

Editorial

The Damage

Disclosure is generally good for the soul but when the disclosure is the forced revelation of governmental police bodies and the soul is the already battered psyche of the American people, the salutary effect is diluted.

Certainly there is some advantage to ripping the twin veils of secrecy and hypocrisy from such agencies as the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency, who under the guise of patriotism and national security laid plans and took actions absolutely inimical to the spirit of our land. Still one must wonder if the latest revelations may so increase the bile already flowing from other recent disclosures that the body national may be irreparably damaged.

Perhaps some of the CIA machinations that have come to light, and remember this may be only the top of the iceberg, if not excusable may be at least understandable. Any half-alert citizen probably surmises that the international arena has always been unclean. But even in light of this, it is regrettable that the great sinew of our secretive arm always seems poised to squash leaders of nations somewhat below the plateau of world power. Surely, even the proximity of Castro does not justify his murder. And we must wonder why this powerful nation was so afraid of the likes of Lamumba, Trujillo, and Diem that we would get involved in plotting their assassinations. And all of this while we are living in ostensible harmony with great potential enemies such as the U.S.S.R. and Communist China.

While the real problems and imagined ghosts haunting the CIA may foment irrational acts, it is almost impossible to find any mitigating circumstance for the FBI, our national police force, for sending anonymous letters pressuring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to commit suicide. Next to such atrocious behavior by an official governmental agency, Carl Segretti of Watergate dirt-sliding fame comes out a choir boy.

The very agency that epitomizes the law and order concept has been shown to have been unlawful and disorderly, which mildly characterizes the frightful picture of the national police agency spying on and harassing private citizens.

Another lesser but still revealing instance of the foolish lengths the FBI was prepared to travel in trying to disparage Dr. King came in 1964 when it asked Cardinal Spellman to protest to the Vatican a scheduled meeting between Pope Paul VI and Dr. King. According to the Senate investigative report, Cardinal Spellman complied but the Holy Father met with the black American leader anyway. Viva il Papa!

So once again we are left with soul-searching. How did we let all of this happen? When did this nation get so big or so small that we decided we couldn't share the same world with a Patrice Lamumba? And how did murder become one of our national modus operandi?

Painful it is to realize that some of our more respected leaders seem to have been equally involved with some of our more pragmatic ones.

So if we are able to patch up the wounds, bind the bones and bear the shame we must proceed to make our national police and intelligence agencies accountable to someone representing the American citizen, if not the Congress then some trustworthy federal ombudsman.

Unwelcome?

Malcolm Muggeridge, the always pungent former editor of the English magazine Punch, has never been one to sheath his cutting observations about society's foibles.

He has a new book in circulation, "Jesus: The Man Who Lives." It has been described by Religious New Service as a "retelling of the Gospel story and the continuation of the author's confession of faith."

In a recent interview, Muggeridge said he doubts that today's generation would have allowed Jesus to be born. Today, he said, an unmarried woman, such as Mary, saying she is pregnant by the Holy Spirit would be an "obvious case for an abortion" and a candidate for psychiatric treatment.

Think of it. And the worst part is that he is probably correct. The fact that we would be unready to recognize and welcome this child says ominous things about our society.

Opinion

Times Sure Have Changed

Editor:

It's been 40 years since I have been to high school and through four years of war. Times sure have changed. Our school principal was also our history teacher and gym instructor and football coach.

His great hangup was "No cigarette smoking." If you didn't like his rules, you could meet him in the gym with a pair of boxing gloves and change his laws.

It seems strange to me that anybody who disciplines you, you have great respect for — like your mother or father or even the sergeant in the army.

I may have been a mean old father to my children. They're taller than I am, they may disagree with me or get irritated, but I have never heard them use foul or vulgar language to express their feelings.

Maybe that's the trouble with today's children. They have no one to guide them. Their mommies and daddies don't give a hoot.

I don't know about these kids (Equal Time, Courier-Journal, 11/12/75). I and my three brothers deserved it when we got a spanking from my mother or the teachers.

The cream puffs of today are too delicate for the hard knocks of life. Sort of reminds me of the old adage: The enemy is using real bullets and not blanks.

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Opposes Change In-Divorce Law

Editor:

The National Federation of Catholic Priests (NFCP) proposed a reconciliation of divorced and remarried Catholics with the Church through the simplistic method of changing the divorce law. Referring to these changes, they predict, "Some of you (loyal Catholics) will oppose, others will withdraw." We respond to the NFCP with the words of St. Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we withdraw? You have the words of everlasting life."

