

Editorials

Dirty Pool

From the start, the abortion controversy has been marked by unseemly and bitter invective. Now with the Hatch Amendment providing the latest complexity to the issue, new diatribe and dirty tactics have arisen.

The Hatch Amendment would enable Congress and the states to restrict abortions despite the 1973 liberalizing Supreme Court ruling — restrict but not necessarily ban. Because of that pragmatic approach, Hatch has not been able to please all pro-lifers. The anti-abortion forces have been divided into two camps: the first includes the Catholic bishops of the United States and feels that any reduction in the 1.5 million abortions performed annually will be a blessing; the other feels that morality cannot be compromised and that Hatch is a sellout.

Recently, and we use this quote only to show that such sentiment may develop unless quickly quelled, a Catholic official referred to anti-Hatch pro-lifers as the "lunatic fringe." This is not only unkind but also hypocritical since in the very near past, that also was the stand of the official Roman Catholic Church in the United States and still is its position in the rest of the world where there is no Hatch Amendment.

Far from labeling strict pro-lifers, we must remain their friends, Hatch Amendment or not. Without

them, the fray with pro-abortionists may well be futile. We must hold hands and try to make minds meet.

On the other side of the issue, dirty tactics seem to have been raised. Archbishop John R. Roach of Minneapolis-St. Paul and president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, has said that "dishonest and powerful forces" have moved into his state in an attempt to embarrass him and discredit pro-Hatch forces. He said that pro-abortionists have made mailings to students at two Catholic colleges in St. Paul falsely claiming that Hatch would outlaw forms of birth control. Aside from the morality question involved, the claims are patently and deliberately false. Archbishop Roach said the "attacks are bitter, well-funded, and we cannot assume that without our efforts to effect it, a human life amendment can succeed."

He feels that pro-abortionists will be working more at the grassroots level than on the national scene. Therefore, we must all stay informed and alert to such unfair procedures.

And it is vital, perhaps that word could not be better used, to follow the lead of Bishop Matthew H. Clark and the U.S. Bishops in support of Hatch. The amendment will first be debated in the Senate and if it passes that hurdle it will face an even more difficult fight in the House of Representatives, where minds must be changed if Hatch is to become law. That chore lies squarely in our hands. We must write and call our representatives to let them know of our support of the Hatch Amendment.

Fight Bigotry

One of the saddest of truths is that Christianity itself is blemished by pockmarks of bigotry. This is so even though it is hypocritical, to say the least, for some to preach the brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God and then decide some human beings of His creation should be excluded.

Because such thought persists among Christians, including Catholics, the bishops of the United States issued a pastoral letter urging each diocese to combat such bigotry and racism. Bishop Matthew H. Clark points out that this diocese fulfills that call through its Office of Black Ministries. This office shares in next weekend's Black and Native American celebration along with the National Office for Black and Native American Missions and the National Office of Black Catholics.

Many Catholics rightfully concerned over the blight of bigotry within their Church and nation seek ways to end it. One easy and sure method is by contributing to the collection this weekend. As Bishop Clark states in his letter elsewhere in the paper, supporting the collection elsewhere will not only help the poor but will also "proclaim our gratitude for the richness of black culture and heritage with which we are graced as Church and nation."

and Opinions

'Eccentrics' Quoted

Editor:

In response to the mumbo jumbo overflowing the Jan. 27 column, "The Open Window," I would simply like to submit a few pertinent sayings of some of the Marian "eccentrics" of the past who wished "to bring some excitement into their otherwise dull lives."

St. Bernard: "God wills that all graces should be bestowed upon us through Mary... Those who honor her daily will assuredly be saved."

St. Thomas Aquinas: "God, to increase our confidence in Him, has given us His Mother... apparitions do not bring us new doctrines, they bring us new graces."

St. Alphonsus: "When we wish to enter the Heart of Jesus, it suffices to have

recourse to Mary; we are granted an audience immediately."

St. Theophilus: "The Son is pleased that the Mother should pray to Him because He wishes to grant her whatever she asks in order to repay her for the favor received from her in giving Him flesh."

St. John Damascene: "To be devout to you, O holy Virgin, is an arm of salvation which God gives to those whom He wishes to save."

St. Louis De Montfort: "All the true children of God, the predestinate, have God for their Father and Mary for their Mother. He who has not Mary for his Mother has not God for their Father... the heretics, schismatics and others who hate Our Blessed Lady or regard her with indifference, have not God for their Father."

Pope Pius XI: "The time for questioning Fatima is over. It is time to believe."

Pope Pius XII: Fatima is "an affirmation of the Gospel."

Let us hope and pray that our lives may be as "dull" and uneventful as these "eccentrics."

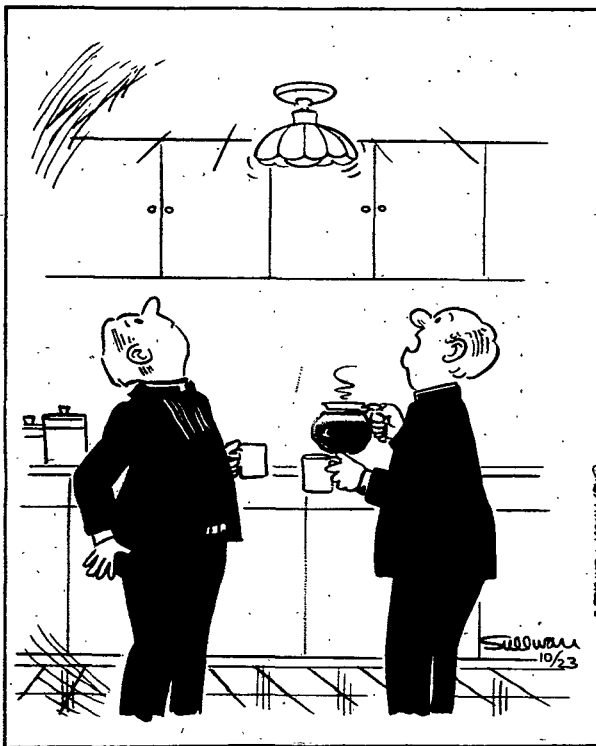
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Editor's Note: In the column in question, Father Louis J. Hohman ended by saying this about such "eccentrics": "Who are we to criticize? If we really knew them, maybe we could look beyond their eccentricities."

