

Editorial

This Is Sport?

Frightening. That is the only word for the animalistic exhibition put on by Cleveland Indians baseball fans last week.

No one can condone such barbarity but the question is why did it happen. Baseball is not the only sport to be so victimized. And the instances seem to be increasing both in frequency and severity.

Although players of both the hometown Cleveland club and the visiting Texas team acted admirably in the face of the fanatics pouring out of the stands, it must be remembered that players from both clubs fought each other on the field just a week before, laying the foundation for the Cleveland fiasco.

Increasingly roughhouse tactics are becoming a part of hockey which in turn sets off childish adults in the stands.

And a fight between two players in last year's World Series between Cincinnati and the New York Mets triggered dangerous and inexcusable fan reaction.

The reasons obviously are complex but one of them, at least, seems clear. When players engage in violence on the field it seems to communicate itself to the fans. Players themselves should take steps to erase such behavior. If they don't, fines and suspensions for fighting should be stiffened.

There seems to be little way to scrutinize so-called fans to screen out wild ones. In the Cleveland fiasco it must be noted that it was 10-cent beer night. Many so-called adult fans obviously are not ready for such promotions and they should be banned.

And in general all of us, players, management, businessmen, and promoters, should come down a level or two in how we assess the seriousness of sports events. Pro football, we feel, has been particularly guilty of presenting its game as almost a patriotic endeavor with drums rolling and serious-voiced announcers wrapping the glory of the age around some young men making perhaps too healthy buck to provide what is meant to be mere entertainment.

So it is obvious that we must return spectator sports to their proper place — a matter of fun and games. Or will we wait until a full-scale tragedy strikes?

Our Job

A former government official has had the grace and fortitude to do something that most of us are loath to — admit publicly that we have made a mistake. And because his error was concerned with a common situation his admission is particularly illuminating.

Dr. Thomas P. Melady, a Catholic and former ambassador to Uganda who now teaches at Seton Hall University, described his uncomfortable event to the Interreligious Affairs Commission of the American Jewish Committee.

Dr. Melady owns up to ignoring anti-Semitic statements and actions by Third World leaders such as Gen. Idi Amin of Uganda. Melady says such lack of action repeats the error of those who did not take Hitler seriously.

He also reported that King Faisal made anti-Semitic remarks during a state dinner Gen. Amin gave for him in 1972. "None of us diplomats raised a protest," Melady noted.

"Maybe I should have walked out," he said but his role as ambassador and attendant protocol left him paralyzed.

Surely it is human to err in such conditions, probably most of us can recall being in similar situations. That is why Dr. Melady's advice is so important.

"I propose we break this veil of silence," he says about keeping still when we hear bigoted remarks.

"It's up to you and me. We can't count on governments."

Opinion

Homily Taken To Task

Editor:

This is in response to Father Vincent Collins' curious homily, [Courier-Journal 5/8/74].

Father Collins accuses the United States of fostering Godless education, and he is obviously right. We now have an atheistic school system (totally contrary to this country's founders) and Catholic schools which tragically are now abandoning Catholicism — e.g. St. John Fisher College.

Father Collins blasts the United States for legalizing abortion and he is, of course, right again. The murder of 2000 unborn children every day is certainly the greatest evil ever perpetrated in this country.

But then he makes the really weird statement that "our government" has been almost totally responsible for the phenomenal spread of godless communism. This is pure nonsense.

"He mentions 'the betrayal of China' but we supported the Chinese Nationalists with more than \$2 billion in aid and we continued to recognize only the Nationalist regime on Formosa even though several world powers recognized the Communist regime.

"He cites the Mexican persecution of the twenties which had really nothing to do with communism and almost nothing to do with us.

"He cites the 'no-win fiascos of Korea and Vietnam,' where our total involvement was a struggle to prevent Communist takeovers.

"He mentions Yalta, Teheran, and Berlin, apparently forgetting that the Russians were our allies against a common enemy. That the Russians later betrayed certain provisions of the Teheran and Yalta conferences was not our fault. And how could we have prevented the partitioning of Berlin when it was the Russians who captured Berlin?

In short, it seems absurd to me criticize the United States for the spread of worldwide communism since 1) we have done our best to oppose communism, and 2) except for China, communism has not spread much anyway in recent decades.

But the most flagrant oddity about Father Collins' homily is that although he blasts the United States as responsible for the spread of communism (which we are not), he fails to criticize our government for helping to maintain repressive dictatorships.