It is the words of Jesus, "He who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery and he who marries one who has been put away is also guilty of adultery," which cause the



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estrangement from the Church.

Expectedly, opposition has come from the Vicar of Christ on Earth, Pope Paul VI. Addressing members of the general council of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, he scored as "false teachers" persons and groups that attack marriage by showing themselves "indulgent toward divorce and extra-marital sex."

Father Curran's recent interview in Rochester covered divorce change which the Bishop of Rochester in collegiality with the Pope should have "opposed." Since he didn't, shall the diocese assume that he "withdrew"?

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'Hair' Cartoon Appreciated

Editor:

All praise to Courier-Journal (Oct. 29) for the courage and acumen shown in printing the cartoon ridiculing Cardinal Carberry's edict on hair styles. The cartoon was magnificent!

Reasoned, restrained and truthful ridicule can be a powerful weapon for good. Perhaps it is one way to penetrate the sensibilities of the members of our hierarchy, and clergy too, who believe they can never be wrong and that the Magisterium of the Church is the word of God no matter what it says.

The Cardinal Carberry episode is just a part of the very small tip of a very large iceberg: authoritarianism. We hope Courier-Journal has, perhaps, chipped a little piece off that iceberg with its cartoon.

Adolphe and Loe d'Audiffret
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Pro-Life Needs Campaign Funds

Editor:

Mrs. Ellen McCormack of Bellmore, N.Y., filed with the Federal Election Committee as a presidential candidate in July. She is motivated to run in order to defend the unborn child. As Eugene Watson, the president of Pro-Life Action Committee (PLAC) and a New York attorney, said: "Winning is not necessarily why you enter a race."

The major thrust of her campaign will be pre-primary pro-life television commercials in states where she is able to get her name on the ballot. These commercials will feature Mrs. McCormack and Dr. Mildred Jefferson, a Boston surgeon and president of the National Right to Life Committee.

Since July the candidate has received \$30,000 in campaign contributions. Her bankers are aiming for a December deadline to raise the \$100,000 needed to tap the treasury for matching money. PLAC can be contacted at P.O. Box 62, Bellmore, N.Y. 11710.

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Letters intended for publication must be addressed to Opinion, Courier-Journal, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604.

They should be no longer than 1 1/2 pages, typed double-spaced, with names and addresses. The paper reserves the right to edit all letters.

well as the younger generation are guilty of showing lack of respect by their manner of dress and behavior in church.

Sincerely,
C. N.

Dear C. N.,

Over the past eight or ten years the problem you mention has become complicated by the rebellion of the young in the matter of dress codes. Back in the 60's they tried to say something by adopting sloppy dress and behavior. Their message was, "Please don't accept persons for their external appearance, the veneer as it were. Accept us for who we are and what we are." Now that's not a bad message because we had come to a point of putting too much stock in appearances. The neat and flashy dresser was often given too much credit for being an acceptable person but could inwardly be "dead men's bones" as our Lord said.

On the other hand, the young people did not take into consideration that their external appearance was offensive to many people and in Christian charity they should not be giving such offense. Not that they had to dress exactly the way an older generation decreed, but there should be limits relative to modesty, cleanliness and general appearance. Likewise they failed to realize that their sloppiness was not only a sign of indifference to externals but also a sign to the older generation of "Who needs you and who cares?"

We could use some codes (loose, not rigid) but they should be arrived at by dialogue between all the segments of the community. At this point some will be saying, "Is this really important enough to occupy the time of parish councils?" What's your answer?



Dear Father Hohman,

Another quirk of mine is the manner of dress that people wear to church. I feel that in church people should dress in modest clothes and clothes which show respect for the presence of God and the other parishioners. When I am invited to a friend's home I consider it an honor and dress accordingly. I feel that blue jeans and shorts and mini mini-skirts are in poor taste and show a lack of reverence when worn in church. If the clothes people wore to church were the best they had because of economic reasons, that is something different, but here in our town that is definitely not the reason why some people come dressed in improper fashion. To me there are many ways of showing our love and respect for God. Consideration for the feelings of our fellow human beings is one way.

Emily Post and etiquette and common decency seem to be a thing of the past where manners and dress codes are concerned. In the parish councils are such things discussed? It seems to me that some code of proper behavior and dress for church is needed. Good taste and a sense of what is proper should never become outdated. The older as