

Editorials

Hunthausen's Act of Love

No one, not even Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthausen of Seattle, believes that the question concerning nuclear armament is an easy one. Archbishop Hunthausen has refused to pay a portion of his income tax as a protest against nuclear weaponry.

In a world long since grown inured to the use of force to settle disputes, it is difficult to shift gears toward the kind of earthly existence Jesus Christ would have us enjoy — a world of turning the cheek without getting your head blown off, of replacing the severed ear, of disavowing the stone-throwers.

Anyone who has a doubt about where Jesus stood vis a vis the use of force should try to imagine Him

in modern garb with a gun in His hand — or try to picture Him in His own earthly existence flailing away with a sword at even those who eventually executed Him.

Despite the Church's traditional position on self-defense, few rational people will dispute the fact that nuclear armament is wrong, morally and perhaps even strategically. The disappearance of all nuclear weaponry is a consummation devoutly to be wished. On one hand, it is simple, only requiring a change in attitude among fellow earthlings. But on the other hand, and more realistically, how can it ever be achieved when we have organizations which pay homage to guns and their destruction within our own society, supposedly the freest on earth? If this nation is unwilling to ban even Saturday night specials, how on earth can we ever expect to make any headway toward outlawing their destructive kin?

Many of his own faith will disown Archbishop Hunthausen. This despite the overwhelming teaching of recent popes, despite the moral outcry of the bishops of the United States, despite the obvious hopes for us from the Savior Himself. Much as

babies with rattles, we cannot let loose of our toys.

But perhaps the archbishop's act will not be entirely futile, if any lesson may be heeded from his pastoral letter concerning his tax act.

He quoted a Vatican II statement: "The arms race is one of the greatest curses on the human race and the harm it inflicts on the poor is more than can be endured."

Then the archbishop added his own apology: "After much prayer, thought and personal struggle, I have decided to withhold 50 percent of my income taxes as means of protesting our nation's continuing involvement in the race for nuclear arms supremacy."

Simple, rational. He urged no one to follow his lead. It is his personal decision and an honorable one. But it will be a futile gesture.

In a bullyboy world which accepts force, fear and intimidation-as guiding lights, a simple act of love and of peace will draw mostly scoffing.

and Opinions

Why No Deaconesses?

Editor:

I am writing to express my anger and objection to the Permanent Deacon Program detailed in the April 14 issue.

My anger grows yearly with the wall of Catholic "maleness" that continues to grow and obstruct women from an active leadership in the Catholic Church. This program simply reinforces the ignorance that excludes women from an active ministry in the Catholic Church.

There is a growing movement in the Church to aggressively exclude women from the institution of the deacon program to the banning of women participating on the altar and speaking from the pulpit. This is a real tragedy because it further alienates committed Christian women like myself from the Catholic Church.

It is ironic that as the Catholic Church calls for reform in such pressing issues as nuclear arms and abortion, that this same Church does not make any efforts toward reform in its own house. The more I look at the leadership in the Catholic Church, the more I see the shadow of the Pharisees whom Christ condemned for their grasping for the words of Scripture, rather than be led by the spirit of God's call.

I have only praise and admiration for the intentions and work of the men involved in this program. But I maintain that this continuing "males only" attitude in the Catholic Church is a blatant hypocrisy in the light of Christ's call to His Church.

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Deacons Cheered... But

Editor:

Among the renewals of Vatican II is the restoration of the permanent diaconate for men. In mid-April, the diocese welcomed its first class of permanent deacons to public ministry in our Church. To these men, I offer encouragement as they continue to explore what the diaconate means.

My questions are addressed to the whole Church: What about diaconate for women? Will that be restored? Should it be restored?

A bit of history might be helpful. Women deacons were an active part of the ancient Church between the third and sixth centuries. One has only to look at the collections of liturgical and canonical traditions of these first centuries (notably the Didascalia and the Apostolic Constitutions) to find clear and extensive references to women deacons.

The Council of Chalcedon (451 AD) speaks of the ordination of women deacons, which took place by the imposition of the bishop's hands, in the presence of presbyters and male deacons. The episcopal prayer over the woman deacon paralleled the prayer over the male deacon, and the Holy Spirit was invoked to aid the woman deacon in fulfilling her ministry, just as in the ordination of priests. In the Byzantine rite of the same period, she was invested with the stole and received the chalice.

Much more could be said about the ministry of women deacons. By the 6th Century, however, opposition to the diaconate of women, based on the assumption that women were inferior human beings, grew enough for the practice to be phased out.

History shows that women deacons existed. Are they desirable today? Many think not. Some oppose women's ordination to both the diaconate and priesthood. Others argue that accepting the diaconate for women compromises the goal of women priests. Still others point to the ministries women already perform. What could women deacons do, they say, that non-ordained women do not do already?

These latter objections could well be based on a devaluation of the sacramental dimension of our Church. Vatican II insists that those who in fact exercise a diaconal role in the Church ought to be given a public character by the Church and strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

Perhaps as the Church grows accustomed to women exercising a wide-ranging but focused ministry, resistance to women priests will gradually erode as well.