Skip Toxic Chemicals

Editor:

An extraordinary successful and economical example of weed control may be found in Australia. A Capt. Arthur Phillip had brought various species of cactus into Australia about 1787



"HE'S THE BEST PASTOR WE'VE EVER HAD, AND IF HE'S INTO TAP DANCING, IT'S OKAY WITH ME."

intending to use them unculturing cochineal insects for dye. Some of the prickly pears or cacti escaped from his gardens and by 1925, about 20 species could be found growing wild. They spread prodigiously, having no natural controls in this new territory, eventually occupying about 60 million acres. At least half of this land was so densely covered it was useless for grazing.

In 1920, Australian entomologists went to North and South America to study insect enemies of the prickly pears in their native habitat. After trying several species, three billion eggs of an Argentine moth were released in Australia in 1930. Only seven years later, the last dense growth of the prickly pear had been destroyed and

the once uninhabitable areas reopened to settlement and grazing. The entire operation had cost less than a penny per acre. In contrast, the unsatisfactory attempts at chemical control in earlier years had cost up to \$10 an acre. This example suggests that extremely effective control of many kinds of unwanted vegetation might be achieved by paying more attention to the role of plant-eating insects.

When reading seed catalogues to plan Spring gardens, skip the toxic chemicals. There are many nonchemical approaches to solving problems.

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Why Hatch Is Necessary Now

Editor:

Re the comments by Stephen McCormick (2-10) on abortion remaining available for women pregnant against their wills through rape or incest and her expressed fear of a return to back-alley abortions, as an opposition to Hatch.

In 1972, the year before the infamous Supreme Court decision, there were 140 maternal deaths from illegal abortions. The Chicago Sun Times exposed false reporting from four abortion clinics in its area. It discovered 12 unreported deaths attributable to these abortion clinics and if we take the cover from our eyes and hearts, we'll realize this false reporting is duplicated in every state. The maternal deaths from legal abortions now exceed the rate from illegal abortions. After the strong Hyde language restricting Medicaid funding two years ago, it was threatened that we would see a large increase in maternal deaths from illegal abortions. This has simply not happened!

Beyond these deaths, Ms. McCormick has not taken into account in her concern for women that horrendous abortion complications are a fact. Do we see chronic inflammatory conditions of female organs, sterility, tubal pregnancies and spontaneous abortions of future pregnancies as benefits to women? Any maternal death is a sorrow but let's not forget that in every abortion there is at least one death — the child's.

Rape and incest are the trumpet calls of the pro-abortionists as they stir in every heart sincere concern. However, a rape victim usually does not become pregnant. The rapist is often infertile and unable to complete the act. The woman is only fertile one or two days a month and it has been proven that a woman having trauma very often does not ovulate. In addition, there are medical procedures available if the woman is seen at a medical center immediately.

Incest is a difficult emotional problem which requires psychiatric care for the whole family. Aborting an innocent baby will not correct the problem or mend the hurts. The percentage of abortions done for incest

compared with the total of 1.5 million is infinitesimal.

Besides all of the above, for a compassionate person like Ms. McCormick, the Hatch Amendment should be just the process to endorse. It will establish a minimum national standard of protection for the unborn and each state can legislate more restrictively but not more liberally. We foresee the national minimum standard will allow abortion for life of the mother and at least in cases of rape and incest. This standard may not be all the very conservative would desire but it will appeal to everyone except those who are for abortion on demand for any reason as we have today.

For instance, does Ms. McCormick want abortion to be used as birth control? With 32 percent of all abortions being done for the second time and 23 percent for the third time, this is not a rhetorical question — it is a reality! Do we believe a teenager should have an abortion with parental knowledge? Do we believe the father has no rights over his child? Do we want abortion for convenience, wrong sex or in the seventh to ninth months? Do we want a handicapped child aborted, and if we do, what are we saying to those who are living and handicapped?

It is vital to realize that the hard cases are the smallest portion of our national figure of 1.5 million abortions each year. With the Hatch HLA we have the opportunity to open discussions at the legislative level which we cannot do now because of the Supreme Court. We need every caring, thoughtful person to be involved to pass this legislation.

Our bishops are not saying that by supporting the Hatch that some abortions are acceptable. They are saying that 1.5 million abortions yearly is unacceptable and something must be done now. I hope that Ms. McCormick and others with questions will attend the information programs on Hatch presented by the Human Life Commission. Decisions made in the dark are often not the best ones.

Peg Turiano
Coordinator
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Diocese of Rochester

Educational Programs On Hatch Amendment

Feb. 28 — St. Patrick's, Corning, 10:45 a.m.

March 1 — St. Vincent's, Corning, 7:30 p.m.

March 1 — St. Agnes, Avon, 8 p.m.

March 14 — St. Mary's, Ontario, 7:30 p.m.