

The Children's Television Workshop Revisited

By ELLEN McCORMACK

Question: Some months ago your column wrote about a 26 part series that, according to Planned Parenthood, would promote abortion. I wrote to the Children's Television Workshop and they responded with a flat denial claiming that pro-life groups were distorting the issues. Could you explain this situation further?

The Children's Television Workshop, best known as the producer of Sesame Street and The Electric Company, is planning a series of 26 one-hour

Ellen McCormack's column *Who Speaks for the Unborn Child?* appears occasionally in the Courier-Journal. She writes it in behalf of Women for the Unborn, a pro-life group.

television programs on physical and mental health for an adult and teenage audience. That much is fact.

Will the programs promote abortion? Here we have two opinions. In an open letter (May 4, 1973) to the Friends of Planned Parenthood, Dr. Alan Guttmacher, president of Planned Parenthood-World Population, was enthusiastic about the series

and saw it as an excellent opportunity to propagate pro-abortion views. On the other hand, the Children's Television Workshop itself denies that the programs will promote family planning. It claims that a final decision has not even been reached on the inclusion of family planning as a topic in the health series.

We are faced, therefore, with two possibilities. First, Dr. Guttmacher could have misinterpreted the meaning of the series. In that case, the denial by the Children's Television Workshop would be the simple truth. Second, the Guttmacher interpretation could be correct. In that case, the CTW would be either a retreat caused by the many letters of criticism or an attempt to lull pro-life forces to sleep until the series had reached a stage where it could not be stopped.

We know for a fact that on March 27 and March 28 of 1973 seven representatives of the Children's Television Workshop met with 18 other people (most of them family planning "experts") in a Task Force On Family Planning in preparation for the TV series. The participants in the Task Force meeting included Dr. Guttmacher, Harriet Pilpel (prominent pro-abortion spokesman and Planned Parenthood attorney), Angel Martinez (administrative program specialist, Planned Parenthood), Phyllis Piotrow (Population Crisis Committee), and Nan McEvoy (deputy director of Preterm Institute, a major abortion clinic). Not a single pro-life representative was invited. As Randy Engel, executive director of the U.S. Coalition for Life, puts it: "We are sure that the CTW need not be reminded that it would not have found itself in the current predicament if it had chosen to provide the same forum for pro-

life voices as they did for Guttmacher and his friends. Additionally, if CTW was not anticipating the promotion of family planning, why would they have sought out for advice nationally-known contraceptive-sterilization-abortion-population-control promoters?"

How is it that during a period of more than one year the CTW never fell over a Hilgers or Ratner or Nigro or a Harrington or Jim Ford or Marx (all pro-lifers)?"

Mrs. Engel suggests what the Children's Television Workshop could do if it truly desired to avoid any pro-abortion bias: "We think that there is the need, the time and the funds for the CTW to convene within the next few months, prior to actual production activities, a Pro-Life Task Force on family planning (with an overlap into other areas such as adolescent health, death, etc., covered by previous task forces.)"

"Certainly in the million-dollar-plus budget such action would

not unduly strain the production budget of what has been explained as a rather flexible schedule. Until a decision on this matter is reached, we hope that pro-life groups will continue to make their opinions on this matter known."

Write to your Congressman and, since public funds are involved, ask for an investigation. Write also to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (888 16th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20006) and the Public Broadcasting Service (485 1st Enfant Plaza SW, Washington, D.C. 20024). If family planning is to be considered in the health series, ask that a Pro-Life Task Force be set up first.

THE OPEN WINDOW

Father Louis Hohman

Editor's note: The following is a letter Father Hohman received from a member of the charismatic movement explaining the "gift of tongues."

Dear Father Hohman,

I read your column of Dec. 19, and feel led to write you about your puzzlement over tongues. I understand why so many not in the charismatic experience have a hang-up on this particular gift of the Holy Spirit.

The very first thing we have to know about tongues is that it is a gift of the Holy Spirit, and therefore cannot be earned or merited or demanded. We cannot question to whom He wishes to give the gift, for the Holy Spirit blows where He wills.

Because God never does anything for no reason at all, the gift of tongues must have a very definite purpose, a very good and even necessary reason for its existence.

All of us were created by Almighty God to praise Him and to worship Him. We know that one can praise God in a variety of ways, one of which is by our speech. But just try praising God in your own language, and see how fast you run out of words.

If you knew all the good adjectives in all the languages of the world today, yesterday and tomorrow, and if you could use them all in praise of God, you would run far short of praising Him as He deserves to be praised. But if you praise Him in tongues, in a language in which He gives the utterance (Acts 2:4), then you are praising Him in His own words, and who knows how to praise God if not God Himself?