The questions that surround these issues need to be asked as part of our Church's quest for faithfulness to the risen Christ.

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Editor's Note: Writer Blum's facts concerning deaconesses are correct. The women deacons were numbered among the clergy, mostly in the East. They were required to observe celibacy. There were limitations on their service; they did not serve at the altar and they basically served with women receiving the sacrament of Baptism. The custom was never accepted in the West and eventually died out in the East. Still, the precedent for deaconesses exists within the Church.

Brownson Commended

Editor:

While reading this month's issue of the Homeletic and Pastoral Review, I was again awakened to the inestimable number of men and women that God, in His infinite love and goodness, raises up for His faithful to reassure them that "I am with you always." In these vile and evil days in which we live, it is of paramount importance to take advantage of God's messages via His human instruments. Orestes Brownson was one of these instruments and from an excellent article from this indispensable magazine, here is a sampling which literally destroys the sophistries of our numerous contemporary "blind guides" suffering from mental paralysis and spiritual emptiness.

"No mortal can speak worthily of the Church of Christ, in which the power, the wisdom, the justice, the love and mercy of God, of the indivisible and ever Blessed Trinity, in all their infinitude are, so to speak, embodied and displayed. Even God himself cannot do more or better than he has done in the Church, for he gives in her himself, and more than himself even he cannot give. How great, how glorious, how awful is the Church. How great, how exceedingly great, the loving kindness of God, who permits us to call her our Mother, to draw life from her breasts, and to rest on her bosom. We love the Church, who is to us the sum of all things good and holy, and we grieve daily over

those who know her not; we grieve when her own children seem to treat her with levity and indifference; we are pained to the heart when we hear men, who have souls to save, for whom Christ died, and whom she longs to clasp to her loving bosom, railing against her, calling her 'the mystery of iniquity,' and her chief pontiff 'the man of sin.' We seem to see our Lord crucified afresh on Calvary, and to hear her sweet voice pleading, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!'" (HPR, April 1982, p. 67) Works by Orestes Brownson can be found at the Rundell Library, downtown.

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Is U.S. Biased On Ireland?

Editor:

On April 10, Gennett News Service published a column by William Ringle titled, "Don't Put Restrictions on Freedom of Speech." Mr. Ringle states that Ian Paisley is despicable and that is the very reason why Paisley should have been granted a visa because of freedom of speech. I agree with Mr. Ringle on that point.

However, Mr. Ringle did not say that Paisley's surrogates, Mrs. Paisley, Norah Bradford, Peter Robinson and John Taylor, were granted entry to the U.S. to preach Orange perfidy wherever they went. Another glaring omission in the Ringle piece was that nothing was said about visa refusals to Northeast Ireland Member of Parliament Owen Carron and Sinn Fein publicity director Danny Morrison. These two gentlemen wanted to present the Irish Republican viewpoint to the American public. The U.S. State Department apparently decided that free speech does not apply to those who oppose the British presence in the north of Ireland.

Carron and Morrison resorted to the use of forged documents to enter the U.S. and were arrested by immigration officials. Granting visas to Paisleyites and Loyalist spokespersons while denying the same to Irish Republicans is hypocritical and discriminatory. Refusing Carron and Morrison the right to speak in the U.S. is a deliberate denial of a fundamental human right that smacks of the restriction of the right of free speech which Ronald Reagan and other U.S. leaders constantly accuse



others of abusing.

I wish that William Ringle had seen fit to include the Carron-Morrison case in his lament of restrictions on freedom of speech. I pray that someday the U.S. government will desist from its current attitude of duplicity and selectivity toward human rights.

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D and C Ad Objectionable

Editor:

To the shame of the Democrat and Chronicle, that paper included in its April 18 issue a full-page ad from an organization that approves killing unborn children. This organization, in addition to advocating the "choice" to kill infants, based its ad on crude religious bigotry. They said that prohibiting abortion means that people will be "forced to accept, as law, one religious interpretation." This statement is a deliberate lie; people of all faiths — and none — believe that destroying an innocent human life is gravely evil.

Killing a child before he or she is born is exactly the same act as killing after he or she is born. It is the same life that is being destroyed; birth is only a change of environment for the infant.

If the D and C countenances such barbarism as this ad, they are as evil as the hedonistic persons that want

the "choice" to kill their own offspring. We need a massive protest to the D and C for running such a monstrous ad, and we need to do everything in our power to stop this horrifying evil.

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Suspicious Of History

Editor:

The church-libbers have been trying to combat the constant cries of the moderates that "everything is changing — what are all these new practices?" So they put their collective heads together, surely in no conspiratorial way, and devised the thinly veiled idea that two negatives might produce a positive.

"If our moderates cry out for the old, ah! then that is what we shall present to them." They ran for the musty church histories, knocking over sacrosanct monks along the way, and tell us that they find in 600 A.D. to verify these "facts." Come now, really!

We moderates are older and I daresay wise enough to see through this thinly veiled ploy. P.T. Barnum said "there's one born every minute." With tongue in cheek, I remind you, the moderates do not fall into that class. Good try, though!!!

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