

THE CHURCH 1973
Fr. Andrew Greeley

Public opinion research is a sobering venture, for the world that emerges from one's investigation is a gray, complex, frequently unexciting world. It does not have the sharp bright colors and the clear contrasts of a newspaper headline or a news magazine cover story or the Sunday supplement feature article!

These latter sources of information would have us believe that there is a generation gap; survey research can find no trace of such a gap. Nor much of a trace of the new politics, and only a six or seven percentage point trace of "political polarization."

Recently, my colleague, William McCready, and I began a study of mysticism in American society. Almost everyone we talked to expected we'd find the "new mysticism" concentrated among young people and much of this "new mysticism" would be drug induced.

We found a lot of people in American society who had had some kind of ecstatic experience, in the course of their lives (37 percentage points), and a fair number (5 percentage points — 10,000,000 people) who have such experiences frequently, but in our national sample we could not find a single ecstatic whose mystical interlude had been induced by drugs, and the younger generation was no more likely to have mystical experiences than their elders. Indeed, there was absolutely nothing in our data to give any evidence at all of the "new mysticism" and lots of evidence to persuade us that the ecstasies we had uncovered were anything but hippies (and, let it be quickly added, there was also much evidence that they were anything but neurotics).

There are, of course, a number of people who are pursuing mystical experience with the aid of hallucinogenic drugs and, more recently, self-hypnosis, yoga, Zen, and transcendental meditation. The people who write the newspaper and magazine articles are not creating such would-be ecstasies out of whole cloth, but the self-conscious new mystics are such a tiny proportion of the whole population that they do not even show up in the national sample. This does not necessarily mean that they are unimportant; it simply means there are not very many of them.

To the extent, then, that there are "trends" in American society, they are created either by a segment of the population so

Red Cross Seeks Help

Because of the rapidly expanding Regional Blood Program and the increased demand for blood in the 39 hospitals supplied by its program, the Red Cross needs more volunteers.

"Volunteers play an extremely important role in the collection of blood," according to Mrs. Murray Goddard, volunteer chairman. They are trained to do much of the preliminary work, such as registering donors, assisting staff nurses, and taking temperatures. Hours range from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Interviews will be Monday, Sept. 10, Tuesday, Sept. 11 and Wednesday, Sept. 13 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Red Cross Headquarters, 50 Prince St. For an interview appointment or for more information, call Red Cross, 275-9800.

K OF C MEETS

The New York State Knights of Columbus held their annual statewide meeting last weekend at Crossinger's Hotel.

small that it does not show up on a national probability sample or, in rare instances (such as political polarization in the last decade), the trends are composed of perhaps 10 per cent of the national population.

Dramatic trends are very rare though they do occur: the classic example is the changing attitudes of Americans on race in the last 15 years. Curiously enough, this trend, which can be documented without a shadow of a doubt, is simply not believed by those who take for granted the generation gap, political polarization, the decline of religion, the "new sexuality," and the "new mysticism."

The grayness and the complexity of the survey researcher's world leads this survey researcher to be very skeptical when someone arrives on the scene and announces the "new trend" in American Catholicism. The trends may be sharp and dramatic to small elite groups — priests, nuns, a relative handful of laity — but most of the newly announced trends don't effect the overwhelming majority of the Catholic population which usually is not even aware of them.

Thus, a couple of years ago we were told about a Catholic "swing to the left." As far as I could discover, this "swing" was represented by the Berrigans and their admirers. Such a group is capable of making a considerable amount of noise but would have been invisible in a national sample of Catholics. Indeed, my guess would be that less than 20 per cent of the Catholic population had even heard of the Berrigans (it's amazing how many people don't watch the television news broadcasts).

Now we hear about the "resurgence of the Catholic right." The Catholics United for the Faith, the Wanderer gang, fundamentalism, pentecostalism — all of these are supposed to be a new trend in American Catholicism. My own guess is that they are no more important than the Berrigans and ought to be taken no more seriously as spokesmen for any substantial group of the Catholic population.

Pentecostalism is indeed a vital and dynamic religious movement but I would bet that in the forthcoming redo of the 1963 parochial school study we will find that less than 1 per cent of the Catholic population has been involved with the pentecostals, and the Wanderer crowd and its dubious allies are so small as to be almost invisible even when compared with the pentecostal surge.

It does not follow that they are not an interesting phenomenon, but not everything that is interesting is worth taking seriously, much less worrying about. The Wanderer may be the greatest comic journal since the decline of Mad, but whatever power it has comes from the regrettable fact that some bishops and pastors permit themselves to be terrified by it, and take seriously the harassments of its devout and dedicated readers.

The Wanderer gang and the Berrigan cultists have a number of things in common. They are both a miniscule fraction of the population, they are both absolutely convinced of their own moral rectitude and perception and the immorality of everyone else, and they both depend for whatever power they have on their capacity to create disturbance and to attract attention. They are fun to write about, an annoyance to have to live with, and absolutely irrelevant save to those who permit themselves to be morally blackmailed.

Rochester Bail Fund Feels Money Pinch

By PAT PETRASKE

Since a request for funding has been denied by the Community Chest, the Rochester Bail Fund must come up with approximately \$20,000 of face extinction by the end of the year.

The immediate problem is not in getting money to post bail, which comes in from private donations, but in obtaining money to pay for salaries and supplies. "If we could just come up with a few desks and typewriters, I'd be pretty happy," said Mrs. Barbara Ellis, director of the three person staff.

Until 1972 the administrative duties and supplies had been taken care of by volunteers, but "Volunteers set their own time, and sometimes it is difficult to depend on them," Mrs. Ellis said.

