

Editorial

Schools Close But Not Service To the People

It is difficult not to be distressed at the closing of our schools at an accelerating rate, whether it be in Geneva or in the Rochester inner city.

Unfortunately the frustration tends to manifest itself in caustic intra-family in-fighting, with sharp charges and counter-charges. No one is pleased at the prospect of the utter absence of Catholic schools in the Rochester inner city. Yet the reality is that the situation could not be avoided.

The Pastoral Center, like the head of any family, tries to use its resources in the best way possible for all concerned. It knows that some of its decisions will go down hard. Still, guided by the broad view, it must act decisively and hope that a spirit of sacrifice will prevail where needed.

The closing of schools is a bitter pill for those in the trenches serving their neighbors in selfless spirit. When schools are closed they tend to feel personally rejected. They also sense, wrongly, that they have not lived up to their responsibilities to the people they serve.

And, of course, hardest hit are the parents and children who have chosen Catholic schools for their extra dimension of Christian discipline, spirit and educational expertise. Taking their schools out from under them is a personal and bewildering blow.

The unfortunate aspect is that none of these parties is the culprit. Yet there is dissension in the family. Arguments abound; they are complicated, intertwined, and in a sense fruitless. The fact is that the trouble comes from outside. The economic crunch paralyzed with government's inability to find constitutional ways to aid nonpublic schools is at the base of the problem. The handwriting has been on the wall. Without government subsidy nonpublic schools are in trouble. Increasingly, people, regardless of religious background, have become dependent on Catholic schools, and they have been denied this choice.

Probably outside aid would not at this point be able to revive schools already closed but it would serve to keep others from folding.

What can we all do? We must inform ourselves as to how our tax monies are being spent. We must decide if it is more in the public interest to buy submarines or school books, bombs, or food for the hungry. Individual issues must be decided on their own merits, but the government must be people-oriented.

Likewise, we must take a greater interest in our Church. We must take a greater responsibility for its direction. We must give more of ourselves. Avenues have been provided through parish councils, various other committees on the parish level, and the upcoming pastoral council.

A Church in change will produce disagreement but this should never become rancor. When we lose the advantages our schools offered, not only as educational institutions but as visible signs of the Church in their areas, then we must work together to maintain those values. We must work together to come up with new and effective ministries. We must not, any of us, forget that in the end it is the people that matter. With that in mind, the momentum is easy. We must only find the proper direction.

Ramification

Schooling also is a problem for other Christian bodies. According to Religious News Service, many fear that the death of the traditional Sunday school may be near, at least in mainline Protestant denominations.

Efforts are under way to try to learn just what the ailment is but statistics show that while they remain strong in evangelical churches and sects they are declining in enrollment in leading denominations. For instance, since 1959, United Methodist Sunday school attendance has declined 22.7 per cent.

A variety of reasons are given and conferences are scheduled to try and meet the problem. It is an important one. For instance, one theologian who feels that the Sunday school is still "a remarkable success" also says that the real test of American Protestantism will come in how it treats its Sunday schools.

Opinion

Where's Greeley On Gun Control?

Editor:

Father Andrew Greeley in his Jan. 29 column stated that if "right-to-life-people" are not concerned about other issues that deal with preserving human life then "they may well be hypocrites who use their own narrow little crusade to work out emotional problems without any real concern for human life at all." He then goes on to give examples of areas in which "right-to-life-people" should also be concerned, such as gun control and industrial safety.

I couldn't agree with him more. However, by the same token, all those who crusade for gun control, industrial safety, end to capital punishment, and women's rights should also be concerned with the abortion issue.

I wonder if Fr. Greeley has done much thinking about this year being proclaimed International Women's Year. I assume he would agree that those who observe International Women's Year should also be concerned with the rights of the unborn. I wonder, too, if Fr. Greeley has done any research that would show that those who were and are outspoken protesters of the Vietnam War are also outspoken anti-abortionists.

It is interesting to note that Fr. Greeley wrote his column one week after the second anniversary of the Supreme Court abortion decision and the protests that marked that anniversary. I imagine he was aware of the fact that one of the features of the Washington anti-abortion activities was a "Food for Life" campaign. Enough money was collected to buy 10,000 pounds of rice to be given through CARE to the hungry in the sub-Saharan nations.

