

Editorial

B-1 Slowed

A small victory and a hesitant one. That probably sums up the feeling of the Church groups which worked against congressional approval of the B-1 bomber. The Senate voted to put off final decision on the controversial aircraft until the next administration next January.

Among religious groups which have opposed the bomber were the Jesuit Conference, the American Friends Service Committee, Clergy and Laity Concerned and the National Federation of Priests Councils. Such groups have contended that the money that would be spent for a fleet of B-1s would be wasted because they are obsolete in the age of the missile. They have been trying to move the nation to spending such billions of dollars to meet basic human needs.

The issue has not been decided but at least time for sober reflection has been borrowed.

By the Numbers

Chances are that when diocesans go to Mass on June 12 and 13, they will experience something new — the inclusion of a plea to make sure they are registered to vote, not in the parish council, but in the November public elections.

The diocese is participating in a statewide campaign to remind the unregistered to make it their bicentennial obligation to sign up and take part in government. A diocesan spokesman said that from 60 to 65 per cent of the parishes in this diocese will take part in the drive.

It may be difficult for many to realize that a great many citizens let the opportunity to vote slip away because they fail to register. But as Bishop Joseph L. Hogan has pointed out, thousands of diocesans do not vote and in one county, 40 per cent of potentially eligible voters were not even registered.

The Office of Human Development, which is directing the voter registration drive throughout the dioceses has held special sessions for inner city parishes, for the highest percentage of unregistered voters probably reside in those areas. Hopefully, the poor, the foreign-born, the oppressed, will use the opportunity to form the basis whereby their voices can be heard. And it behooves all of us to support the campaign.

Of course many ask the reasonable question, Should the Church get involved? If one thinks that the rights of the unborn, the aged, crippled, those under 18, those hampered by language barriers, the impoverished, should be protected, then the question is rhetorical.

Furthermore, it should be realized that this involvement does not concern politics per se. No political party or individual will be singled out or supported or demeaned. Rather it is a call to involvement in government by all. It will be an effort to make all political parties and all candidates aware of all their constituents.

The state's bishops, all of whom have endorsed the registration day, have formally stated:

"As Catholics, we have a responsibility to promote a just social order, and to provide for the needs and guarantee the rights of our fellowman. Unfortunately, the records indicate that the majority of our people do not actively participate in the electoral process, so that a minority of voters are permitted to determine the welfare of our total populace. For a Christian to dissociate himself from the concerns of his fellowman is a violation of his conscience and an abnegation of his responsibilities."

Registration is, of course, but the first step. We must follow through and keep all of those who sign up aware of their obligation to vote. And that duty starts right at home, with each one of us. A lot of someones have been registering but not voting. Let's make sure we, each of us, are not among that number.

Opinion

Editorial Seen 'Close-Minded'

Editor:

Congratulations. Once, again, the official spokesman for the diocese of Rochester has demonstrated the kind of close-minded stupidity that can only be generated from a total lack of investigation and unwillingness to hear any point of view other than its own. Your March 24, 1976 editorial and May 19, 1976 response to Mr. Gerald Gerace of Dansville, New York, would make William Randolph Hearst proud of your snide, pompous, ignorant, yellow journalism.

The single-minded, recalcitrant, asinine approach embodied in those editorials completely disregards the following:

1. People who hunt with guns in the State of New York and the Rochester area make the largest monetary contribution through their license fees and permit fees in the effort to conserve and preserve our ecology and wildlife habitat.
2. A significant portion of the population in rural New York augment their diets through hunting, providing much needed protein to their families.
3. Your proposed disarmament plan will have no effect on the criminal market in stolen and imported fire arms.
4. Regulation of hand guns and fire arms has accomplished nothing in the past as less than five of the violent crimes committed with the aid of fire arms in the last three years involved the use of registered pistols or otherwise regulated guns.

Indeed, it would appear that the Courier is not afraid to regulate or ban the use of guns because it has exercised no insight in recognizing the problems at hand. Its ostrich-like answer will only harm the public. The Courier, however, should be proud to know that its editorial policies are carrying out the true spirit of the dictatorial practices of the Inquisition. Henceforth, I, at least, will include in my prayers in the hope our Lord may send you and all other close-minded bigots, the Holy Spirit's help in grasping complex issues and the wisdom to approach them with the intelligent thought they deserve and require.

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Takes Issue With Column

Editor:

I strongly disagree with Nancy

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"WELL, YOU TELL HIM IT'S HIS BISHOP..."

Murphy's column of May 12 when she states Benzinger texts dissent from Vatican teaching. The presence of an Imprimatur would address such a question.

As a religious educator who has chosen this ministry as a means of sharing more personally my faith in the Lord Jesus and encouraging others to do the same, I am pleased when interest is shown. However, quick assumptions and use of jargon cloud our purpose and direction and often confuse the very people we are called to serve.

Case in point — to ask, "Why don't they teach accurately the Divinity of Christ?" assumes that we teach otherwise. That the Apostles floundered and misunderstood in their recognizing who Jesus was is reiterated in St. John's Last Supper narrative. To avoid speaking about the humanity of Jesus would certainly not prepare our students to join us each Sunday as we profess that he "became man" and as St. Paul states clearly "in all things, save sin."

There may be dimensions or emphases in modern approaches to faith growth with which we may be unfamiliar or uncomfortable. What we all seek is that together we may come to know Christ Jesus and accept him into our lives and for this purpose religious education programs exist.

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Greeley Must Be Nervous

Editor:

Andrew Greeley is like busing. You can't be a good liberal and oppose him. But who cares about names. Religious educators should listen to his caustic remarks (Courier, May 19, 1976) and say something intelligent and constructive in spite of them.

First of all, there is no "CCD." We buried that a long time ago when indoctrination and regimentation attempted to focus only on the school children and replace "conscious, living, active faith" with an irrelevant and dishonest loyalty oath.

Another constructive reply we don't want to be a substitute for Catholic schools. They are our friends and a most reliable resource in a parish. Educational services, whether Catholic or public, stand on their own strength. And all the strong ones don't feel threatened by a group of young people gathering together in a public building to share their faith through community service, through prayer, or through any kind of learning experience.

I don't feel like part of a "horde of CCD enthusiasts" opposing Greeley. He must be nervous.

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Reason To Be Sorrowful

Editor:

We Christians are being taken very much to task in recent years for being "pessimistic." We should be joyful, we are told, because evil will never triumph. Ultimately this is so, yet the great temptation, after such sermons, articles, etc. is for us to sit back, with a sigh of relief and a smug smile and do nothing.

Yet Our Lady came to three little children at Fatima in 1917 to give the world a message — unless Christians, Catholics in particular, reformed their lives, did penance, made sacrifices, made the Five First Saturdays and said the daily Rosary, terrible punishments were in store for the world. Already two thirds of the world are enslaved by the terrible chains of communism.

What we may yet suffer here in the Western world, is too terrible to even imagine.

Our Lady told us what we must do to save ourselves. Yet very few are paying any attention, lulled into a sense of false security by many forces.

Those who do see, and believe Our Lady's warnings, are labeled "fanatics" and prophets of doom by the majority — even in the Church.

Yet evil can and does triumph in individual souls and Our Lady told the children at Fatima, many, many souls are lost for all eternity, because there is no one to pray and make sacrifices for them.

In view of all this, is it any wonder that some of us are sorrowful?

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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.