

## Editorials

# Communists On Defensive

Most observers agree that the mere naming of a Polish citizen as pope has put the powers-that-be behind the Iron Curtain in the most ticklish position they have experienced in a very long time.

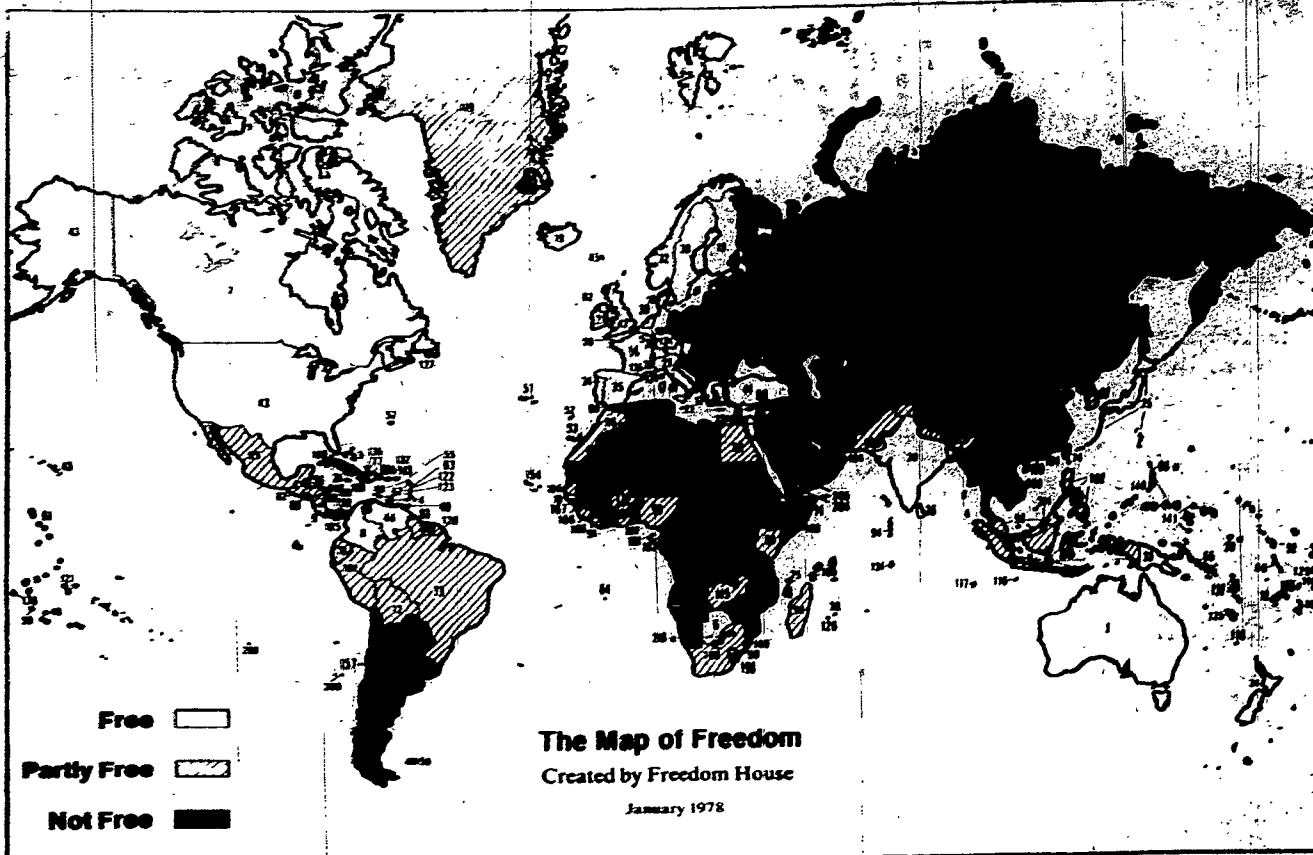
For the time being, at least, it seems that the stance of the Communist totalitarian bloc will be one of tolerance, even openness. Anything else could be extremely embarrassing or in the case of Poland even worse. Any slight of Pope John Paul II by Warsaw would be inviting the kind of trouble the Soviet-dominated nations can least afford.

Just before the election of the new pope, Freedom House issued its annual report rating the amount of freedom in the world's 211 nations and it stated that less than a third of them are comparatively "free." Think of that. Of 211 nations, only 44 are free. The independent, nonpartisan organization finds 47 nations are related territories of which 24 are rated free, 28 partly free and 4 not free.

Almost needless to say, both the Soviet Union and Poland are listed as not free, as are the other Eastern European Captive Nations.

Only one of the Soviet bloc-nations, Yugoslavia, maintains full diplomatic relations with the Vatican but that does not mean there is religious freedom under Tito — there is not.

In Poland itself Church and State have lived together in a kind of wary relationship. More than 34 million Poles are Catholic which obviously means that the Church could wield a great deal of power there if it so desired. So far it has been content to be diplomatic



Nations in black are not free, shaded partly free and white free in this map issued by Freedom House.

in its dealings with the government, probably in the interest of maintaining peace in the nation.

That, however, does not mean that the Polish Church has not stood up to the Communist regime at all. Though the government has yet to respond to the hierarchy's repeated demands for an easing of state censorship, access by the Church to the mass media, and for permission to build more churches, the leaders are equally aware as their Church counterparts that they need the cooperation of the bishops to avert trouble.

Into this uneasy situation comes Karol Wojtyla as Pope John Paul II which creates a great many more problems for the Communists than it does for the

Church. For it is the totalitarian rulers who are on the defensive, who have got to sit down and map out strategy, who have got to react to this development and do it on the world stage.

