

Editorials

Leadership

Leadership. That's what President Reagan displayed when he made his offer of reduction of nuclear arms to the Soviet Union.

Undoubtedly, his proposal that as a first step both sides reduce their 7,500 nuclear warheads by one third will be met by opposition from various corners. Some will say that the plan does not go far enough; others, that dealing with the Soviets, particularly if inspection is necessary, is impossible.

The initiative is described as a first step because the president also proposed a second phase whereby both nations would agree on "equal ceilings" on total payload of all nuclear weapons.

Obviously, this an oversimplification of a complex and exceedingly difficult project. Not only are the two nations mutually distrustful but they are not the only nuclear powers involved. Somehow, Communist China must be a party to such pacts if they are to be

realistic. And any number of smaller nations must also abide by any agreements.

As per our relationship with Moscow, President Reagan has lubricated the way by calling for negotiations to begin as early as next month without any preconditions. Analysts see this as a shift in the presidential attitude from bellicosity to conciliation. Some will see this as backtracking or weakness. But others will rightly see it, at this stage anyway, as a necessary movement in a world literally faced with nuclear annihilation.

The move assumes stronger importance precisely because it was made by President Reagan, a conservative. And in another fashion it reflects favorably on him in that it shows that he can alter his attitude if necessary.

That oft-quoted philosophy that the longest journey begins with but a single step seems tailored to this situation. The road to nuclear disarmament will be long but we must begin. It is pleasing that an American president took the initiative. If President Reagan is successful in this, it would easily be the crowning achievement of his presidency. The nation must wish him well.

... But Then

On the other hand, the president shows a peculiar brand of obstinacy when he refuses to endorse proposals to make Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday a national holiday.

Too expensive, he says, echoing the cry of those who use financial reasons for blocking the holiday, even though many have ulterior motives.

For a nation that seems to afford any material thing, it is shameful that we cannot find a way to celebrate a black hero.

Somehow, the president, despite his protestations to the contrary, finds it difficult to relate to the emotional and physical needs of the less than well-off in our nation. His budget cuts slice precisely at those who need him — the jobless, the poor, the vulnerable, the elderly. And now he shirks the opportunity to show that he really does understand the mindset of a huge portion of the populace. Instead he cries poverty. And perhaps it is precisely that: poverty of spirit.

On nuclear arms, the president has shown that he is big enough to change his mind. Would that he chose the same course regarding the Rev. King whose great contribution to our nation was opting for peace when violence beckoned.

and Opinions

Budget Cut Unfair

Editor:

We, the concerned disabled citizens, really feel we are being very much discriminated against... on account of agencies being cut one third of the original financial grants, especially the Independent Living Center of Rochester, 1400 Mount Hope Ave. This situation lets several very well educated people, who are handicapped, out of work.

One is a communication education coordinator; the other is working only part time: she is a blind woman. This is not fair.

The woman who is the educational coordinator is a wonderful spokesperson for the handicapped.

We realize that all budgets are being cut but why The Independent Living Center, and all the other worthwhile agencies who try to help us?

Yes, we are extremely angry and frustrated because we feel that if we disabled persons let this go by the boards, we won't have a thing to fall back on. The Independent Living Center and staff teaches people coming out of institutional living to be more self-reliant, and helps individuals to adjust and become more independent.

And now this great big disappointment. We are more

than thankful to be as self-sufficient as possible; but the ones who truly need this kind of service are the true victims of the budget cut. How would you feel in their circumstances?

Please help these most deserving individuals to find their rightful place in today's society; also the people who have been placed on the unemployment rolls.

Frank A. Scialdone Jr. Concerned Persons Who Really Care 31 Exio Dr. Rochester, N.Y. 14606

Restore Our Mother Mary

Editor:

May is dedicated to Mary, Christ's and our mother.

Often I try to imagine what she looked like, this perfect human being who gave Christ His human form. I close my eyes and see a luminous face full of joy, the freshness of apple blossoms, dancing crystal blue eyes and joy — fun. Remember, she was only a girl of 14 when Jesus was born. I see her running through gardens and fields laughing with her son. What wonderful goodies she must have made — and those seamless garments.

The bible says her joy is to be with the children of men, playing in the world, so she must really appreciate it when her children share their moments in time and try to make them brightest and best as she did and does.

She used to be the unique pride and joy of Catholics, but you hardly ever hear her mentioned any more. We used to point with pride to the unity of Catholicism, that no matter where you went in the world, you felt at home at the Mass in Latin, not a tower of babble and watered down novelties — "anything goes."

Is that why our beloved Mother Mary has been forgotten?

Charismatic movements cannot compare with the solidity of Our Lady that used to be and the Summer School of Catholic Action, when Father Daniel Lord inspired young Catholics with zeal for doing good and helping others. It might not be surprising to find out I was head of Our Lady's Committee, and my sister before me, at

Nazareth Academy. The spiritual enrichment of those times stay for a lifetime.

