

Life, Liberty and Law



Nancy Murphy

The basic premises of Values Clarification are these, and I quote directly from two of its articulate and educated supporters:

1. There is no correlation (relationship) between character training and actual behavior.
2. Moral behavior is not consistent in a person from one situation to another. The circumstances are the most important factor.
3. There is no necessary relationship between what people say about morality and the way they act.

4. "Cheating is normally distributed around a level of moderate cheating — that is, normally everyone cheats a little." (Moral Development, A Guide to Piaget and Kohlberg by Ronald Duska and Mariellen Whelan, Catholic educators, published by the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle — the Paulist Press, New York, 1975. The Paulists also publish Education in Love the AAECT/SIECUS-tainted sex education series co-authored by a member of the AAECT Advisory Committee and used in many Catholic schools in place of Vatican directives.)

(Pages 6-7 Paulists): "Studies indicate that the traditional forms of character or moral education are not effectively producing behavior that conforms to the principles being taught by the modeling, lecturing, rewarding or punishing. (Therefore) moral development is not a process of imprinting rules and virtues, but a process involving transformation of cognitive structures (based on personal experience and observation).

"Jean Piaget, currently co-director of the Institute of Educational Science in Geneva and professor of Experimental Psychology at the University of Geneva, has conducted research for more than 40 years into the origin and development of cognitive structures and moral judgment in the early years of life." (Page 8): "The youngest children are at a stage of Heteronomy where rules are sacred because they are handed down by adults." (Heteronomy is defined by Webster's Third International as subjection to and obedience of the law. NM) "This (immature) stage gradually diminishes in favor of Autonomy where rules are seen to be the outcome of a free decision and worthy of respect (only) in the measure that they have enlisted mutual consent. The rules are then seen as requirements for Group Relationships. It is important to note that Autonomy to Piaget refers to freedom from the constraint of Heteronomy. (Autonomy is) the basis for the social interaction that is necessary for moral development." (Autonomy is defined by Webster as the freedom from subordination to law. NM)

(Paulists, page 14): "Not until a child is at the level of Autonomy will his knowledge and respect approximate his practice. The use of adult superior force and commands demanding blind obedience reinforce the unilateral Heteronomous view of rules, whereas dialog and discussions that bring about mutual (community) understanding and agreement lead to cooperation and eventually to autonomy" (where a child can be free from obedience to law.)

(Page 17): "Piaget constructed stories (dilemmas or strategies) that force a child to make a judgment about behavior which deviates from the rules... devised to provoke a child to compare (acts) involving considerable material damage! Children were then asked whether the children involved in the dilemmas are equally guilty, or who was naughtier, and why." (Page 22): "The child moves slowly away from moral realism where he judged by objective responsibility — that is, if it's not true it's a lie — to judging by intention. It is through experiences of cooperative living in the various communities of which the child is a part that he develops an understanding of lying as a violation of community trust."

That's Catholic teaching?

Next week: Continued

Unit Hits African 'Injustice'

BY MICHAEL GRODEN

The newly established International Justice and Peace Commission, of the Rochester Diocese, issued a strong statement condemning white minority rule in southern Africa this week.

In a prepared statement the commission said that they "unreservedly condemn the acts of repression and exploitation perpetuated against the oppressed people in southern Africa especially by those who claim to be Christian, and yet are not ashamed to distort and defame the image of Christ among people."

The paper is a result of research done by the International Justice and Peace Commission which studied reports dealing with southern Africa by the National Conference of Black Churchmen, a letter written by Bishop James S. Rausch, general secretary of the United States Catholic Conference, to Henry Kissinger, then secretary of state, and an open letter to the government of Rhodesia, by Bishop Donald Lamont, O. Carm., which attacks white minority rule and the practice of apartheid, among others.

Bishop Lamont preached in the diocese at St. Patrick's, Seneca Falls on August 13, 1967. He has

recently been sentenced to ten years at hard labor by a Rhodesian court for aiding anti-government black nationalists.

(The commission's entire statement appears as an advertisement in this issue.)

The International Justice and Peace Commission works to "identify specific aspects of the problems of world-wide poverty and injustice with which the Church of Rochester could deal effectively."

They hope to achieve these goals by "defining limits" of Rochester involvement, to establish programs involving individuals, parishes and regions and by trying to achieve "an attitude of cultural acceptance and recognition of human dignity and rights between the people of the diocese

and from third world countries." The commission was established in the spring of 1976.

It now has 18 members and works closely with the Office of Human Development and the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

Sister Phyllis Bernardo, RSM, staff person with the Office of Black Ministries and Dr. Philip Thiuri, a professor of African and Afro-American Studies at Brockport State, explained that the commission took this position because it believes strongly in the "sacredness of life and the

interdependence of nations upon one another."

They both are members of the commission and worked on the prepared statement. Sister Phyllis said that this condemnation is in accord with Pope Paul's decree to "defend life." Dr. Thiuri added that the United States has a responsibility and should make a commitment to oppressed people in the world.

Persons interested in the International Justice and Peace Commission are asked by the commission to contact Lourdes Perez-Albuern, coordinator of the commission, 750 Main St., Rochester, 328-6400.

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