

# Voter Registration Dispute Aired

By BONITA BALDWIN

The Monroe County Coalition for Voter Registration and V. J. Chiavaroli, Republican election commissioner, debated the coalition's recommendations for a voter registration outreach program during the Dec. 10 meeting of the County Legislature's Ways and Means Committee.

The coalition proposed that two full-time staff members be hired to conduct all phases of a yearlong outreach program: registrar recruitment and training, site selection, community work, and evaluation.

Commissioner Chiavaroli claimed that hiring staff members would be a waste of time and money. He explained that 75 per cent of all registration is re-registration. Beginning Jan. 1, people who have moved within the county will be able to register by mail.

Father Charles Mulligan, chairman of the Coalition and representative of the Office of Human Development, noting that the mail registration was untested, said that the concern of the MCCVR was to reach the thousands who have never registered.

According to the Board of Elections, 323,060 voters are registered in Monroe County. Regional Planning Board figures show that there are 468,000 individuals of voting age in the county.

Chiavaroli commented on the apparent potential of 100,000 unregistered voters saying, "Once the felons and mental cases and transients are removed, it is not as much as it seems." He added that people can't be forced to vote.

Mrs. Sally Knorr of the 16th Ward Coalition and a member of MCCVR noted the coalition's three-year record of volunteer effort. Since 1972, Outreach Registration has averaged 43 registrations per site at an average cost of \$1.25 per person. During the same period, the Board of Elections has averaged 38.7 persons per site.

Jean Askham, president of the League of Women Voters and coalition member, estimates that the board's work costs an average of \$10 per registrant.

The Monroe County Coalition for Voter Registration recommended also that a Citizen's Advisory Board be established to help recruit minority registrars, locate outreach sites, and provide community rapport, feedback, and evaluation. Chiavaroli said that he had hired minority registrars, but they had failed to show up for work.

Frank Santoro, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, recommended that the coalition's staff proposals be sent to the personnel committee. If personnel approves of hiring, Ways and Means will discuss funding.

supposed to have gone out with the late Herr Hitler. Most "Southies" have done no violence, joined in no protests, kept no children out of school. But they are branded racist simply because they are poor Irish Catholics who happen to live in a neighborhood which has been chosen by a suburban judge (an affluent Irish Catholic, apparently) to pick up the tab for the consciences of the Harvard type liberals. Deserted by their religious and political leaders, branded as bigots by the media, the "Southies" are guilty en masse.

With such horrendous injustice, the amazing thing is not that there has been some violence in South Boston but there hasn't been much more. If the intellectual, political, religious, and judicial elite is going to impose busing on American society, it had better spread the obligation around so that everyone bears it, not just the poor. Otherwise there is going to be a lot more trouble ahead.

How do the liberals justify what is done to the "Southies"? There is rather little argument that busing improves educational outcomes. The evidence against that is overwhelming (save in the case where rather small groups of lower-class students are integrated into a higher-class environment — which is hardly the case in South Boston). The implicit assumption is the racial balance in schools is a good in itself regardless of educational outcomes.

Harvard psychiatrist Robert Coles, who is not an Irish Catholic and can hardly be accused of racism, sums up the situation perfectly. "They've all gotten a raw deal, black and white. Both of them are looked down upon by the well-to-do white people. All the laws are written for the wealthy and the powerful... the tax laws, the zoning laws... and no one has taken anything away from them."

But Professor Coles may have missed the point: busing is a great way to stir up conflict between the poor blacks and the poor whites. Better that they fight one another than that they ally themselves against their common enemies, well-to-do liberal suburbanites and college professors. The last thing such people want to do is to live with the poor.



### THE OPEN WINDOW

Fr. Louis Hohman

Dear Father Hohman,  
I guess I'm one of the "old-timers" because I still go to confession every other week or at least once a month. In our church you could shoot off a cannon and not hit anybody just about any time on a Saturday afternoon or evening. Where have all the people gone? Has there been some change in the teaching of the Church about confession which I haven't heard about? Isn't it still true that when one goes to confession without mortal sins but only venial ones that he gets an increase in sanctifying grace? Why aren't people urged more to go to confession?

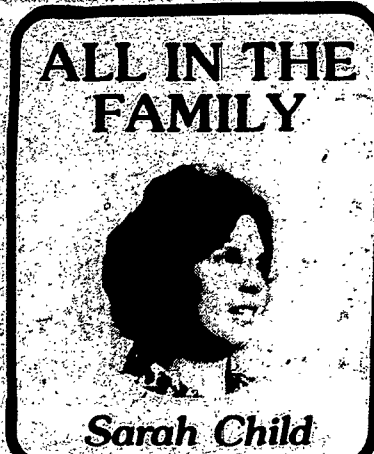
Sincerely,  
D. K.

