

Joan M. Smith, Editor

Speaking Out

By Mark Ouweken

McQuaid

War? Registration? The Draft? Women in combat? Kids in uniform? Soviets in Afghanistan? The Persian Gulf? Gas in our cars? Bodies in coffins?

Fear in our hearts?

Each day, Americans struggling to understand the world situation read the paper. The name of the last page of the "C" section seems ironic, if not diametrically opposed, to most of the rest of the paper: the funnies. The New York Times is full of news of today's world. The New York Times has no "funnies."

Four months ago, the great United States was in negotiations with the mighty U.S.S.R. The issue? The United States has the ability

to destroy every major Soviet city forty times. The U.S.S.R. has the ability to eliminate every major American city twelve times. (So we're stronger! We can kill them more times than they can kill us!) So President Carter started preaching the need for an arms limitation treaty to slow down the increasing power of each country. The words "detente" and "SALT" were spread throughout the papers. Make friends with Russia! They don't want war! Trust!

Now, four months later, the Soviets are "visiting" Afghanistan, "protecting their borders." SALT has been practically forgotten. "You never know what those Russians are going to pull." Mr. Carter is now singing a different song about the U.S.S.R. Boycott the Olympics! Who do those Soviets think they are? We'll show 'em.

What? Confused? Join the club. Confusion, my friend, is the name of the game. "You can't believe everything you read." "You can't believe everything you hear." What can we believe? Whom can we believe? The news, or what is given us as news, contradicts itself, or contradicts other sources of information, or tells us nothing, or tells us something to contradict what we "knew" last week. Last month, the Russians wanted peace as much as we do. Now we hear, "The Soviets have been planning this for months." Not long ago, the Shah was pictured as our loyal, good friend in the Middle East. Now, it is hinted, his regime was corrupt and vicious.

We are confused. Uninformed. Misinformed. We are afraid. We take a look around us. What do we see? We see some Slavic soldiers invading

their neighbors to the south. We begin to worry. They are a three-day journey (by tank, of course) from the Persian Gulf, from which we receive a large portion of our supply of that gooey black stuff that made the "Beverly Hillbillies" so rich. We begin to worry. We see a small country in the Middle East trying to tell us, the mighty United States, what to do, and holding 50 of our citizens hostage. And we see the mighty United States powerless. That's it. Powerless. We see people demonstrating for their beliefs and making statements which show their own confusion or lack of information. We see prices soaring. And we worry. Optimists are labeled "dreamers" and pessimists are called "realists." And we worry.

And along comes the question. If the United States were forced to defend itself in a military confrontation, nuclear or otherwise, could it?

We are told, "Probably not. Our armed forces are insufficient." Where we were told "the struggle for peace and trust is utmost," we are now told, "the draft is necessary to protect our country."

O.K. Maybe so. But we are confused. Statements like, "Hell no, we won't go; we won't fight for Texaco," are made by people who think nothing of telling the attendant, "Fill 'er up." Statements like, "Let only the people who want to be in the army be drafted" are made. The only problem is that if people wanted to be in the army, then our volunteer system would be working. Apparently it's not. "I am equal to you in all areas, but you go fight — I shouldn't be made to." That's equivalent to saying "people are equal, but some are more equal than others." And then there's "The draft is unconstitutional; it is an infringement of my

freedom." But if we aren't prepared to fight for our freedom, we could end up losing it completely. Freedom involves responsibility.

Are America's youth chicken? Are they unpatriotic? Are they cowards? "Today's kids (that's us) just aren't the same as we used to be. Why, in my day, during the big war, there was none of that opposition to the draft." Today's kids are not unpatriotic or disloyal. Afraid, maybe. Confused, certainly. After Pearl Harbor, the draft was hardly necessary to fill the armed forces. Today, people aren't really sure if there is a threat. How do we know for sure? That's why there is so much opposition to the draft. The only problem is, with the sophistication of today's tools of war, by the time we know we need an army, it may be too late.

We simply don't know what to believe.

