

Editorials

Hatch Decision Close in Senate

"A right to abortion is not secured by the Constitution. The Congress and the several states shall have concurrent power to restrict and prohibit abortion; provided that a provision of a law of a state which is more restrictive than a conflicting provision of a law of Congress shall govern."

That is the wording of the Hatch Amendment which, if passed into law, would have the effect of reducing abortions. It has gained the official support of the Roman Catholic bishops of the United States. Because it does not restrict abortion on demand outright, it is not exactly popular with many pro-lifers, but the bishops back it because they believe some movement toward life must be made soon.

True, Hatch is a compromise of sorts and no such mechanism is ever satisfactory to all concerned.

If passed, the amendment would establish that there is no such thing as a constitutional right to abortion, would reverse the heinous 1973 Supreme Court decision which liberalized abortion, and give the states and Congress the power to prohibit abortions.

Cardinal Terence Cooke, leader of the bishops' pro-life organization, says the amendment should be supported "as a realistic step which makes it possible to restore legal protection to the unborn."

Some time back, the Courier-Journal, at the behest

of the diocesan Human Life Commission, urged readers to write to their senators and urge them to support the Hatch Amendment. Many did and received what seem stock replies from our two senators, Daniel P. Moynihan and Alfonse D'Amato.

For instance, Sen Moynihan:

"My own position on this issue has been consistent since I first came to the Senate. I find abortion personally repugnant. But I also think that because such decisions are moral and religious in nature, they must be left to each family or individual to make . . . I will not impose my moral standards on others . . . I cannot support governmental interference in that process (abortion choice)."

In short, with the Hatch Amendment at the Senate's doorstep, our senior senator plans to vote against it.

Sen. D'Amato has had a consistently pro-life record and in his letter on Hatch assures those who wrote to him, "Let me assure you that I will take those actions on the floor of the Senate which will best further our mutual goals."

Translated, Sen. D'Amato will vote for Hatch.

The diocesan Human Life Commission has received word that the amendment, already passed by the Judiciary Committee, will be debated very soon on the floor of the Senate.

We urge all in favor of this pro-life measure to write to their senators — urging Sen. Moynihan to reconsider his "I oppose abortion . . . but" position and reinforcing Sen. D'Amato's position. Each has the

same address: United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510.

Bishop Matthew H. Clark stated that the Hatch Amendment "respects Catholic moral principles concerning life. In addition, the amendment offers the possibilities of achieving broad-based support from the citizens of our country and offers the real hope that we can remedy the shame of abortion on demand in the United States."

The vote will be close in the Senate. The help of all who believe in the sanctity of life is needed — make that urgently needed.

Epilogue

Questions produced by the Falkland Islands debacle:

Did an Argentinian "man in the street" provide a fitting epitaph for the conflict and for all wars when he remarked, "All we have are a lot of dead kids"?

...

If they had a World Cup for stupidity, would England and Israel now advance to the "championship" round while the PLO and Argentina meet in the consolations?

...

Would England have reacted so swiftly and boldly if it had been Communist China taking over Hong Kong?

and Opinions

Must Consider Women Priests

Editor:

Bishop Clark's pastoral letter, "The Fire in the Thornbush" is honest, conciliatory and refreshingly hopeful. Responding to the open spirit of his letter some fundamental concerns and questions might be posed concerning the ordination of women.

The Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) relies heavily on the fact that Jesus and the apostles did not ordain women, but there is no evidence that this is of divine command and not just culturally conditioned. In determining Christian revelation, the socio-cultural must be distinguished from the essential and abiding. Jesus did in fact break with many of the prejudices against women but He did not Himself have to break with all of them. He gave us the principles and the Spirit to allow His Church to grow and develop based on these

principles. Jesus never really addressed this question in his day.

But where in the New Testament is maleness listed as a precondition for being an apostle? Why didn't Peter list maleness as a qualification in choosing Judas' successor? Even if it was a pre-condition then, would that make it so for all time? Why didn't the CDF make use of the Pontifical Bible Commission's study of the question which was overwhelmingly agreed that the prohibition of women as priests cannot be supported from the New Testament?

