought he could dispense with the Supreme Court; Dwight Eisenhower seemed to think he could dispense with government altogether; Lyndon Johnson thought he could govern without bothering to inform Congress or the American people what he was up to; and Richard Nixon apparently thought he could dispense with the courts, the Congress, the bureaucracy, the cabinet, and even the Republican party. He imagined that he could control the country with the aid of a ruthlessly loyal clique of unpolitical technicians with whom he surrounded himself in the White House. In each case the mandate led to a disaster, and how great the disaster was depended in substantial part on how resilient the president was. Franklin Roosevelt, at least, had a way of bouncing back.

There is considerable question in the present mess as to whether the American system has stopped working. My own guess is that if James Madison were around to be interviewed (off the record, of course) by the Washington Post, he would be delighted with the way the system had worked. He built in two checks and balances to restrict presidential power: The Congress and the courts in the persons of Sam Ervin and John Sirica did exactly what Madison would have expected them to do. The informal check, the press, legitimated not so much by the Constitution as by the Bill of Rights, also functioned as Madison would have hoped — though even he might have been embarrassed by the unholy glee with which the press is demolishing Mr. Nixon and his cronies.

Did we "luck out" then, or did the system work the way it was supposed to? I much prefer the latter explanation, but it still ought to be clear that a heavy price has been paid and will continue to be exacted in the years ahead.

CDA Marks Anniversary

Utica, [RNS] — National Regent Mary C. Kanane and a delegation of 425 members attended a Mass and banquet here marking the 70th anniversary of the Catholic Daughters of America (CDA).

Father Leonard Bachmann, superior of the Shrine of St. Joseph in Stirling, N.J., and consultant to the national regent, said in a homily at the Mass that the United States needs "a return to basic values."

The CDA, he said, can be "the organization which will help bring about this spiritual and moral reform."

Father Bachmann commended the organization on its dedication to America, and deplored "some misdirected mobs" who he said had replaced the national anthem with flag burning and obscenities.

The Mass was held at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, and the pastor of the church, Msgr. Daniel E. Lawler, was principal celebrant.

Court Acquits 'Confession' Journalists

Padua, Italy [RNS] — Two Italian journalists who had published a book, Sex in the Confessional, based on secret tape recordings of 632 "simulated confessions" to Roman Catholic priests, have been acquitted of charges of offending the state religion (Roman Catholicism).

A local court here also dismissed a charge of "obscene publication" against the defendants.

Norberto Valentini, 34, and Clara de Meglio, 40, were ordered to stand trial in April after their book was published.

Valentini and Miss de Meglio, both non-practicing Catholics, had travelled around Italy faking confessions in sexual matters, and surreptitiously recording the responses of the unsuspecting priests.

The two journalists are under automatic excommunication for publishing the book.

80th SETON

Dr. and Mrs. Clare Smith of 1860 West Bloomfield Road, Honeoye Falls, will entertain members of the 80th Seton Branch and their husbands at a steak roast, Saturday, July 7.



Father Cuddy Feted

Farewell presents for Father Paul J. Cuddy are offered on behalf of St. James Mercy Hospital, Hornell, by the administrator, Sister Mary Rene, at a public reception given by the hospital June 24. Father Cuddy, chaplain at Mercy and its nursing school for nearly six years, has been named associate pastor of Holy Trinity, Webster.

'Late Vocation' Priest New Columbus Bishop

New York — A prelate who was what the Church calls "a late vocation," has been named the new bishop of Columbus, Ohio, by Pope Paul VI.

Auxiliary Bishop Edward J. Herrmann of Washington, D.C., whose family became converts to Catholicism and who became a priest at 33, will take over the see left vacant by the death last February of Bishop Clarence E. Elwell.

The new bishop delayed entering college for 10 years in order to help support his mother and sister. He still considers the parish ministry his "greatest delight."

While expressing pleasure in his new appointment, Bishop Herrmann admitted that he will "hate to leave Washington," where he has worked for 26 years. He said he has spent "most of my priestly life" at Our Lady of Victory Parish, where he is now pastor. He was assistant pastor there between 1947 and 1960, and returned as pastor in 1968.

"I want to be a bishop close to the people," he said in a telephone interview. He added that this has always been his goal as a priest — "to be close to the people."

Bishop Herrmann, who was born in Baltimore on Nov. 6, 1913, told about his family:

"My father (an evangelical Lutheran) died in 1918 when I

was only five," he said. "Soon after, my mother (an Episcopalian) joined the Catholic Church." They attended St. Bernard's Parish in Baltimore.

Bishop Herrmann recalled that "our family was very close to the priests and Sisters there — and to all the people in the parish. We were especially close to Father Toolen (now retired Bishop Thomas J. Toolen of Mobile, Ala.) who taught my mother and brought her into the Church.

"Mother raised us and supported us all those years. I had always known I wanted to become a priest. But I decided to bystep it for a while and help my mother," Bishop Herrmann said.

So after high school, between 1930 and 1940, he worked to support the family. He was employed in various clerical and secretarial jobs at the American Oil Company in Baltimore.

"Then, quite unexpectedly things quickly jelled together. I was able to make adequate arrangements for my mother, and return to school," Bishop Herrmann said.

He said that his mother, now 87, is living with his married sister in Towson, Md. "I talked to her this morning, and she was very happy about my new appointment," he said.

Bishop Herrmann was ordained at age 33 and has spent his entire priestly career serving the Archdiocese of Washington.

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