

**Editorials**

**Ray of Hope**

Two developments may not make a trend but the Supreme Court ruling that states do not have to pay for abortions for the poor, and last Friday's State Senate vote amending the state budget to restrict funding of abortions certainly are encouraging.

As Sen. James Donovan put it, "We have been waiting for this moment 8 to 10 years."

As we go to press, the disposition of the budget and the anti-abortion amendment is still cloudy but the Senate nonetheless, in its reversal of form, clearly provided a victory for pro-life forces. Many deserve commendation for their arduous, long, and often thankless efforts in behalf of the unborn.

Many who oppose the amendment see it as discriminatory against the poor. It is unfortunate that helping the impoverished should be considered part of this issue. The question is what good would we be doing for the poor by paying to kill the poor.

The morality of abortion is the key issue. There are those on both sides of the question of Medicaid abortions who see the financial implications as paramount. On one side some feel that the poor suffer because they cannot afford abortions like their better-off counterparts. On the other, people wonder why they should pay for an act they feel is morally unacceptable.

Then, of course, there are subtle complications. For instance, many who openly declare the state has an imperative to pay for abortions for those who cannot afford them may have ulterior motives. Privately, they may be trying to save tax dollars in the long run, by cutting down on future welfare costs.

Again none of this focuses on the main principle involved — the right of the unborn to life.

Whatever, we can rejoice, at least temporarily, in the fact that if the anti-life tide has not been turned it has at least been stalled.

We should not fool ourselves into thinking that we are near the total endorsement of life needed but these developments represent a ray of hope in what over the years has been a dark display of disrespect for life in our society.

Assemblyman Roger Robach, the leader of the fight in the Assembly against the abortion funding, urges pro-lifers to contact their state representatives on the issue. He expects the debate on the question to take two weeks.

**... Future Work**

Meanwhile the National Right to Life Committee has listed some goals for all pro-lifers. The committee declares:

- We must win the needed votes in Congress to guarantee an end to all taxpayer funding of abortions.

- We must redouble our efforts on behalf of the Human Life Amendment. This amendment will end legal abortions and spare the lives of over a million babies each year.

- We must increase our activities on the state level, making sure that state and local laws are designed to defend and protect life, rather than destroy life.

- And, most importantly, we must continue to do everything we can to inform every American about the life issue.

**Cancer Mass**

The highly successful Mass last year at Corpus Christi Church on West Main Street stressing hope and trust in God in the face of cancer will be repeated at 11 a.m. next Sunday, April 9.

Apparently the idea of a church service is catching on; it is a worthwhile and important means of confronting cancer. Prayer is, of course, always beneficial. It also helps to support organizations such as the American Cancer Society in its war against the disease.

**Opinion**

**Refugees Need Help**

Editor:

In today's world the followers of Christ are called into many worthwhile missions. Some find themselves aiding the migrant worker, others prefer to help the mentally retarded, some drive for the FISH program. The list is endless.

Yet one of the most glaring needs is almost universally being ignored, namely, that of the Southeast Asian refugee problems. Thousands of people wait in camps in Thailand for some country to take them in. Thus it is with some pride that I congratulate the Parish Council of Blessed Sacrament Church who showed great courage this past Monday evening in accepting the challenge to bring a Laotian family of 11 to our city — to be their sponsors, to provide them with shelter, food, clothing and friendship.

The purpose of this letter is threefold: First to ask other parishes to accept a similar challenge. For further information about this call Margaret Finucane at 442-8711. Also if you wish to contribute to the family we are sponsoring, send your donation to the Blessed Sacrament Refugee Fund, in care of John Caselli, 280 Rosedale St., Rochester, N.Y. 14620. If you have any furniture or household goods you would be willing to donate, you can contact me at 442-8721.

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**Segregated Schools Can Be Excluded**

Editor:

Walter O'Hagan (Courier-Journal 3-22-78) raises the question of segregated private schools. Safeguards can be written into law preventing parents from using tax credits for schools that practice segregation, or for schools promoting communism, nazism, etc.

Deductions for contributions to Protestant radio programs are allowed by our tax laws. I find no

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one protesting they can't get on their board of trustees. Tuition tax credits are hardly much different.

Yes, Mr. O'Hagan, your tax bill will probably increase somewhat. You have enjoyed lower education taxes because parents of private school children have been bearing a double burden. When are they to receive some relief and some equity? Besides, if all or most of the private schools close, as will eventually happen unless such a bill as tuition tax credit is passed, your taxes will increase anyway, so what's your point?