Some optimists see it all as possibly the beginning of the end for the "not free" nations of Eastern Europe. Perhaps that is too much to hope for, at least this early, but it is comfortable to realize that the Communists are experiencing difficult times and that it is the Church that has accomplished it. In a belittling statement, Josef Stalin once asked, "How many legions does the Pope have?" It took a long time but it is possible that the Communists are finally realizing that there are more than they can handle.

## and Opinions

### Questionnaire For Seminarians

Editor:

Following is a questionnaire for seminarians and I hope seminarians and priests will find it helpful. It was written mainly for seminarians but it can be applied to anyone in the religious life.

Can you pour yourself out daily as a human sacrifice?

Can you face each day rejoicing knowing you'll be serving Christ?

Can you take the pace of sorrow, comfort broken hearts with care?

Can you lead all souls to heaven; can you be a man of prayer?

Can you minister to others though your needs are crying out?

Can you solace those in darkness when your soul's immersed in doubt?

Can you face the dreary hours of monotonous duty calls

When you'd rather be out golfing than confined to four white walls?

Can you be a man of reverence? When today it's smart to mock,

Can you be serene and patient though you're racing with the clock?

When discouraged, tired and lonely, can your faith withstand the test?

Can you walk the extra mile when your body demands rest?

Can you feed the cold and hungry? Can you heal their inner wounds?

Can you be a good example in a world of utter ruin?

Yes, there'll be some compensations that will make it all worthwhile.

But friend it's more than just a job; it's the Christian priest's life style.

Anne Christoff  
154 Crittenden Way  
Rochester, N.Y. 14623

### Full Care . . . Almost

Editor:

A recent editorial in the Courier-Journal told of

how Catholics should be edified by the recent recommendations of the Vatican's International Theological Commission that "the Church give 'full pastoral care' to divorced and remarried Catholics even though they may not receive the sacraments of Matrimony and Communion." That's like telling a woman she's "sort of" pregnant. I would think that all the sacraments would be a part of "full pastoral care." Sounds like more high level gobbledegook to me.

Terry Sweeney  
101 Hyde Parkway  
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### Use All The Gospels

Editor:

I would like to comment on Father Paul Cuddy's article in the COURIER-JOURNAL 11-8-78 regarding the young hitchhiker from McQuaid High School.

Father Cuddy is certainly a fine source of information in regard to the historical and ethnic background of St. Luke and the writing of his Gospel. All well and good. Nevertheless, I am perplexed. Father did not mention at all the opportunity that he had to

share and reflect on the healing message and love that Jesus has for each one of us. This is portrayed in all four Gospels.

Please accept my humble apology, Father Cuddy, if you did take advantage of the opportunity and failed to mention it in your column.

Rhoda M. Ariano (Mrs.)  
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### Assemblyman Thankful

Editor:

Upon my re-election to the State Assembly, I'd like

to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the citizens of the 133rd District.

A man named Dr. Thomas Franklin once said that "the heaviest debt is that of gratitude."

I am immensely grateful to everyone for my re-election. In turn, I promise to serve the 133rd District to the best of my ability for the next two years in Albany.

Andrew D. Virgilio  
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### Guidelines

Letters intended for publication must be addressed to Opinion, Courier-Journal, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604.

Expressions of opinions should be brief, no longer than 1 1/2 pages, typed, double-spaced, with names and addresses.

We reserve the right to edit as to length, offensive words, libelous statements, or to reject altogether. Generally speaking, however, only limited grammatical corrections will be made and letters will reflect the writer's own style.

We encourage readers to submit opinions but since we try to print letters from as many different contributors as possible we will publish no more than one letter a month from the same individual.

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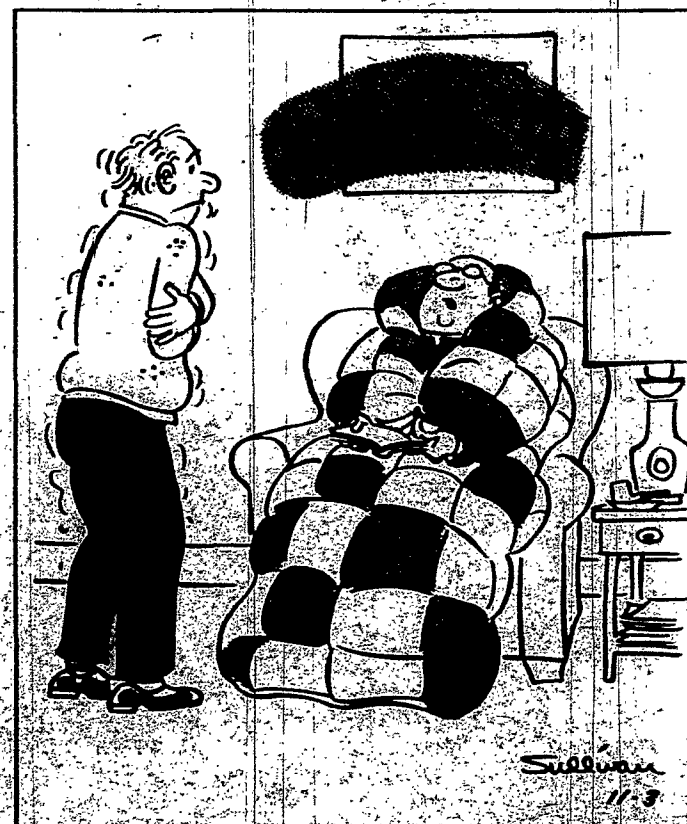
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Courier-Journal



I'VE DECIDED THAT IN THE INTERESTS OF VOLUNTARY POVERTY WE'RE GOING TO CUT DOWN ON FUEL COSTS THIS WINTER!