

Editorial

One for Bishops

It may lack the glamor of some of the other issues debated at the U.S. Bishops meeting in Chicago but the question of the plight of religion in Eastern Europe is of paramount importance. The strong statement by the bishops on this problem was needed.

They said that lives of individual believers and the Christian community in Eastern Europe are both "in serious jeopardy" and they urged U.S. policy-makers to "give respect for religious freedom a more prominent role in the conduct of our relationship with these nations."

President Carter has provided leadership in this area of foreign relations by speaking out on the deprivation of human rights, particularly in the Soviet Union. To some this amounted to a foreign relations blunder; still others see it as platitudinous. We, however, feel such public statement of concern is healthy and long overdue.

The bishops pointed out that the U.S. policy of non-interference in the affairs of Eastern European nations has "prevented the U.S. from making any form of effective protest against Communist oppression."

"Advocates for the defense of human rights, including courageous dissenters in the East, have earnestly appealed to the West to apply multiple kinds of pressures against regimes in Eastern Europe, including the Soviet Union," the bishops said.

The bishops pointed to such recent developments as the Helsinki agreement, greater trade between the U.S. and Eastern Europe and a growing independence within the bloc itself as giving the U.S. "a potentially greater measure of influence with Communist governments in that region." They said the question is how and if we will use that influence to protect religious freedom.

As follow-throughs the bishops encouraged Washington to "engage seriously in the preparation for the followup to the Helsinki agreements scheduled for 1977." They also urged U.S. trade officials, businessmen, intellectuals, performing artists, technicians and scientists to introduce the issue of religious liberty, as well as other human rights, into their relationships with individuals and groups in Eastern Europe.

The bishops said they would continue to "make the public advocacy of human rights a matter of prime concern. We associate ourselves in solidarity with the Persecuted Church in those regions around the world where the human right of religious freedom is severely restrained by overt acts of suppression or by subtle intimidations."

The statement was approved by a vote of 252 in favor, 1 abstention, and 2 opposed. It is difficult to fathom any reason for opposition to such a stand.

One for Carey

Gov. Hugh Carey is to be commended for his strong stand against the death penalty. He has promised to veto any such measure passed by the Legislature which is important because anti-life as a norm must be opposed in any shape or form.

The governor has been quoted: "I will not send any person in this state to the death chamber," and added that he would reject "any death penalty bill" because "I don't want to leave in the hands of any future governor a power which I would not exercise myself."

This is a commendable position. It also happens to be in line with recommendations of the state's bishops. One could only wish that the governor had been as courageous with his convictions on the question of liberalized abortion laws which he refused to combat because of constitutional questions.

Opinion

Humboldt St. Church, Staff Inspirational

Editor:

This letter is prompted by one which appeared in The Open Window column May 4 in which several negative comments were made about St. John's on Humboldt Street. Certainly, I respect the right of M.M. to dislike St. John's; to express publicly that distaste; and to seek a more compatible worshipping community. It seems clear that all of us, if we are to worship in a meaningful fashion, need to do so in a setting in which and among people with whom we feel comfortable.

For precisely that reason, I would like to present a quite different view of St. John's. Even as I begin, I know I shall experience frustration at my inability to express adequately something of what St. John's means to a great many people.

The core of life at St. John's is pervasive and authentic commitment to prayer. The heart of that prayer life is the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist — a celebration which is obviously the fruit of careful, loving and competent planning. These weekly celebrations are unhurried, joyful and profoundly reverent. In addition, the superb quality of the homilies, always rooted in the Christian life within the framework so deeply cherished in our Catholic tradition.

The same quality and spirit are carried through the entire week whether it is at the daily Eucharistic celebrations or in the lovely small Blessed Sacrament Chapel behind the main altar or during the many liturgical or paraliturgical offerings. I, for one, find the frequent opportunities to join with fellow Christians for varied prayer experiences an enormous help in my all too often faltering struggle to witness to the love of Jesus in my little corner of the world. I find, too, the deep commitment to Scripture, be it a traditional Lenten Friday celebration of the Stations, a May Penance service centered on our Blessed Mother as role model par excellence, or a simple weekday gathering of clergy, religious and laity for the Prayer of the Hours a

tremendous spiritual enrichment.

Finally I would like to express admiration and gratitude for the parish staff. They have been a major source of inspiration for me. It is my hope that I can live out my vocation as a Christian woman with half as much dedication, depth, joy and unflinching good humor as the Sisters on that staff with whom I sometimes have the privilege of working.

If I shared the prayer style of some of my charismatic friends I would surely lift my hands up high and shout "Praise the Lord for St. John's!"

Jean H. Cardinali (Mrs. D.J.)
154 Greenaway Road
Rochester, N.Y. 14610

'B-1' Editorial 'Courageous'

Editor:

Reference is made to your Wednesday, April 27, edition containing an editorial relative to the spending for the B-1 bomber. Please accept as a compliment my surprise and admiration that you have taken this editorial stand. I would almost judge that it took a considerable amount of courage on your part since, in some quarters, to be against defense spending is somewhat akin to being against Mom, apple-pie, and the American flag.

