

# AS I SEE IT

Paul Curcio

After giving two years of my life to the 6:30 news and its Watergate reporting, it seemed the height of irony that when the transition came we were speeding down the Connecticut turnpike without access to television and our car radio, to use an administration term, "inoperative."

But with the foresight he shows from time to time, the head of the house had thrown a small transistor radio into the glove compartment before we had departed home a few days before.

And so it was that somewhere between Bridgeport and Stamford by manipulating the aerial and holding the radio upside down we

were able to hear the inaugural address of our 38th president.

I don't know what I had expected but after six years of conditioning by presidential speeches, often at the drop of a hat, it was not much.

Instead, a surprise.

I heard myself murmuring at some point about the beauty of the man's words, the way he was saying them and I felt my eyes filling. All this from a presidential speech! And from a man who stumbles over his own cliches and platitudes.

By the time it was over, we were off the turnpike and heading for the Tappan Zee Bridge, and I wondered idly if the calm, the peace, the relief I felt was a personal reaction or a universal phenomenon.

By next morning as we read political pundit after pundit it had become clear that President Gerald Ford, the man President Johnson intimated was a mental football casualty, had touched an entire nation.

Three days later he addressed the joint session of Congress. Wonder of wonders — we were laughing — with him, at him, at Congress.

Even commentator Eric Sevareid never at a loss for words seemed hard put to describe the change that had come over the Capital.

The best he could seem to do was to say, "This town (Washington) is wide open."

Other words and phrases seemed destined to dull the ear: catharsis, fresh air, relief, etc., etc.

By week's end it seemed to be sinking in. We had a new president. And to use the sports analogy so beloved of the former administration — it indeed looked like a whole new ballgame.

## Council Elected

**Aurora** — Joseph Finn and Lansing Miller of Aurora and Nancy Tanner of Union Springs were inducted as members of the St. Patrick's parish council in Aurora and St. Michael's in Union Springs at a recent orientation meeting.

Members of the council met in the rectory chapel where they engaged in a dialogue homily based on readings from St. Paul and documents from the Second Vatican Council.

Mrs. Clinton Osborne of St. Michael's and Mrs. Charles Sullivan of St. Patrick's were elected trustees of their respective churches. Mrs. Sullivan is a professor of biology at Wells College and Mrs. Osborne is a Union Springs business woman. It is believed that these are the first women to be selected trustees in the Auburn area in a move that was inaugurated a year ago when they began to serve the parishes as auditors. Both have been active in church committees for several years.

Roger Purcell continues as chairman of the council and Mrs. Louis Bianconi is secretary.

# COURIER-CALENDAR

**Padre Pio Holy Hour** — At 8 tonight, Aug. 21, St. Philip Neri Church, 1776 Clifford.

**Southwest Golden Age Group** — Meeting at 34 Monica St., 1:30 p.m. Friday, Aug. 23.

**St. Helen's** — Car wash, benefit of Joy Folk Group, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 24, 9-3 Sunday, Aug. 25, Schoeffer's Service Station, 2067 Chili Ave.

**St. James** — Fall festival, Aug. 24, rain or shine, at Fair Grounds, Trumansburg; parade of decorated bicycles, 11 a.m., arts and crafts sale, contests for children, euchre tournament at 1:30 p.m., beef and port barbecue, 4-7 p.m.

**St. Paul X** — Twenty-first annual Country Fair, Aug. 24, 25, on school grounds, 3000 Chili Ave. Ham dinner 5-7 p.m. Saturday, 4-7 Sunday \$2.50 for adults, 50 cents for children under 12.

**St. Patrick's** — Annual parish picnic begins at 10 a.m. Sunday, Aug. 25, Webster Park's Valley View Shelter, parishioners to bring their own food and drink.

**Holy Apostles** — Rosary Society Band Leaders meeting in school hall, Aug. 28.

**Muggleton Gallery**, 7 William St., Auburn — Fifth annual American crafts show includes Andrea Hill jewelry, Bernard Caster enamels, Rochester Folk Art Guild porcelain, stoneware, handblown glass, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. daily except Wednesdays, through Aug. 31.

**Bristol Valley Playhouse**, Naples — Sergava-Szmycer Playlaboratory, 8:15 p.m., Aug. 24; 3 p.m., Aug. 25; Stanley Watson, classical guitarist, 8:15, Aug. 23.

**Rochester Shakespeare Theatre** — The Theatre and The Bottom of the Bucket But... Dance Theatre presents Joseph Papp's New York Shakespeare Festival Mobile Theater in a free, outdoor performance of "What the Wine-Sellers Buy," a black drama by Ron Milner, to be held in the open lot near FIGHT Square, 8 p.m., Aug. 24. In case of bad weather a rain location will be announced.

**Waterfowl Hunter Training Program** — Sessions conducted by State Department of Environmental Conservation, Canandaigua Primary School, 7:30-10:30 p.m., Aug. 23; Monroe Community College, 2-5 p.m., Aug. 31; Genesee Conservation League, 1570 Penfield Rd., Penfield, 7:30-10:30 p.m. Sept. 6; SUNY Brockport, Edwards Communications Building, 2-5 p.m. Sept. 14.

### Deadline

Calendar items should be mailed to the Courier-Journal Calendar Desk, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604. Deadline is Wednesday noon, one week ahead of the publication date.

## Priest Charges Persecution

**Rome [RNS]** — Revival of a Stalinist-type anti-Catholic persecution policy in Czechoslovakia has been charged in an article published in a recent edition of the Jesuit fortnightly, *La Civiltà Cattolica*.

The article, which reflects Vatican concern for Czech Catholics, appeared as reports from the Communist-controlled country told of the sentencing of a number of Catholic priests for their religious activities.

In one case, according to the reports, a 39-year-old pastor in Slovakia was sentenced to three months in prison because he had given religious instruction to his nephews and had conducted religious services for nuns in a small hut of his own construction.

The reports said the priest had been previously forbidden to do any pastoral work. According to the same reports reaching the West, another pastor was sentenced for having said in public that all men, even atheists, must one day stand before God's judgment.

The article in *Civiltà Cattolica*, written by Father Giovanni Rulli, SJ, a staff member, analyzes public statements of various Czech officials. The main target of Father Rulli's commentary is a special edition of *Nova Mysl*, the "Theoretical and Mystical Journal" of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Father Rulli asserts that the "fruits of the special edition of the journal, which was published in January, 1972, are now being seen in practice."

The edition, aimed at party members and students, was devoted to "Atheistic Education" and outlined a strategy for cutting off religious influences.

Father Rulli summarizes the policy in these words: "In socialist countries, Catholicism cannot be allowed any 'freedom-space' because that would only bolster its anti-socialist, anti-communist, anti-state, and anti-national intentions. For this reason it is indispensable that Catholicism be kept under the control of the socialist state, so as best to prevent its political ac-

tivity and its exploitation of the religious sentiments of believers."

According to the Jesuit writer, the so-called "political activity" of the Christian Churches in Czechoslovakia consists basically in the "normal religious expressions recognized as such in modern democratic states."

Czech government officials, he says, have complained that Catholic bishops have asked, for instance, that seminaries be free of state control, that state approval not be required for the assignment of priests to parishes, that religious education be permitted outside state schools. Under the present set-up, says Father Rulli, religious instruction can be given only in grammar schools, and only under the supervision of a Communist teacher. Parents must formally — in writing — request this instruction for their children.

According to the Jesuit priest, families thus involved in religious education must suffer the consequences: the future academic career of the child is placed in jeopardy.


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