

Fr. John Reedy



Looking for the Lord

Sitting alone in my office, I listened carefully to President Reagan's state of the union message. It's clear that a lot of political energy

will be poured into his proposal that large chunks of public service should be turned over to state governments.

These are some thoughts which drifted through the mind of one concerned citizen after the president made his case.

Ronald Reagan is certainly consistent. For many years now he has been maintaining that the federal government was too big, too inefficient, too far removed from the actual needs of the local communities which were being taxed and served.

Many of these criticisms reminded me of my own complaints about winter weather in northern Indiana — a lot of truth to it, but no one expects a serious effort to change the situation. Apparently Reagan is going to go for the change. He will have sympathy, but the task is monumental.

At first glance, he seems to be arguing for the principle of subsidiarity which has been defended in the recent social teaching of the Church. In very simple terms, it says that society benefits when those services and functions which can be offered at a lower level of government are not absorbed into a higher level of government.

The president's writers could have provided him with impressive quotes from Popes John XXIII and Paul VI to support his effort to return responsibilities to the states.

My doubts do not concern the principle but the application. In the actual circumstances of the United States today, can we expect those needed, valuable

services which have been offered by the federal government to be adequately and efficiently provided by state and local governments?

Our answer depends on our best estimation of what is likely to happen under different programs. I can accept the principle of subsidiarity while judging that genuinely needed services cannot and will not be provided at the local and state levels. If that is my opinion, I should oppose Reagan's proposals.

My personal knowledge and experience give me mixed data for this evaluation. I have had some experience with absurd, wasteful, bureaucratic empire-building in federal programs. I have seen — and argued with — government officials who were completely insensitive to the purposes of their programs.

These people, admittedly very few, provoked fury and frustration as they focused on procedural trivia, protection of their turf and concern for their own

careers while they ignored the needs they were hired to serve.

Would local people be more sensitive?

I also saw "revenue-sharing" funds returned to local governments so that they could take care of human needs which were being cut from the budgets of federal programs.

In my experience, very little of those funds went into programs which would replace the eliminated services to human needs. Instead, they were drained away into the ordinary financial and political expenditures of local government.

The tentative conclusion of my thoughts:

That Reagan's program, in broad outline, will not win support. My guess is that neither local politicians nor the country as a whole will buy this reversal.

That it probably should not be accepted. Our society and our economy have just become too complex, too interrelated, for such a decentralization of government service.

Teens and Booze

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"that most 11- and 12-year-olds are at a social level when they'll start drinking," and she explained that this earlier drinking age gives the person a longer time to develop a dependency.

This view is underscored by State Sen. Frank Padavan, (R-C, 11th District), who is chairman of the Senate Mental Hygiene and Addiction Control Committee. In his report ("Nineteen"), regarding proposed legislation for raising the drinking age in New York State to 19 it is stated:

Some adolescents who have become significantly involved with alcohol subsequently exhibit a delinquent lifestyle. The weight of evidence leads to the conclusion that these negative consequences are more of a problem for young people than either defined alcoholism or severe alcohol involvement.

Young people, however, are becoming more and more involved with alcohol and thus more and more susceptible to the clinically defined disease of alcoholism.

The report went on to say that 70 percent of today's teenagers drink; most begin drinking between the ages of 13 and 14 years. Almost one-half of teenage drinkers have been drunk at least once in their lives, and at least 20 percent get drunk once a month or more often.

Why this need to drink? Parental attitudes, immaturity, and peer pressure, said the teenagers who participated in a legislative public hearing recently at East

High School. The forum was conducted by Assemblywoman Pinny Cooke (R-132nd District), who is a member of the governor's Alcohol and Highway Safety Task Force.

What are some of the tragic consequences of drinking? Aside from contributing to physical and mental dysfunction, alcohol is a prime cause of automobile accidents. According to John Cucci, assistant vice president of the Alliance of American Insurers, who reported in Nineteen, "The toll of highway deaths and injuries caused by drinking drivers statewide exceeds 1,000 persons killed and 20,000 seriously injured each year."

Alcohol is also involved in 35 percent of adolescent suicides according to the Baltimore Evening Sun's report.

Are teens aware of alcohol and its inherent problems? It appears they are. Besides the day-long seminar at East High, individual students are bringing this awareness before their peers. Like senior David Albee, who in his article "Licensed Maturity" for the Aquinas Maroon and White (see RapAround), discussed drinking and driving. Last fall, the Cardinal Mooney Health Department invited Frank Wheeler, senior investigator of the Monroe County Medical Examiner's Office, to present his drinking and driving program to the classes.