It is refreshing to find people who have researched and analyzed the situation and now realize that, as Representative Perrin Mitchell of Maryland pointed out some time ago, the downfall of this country will not come from forces without; it will come from the gross social inequities being created by money being spent for non-essential and non-useful purposes.

Please accept my deepest regards for your courageous stand.

William C. Larsen
6 Woodstock Lane
Pittsford, N.Y. 14534

Seeks Help For Hospital

Editor:

I'm sure you are well aware of our problem in Elmira with two hospitals and a small obstetrical service at St. Joseph's, our Catholic hospital. Interested not only as a physician but from an ethical standpoint, I seek your help in the effort to preserve the hospital's small and adequate primary care obstetrical and gynecological service.

I am very well aware that there is a constant need in our community to cut out excess costs in hospital run programs, as indeed it is becoming a major issue. It would seem to me, from a constitutional basis, to deprive a person of a primary care facility—and indeed obstetrics is such—would be a truly unenlightened position, especially to a Catholic patient in this area at a hospital where abortions are not performed.

For the last five years, this community has constantly been trying to stay away from duplication of effort, examples being a cobalt unit at the Arnot Ogden Hospital in Elmira, the Rehabilitation Medicine



"MONSIGNOR MULLHAUS FROWNS ON THIS SORT OF THING! MONSIGNOR MULLHAUS FROWNS ON EVERYTHING!"

Center and Burn Program at St. Joseph's Hospital. Certainly these specific special areas do not require duplication of effort in our valley area.

On the other hand, obstetrics is such a primary interest to every human being in our area that to have a small unit at our Catholic hospital is a justifiable request. In the rapidly approaching days of "1984" where we will be constantly supervised, we still must count some on individual needs.

James H. Marshall, MD,
FACS
Diplomate, American Board
of Plastic Surgery;
American Board
of General Surgery
445 E. Water St.
Elmira, N.Y. 14901

Selma Story Questioned

Editor:

The other members of the Edmundite Mission staff and I were all delighted to see the extensive coverage your April 26 issue provided for the fine work being done by the Sisters of St. Joseph from Rochester down here in Selma, Ala.

However, your article, "Bishop Hogan Visits Selma," does the city an injustice. The statement that Selma's "schools, restaurants, toilets (and) swimming pools are ... always 'de facto' segregated" is simply not true.

Nobody claims that Selma has achieved complete integration. There are still some neighborhood schools, pools and eating places that can be called "black" or "white." But by and large our educational system, our athletic facilities and our public restaurants are freely accessible to members of both races.

Selma High, for example, is about 40 to 50 per cent white. It has a black principal, a white coach and a state championship basketball team that was both black and white. Most of the 52 baseball teams in the city athletic league are similarly integrated. Black and white kids alike splash at the Memorial Stadium pool. And the fellow who swims laps with me at the YMCA is not of my color. Black and white diners can be seen at the Downtowner, the Holiday Inn, and every other major restaurant in the city.

We still have problems. The poverty that shocked

Bishop Hogan and Mr. Costello persists in spite of all our efforts. But this city has come a long, long way in terms of race relations, and the Mission (Fathers and Sisters alike) played a small part in helping the community break with its painful past. And it hurts to see this progress ignored, and Selma 1977 treated as though it were still Selma 1965.

Thanking you again for your kind words about the Sisters at Queen of Peace Convent, I remain

Alston Fitts III
Director of Public Relations
Fathers of St. Edmund
1428 Broad St.
Selma, Ala., 36701

Editor's Note: Anthony J. Costello who wrote the story in reference says, "I can appreciate Mr. Fitts' position as public relations director. But I would like to point out that the story says 'While the plight of the blacks probably has been improved over the years through such work (by the sisters and Edmundite Fathers) it (segregation) still exists. Schools, restaurants, toilets, swimming pools are black and white — perhaps not always officially but certainly always de facto.' The story did not say there has been no improvement and is based on taped quotes from people who live there. In his letter, Mr. Fitts did not state how many years the white swimming pool was closed to avoid integration before another was built in the black neighborhood on the other side of town. Then the white swimming pool was reopened. The story also pointed out the meritorious work of the Edmundites in this area, employing mostly blacks at its Good Samaritan Hospital and establishing a credit union which has benefitted the black community in economic independence and self-respect."

More Letters On Page 9

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.

COURIER-JOURNAL

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan
President

Anthony J. Costello
General Manager

Carmen J. Viglucci
Editor

Rev. Louis J. Hohman
Episcopal Advisor

Vol. 92 No. 3 May 18, 1977

Published weekly by the Rochester Catholic Press Association. Subscription rates: Single copy 20¢; 1 year subscription in US \$7.50; Canada and Foreign \$12.00. Offices, Richard Building, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604 (716) 454-7050. Second Class Postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.

Courier-Journal 1