Investigate the budgets of public schools and compare them to the budgets of private schools of comparable size. Compare the number of administrators and then tell me public schools are hurting financially, as you claim, Mr. O'Hagan. It may open your eyes.

Find out how much time teachers and administrators and parents of religious schools spend on money-raising and how much money faithful alumni pour into those schools.

Any time Catholics fight for their rights, they are accused of using their power. It's OK for every other group to do so and to exercise their democratic rights. Catholics are supposed to be second class citizens. Catholics are supposed to lie down and die. Well, while there is time and we still have some of our schools left, we had better fight for our democratic rights. So, write President Carter, HEW Secretary Califano, your senators, and your representatives urging them to support the principle of tuition tax credits and especially the Moynihan-Packwood bill.

In Canada, it is possible for different school systems to be operated and financed by the government. They have few difficulties.

Walter O'Hagan writes of Catholics who "freely" choose to send their children to parochial schools. Recently, many have been unable to do so because of high tuitions. He must be aware of this.

Limits on those of high incomes could be included in a tuition tax credit bill. In this way, we would not subsidize the rich. We must help the poor and the already hard-pressed middle class so they do have the economic ability to choose a religious school.

We have to work for our children, our grandchildren and their children, not to mention the welfare of this very nation where every group has the right to lobby for what they believe is just and right, and for what they believe is best for the enduring of our beloved nation.

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**Tax Bill Supported**

Editor:

In your March 22, 1978 issue, you published a letter



"I TOLD ARNOLD HE SHOULD GET ANOTHER HOBBY. THE AVON LADY GENUFLECTS WHEN SHE COMES IN."

of Walter O'Hagan opposing the Packwood-Moynihan tuition tax-credit bill. I can understand that public school employees oppose this bill because they fear loss of control of some education tax dollars and they are worried about the competition from the non-government schools.

What I cannot understand is the promotion of opposition among Catholics or anyone who pays tuition.

Fifty percent of tax-credit money will go to parents whose children attend PUBLIC higher education.

For those who fear that any of the tax-credit will go to segregated non-government schools, the Packwood-Moynihan Bill specifically would exclude segregated schools. Only schools incorporated under 501 C would be eligible and under the Internal Revenue Code these schools are subject to the Civil Rights Act. This would eliminate the Moonies, Nazis or Communists that Mr. O'Hagan is worried about.

We would all agree that education is a shared community responsibility. This support comes from the government, parents tuition and private donations. The private donations are tax deductible. To allow parents tax-credit for a small portion of their tuition is simply recognition of the \$17 billion paid for education by these parents. The Packwood-Moynihan Bill would allow a tax credit for one-half of the tuition paid by parents in public and private schools up to a limit of \$500. Lower income families not paying income tax would receive this amount as a refund. Finally, we have help for poorer families and a real choice in education.

By giving the money to the parent who pays tuition, the tax-credit bill is similar to the G-I Bill which obviously was constitutional. The U.S. Government gives tax money to many foreign governments with no American taxpayer representation and some of them opposed by taxpayers. This is not unconstitutional.

How could a bill passed by Congress and signed by the President, all elected by the people, be construed as bypassing the feelings of taxpayers. It seems very democratic.

Because Mr. O'Hagan feels that tax-credits are unconstitutional, I hope that he does not mind if the

rest of us wait for the U.S. Supreme Court to speak. I respect him for voicing his opinion, but I hope that he would afford the rest of us the same respect.

Mr. O'Hagan presents a perplexing dilemma. On one hand, he is worried about tax payers having the freedom to vote but on the other hand, he is critical of Catholics who do not vote the way he wants on government school budgets. Maybe some people, Catholics and non-Catholics, see the efficiency of non-government schools who do at least a comparable job to the government school at about 50% percent of the cost.

Education is the second largest industry in the United States. Before it is too late, let's not allow a monolithic government monopoly of education. Parents can get recognition by support of the Packwood-Moynihan Bill for tax-credit for tuition paid by parents to public and private schools.

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**Letters Commended**

Editor:

I believe Mrs. Martha Foley's letter and Theresa M. Hussar's letter are the best the paper has printed in a long time in defense of the Catholic Faith.

Satan certainly is trying to destroy it.

And the new liberalism, especially among some priests, nuns, and lay educators is causing more satanic havoc than can be believed. First the minds, then the souls.

God help our children — America's and the world's.

Thank you for printing those letters.

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