Dear D. K.,  
The reasons for the happening which you write about are many and complex. There really isn't space here to go into the matter very fully. To a large extent the phenomenon seems to have originated from the people themselves. There was no specific statement out of Rome or from the bishops saying that confession was passe or that one should not go to confession frequently. The Constitution on the Liturgy of Vatican II has just one short sentence on the Sacrament of Penance: "The rite and formulas for the Sacrament of Penance are to be revised so that they give more luminous expression to both the nature and the effect of the sacrament." (72) But in the last ten years no great liturgical reform dealt with confession. (Very soon there will be some action in this matter.) So that is part of the problem. Nobody really knows where the whole thing stands.

There have also been notable changes in attitudes about confession. One of them has to do with the neglect of the communal aspect of penance, a sense of the effect our sins have on the community and our need for reconciliation with the community as well as with God. Hence the extensive experimentation with communal penance services. For many people these communal services have come to replace private confession, particularly the "confession of devotion" or confession not involving serious sin. In 1972 Rome declared that such communal penance services were not sufficient for the remittance of serious sin.

Another change of attitude related to the concept of mortal sin. For a long time people regarded mortal sin as something one could almost "slip into," something which could happen week after week and be remitted by confession week after week. Now mortal sin is seen as a much more complete deliberate turning away from, or rejection, of God in a serious matter. It would not be that frequent for the person trying to lead a good life, nor would a true repentance be that easy. So in practical terms there would not be very many mortal sins committed by the practicing Christian, at least not in a turn of fashion.

Sanctifying grace is the "God-life" in us. An increase in it is a growth in that life. It should not be thought of in a quantitative way (by an amount). Even confessions of devotion can help us grow in the God-life. You're not on the wrong track.



### ALL IN THE FAMILY

Sarah Child

In the past few weeks the kids have been furiously scribbling and rescribbling their Christmas lists. Since there is but one week left until the big day I thought it judicious to compile my own.

During this Christmas season of 1974 I wish for these presents:

\*The gift of Fortitude — that I may look one more plate of hors d'ouevres right in its pimento and hot waver.

\*The gift of Perspective — that I may realize that another batch of cut-out cookies will contribute nothing but flour and sugar sprinkles all over an already sticky kitchen floor.

\*The gift of Patience — for when the pre-schooler asks me for the 100th time if tonight is the night to leave the carrot for Rudolph.

\*The gift of Endurance — for all the physical chores involved.

\*The gift of Restraint — for when the plastic football sails through the decorated tree.

\*The gift of Talent — that I might finish learning "Silent Night" out of my nine-year-old's first level piano book.

\*The gift of Wonder — that I not let the miracle of Christmas

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dim in the rush of holiday pursuits.  
\*The gift of Joy — for its own sake.  
\*The gift of Courtesy — to clerks who have at least as much to do as I plus holding down an arduous job.

\*The gifts of Love and Charity — that I may communicate them in turn to all I come in contact with during this and all other seasons, some of which may be less merry.

\*The gift of Caring — for all those with so very little of material value and for those who have so much that we are tempted to dismiss them as needing nothing.

\*The gift of Continued Faith — that I may rest in the knowledge that nearly 2,000 years ago a Blessed Infant was born. A Saviour and Lover of our souls, a Shepherd of our daily lives.

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### The Church 1974

Fr. Andrew Greeley

One of the most disgusting things to happen lately is the descent of the vultures from the liberal journals onto South Boston to pontificate about the shanty Irish racist barbarians. You can see writers like J. Robert Nelson in "The Christian Century" licking their lips with glee. Everyone (which means all their readers) knows that the Irish are racist bigots. You can have a field day.

Now I don't approve of violence or of resistance to decisions of federal courts. Nor do I think that busing is much of a solution to the problems of urban education, particularly when it buses students into schools that are already second or third rate. However, if busing is required by the Constitution (and one wonders how it can be proven that the framers of the Constitution had this in mind since there were no buses in those days), then the law must be obeyed.

But it cries to heaven for vengeance that this form of punishment — and that is what it is — should be imposed on the poor and not the well-to-do. Judge Garrity, from his secure suburban home, delivers pious lectures to the poor in the central city about the Constitution. Isn't that nice? A lesser man would be written off as a hypocrite and a fraud. If there is to be busing, let it be imposed on all social classes, not just on those who are most ill-equipped to bear its burdens.

There are undoubtedly racists in South Boston (and there are anti-Catholic bigots on the Harvard faculty, too), but it doesn't take very many people to cause a riot or "unrest." Judgments against a whole community on the basis of what a small number of people do was

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