The Bail Fund explained its philosophy thus in the proposal presented to the Community Chest: "The Bail Fund is working to alleviate injustices suffered by poor people who are defendants in a judicial system heavily weighted in favor of defendants who have money. The presumption that a person is innocent until proven guilty is meaningless if that person must sit in jail for months awaiting trial because he lacks the money to post bail."

The two-year-old program was denied aid because the Community Chest considered it more a federal than a local program. Mrs. Ellis said an appeal would be made for federal money "as a last step."

"It doesn't seem like they would have people arrested and then give money to an agency that bails them out of jail," she said. Requests have been made to private individuals and to agencies such as the Four Downtown Churches and the Genesee Ecumenical Ministries.

The Bail Fund blossomed out of the so-called Flower City Conspiracy, a group of eight young people who ransacked the draft files in the Federal building as a war protest. "While in jail, the members of the conspiracy issued a statement to the effect that a lot of people were in jail simply because they were poor. They made an appeal to the community to start a bail fund. However, none of the money was used by the members of the conspiracy for their own bail," explained Bob Bonn, director of the Jail Ministry which works

Good Grief, Charlie Schulz

Santa Rosa, Calif. (RNS) — The Catholic Diocese of Santa Rosa has sold a controversial bishop's residence to the "Peanuts" cartoonist, Charles Schulz.

Critics had objected that the residence, located on a four-acre estate and equipped with swimming pool, three-car garage, guest house and cabana, was too luxurious.

A 1971 story in the California Home magazine section of the Oakland Tribune stirred up a furore. In a letter to the paper, Bishop Mark J. Hurley agreed that the residence was too extravagant for a bishop and said that he had been unsuccessfully trying to sell it ever since he became bishop in 1969.

Bishop Hurley inherited the residence from Bishop Leo T. Maher, the first bishop of the diocese and now bishop of San Diego.

The asking price for the property had been \$225,000 but neither Bishop Hurley nor Schulz would reveal the price actually agreed upon.

closely with the Bail Fund.

When a referral is received, members of the Bail Fund interview the defendant in jail and confer with the defense attorney and the judge to get the bail lowered. Presently, only one member of the staff is allowed in the jail since fingerprinting and an F.B.I. check are prerequisites for admission and the workers object to this. "We see this as a violation of our rights. They could use local records to get the information they need," Mrs. Ellis maintained.

A limit of \$500 is placed on every bail posted and it is up to the family or friends of the defendant to secure the remaining portion. After the court case is completed, the Bail Fund usually receives a refund from the courts and then returns it to the contributor, according to the director.

In the first six months of this year, the Bail Fund handled 79 cases involving \$32,660 in bail. Mrs. Ellis said that nearly 75 per cent of the defendants were in the age bracket of 16-25 with males outnumbering females 15-1. Most of them had previous records, she added.

Assistance in obtaining employment, educational opportunities and a place to live is also available through the Bail Fund. "The judge may be more lenient if a person has a job. Otherwise he may think the defendant would be better off in jail," Mrs. Ellis said.

One of the most pressing needs is for paraprofessional legal help to steer the accused through the confusion and distress of the pretrial routines. Even people who have bail money sometimes do not know how to post it, Mrs. Ellis said.



HER COFFIN: THE GARBAGE CAN

THE HOLY FATHER'S MISSION AID TO THE ORIENTAL CHURCH

HOW MANY MORE?

The Sister was moving among the slums of a city in India. Unbelievably, she heard sobbing coming from a trash barrel. Brushing aside the filth and the vermin, she looked. Beneath the filth and debris was an old lady crying from tearless eyes as her life slowly ebbed away. Tenderly the Sister lifted her, placed her on her shoulders and took her to the Hospice for the Dying. Before she died, the old lady told the Sister, "I'm not crying because I was in the garbage. I'm crying because my son put me there. He had to. There was not enough food for the family." . . . Tragically, this scene can help be replayed many more times. But you can help to lessen it. Will you? Here is how . . .

WILL YOU HELP?

- In the hands of our native Sisters your gift in any amount (\$100, \$75, \$50, \$25, \$10, \$5, \$2, \$1) will fill empty stomachs with rice, fish, milk, vegetables.
- Our priests can start a model farm for their parishioners and teach them how to increase their crop production for only \$975. We will tell you where it is located.
- \$15 a month will enable an aged person to spend his or her declining years with simple dignity cared for by our Sisters.

A REMINDER

Why not send us your Mass requests right now? Simply list the intentions, and then you can rest assured the Masses will be offered by priests in India, the Holy Land and Ethiopia, who receive no other income.

SOME DON'T

Have you made your Will? Did you remember God's poor and needy? They can pray for you after you have gone. Our legal title: CATHOLIC NEAR EAST WELFARE ASSOCIATION. Masses offered for the repose of your soul provide our native Priests with their only income.

Dear Monsignor Nolan:

CH ENCLOSED PLEASE FIND \$ _____

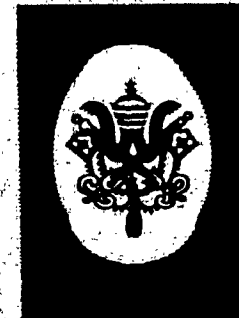
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THE CATHOLIC NEAR EAST WELFARE ASSOCIATION



NEAR EAST MISSIONS

TERENCE CARDINAL COOKE, President
MSGR. JOHN G. NOLAN, National Secretary
WRITE: CATHOLIC NEAR EAST WELFARE ASSOC.
330 Madison Avenue • New York, N.Y. 10017
Telephone: 212/986-5840