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especially in Latin America. Take Brazil as an example, which is a repressive military dictatorship. Thousands of political dissenters and those (including priests and nuns) who have tried to help the poor have been jailed, tortured, exiled, or murdered. The Brazilian bishops have responded by strongly and persistently attacking the government. Brazil contains workers' and slave farms and concentration camps for Indians. The terrible class distinction between the rich elite, led by the military, and the masses of the poor is maintained by the police forces, for the sake of the giant multinational corporations that exploit the thus "stabilized" situation. Many of the Brazilian officers of these corporations are military men. Among the police, 15 members of the notorious Escuderia da Morte (Death Squad), responsible for more than 1500 murders, were arrested but none has ever been convicted. And much of the training of the Brazilian police and counterinsurgency (repression) forces has been by the United States Army, in places like Panama and Florida.

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Drivers Hit For Drinking

Editor:

I am writing this to set you straight on a few statements you made about the National Rifle Association.

WORD FOR SUNDAY

Father Albert Shamox

Sunday's Readings: (R1) Gn. 14:18-20. (R2) 1 Cor. 11:23-26. (R3) Lk. 9:11-17.

Sunday is the feast of **Corpus Christi**, the body of Christ. This continuing presence of Christ among men is made possible through His priests (R2). Among the Jews the priesthood was a hereditary office, belonging to the tribe of Levi. The Christian priesthood is not a hereditary office, but a **vocation**; hence in the line of Melchizedek (R1).

Like the people in Luke's gospel, we gather in groups every Sunday to receive the bread that Christ will give us through His priests. This bread is Corpus Christi, the body of Christ! From the incident narrated in the gospel we can draw two lessons.

First, the gospel teaches what ministry is all about. To appreciate the kindness of Jesus and His self-forgetfulness on this occasion, we must remember when the miracle of loaves and fish occurred. It happened shortly after the apostles had returned to Jesus from their first missionary journey. You can well imagine how happy they were to be together again — how much they had to tell Jesus! He suggested a retreat across the Sea of Galilee so they could tell Him all about it.

Having crossed the lake, a crowd was already there to greet them. This cherished moment to be alone with Jesus and He with them was lost. But instead of becoming annoyed, Jesus reacted with His usual graciousness. He spoke to the crowds and healed those in need of healing. After sunset the apostles were all for sending the crowds home. They had not yet learned what ministry was all about.

Ministry is not an offering of service when and as one chooses and desires. Nor is it an occupation where one's own good and satisfaction come first. Ministry means a readiness to accept to be disturbed and to be called on, even when one has every excuse in the world to take a rest. Ministry means, not dismissing people when they might prove inconvenient, but

I have been a skeet shooter for a good many years around Central New York. In that time I have never seen anyone under the influence of drink, shooting.

Can you say as much about car drivers?

Lee V. Holland
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Magazines For Missions

Editor:

Readers may like to mail their used Catholic pamphlets and magazines direct to the Foreign Missions.

If those who wish to do so will please send me self-addressed envelopes, I will give them the addresses of missionary priests and nuns who need Catholic literature.

Write direct to:

Mary Conway
14 Castle Street,
Cork, Ireland

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.

caring for them! The gospel also teaches that Christ is present to satisfy the basic hunger of all men.

The history of the universe is simply the history of matter leaping into life and of life leaping into thought and love. Creation reached its climax when man became present in the world. But after sin, man discovered his nakedness. So he continually hides himself from himself and from his neighbor. He finds it hard to be really present to himself and to others. The mysterious power of evil within himself and his earthly condition estrange him from himself, so that he does what he does now wish, and they alienate him from others, so he becomes not his brother's keeper. So hopeless did his situation seem that men of good will looked above for the presence of One who could save man from his estrangement and alienation.

When God's own people were in the hopeless situation of their Captivity, the hope that a divine presence would come to save man surfaced. "God is coming to save you," said the Second Isaiah. By lifting their Captivity, God showed His redeeming presence. But in Jesus He became really present in terms of caring, curing, comforting, teaching, feeding the hungry, exorcising, and so on. In Him, God visited His people.

On the night before He died, Jesus fulfilled the desires of all men to have God's presence in their midst. He took the common signs of sustenance — food and drink — and made them the vehicles of his self-giving presence. Each time His people come together to repeat, remember, recall and re-live what He said and did, He becomes really present.

But why really present? In a world where men are gradually losing the capacity to be really present in terms of sensitivity and awareness and love, Jesus — through His real presence in the Eucharist — is constantly offering us the capacity to become really present to God (in worship), to others (in service), and to oneself (in self-control).