To shed light on the high cost to society as well as to the individual teenager because of alcohol abuse, the Teens and Booze articles will explore the various aspects of teen drinking.

NEXT WEEK — The perils of drinking and driving.

New Parish

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Therefore, St. Elizabeth can help all us Americans: wives, parents, Sisters, teachers, children, senior citizens, the prosperous and the poor; the Protestants and the Catholics; the discipline Catholics and the charismatic Catholics; the 'new style' priests and the 'old style' priests. Her Sisters from Emmitsburg, Md., opened St. Mary's Hospital here Sept. 15, 1857, so she had a strong tie to our diocese. The new parish was approved following a lengthy study which showed the Hamlin-Clarkson area is one of the fastest growing in the diocese. When Route 390 is completed to the Ontario Expressway, it is felt that the

growth will be further accelerated. Father Amann is a graduate of St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's Seminaries and has a masters in philosophy from Catholic University. He served as assistant pastor at St. Andrew's in Rochester, Holy Trinity in Webster and at Our Lady of Mercy where he later became co-pastor and eventually the sole pastor. Before going to Rome for studies, he was administrator at St. Cecilia's in Elmira.

He also was chaplain at Bishop Kearney High School, coordinator of the Northwest Region and a member of the Priests Council.

United Way

Continued from Page 1 educational, religious or political purposes, and those to capital campaigns, will not be honored.

Father Charles Mulligan, the diocesan director of social ministries, while stressing that the diocese "was not taking a negative attitude toward the plan," nevertheless said, "I'm hesitant about some provisions since "we have not been provided with very complete information" from United Way.

Social Ministries includes Catholic Charities, whose departments are among United Way-assisted agencies.

"A key question," Father Mulligan said, "is relative to the negative designation guarantee. Will United Way in fact make sure that none of a donation goes to any agency to which the donor opts not to support? We have not had careful explanation on this from the United Way. We simply have not had the opportunity to study the plan in depth at this point."

One of the observations made by the planning committee was a growing trend on the part of individuals to want more control over decisions made by institutions that affect their lives. Birmingham said that a recent survey found that 71 percent of the respondents who did not contribute to last year's campaign said they would consider making a gift this year if allowed to say how the gift would be used. Of

those respondents who did contribute to the \$22.5 million fund last year, 45 percent said they would consider giving more if allowed to designate their gifts.

Many in the diocese have objected to funds going to Planned Parenthood because of that agency's pro-abortion posture and its espousal of contraceptive birth control methods.

"In essence, the donor option system integrates the responsibility of the United Way to raise money efficiently and allocate it intelligently, with the right of the contributor to decide the amount and purpose of his gift," Birmingham said.

About 30 United Ways in other cities, including Philadelphia, San Francisco and Los Angeles, have been using some type of donor option system, according to the United Way.

Birmingham said that meetings to discuss the new system have taken place with more than 300 United Way volunteers and agency representatives for the past two months. United Way's fund-raising partner, the American Red Cross, has endorsed the plan.

He said the United Way decided to announce the plan prior to the meeting of the directors to get further public reaction before the final decision is made.

Personal Growth, Individual and Family Counseling Services. P.G. Drug and Alcohol Program. Are you concerned your child is harmfully involved in drugs or alcohol. We have developed a highly successful evaluation program for young people which includes evaluation, individual and group sessions.

THINKING OF ENTERING THE DIOCESAN COLLEGE/SEMINARY PROGRAM AT BECKET HALL? THEN PLAN TO ATTEND.... "PROJECT LEADERSHIP" FEBRUARY 19-21 at Becket Hall 80 Fairport Road (located on the Campus of St. John Fisher College) Project Leadership is a weekend program offered each year to high school Junior and Senior men who are considering a vocation to the priesthood. Project Leadership provides an opportunity to live in the seminary community for the weekend and to learn firsthand, all about the Becket Hall Program. The cost of this weekend program is \$10.00. This fee is payable upon arrival at Becket Hall. MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW! Reservations must be made on or before Wednesday, February 17. FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO MAKE RESERVATIONS CONTACT: Father Tom Valenti, Director of Vocations, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, New York 14624. PHONE (716) 328-3210 from 8:30 - 4:30 Weekdays