

**Situations  
Similar**

Editor:

Once wasn't enough. Three times I read the Regional Pastoral Letter, "Powerlessness in Appalachia," recently signed by Bishop Joseph L. Hogan and 24 other bishops, absorbed by its poetry and forthrightness. I had, in fact, just returned from a tour of a cooperative in the Andean hill country here in central Bolivia, in a particular area where those who are lucky enough to belong to this enterprise earn \$6 a week. Their membership in the cooperative also entitles them to receive some medical attention from the nun-nurse who told me how difficult is to give these people some reason to hope. Thus the Appalachians and the Andes have some similarities.

Without doubt the Pastoral can be compared with that powerful statement, "I Have Heard the Cry of My People," written by the shepherds of another regional Church, "which is symbolic of so much other suffering in our land, in our world" — that of North East Brazil, South America. Neither the Appalachia pastoral nor the Brazilian statement hesitates to name the real hurts of the people of their respective regions, nor in naming the source of those hurts — "maximization of profit, a principle which too often converts itself into an idolatrous power."

I welcomed the words: "Without judging anyone, it has become clear to us that the present economic order does not care for its people. In fact, profit and people frequently are contradictory. Profit over people is an idol."

I welcomed those words because the difficulty, in my opinion, is not a matter of class conflict, as some would say, as much as it's a matter of value-conflict. For example, I think of Paul, a construction worker living in a coal-patch community in my home diocese of Greensburg, Penn. Paul invests a few dollars in the stock market; he reads the Wall Street Journal; he is supposedly one of those millions of Americans who "own" a corporation. In fact, Paul has nothing to say about corporate policy. His only role is to insist that "his" corporation turn a profit, which may mean that his Appalachia (or part thereof) give way to "destructive growth patterns that pollute the air, foul the water, rape the land."

It's possible that Wall Street spokesmen will react to the pastoral with the same hostility which they directed against Pope Paul VI's Development of People in 1967. It's even possible that Fr. Andrew Greeley will see the pastoral as one more example of the bishops' capitulation to the values of the "new Catholic Social Action" as he calls it. But I hope this wouldn't discourage priests and deacons from quoting it in the pulpit with the same understanding and sensitivity with which it was written, not keep people from meditating deeply on its message and implications.

Maybe a camera crew could be commissioned to travel the length of the Appalachian chain; filming a short movie whose only script need be quotations from the pastoral. Then we could view the whole reality in our church halls, classrooms or even over TV.

Or maybe the pastoral could be used as the preamble for a new American constitution in 1976. For those who are moved to act rather than dream (and one must do both), there already is a coalition of nuns who have specific expertise and action-suggestions, published in a monthly bulletin regarding national legislation which responds to the issues raised by the pastoral. They're at NETWORK, #224 D Street, SE, Washington, D.C. 20003.

**More Opinions**

Affecting national legislation is not the only way to overcome powerlessness. It won't take the place of people-to-people interaction on the local level for instance. But until we make Washington more responsive, "unaccountable economic powers will continue to use democratic political institutions for non-democratic purposes."

Father Bernard Survil  
Casilla 550  
Cochabamba  
Bolivia, S.A.

**The Mighty  
Mite**

Editor:

Dedicated to Sr. Regina Mary, SJ. — She was a happy nun, who spent the majority of her useful days, amid the challenge of parochial schools. A highly dedicated teacher and disciplinarian who would quickly rap the knuckles of any

wrongdoer, but would be fast with a smile and encouraging word.

Sister would have preferred foreign mission fields, but fate had decreed otherwise. So, with little persuasion, she prominently displayed on her desk a mite box that gobbled up pennies, nickles, dimes, an occasional quarter, but nary a slug. . . a small miracle in that class.

Daily she would make us aware of our blessings and of the fact that the poor were always with us, and that included the lazy student.

Always pouring forth with sage advice she once said: "We have been blessed with the gift of free will to choose good or evil. Don't delight the devil! Do develop good habits, embrace charity: it will enrich your life and reward you with paradise."

During Lent the give-it-up monies would repeatedly fill the

box, then be swished away to help save a poor soul.

Memories of this thoughtful nun rushed back, as I watched the Bill Moyers' program, "World Hunger: Who Will Survive?" Sister's funding couldn't compare with the results of professional funding, but the prayers and sacrifices, that gift-wrapped the donations, created small miracles and built character.

Now, more than ever, there is an immediate need to help the hungry of the world.

Florence Catherine Young Hatch  
Pittsford, New York

**Disagrees  
With Students**

Editor:

The letters appearing in "Equal Time" on February 19 simply staggered my "raised" consciousness. Of the eight views printed, two actually approved of female priests, five disapproved, and one hedged the question. And what was the reason for disallowing women as ordained Roman Catholic priests?

Tradition!

In ours, the Twentieth Century, would not clerical advancement, coupled with a newfound maturity and security, take precedence over "tradition?"

If Ms. Bircsak feels uncomfortable seeing women in leadership roles, perhaps she should ponder how far advanced our society would be today without any great women leaders (Queens Elizabeth and Victoria, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Golda Meir, to name a few).

Ms. Ryan and Mr. McNamara, it is undeniable that Jesus and the Apostles were men, but are you calling for sex segregation? Mme. Eve Curie originated the science of Radiology, but male scientists in this field have not been made to feel themselves outsiders! Sapphic verse has been imitated by male poets quite neatly.

I welcome any rational answers or defenses from the spokespersons of Notre Dame High.

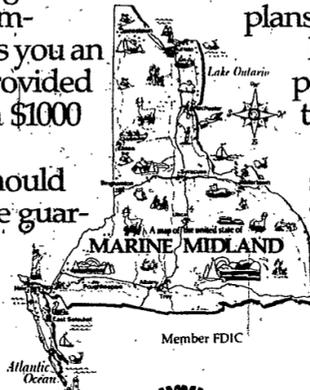
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