Time Out For Faith

By Father J. Moffatt, CSB
Aquinas

For most of us the notion of Lent is a distasteful one because we tend to think of it as a time of "giving up" something we wish not to forfeit. The mistake here is to see mortification and self-denial as an end in themselves instead of a means aimed at creating a condition within us which will allow us the freedom to be more truly like Christ.

The word Lent comes from an old English word *lenten* which means spring season. It occurs in the Liturgical calendar at the very time when we and all of nature awaken from the death-sleep of winter and rise to the new life of Spring.

During Lent we are reminded that we are sinners, that we are a people who have turned from God. It would be well for us to remember the Hebrew concept of sin as a condition of a people who have turned from Yahweh rather than a notion of individual acts. We need to turn our lives, we need to amend them, we need to review our motives for the actions we perform. The motive behind our thoughts and actions determines the gravity or the virtue of what we do.

The Italian Renaissance poet Dante Alighieri, in writing *The Divine Comedy*, contrives a picture of Hell as a cone open and wide at the top and twisting its way down to the lowest point at which he places the Satan, frozen in a

sea of ice. Dante placed the souls guilty of the sins of passion at the highest point in his Hell and the sins committed out of malice, the sins of hatred at the lowest point in Hell, closest to Satan and farthest from the warm Sunlight of the Divine.

Time after time the Gospel exhorts us to "pray often, love your enemies, give to the poor, enter the narrow gate, do good; become like little children; deny yourself; take up your cross." We are asked to "rend our hearts and not our garments." The external is valuable only when it is a manifestation of the internal. Lent is a time to prepare for the Springtime of Christianity, for the resurrection of life.

Is this a Fast, to keep
The larder lean,
And clean,
From fat of veals and sheep?
Is it to quit the dish
Of flesh, yet still
To fill
The platter high with fish?
Is it to fast an hour,
Or rag'd to go
Or show
A downcast look or sour?
No, 'tis a Fast to dole
Thy sheaf of wheat
And meat,
Unto the hungry soul.
It is to fast from strife,
From old debate,
And hate;
To circumscribe thy life.
To show a heart grief-rent,
To starve thy sin,
Not bin;
And that's to keep thy Lent.

—Robert Herrick

Fun and Plans

Second semester is an active one for the Nazareth Academy Student Council. There was a "dress-up, dress-down and dress-red" day and each student participant paid \$.25 for the privilege of being out of uniform. Proceeds from these events will go toward a special purchase for the school.



Fun For All Ages

Last month, Cardinal Mooney's Action for People Association (AFPA) held a party for area senior citizens. There was the traditional-turkey dinner, complete with all the trimmings, and followed by dancing to the Goldne Agers Band. Young at Heart, Golden On right, senior Patty Hermann and junior Sean Phelan help with the KP duties after the festivities.



Sound Business

Last month the Rochester Junior Achievement Association held its annual Midtown Trade Fair. Area high school students, representing JA companies sponsored by area business and industry, were on hand to sell their products. Above, Kathy Deisenroth displayed the desk calendar that her company, Datrec, sponsored by Gleasons, was selling. She is a junior at Mercy and is vice president of sales marketing. Mitchell Mather, McQuaid and president of Zephyr, sponsored by Marine Midland, gives the sale pitch for his company's product.

The Way It Was March, 1975

The Aquinas band performed its first concert at St. Agnes and received a standing ovation for their resounding rock, dixieland and ragtime selections. The Mercy basketball team wrapped-up its 9th and 10th straight league wins by beating St. Agnes and Bishop Kearney. These wins also locked up the team's fourth straight league championship. One reason for their success — "Talent," said Sister Cathy Pfleger, coach — that and going to clinics and taking advantage of what basketball doctors at the clinics had to offer.

Candy Sale

A candy drive is in full swing over at St. Agnes. It started with a kick-off pep rally, March 5, and will continue until this Friday. Awards for achieving the school quota will include a school holiday, May 5. Individual quotas will bring out-of-uniform privileges and other prizes. Ms. Bette Geen directed the drive.