Father Greeley doesn't seem to distinguish between being actively involved in an issue and being concerned about it. Those who are active in the abortion issue are spending much time and energy. It would be physically impossible to be equally active in other issues at the same time. This doesn't mean, however, that their concern is lacking in other areas.

In conclusion, I certainly agree with Fr. Greeley that respect for life extends further than simply being anti-abortion. Surely we must also be deeply concerned with such problems as the hunger crisis and the continuing destruction in Vietnam. His article would have been more enlightening if he had not pointed his finger only at "right-to-life-people," especially since he didn't provide any evidence that proves that they really are unconcerned about other issues. Also, it would have been nice if he had ended on a more supportive and encouraging note.



"THAT WAS JUST ON THE FIRST DAY OF YOUR VACATION! NOW LET ME TELL YOU WHAT HE INTRODUCED ON THE SECOND DAY..."

especially since he says: "I am, let it be clear, against abortion." I wonder what Fr. Greeley has done lately about the National Rifle Association and about industrial safety.

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We Must Aid S. Vietnam

Editor:

The people of South Vietnam, a large percentage of whom are Catholics, are in grave danger of being surrendered to the Communists by the Congress and the American people. Sen. James Buckley said recently that he receives 300 letters a day, 95 per cent of which are opposed to extending further aid to South Vietnam. Without this proposed aid in the form of a grant of \$300 million, the people of South Vietnam will be unable to continue the war.

This will mean: 1) The thousands of American boys who died to save the people of South Vietnam from death and slavery will have died in vain. 2) As many as one million people may die in the blood bath which will follow the fall of Saigon. 3) If South Vietnam falls to Communist aggression, Cambodia will become an easy prey to the Communists. 4) Two more countries will be added to the Communist bloc, the Cold War will be intensified, other nations will be endangered by the Communist threat. 5) The United States government will be branded in the court of world opinion as weak and vacillating, untrustworthy, unwilling or unable to live up to its commitments or to aid its allies.

If Russia and China, which cannot feed their own people without the help of U.S. wheat and rice, can give aid to Hanoi, which could not continue its aggression without that aid, should this nation abandon the people of South Vietnam to death and slavery? And if we can pledge more than \$2 billion to Israel, how can we refuse \$300 million to S. Vietnam? If we must begin to practice economy, let us begin with such projects as outer space exploration.

Catholics, come to the aid of your fellow Catholics who will be slaughtered by the thousands if North Vietnam wins the war. Write to your senators and congressman TODAY. Tell them that this nation must live up to its commitments. We cannot abandon the people of South Vietnam.

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'Speaking Out' Column Hit

Editor:

Jim Redmond's column concerning inflation and

Recession in the RapAround page appeared to lack in-depth research (Courier-Journal 2-5-75).

He writes that "inflation is caused by wages and prices being out of phase with each other." Webster's New America dictionary defines inflation as "a drop in the value of money or an increase in the supply of money in circulation." From 1962 to 1972, a period of inflation, the amount of money in circulation in the U.S. more than doubled.

Redmond proposes as a cure to our inflation and recession a tax rebate and creation of a federal job corps. Both of these would create massive deficits. Indeed, the administration has already predicted a \$52 billion deficit!

Huge federal expenditures coupled with lower tax receipts would necessitate the printing of even more paper dollars creating still higher inflation.

The federal government has made such a mess of our economy that I believe it is high time to demand less government through lower taxes. Then and only then will such hurtful problems such as inflation be solved.

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Council Backs St. Mary's

Editor:

The St. Augustine's parish council at its February meeting considered in depth the impact of the possible closing of the obstetrical unit at St. Mary's Hospital. The council supports St. Mary's Hospital in their endeavor to retain their obstetrical services. We support St. Mary's because we believe that women should have the right to select a Catholic hospital or any hospital for medical care.

We oppose abortion and sterilization procedures neither of which are offered at St. Mary's Hospital. We also oppose the big business practices and the attitude of exclusivity of some of our local hospitals which is detrimental to St. Mary's Hospital.

We also wonder why St. Mary's Hospital was not represented on the committee researching the obstetrical services and needs of this community.

We encourage all in the community to attend the public hearings in support of St. Mary's Hospital.

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