

Editorial

Discretion? Perhaps . . . But Never Lies

Our "right to know" is much discussed these days as a side issue in connection with the chicanery that not only was being practiced in our nation's capital but was being honed to a fine art.

In the light of the Watergate, secret governmental police squads and the clandestine bombing of Cambodia, it is tempting to declare that the public should be told everything that goes on in the decision-making processes of our government, Church, even places of business. Tempting but unfounded.

A bit of reflection should convince anyone that there are times when information must be withheld, even from those vitally concerned. A simple example would be the decision not to tell a person of the possibility that he has a fatal disease, particularly when that information may cause further deterioration of his health.

Though the withholding of information is not always reprehensible, per se, extreme danger lies in the companion decision of what to say. For each time a group of people decide to hide some action from the public they simultaneously agree on something to tell in place of the facts.

Thus when the bombing of Cambodia was kept secret, it was decided to tell the public that we were respecting that country's neutrality. The former may possibly be excused by those who equate national security with bombing neutral countries; the latter is a simple lie.

When administration figures decided to cover up involvement in the Watergate burglary, they also decided to tell the public that covert CIA operations would be jeopardized, the very security of the nation was at stake, Cuban plots were involved, opposition candidates were guilty of indiscretions, at least, and of possible subversive links at worst, that a dead President conspired in the slaying of a foreign leader. What was withheld was bad; what was told was seven times seven worse.

Those in government or in the Church who legitimately withhold information from those concerned must realize the tremendous responsibility inherent in such action.

In all cases, the public must be told as much as possible, not as little. For the people are the government, are the Church, and in order for them to make the best possible judgments they must know as much as possible.

No public information can be withheld for self-serving purposes.

Again what is paramount is that there is a skyful of difference between withholding information and the outright promulgation of lies.

Scarecrow Tactic

The legal committee of the United States Catholic Conference has come up with an appropriate figure of speech in describing the recent Supreme Court decisions striking down aid to nonpublic schools.

The court's opinion that such aid would cause political divisiveness and this is unconstitutional was dubbed a 'scarecrow' by the legal unit.

The implication is that the high court has attempted to establish a blanket ruling against all forms of such aid and used this ridiculous argument as a kind of scarecrow to fend off any such efforts in the future.

How can this court justify its attempt to keep a segment of American society, which has done its part of the tilling, from a share in the harvest? It will take more than a scarecrow to keep Americans from seeking what is theirs. It certainly will take more than high court sophistry.

Opinion

Summer Series Big Success

Editor:

On behalf of the staff of the Hochstein School and the talented persons who participated in our Summer Concerts and Events, I wish to thank you for your help in making our summer program a tremendous success.

Our concerts have been enthusiastically received by the community, and so much of the success of these programs is because of your help in letting the community know what is happening.

It has been a pleasure for us to bring fine talents and "good times" through free concerts for the public and we hope to continue this kind of programming throughout the year.

Again, thank you, we appreciate your interest in Hochstein and your concern for the arts.

Helen Tuntland
Director

CUF Faults Bishop's Stand

Editor:

The Rochester Chapter of Catholics United of the Faith (CUF) was extremely disappointed and confused (as I imagine a great number of parents were, judging from the calls and letters we received) in Bishop Hogan's response to the recent Vatican decree ordering an immediate end to the experiment permitting children to receive the Holy Eucharist before they have made their First Confession.

When CUF first expressed its concern to our Bishop in April of 1972 regarding this matter, we cited the "General Catechetical Directory" which disallowed this practice and encouraged the traditional sequence, but it reluctantly permitted it in dioceses where this experiment was in progress, subject to re-examination. The Department of Education responded that they expected a furor over this but planned to continue with its present practice of postponing First Confession regardless.

Now, however, in light of this recent Vatican Decree it would seem that the Bishop's delay in implementing it departs notably from the instructions in the last paragraph of the Decree which reads:

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"After carefully considering the matter and mindful of the wishes of the bishops, the Sacred Congregations for the Discipline of the Sacraments and for the Clergy by this document with the approval of the Supreme Pontiff, Paul VI, declare that an end must be put to these experiments which have extended over two years, with the conclusion of the current school year 1972-1973" (this would only apply if there are any summer classes in progress leading to First Communion in the Fall) and that the Decree "Quam Singulari" is therefore to be obeyed henceforth everywhere and by all.

It was signed by Antonio Cardinal Samore, Prefect, Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, and John Cardinal Wright, Prefect, Sacred Congregation for the Clergy.

We urge parents to exercise their option left open to them by the present diocesan guidelines and abide by the Vatican ruling.

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Thanks Bishop For Pastoral

Editor:

Bishop Hogan's Pastoral Letter concerning the sacrament of Penance reflects a truly honest, tactful and pastoral stance.

Though his letter deals directly with one issue, in essence he has faced very directly a much larger challenge, that of the local Church and a bishop's responsibility to his people as he knows them and their concerns.

I wish to express my thank-you to Bishop Hogan for his wisdom and courage.

Marie Lynch
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Lyons Column Criticized

Editor:

May I object to Bernard Lyons' column of Aug. 1, 1973.

The masthead says — Our Parish Council — however in my opinion he is using this column not to be helpful for Parish Councils but to further his own personal ideas.

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Mistakes Spotlights

Editor:

The award-winning Courier-Journal frequently displays its adeptness in visual communications. In addition to its primary themes, its masterful photojournalism sometimes documents conspicuous visual rejections of the Catholic Faith. The centerfold features "Brides of Christ" (7/18/73) and "Institute Opens New Vistas" (8/1/73) could serve as illustrations for an unwritten but ubiquitous book "Visual Verification of Protestant Identities in Lieu of Authentic Catholic Vocations."

Such a title evokes many emotional and some "rational" reactions. Many defend the disobediences of lay-image sisters by noting that they are good committed people whose good motives cannot be questioned (by good people).

"Rational" responses are assembled from bits of philosophies of Maurice Blondel, his admirer Teilhard de Chardin, SJ, and contemporary theologians like Father Gregory Baum, OSA who admittedly lost his faith in Catholic teaching but does not openly apostatize in order (like de Chardin) to be more effective in changing the Church. In his misunderstanding of the Catholic Faith, Father Baum tells bishops that disobedience to the Holy Father is the only way to achieve "Collegiality" — (Praise lay-image sisters).

Internal destructions of faith in Our Lord's Vicar, and of the infallibility of Church Teachings are integral with destruction of faith in the infallibility of Our Lord Himself. Scripture Scholar, Father Raymond Brown offers his belief, "I do not believe . . . as Jesus and Paul thought . . . I see no other way . . . Jesus and Paul were wrong on that point." Undeserved faiths in psychologies and other disciplines of knowledge divide and disintegrate the Catholic Faith of many priests and Sisters.

The publications of Vatican II Documents, of Vatican directives and of papal rule all clearly establish that Sisters have the obligation to wear an identifiable religious habit as "a sign of their consecration."

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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.