



This "Freedom Map" prepared by Freedom House 1976 survey. Free nations are in white, "partly-free" in gray and "not free" in black. (RNS)

Editorial

Freedom Alert

One of the weaknesses that characterizes human beings is that we tend to get smug or apathetic when things are moving along reasonably. Perhaps it might be dangerous to suggest that things may be going well at present. Yet, relatively speaking, a case could be built that they are.

This country, or rather its citizens, is not engaged in open warfare; though our economic plight continues we have become somewhat inured to it and a new administration offers at least hope that fresh attacks will be aimed at the problems; racism persists but not as flagrantly as it once did nor is it acceptable as it once was; women are a long way from equality but their problems are seen in better perspective.

Admittedly there is room for improvement in all spheres of our national life but still Americans are not suffering as in the preceding decade, for instance, and still are doing better than most of the rest of the world.

However, if smugness is ever permissible it is not now. A survey released by Freedom House gives plenty of cause for concern. It reports that only 19.6 per cent of the world's population lives in "free lands" - a record low. Compare that with 43.9 living in nations without freedom and 36.4 in "partly free" nations. Furthermore,

Freedom House claims that the 1976 figures continue a trend away from freedom.

It offers some thumb nail reports on different regions.

On Asia, it reports, "Except in Japan; the erosion of the rule of law was dramatically accelerated." About Europe, it says that "the West showed notable gains for freedom while in the East repression continued."

Closer to home, the survey says of Latin America, "Only three nations continue free (Venezuela, Colombia and Costa Rica)." In another segment, it notes that "El Salvador dropped from free to partly free."

And about our own United States, the Freedom House survey declares that "Americans closed the book on a troubled era, and are displaying renewed self-confidence."

Returning to our original point, we warn that when things begin to look as if they are taking a turn for the better, people tend to become passive and unconcerned. With only 19.6 per cent of the world's population living in freedom we cannot afford such nonchalance. Not for our own good, not for the good of the rest of the world.

Opinion

Communion In Hand?

Editor:

Re the "All in the Family" column of 12 22 76. Would someone in authority please let me and every other obedient Catholic know just what in God's Name is going on? It is my understanding that the Roman Catholic bishops met, discussed and voted on a proposal of whether or not to allow Communion in the hand along with the traditional method. The MAJORITY voted in favor of the latter ONLY.

Why then, does the diocesan paper, which a Catholic should be able to read without becoming confused, impress one as

being as secular as the local paper? One is left with the impression, upon reading Mrs. Child's remarks, that the local pastor can make his own rules in this matter. At a time in history when there is so much blatant disrespect and downright disobedience to authority, civil and ecclesiastical, happenings of this nature should not be ignored.

I mean no disrespect to the office he holds, but when is our local shepherd going to lead the flock entrusted to him by Our Blessed Lord? The flock is beginning to act a wee bit confused, to say the least. He had best look among his fellow priests and see if all are worthy of His trust. It may not be too bad an idea to re-employ a few that have been "put out to pasture!" We, the laity, want and need

to be led in matters concerning our faith, but Good God, lead us to the green valley and not some rocky field where we won't find enough sustenance to keep our bodies together, never mind our poor souls.

Mrs. Theresa M. Lawson
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Another Proposal

Editor:

I would like to respond to Father James Marvin's letter that appeared in the Courier-Journal before Christmas that dealt with the Sunday opening of stores.

While I agree with the point that Father Marvin made that we should boycott such establishments, I would like to take it a step further. Perhaps our Catholic parishes could set a fine example by not scheduling such activities as BINGO on Sundays. To add that the Detroit "Call to Action" suggested that we encourage Sunday as a family day that would enrich peoples' lives, may give added weight to Father Marvin's proposal.

I sincerely hope the Catholic community can lead the way by our example in this matter.

Father Kevin Murphy
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Issue Seen Wasteful

Editor:

We thought your special issue of the Courier-Journal dated Dec. 29 was an exceptional waste of time, money and paper.

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Action Issue Downgraded

Editor:

With regard to the Call to Action issue of the Courier-Journal:

The passages were tangled and difficult to follow with any degree of honest logic, whereas the authentic Roman Catholic doctrines pertaining to these situations are clear, reasonable, compassionate and logical.

The passages were ambivalent. What appeared as an attraction to authentic Church teaching (especially toward contraception) was really a flat arrogant rejection.

The 'voting' passages were chaotic.

In sum, we quite frankly feel that the issue was little more than a series of Values Clarification 'strategies' designed to create a moral disequilibrium. We deeply sympathize with Bishop Joseph L. Hogan who has tried honestly to come to grips with the disastrous Detroit conference. He has done his best to reap some modicum of Catholicity from the rubble.

He has our continued prayers.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Murphy
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'Action' Seen Schismatic

Editor:

To all the clergy and laity who are working so hard on the Call to Action to make drastic, unacceptable changes to the Catholic Church, I have a suggestion. Why don't you just leave the Church and join a Protestant sect? There you could have married clergy, lady ministers, birth control, divorce and remarriage, etc. It was all done for you several hundred years ago - you'd only have to enjoy it.

Are you people trying for a North American Catholic Church, separate from Rome? Do you realize you could be laying the groundwork for a schism between America and Rome? Wouldn't it just be easier to leave and join a group whose rules you like? I truly wish you would, and leave my Church alone.

Mrs. Leona F. Hancock
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Teaching Criticized

Editor:

As Catholics and parents, we should be deeply concerned with the content (and quality) and the method of teaching being

used in the so-called "theology classes" in our Catholic high schools, junior high schools and even in CCD programs.

Teachers and/or religious textbooks that present "merely" subjective theorizing as the church's teaching, should be removed from the classroom and the promotion of "situation ethics" and "moral relativism" should not be tolerated even though "some" consider them to be in vogue.

The use of textbooks such as "The Emerging Church" and "Understanding Christian Morality" written by Ronald J. Wilkins (an ex-Christian Brother and avowed Teilhardian) are filled with modernism, which has been condemned by the vicars of Christ and are incompatible with catechetical directives given by the magisterium of the church, who alone can give authentic interpretation of divine revelation and in doing so safeguard the divine deposit of faith.

These works are dangerous as they foster humanism among Catholics and the writers' denial of orthodox Catholic teaching on original sin strikes at the core of our faith. They are also full of the "speculative theology" of Teilhard de Chardin. In 1957, the Holy Office decreed that Teilhard de Chardin's works must be withdrawn from seminaries and religious institutions; and again in 1962, the Holy Office issued a warning exhorting all diocesan bishops, superiors of religious institutions and presidents of universities to protect the minds of all, especially the young, against the dangers in his writings. In 1967, the Sacred Congregation on Doctrine, (formerly the Holy Office) stated that this warning was still in effect.

It is no wonder that most children today are religious illiterates with respect to their Catholic faith and it is mostly due to the methodology of "experiential catechetics" which is damaging what little faith our young have. This will continue to go on unless we, the Catholic parents who have to live with its results, break out vocally from the silent Catholic Majority and disallow this modernistic minority the self-given right to "Protestantize" our Catholic faith.

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Vol. 91, No. 37 Jan. 12, 1977

Published weekly by the Rochester Catholic Press Association. Subscription rates: Single copy 20¢. 1 year subscription in U.S. \$7.50. Canada and Foreign, \$12.00. Offices: Richmond Building, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14601. (716) 454-7050. Second class postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.