So, praying in tongues is primarily prayer of praise of Almighty God. However, it can also be a prayer of intercession, especially when you want to pray for someone or some problem, and don't know exactly what is it you should be praying for. The Holy Spirit does know, and your prayer is pinpointed by Him to the exact need (Rom. 8:26-27).

The gift of tongues comes only with the baptism in the Holy Spirit, although many do not have the manifestation of this gift for some time, if at all.

Because the speech is usually unintelligible to the hearers and the speaker, many people think of it as gibberish. That it is useful in one's spiritual life probably cannot be proved except in one's own experience. Those who have tongues will attest that this new prayer life has done wonders, bringing them close to Jesus and the Father.

It is a blessing that cannot be denied by those who have, and cannot be argued against, because experience brooks no argument. Tongues are meant for everyone to have, because the baptism in the Holy Spirit is meant for everyone to receive (Acts 19:2, 8:16).

Is it a real language? Let me tell you my own experience. I received the baptism in the Holy Spirit in June of 1968, and the manifestation of tongues four months later. I began to use it in my prayer life every day, from then on in praise of Almighty God, although most often I doubted it was real. I thought I was making it up. But I continued to use it for two years, knowing that at least in intention I was praising God.

In September of 1970, my wife and I and nine other people from Rochester went on a pilgrimage to Rome. We visited one of the catacombs, where we were joined up with a group of 40 or 50 American Jews, led by a professor. While going through the catacomb, I had the almost irresistible desire to go up to the professor and speak to him in tongues. I told my wife and some others what I was going to do, so the Lord provided witnesses.

The tour over, I confronted him and, without saying a single word in English, spoke to him in tongues. His eyes opened wide as I continued, and I thought to myself, "This man understands me."

When I finished what I thought might be a sentence or two, I said to him in English, "Translate." And he did! He told me what I had been saying in praise of Almighty God.

Then I asked him, "What language is it?" He replied, "It's Aramaic-Hebrew of the third century, neither before nor after."

Need I say I know nothing of Aramaic or Hebrew? The thought came to me later that it was possible that this very language was spoken in this very catacomb, for Christians were still in the catacombs in the third century.

I hope this has answered some of your questions. Hundreds of priests and thousands of laymen have experienced this beautiful gift of the Holy Spirit. He offers it to you, too.

Sincerely in Jesus,
William W. Buechel
3601 Lake Ave.
Rochester, N.Y. 14612

'No Decision' Yet Reached

Mrs. Randy Engel of Export, Pa., executive director for the U.S. Coalition for Life, has told the Courier-Journal that she has received a letter from Children's Television Workshop stating that a decision had not yet been made on whether the proposed series on health care would include family planning.

The letter, signed by William Kobin, a vice president for CTW and dated Dec. 27, assured Mrs. Engel that should such a program be developed, they will contact pro-lifers.

Mrs. Engel said, however, she hopes to have a group meeting with the staff and producers of such a program.

NEW CHAIRMAN

Rev. Richard Gilbert, pastor of the Unitarian First Church, is the new chairman of GEM's Judicial Process Commission, succeeding Rev. Jay Leshner.



THE HOLY FATHER'S MISSION AID TO THE ORIENTAL CHURCH

FEEL GOOD TODAY

DO
SOMETHING
MEANINGFUL
WHILE
YOU'RE
STILL
ALIVE

This column's happiest readers are the men, women and children who know they're needed. The days we're busiest helping others are the happiest days of our lives. Who needs you most? Surprisingly, God needs you — for instance, to help an abandoned orphan become a God-loving, responsible adult. Lepers need you (there are still 15 million lepers in the world), blind children need you, and so do we. Here in New York we are your agents, telling you where the Holy Father says your help is needed, and channeling your help promptly and safely to the people in need. Want to feel good right now? Do without something you want but do not need, and send the money instead for one of the needs below. You'll feel good, especially if your gift is big enough to mean a sacrifice to you. This is your chance to do something meaningful for the world — it's God's world — while you're still alive.

LEPERS

☐ Only \$8.50 gives our priests and Sisters in Shertallay, south India, enough Dapsone 'miracle' tablets for 43 lepers for a year!

BABIES NEED YOU

☐ For only \$14 a month (\$168 a year) you can make sure that an abandoned baby has food, clothing, a blanket and love. We'll send you a photo of the baby you 'adopt', tell you something about him (or her), and ask the Sister in charge to keep you informed.

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☐ Your stringless gifts in any amount (\$5,000, \$1,000, \$500, \$100, \$50, \$25, \$10, \$5, \$2) will help the neediest wherever they are — in India and the Holy Land, for instance.

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Dear Monsignor Nolan:

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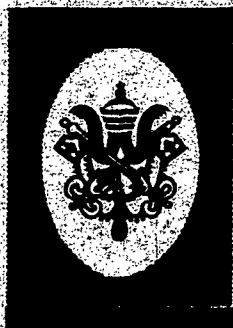
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