Dorothy Louis 86 S. Union St. Apt. 409 Rochester, N.Y. 14607

N-Freeze Unwise

Editor:

A newly formed group known as the Task Force on Nuclear Disarmament will be asking diocesan pastors to give room for nuclear disarmament displays (Courier-Journal, 5/5/82).

I believe this is part of the dangerous nuclear freeze mania which could lead to unilateral disarmament and a

further sapping of America's will to exist as a free nation. President Reagan stated on March 22 that "the Soviet Union does have a definite margin of superiority. A (nuclear weapons) freeze would not only be disadvantageous — in fact even dangerous — to us with them in that position."

"Freeze people" are saying that a treaty be made with the Soviet Union on the nuclear arms issue. However, the historic record shows that the Soviets have consistently cheated on every treaty they ever made including SALT.

As we should have learned from Pearl Harbor, military weakness invites the aggressor to make war. It is immoral for us to fail to adequately protect our families and our nation

from those who seek to conquer the world and impose slavery.

Nicholas Hober 101 Lapham St. Rochester, N.Y. 14615

Information Appreciated

Editor:

Thank you for making us aware of the Planned Parenthood activities in the April 21 issue. We have sent a letter to our congressman and ask you to continue to keep us informed of these important issues.

George and Margaret Sichak 90 Caroline Drive Rochester, N.Y. 14624

Diaconate Great for Whom?

Editor:

The ordination of permanent deacons was hailed as a "momentous occasion" for the diocese. Momentous for whom?

A program which admits a married man yet discriminates against a single religious, merely on the basis of sex, leaves some doubt in my mind as to its morality.

Many Sisters serve as pastoral assistants. As a member of a parish having had this experience, I can

attest to the complete dedication, hard work and love provided by these nuns to the parish family. There is no valid reason why they should not be eligible for the permanent diaconate program.

If "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free; there is neither male nor female. For you are all 'one' in Christ Jesus;" on a scale of one to ten, how come we're a minus two?

Mrs. Allan J. Brown 33 Irving Road Rochester, N.Y. 14618

Fr. Albert Shamon

Word for Sunday



The Church Needs Her Institution

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Jn: 17/17-19, (R1) Acts 1/15-17, 20-26, (R2) 1 Jn. 4/11-16.

The theme for Sunday's reading is unity — unity of mind and heart — in anticipation of the founding of the Church at Pentecost.

Christ prayed for unity of mind (R3); John for unity of heart (R2); and Peter gathered together the Church to restore the unity blasted by the defection of Judas (R1).

Today Church unity is being marred by those who, perhaps in good faith, attach the Church as an institution. Young people seem to bristle at institutional religion.

"Religion is all right, but churches are out!" they argue. "After all, religion is a pretty personal thing, but institutions are anything but personal. How often, too, the needs of the organization crowd out the needs of the people. The energy, time and personnel consumed in maintaining the organization could better be spent proclaiming the Gospel."

So some reason.

Others see the Church as one more thing between God and themselves: in fact, "a substitute for God."

Still others complain that it seems being a card-carrying member of the Church is more important than to love God and neighbor.

Institutions, they add, seem to lose their freedom. To get along, they often have to go along. As proof, they cite the fact that recently some Catholic hospitals, under state pressure, have permitted tubal ligations.

Religion, moreover, should seek universal brotherhood, they say, but institutions set up fences, are divisive.

And so it goes on and on.

But did you ever see a dream walking, or a truth talking? Truth cannot become effective in a complex society without organization! Consider the number of organizations recently begotten by ideas on abortion. Man needs organization just as his mind and will need an organized body. How in the world could man ever know

without the highly complex organization of his five senses!

Organization, of course, is not life, but without organization there can be no life. In the Salt Lake Valley, farmers build irrigation canals. These are tile water-courses which conduct the melting snows of the Wasatch Mountains to vineyards and cornfields. The farmers have no guarantee that snow will fall or that it will melt, or that the law of gravitation will bring the waters down to the tile conduits. These things are in the hands of God. The orchards blossom and the corn sprouts not solely because the farmer has laid so many feet of tile, but chiefly because God sends the snow, melts it and causes it to flow downward. Yet the highly organized network of tile canals is necessary to baptize the arid valley and cause it to resurrect into productive life.

Similarly the Church, her organized life, her ministry, her sacraments, her worship, her proclamation of Jesus' message of truth and love — all these are not less essential today than in the beginning, when Peter convened 120 disciples to choose Matthias.

Yes, the institutional Church was there in the beginning and is absolutely necessary. But it should always be, as it was in the beginning, a community of truth and love: working together, praying together and achieving together.

Gabriel

