

Interfaith Group Backs Attica Fund Proposals

In a letter to Gov. Wilson, the Interfaith Legislative Liaison Committee of New York State has endorsed proposals made by religious leaders from Rochester and commended the governor for the commitment he made to the group.

At a meeting Feb. 11 in Albany, Gov. Wilson told the eight leaders, including Bishop Joseph Joseph L. Hogan, that as soon as he received concrete proposals concerning defense funding for 62 Attica inmates indicted after the 1971 uprising, he would set in

motion action to assure funding and enabling legislation.

The Interfaith Liaison Committee, representing the New York Board of Rabbis, the State Catholic Committee, and the State Council of Churches, commended the governor for his "public commitment that you would see that adequate funding is provided for the defense of the persons indicted on charges arising from the September 1971 uprising."

The Rochester group on March

22 sent the response which noted that "we discovered that the Fourth Judicial Department had already prepared a proposed budget after conferring with Erie County officials. We understand that this budget has been approved by Judge Bartlett, state administrative judge, and forwarded to you."

It explained that the budget has two main provisions for the defense, namely a sum of \$750,000 for fiscal year April 1 to March 31, 1975, which could be used for attorney's fees and/or disbursements and investigations, and a recommendation that County Law 722B be amended to provide for interim payments to the attorneys. It also endorsed the "concept of flexibility in the allocation of defense funds."

The interfaith legislative group stated that the proposals are "sound" and urged the governor "to continue your leadership by the implementation of the above proposals."

CYO Plans 'Cross Walk'

The CYO has planned a "Cross Walk" for Good Friday, April 12, 4-3 p.m. at Durand Eastman Park, Pavilion #6, north of the golf course.

The walk will be re-enactment of the Stations of the Cross by a cast of about 100 from nearly a dozen parish youth groups. Each station will last three to five minutes.

The groups will develop their own contemporary versions of the Stations, focusing on modern life and community. Dialogue, readings, banners, short skits, and music will go into their versions.

All are invited to join in the walk.

New Administrator For St. Mary's

William J. Riordan, administrator of St. Mary's Hospital since 1969, has taken a similar position with St. Vincent's Medical Center in Bridgeport, Conn. He will be succeeded here May 15 by Sister DeChantal LaRow, who will become vice chairman of the board of directors.

The change was announced last week at the annual meeting of the directors by Sister Margaret

Finnegan, chairman.

Sister DeChantal has held administrative positions in Providence Hospital, Washington, D.C.; St. Vincent's Hospital, Jacksonville, Fla.; and Our Lady of Lourdes, Binghamton. She was educated at St. Joseph's College, Emmitsburg, Md., and Catholic University of America and is a Fellow of the American College of Hospital Administrators. She is a native of Utica.

THE CHURCH 1974

Father Andrew Greeley

I'm afraid that I will never get over being surprised at the pettiness of ecclesiastical bureaucrats. Each time I think I've got them figured out, they pull something new that convinces me I have over-estimated their intelligence and vision.

My colleague, Professor William McCready, has recently finished an ingenious and pioneering study of the basic beliefs (ultimate values) of Americans. He was resourceful enough to put a question into our survey instrument about attendance at parochial schools. In working on our report (The Ultimate Values of Americans) we discovered some rather striking evidence of the effectiveness of Catholic schools in developing a "hopeful" world view. Feeling that this sort of material might be of some use to Catholic educators, McCready and I released the findings in a brief, journalistic article. I foolishly thought that the Catholic educational establishment would be delighted.

Instead, Catholic educators fell all over one another trying to be nasty. C. Albert Koob commented that the study "didn't tell us anything we didn't know before." (Lucky Father Koob, he gets research findings without having to pay for them or doing any research.) Dr. Edward D'Alessio of the NCEA issued an 11-paragraph comment in which eight of the paragraphs were an attack on us. Father Michael O'Neil called our findings "mildly interesting" but "not important" and gave us a prim little lecture on survey methodology.

Now I don't think that either Prof. McCready or I have much to learn from Father O'Neil about how to do research. There is no such thing as perfect methodology. You can find faults in all research exercises if you try hard enough. A competent researcher reports his findings and notes the weaknesses and limitations of his data base and method. McCready and I were very clear in our article that our findings were at best tentative and ought to be confirmed by more intensive and extensive research.

Our data may not be nearly as good as we would like, but it is the best there is. We had, incidentally, more Catholic respondents than a typical Gallup sample and more than twice as many as there are black respondents in the surveys that routinely report attitudes and behavior of black Americans.

Policymakers doubtless would want better data before making decisions (although many politicians make major decisions on the basis of data that are not so good). But until they are willing to pay for it, they will have to be content with data that researchers squeeze out of projects designed for other purposes. To criticize the best

data available because they are not ready to pay for any better is singularly graceless. But then no one ever accused Catholic education administrators of being graceful.

I have always had a hard time figuring out why Catholic educators dislike me so much. I am virtually the only Catholic liberal intellectual (heaven forgive me for admitting that I am both!) who has defended Catholic education during the past decade and a half. The Education of Catholic Americans was surely favorable to Catholic schools. The secular press publishes my articles in support of Catholic education. Most recently the New York Times carried a long pro-Catholic school article, which Catholic educators completely ignored.

This didn't bother me very much, but it did puzzle me. A bishop (who I think is still a friend) once sent a secret letter to his colleagues in the hierarchy denouncing me as an enemy of Catholic schools. When the presidential commission was hearing testimony on Catholic schools I was not asked to testify, and when the commission wanted research proposals NORC was not consulted (so what if we did the only comprehensive study of the effects of Catholic schools?). A commission in my own diocese met for more than a year and seemed unaware of my existence, much less of my extensive bibliography of publications on the subject. It was once suggested that I volunteer for the school board in my diocese (they were having a hard time getting volunteers). I got in the mail a form letter telling me that my experience and background didn't qualify me for membership.

As I say, I am not especially miffed. I don't lack for things to do or projects to pursue. But I couldn't understand the reason.

This last go-around, however, makes things quite clear. Catholic education administrators don't like me because I am not a member of their club. I don't knuckle under to their party line. I don't play their game. What was wrong with the McCready-Greeley article was that the findings were ours, not theirs — and the publicity was ours, not theirs. I think the name for that is envy.

I feel sort of sorry for Prof. McCready. He is a pleasant, gifted young man who hasn't done anything to anyone, but he is already tarred by his association with me. But I take consolation in the thought that if he continues to do research on Catholic subjects he will shortly make as many enemies among the bureaucrats as I have, and he will make them on his own. For he has the one thing that the third-rate incompetent mediocre bureaucrats who dominate Catholic education most abhor — talent.

To Our Friends, a Most Joyous . . .

EASTER

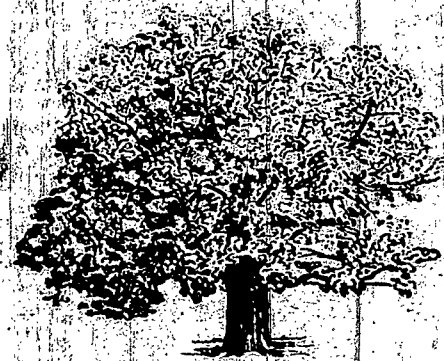
Part of the hope and promise of Easter is the sense of sharing, the feeling of oneness with our fellow man. That is why we are, at this time, particularly pleased to have the privilege of exchanging greetings with our friends and neighbors. As you gather with your families, as you worship in the church of your choice, as you celebrate this wonderful Eastertide, our thoughts are with you. We sincerely extend to each and every one of you our best regards and happy Easter wishes.

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