Another important argument of the CDF is that the priest represents the Church "in persona Christi," and Christ was a male. It is therefore the ordained male and only the male who can preside over the Christian assembly and celebrate the Eucharistic sacrifice? Granted, Jesus is male, but it is humanness, not his maleness, that touches the substance of the Incarnation. It is his humanness not his maleness that is essential to his role of Mediator. Were this

not so, one could reasonably argue that half the human race is unredeemed.

The fact that Jesus was and remains a male sheds no light on why only a male can represent Christ. The CDF argues that a woman cannot minister to or represent a man. If women priests cannot represent men, how can male priests represent women? The sacraments, especially the Eucharist, were instituted for human needs. Is the Church not empowered by Christ through the Spirit to develop organically in response to these needs with a changing and growing sense of ministry? Would the substance of the Eucharist be changed if it were celebrated by a woman? Would it be any more or less a miracle?

Finally, in the Church, the community decision-making remains with the priestly hierarchical structure. The very maleness of this power means that women can be marginalized. For the wholeness and completeness of Christ calling all things to Himself, women must play a greater role in that decision-making. This world, both secular and religious, has been ruled almost exclusively by men since the beginning of human history and this had led us to the edge, the brink of nuclear destruction. It is time to listen to other voices.

disarmament, a just world order, support of primacy of conscience, education for peace, alternatives to violence. These actions are all done through prayer. Prayer as we know it is not mean-spirited or slanderous. In our Rochester group we have many religious involved. In the international group, we have many bishops in Pax Christi and many who support us.

Pax Christi is a peace movement which works with Catholics to promote peace.

I attended the June 12 rally in New York City to support the U.N. special session with thousands of other Pax Christi members. I never heard a slanderous or mean-spirited innuendo in the whole course of this experience. In fact, I found the opposite. People were very loving, concerned and caring in their language and attitudes. Their primary concern was peace and justice for everyone. They were willing to make a stand and to actively announce, through action and prayer, peace in Jesus Christ.

I would like to invite Mr. Schmitz to one of our meetings so he can see for himself what we are about. Our next meeting is July 13 and our meeting after that is Aug. 16, at 7:30 p.m. at 750 W. Main St.

Emmett Neary
109 Bakerdale Road
Rochester, N.Y. 14616

Diane Augsburg
Secretary, Pax Christi
750 W. Main St.
Rochester, N.Y. 14611

Detractor Is Invited

Editor:

I am writing in response to William Schmitz's letter regarding Pax Christi.

I have been involved with this group since February 1982.

Pax Christi's priorities are

Women: Seed For Change

Editor:

"Women in the Church" — This is no longer only a vision, it is becoming a reality for us as wives, mothers, single and religious. Though change is slow, it is also hopeful and giving new life to our Church.

Although our participation



**GIVE TO YOUR ENEMY FORGIVENESS
OPPONENT TOLERANCE
FRIENDS YOUR HEART
CHILD A GOOD EXAMPLE
PARENTS DEFERENCE
EVERYBODY SUNSHINE**



in the Church is not entirely as some of us would like it to be, we alone cannot change it. Our prayer should be "How can each one of us change first, Lord?" Some have already struggled with this question and moved on; others have not even thought about their roles as women in their Church.

world, so long as you constantly pose critical questions to the society you live in . . . so long as you stay unsatisfied with the status quo. You are Christian only when you believe that you have a role to play in the realization of this new kingdom. . . .

As today's Churchwomen, I see our task as being the seed. Dying to our self to become the plant. We may not ever see the results. Only God sends the growth. We must draw on the power of the Spirit to love — to hope.

Let's support and pray with Bishop Clark so we as a faith community will be unified, and not divided over a controversy.

Mrs. Donna Carson
267 Winchester St.
Rochester, N.Y. 14615

Continued on Page 14

Guidelines

The Courier-Journal welcomes your opinions. Letters must bear the writer's signature, full address and telephone number. They should be sent to Opinion, Courier-Journal, 114 S. Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607.

Opinions should be brief, typed, double-spaced, no longer than 1 1/2 pages.

We routinely condense letters, edit offensive words and libelous statements, and reserve the right to reject letters. Generally speaking, however, only limited grammatical corrections will be made and the letters will reflect the writer's own style.

Because submitted opinions exceed the space for letters, we publish only original letters addressed to us. We will not use poetry, open letters, or copies of letters sent elsewhere. To ensure diversity, we limit each writer to one letter per month.