

'Man Nobody Saw'

Sickness of Racism Dramatized

BY CHARLES RANDISI

Racism invaded Holy Family School on Tuesday night, Nov. 13, in dramatic form.

'The Man Nobody Saw,' a half-hour play by Elizabeth Blake, was presented by the Rochester Community Players' Studio C, as part four of a training session for Human Development Committee leaders of the parish.

The play was commissioned by the President's National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. Studio C produces several such short dramas dealing with social issues, and makes them available to interested groups.

This particular play has been performed more than 20 times for Rochester groups. The offices of Human Development and Education have used it more than once for training and adult education sessions.

Only five actors and minimal props are necessary for 'The Man Nobody Saw.' The focus is on Nathan Richardson, a black man accused of arson, assault and various other crimes.

His lawyer enters a plea of not guilty. Many witnesses (played by



Dick Kirsch, left, Shelby Garfield, "The Man Nobody Saw," and Julie Fitzsimmons.

two white actors, one man and one woman) are called to the stand. All are asked whether they have ever been acquainted with Richardson, and all deny it.

But the witnesses have dealt with Richardson, as employment interviewers, bankers, and others who have rejected him in the past.

Flashbacks are used extensively. At one job interview, a secretary mistakes him for the messenger boy. When she learns

that he is there to apply for work, she first apologizes, then, trying to be friendly, asks him, "Do you play a musical instrument?"

At home, Richardson and his wife Helen argue over the future, while surrounded by sick living conditions — their son is dying, rats are thriving, junkies and prostitutes roam the streets.

Richardson decides to start a dry cleaning business, but he needs a \$5,000 loan. Since his house's worth is estimated at \$15,000, he would put it up to back the loan.

But the banker says no. A matter of policy, he says, because Richardson lived in a "high-risk neighborhood."

Back in court, a potential employer, an Italian-American, tells Richardson's attorney that he doesn't think black people should get any special favors. "I had to make it on my own," he says, just as his father and grandfather did.

The lawyer answers that being successful wasn't very hard for the businessman, because "you just don't look all that different."

At another point, after Richardson learns that there are no good jobs available anywhere for him, the white actors mount folding chairs and shout at him, "Bye, bye, black sheep, have you any wool? No sir, no sir, quota's full, quota's full, quota's full."

Richardson finally cracks. He grabs a gun, and begins to run out of the house, claiming he is going to "go shoot all the whores and junkies." His wife tries to stop him, and he beats her.

At the trial, she explains why she did not press charges against him: "When he fights back, then you know he's alive," she says. When he doesn't he becomes a "walking dead man."

Richardson was played by Shelby Garfield. Sylvia "Martian" Barker played the wife, Joan Ginn directed and played the lawyer. Dick Kirsch and Julie Fitzsimmons were the witnesses.



TOWARD TOMORROW Fr. Henry Atwell

The current 'Critic' magazine, somewhat tongue in cheek, lists in five columns "The awesome spectrum of American Catholic influentials," ranging from those labeled extreme left, mildly progressive, center, conservative, rigid right.

Critic's publisher Dan Herr is listed as the sole individual in the center position. No one is listed in the extreme left column because, as Herr states, all such people have either lost interest in the Church or just "copped out" altogether.

Father Charles Curran, still a member of our Rochester Diocese, is given the label of "mildly progressive."

Herr comments in a note. "To even the casual observer, the absence of women on our list should be evidence that the American Church has become more male chauvinistic than ever, despite outcries that might have made you think otherwise. In the old days at least we listened to Jacqueline Grennen Wexler, Baroness De Hueck, Sister Mary Luke Tobin, Corita Kent and Dorothy Day — for 'better or worse.'"

Although the article is meant to be a bit of humor—Father Andrew Greeley, for example, is listed in each column from mildly progressive to rigid right and then it is noted that he is at the moment "inoperative, influentially speaking, at this time. I'd like to know who is in any way at all influential in the way American Catholics think today. Even the Pope is a negligible factor, as are the bishops and certainly the priests.

There are, of course, individuals and perhaps even clusters of people, who take statements by church officials seriously but compared to the vast numbers of American Catholics, these people are few indeed.

Why has there been this disenchantment with all authority figures?

First, undoubtedly, because all authority — civil as well as religious, even academic and industrial authority — has proved so often recently to be inadequate. And, secondly,

because our democratization process has now gone so far that instead of considering each other at least as equals, we have developed, probably still subconsciously, the notion that really nobody is quite as equal as I am. Equality has deteriorated simply into snobbery.

We desperately need authority figures today — not pompous persons, but people who by talent, experience and charm can lead us through the maze in which life engulfs us. We need people today to lead us as Pope Pius XII did, not by going back over the same paths he cut for us, but by blazing new paths as he did; we need people like Father Charles Coughlin and Bishop Sheen, certainly not to repeat today what they said twenty and thirty years ago, but to speak to issues of our day as they did in theirs; we need people like Baroness De Hueck and Dorothy Day, not to copy their bold and irritating experiments, but to initiate new solutions to the new situations of today.

At Thanksgiving time, we look back with nostalgia not just to remember the good old days but to dare to create good new days too.

Birchers Protest, Support of U.N.

For the second year in a row, local members of The John Birch Society used the anniversary of the founding of the United Nations — Wednesday, Oct. 24 — to commemorate instead a U.N. "Day of Shame." This year David Hoesly, local leader of the anti-Communist organization, says that the group has launched a nationwide petition campaign, addressed to the Congress, to "Get U.S. out of the United Nations."

"We recognize that getting five million, or two million, or even one million signatures on our petition will not be an easy task," Hoesly stated. "However, we intend to make this drive the largest, most powerful, and most effective petition campaign in history."

"Two years ago," Hoesly stated, "the United Nations used its 26th anniversary to demonstrate its total subservience to its Communist masters, when it voted to expel the Republic of China from membership and to seat instead the murderous tyranny of Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai."

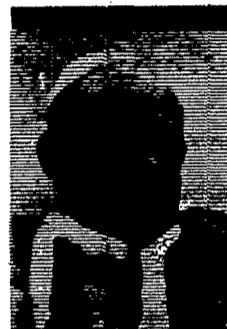
PIO HOUR POSTPONED

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the Padre Pio Hour will not be held on Wednesday, Nov. 21. Rather, it has been postponed to the following Wednesday, Nov. 28, 8 p.m., at St. Philip Neri Church. All are welcome.

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"WHAT ELSE CAN I DO ABOUT INDIA?"

HOW TO HELP THEM HELP THEMSELVES

The parishioners gather the stones and do the construction free-of-charge, under their parish priest's direction. That's how in India a church, school, rectory and convent can be built for only \$10,000. . . . Name the parish for your favorite saint, we'll erect a permanent plaque asking prayers for your loved ones, if you build a parish as your once-in-a-lifetime mission gift.

Archbishop Mar Gregorios will write personally to say where he'll locate it if you enable him to buy (\$975) two acres of land as a model farm for a parish priest. Raising his own food, the priest can teach his parishioners how to increase their crop production. (A hoe costs only \$1.25, a shovel \$2.35.)

WAR'S INNOCENT VICTIMS

War in the Middle East this year has again made families homeless. Please help them survive. Just \$525 will build a house for a refugee family. Anything will help!

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