

Editorial

Disenfranchised

If only the unborn could vote.

Politicians who use the tired line that they are personally opposed to abortion but will not oppose it officially because of this or that are more than a little disturbing. It is difficult for the pro-life forces to counter those who sincerely believe that abortion is acceptable. At least they make clear their convictions, however misguided.

However, some politicians, and Sen. Birch Bayh of Indiana, a possible presidential candidate, has added his name to this list of mediocrities, claim to believe one thing but do another.

Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Sen. Bayh voted against each of the proposals to amend the Supreme Court decision of 1973, mouthing that old line about his personal belief but then double-talking that in his opinion laws controlling abortion would be widely flouted and drive the practice back into illegal channels.

First, let us not make light of this concern. It is a legitimate one and when the Supreme Court decision is finally overturned, safeguards must be provided to prevent such happenings.

However, because such concerns have a basis in fact, let us not allow our elected officials to use a tree to block the forest. Nor to speak out of both sides of their mouths at the same time.

We have known the local politicians who have put their political careers before their convictions. The same pervasive ambition saturates those who have risen to national prominence, Sen. Edward Kennedy and Sen. Bayh, two recent examples.

We are willing to grant that to some degree their refusal to support overturning the high court decisions may have been related in some way to reasons other than expediency.

Still, it leaves us wondering if things might be different if the millions of babies who have been victimized by abortion and the millions facing the same fate were able to vote.

They can't, but millions of the rest of us can.

Gun Control

We do not think it is shooting from the hip to wonder when something will be done to provide a national firearms policy. We know there are constitutional questions involved and that in protecting everyone's right to a full God-given life we must not abridge the rights of others to "carry and bear arms."

The argument has been protracted and costly. Surveys show that the bulk of Americans want gun control laws, possibly most of us want nothing to do with guns. Progress has been slow or nil.

In light of the two recent attempted assassinations on the President of the United States, in light of the other disgraceful assassinations of public figures, in light of the thousands who end up victims of these anachronistic weapons, it is time for some changes.

When a president gets shot down public attention is aroused. We must remember that when a person on Any Street, U.S.A., is victimized by these weapons, the pain to family and friends is as great.

Perhaps there is little need to note that the U.S. Catholic Conference administrative board is advocating a national firearms policy, declaring that "the unlimited freedom to possess and use handguns must give way to the rights of all people to safety and protection against those who misuse these weapons." The board has called "for effective and courageous action to control handguns, leading to their eventual elimination from our society."

Please, gunnies, and other National Rifle Association fellows, you have proved that you have the resources to overrule the sentiment of your fellow citizens. Now, take the responsibility to lead the way to sanity. Don't repeat hack phrases about outlaws. Police departments don't agree with you.

How about it? We all know that you're good citizens. Prove it, once and for all. Back laws controlling handguns in society.

Opinion

Don't Close St. Mary's

Editor:

We are the parents of four children all born at St. Mary's Hospital, in the late forties and fifties. We and the several thousand others whose children were born there, deplore the action taken by the Monroe County Health Council regarding the closing of the obstetrical unit at St. Mary's. This hospital represents in our community an institutional witness to the concern of a large part of our population for the value of unborn life. While our country is still struggling to settle the question whether the law should protect unborn life, this protection has always prevailed at St. Mary's.

St. Mary's has served the community since Civil War days, and probably more Rochesterians have been born there than have been born in all the other hospitals put together. It's ironical that this should happen at the same time the whole world is honoring the founder of the Sisters of Charity, Elizabeth Ann Seton, with canonization.

We believe this hospital stands as a beacon of intrinsic morality and for the difference between good and evil, of right and wrong in human actions in regard to the unborn. If St. Mary's obstetrical unit is allowed to be closed, we feel this will be another act of human selfishness which is indicative of the moral decadence and corruption that is permeating our civilization.

We, on behalf of the above mentioned thousands, implore you to consider our remarks and look deep into your hearts and decide whether the closing of this unit is essential for God and man, or is it to satisfy the Godless who ignore the value of the unborn.

Mr. & Mrs. Wm. D. Morgan
2060 West Side Dr.
Rochester, N.Y. 14624

There Is One Judge

Editor:

In Mr. Bart's letter (9-10-75) he asks, "What is so positive about homosexuality?" I would answer that the question is irrelevant and shows not only ignorance but a lack of understanding towards human sexuality.

Kevin Scahill
28 Harmony Lane
Rochester, N.Y. 14622

One's sexual orientation, as a predominate theory states, is determined by one's childhood environment and countless social interactions. But once it is established, it cannot be changed. So the positiveness or negativity of anyone's sexual orientation, whether homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual, is subjective and rests with the person's own views on her/his own situation.

Of course those views are influenced by the person's social environment. It is from these surroundings that the person encounters either acceptance or rejection, understanding or prejudice, and develops either a sense of goodness and well-being or of guilt and paranoia. So therefore, a person's positive or negative feelings ultimately come from the rest of society. This presents society with a responsibility to obtain genuine information on issues and maintain a contemporary and unbiased view towards humanity. This responsibility also includes dealing with these issues in a truly Christian manner.

To those who, out of their ignorance and fear, would condemn me, I would say that there is but one Judge and my faith resides in Him.

Kevin Scahill
28 Harmony Lane
Rochester, N.Y. 14622

Interested In Gregorian?

Editor:

In the past couple of years, we have read and heard of the

direction of Pope Paul that there be some return to the use of Latin in the Liturgy and to the use of Gregorian music as well. He has even published a collection of the more simple, and quite familiar chants, to be used for this purpose. This seems to be done only once in a while, perhaps on special occasions.

I am one of a group which has gotten together under the direction of Father Benedict Ehmman. We hope to rehearse the melodies in this booklet of Pope Paul's and add others as well. As we do this and mature as a group, we hope to renew interest in our parish congregations in this beautiful music, not with the idea of replacing anything, but to enlarge the scope of our liturgical music. There is such a wealth, of not only religious, but educational and cultural values as well, to be found among the great liturgical composers. For these reasons, and because the Holy Father has so directed, we are interested in preserving this art.

We feel there are many people out there, men and women, who would be interested in joining us, to sing these beautiful priases to God. I would be happy to give details not permitted in this space to anyone who is interested. I can be reached, evenings, at 621-7640.

[Miss] Dorothy A. Florack
437 Britton Road
Rochester, N.Y. 14616

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I certify that the statements made by me are correct and complete.
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Anthony J. Costello
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Carmen J. Viglucci
Editor

Rev. Louis J. Hohman
Episcopal Advisor

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