

Editorials

Focus on Youth

Editions such as today's Courier-Journal are of special concern to a newspaper's editorial staff. In one issue, this paper has articles concerning teenage alcoholics and suicide among young people. Is the paper concentrating too much on the anomalies of young life? Is any purpose served by printing such problematic pieces?

Obviously, we think so. Besides the fact that such problems do indeed exist and will not disappear if they are ignored, there is another reason for publishing such articles.

The disease of alcohol is insidious. It is complicated. Many of its facets are difficult to recognize. It is only in recent years that it has come to be classified as a chemical dependence, much as other drugs more widely criticized. By focusing on it, perhaps readers' consciousness will be raised; perhaps some hitherto unrecognized subtlety or symptom will be exposed and one individual or one family will be helped.

But why teens? Because it is a growing problem among our younger people. Perhaps because with the deeper and broader attention given to the abuse of drugs, we may tend to overlook the danger of alcoholism among young people. That is why the state has raised the legal drinking age to 19. That is why the governor called the conference on alcoholism among young people which is the focal point of Joan M. Smith's latest series on the problem.

Further support comes from the state itself which

has informed the Courier-Journal that Mrs. Smith's series will distributed to all appropriate state agencies.

The same basic reasons apply to the raison d'etre of the story on teen suicides. This is not a staff-developed story but a report on a talk given here by Dr. Robert Davis, sociologist at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. He said that suicide has tripled among teens in the last 10 years.

Why these things happen and what can be done are of vital interest.

Briefly put, for such reasons newspapers must dwell at times on the darker side of our shared existence.

But such reporting must be balanced if the Courier is to fulfill its objective of reflecting life in the diocese. That is why we weekly print the RapAround section which describes the upbeat, active and wholesome activities of high school youths.

And that is why, in this particular edition, we have an article showing that the diocese is doing something about coalescing the young people into a sense of community.

This year the Office of Youth Ministry was established by the diocese, thanks to the Bishop's Annual Thanks Giving Appeal. Patrick Fox heads this new department and hopefully such exposure as the Courier article will cause parishes to contact him for assistance in setting up beneficial programs for people 13 to 18 years of age.

Balance? We think it tips in favor of the wholesome accomplishments and pursuits of youths and we hope that is truly reflective of young life in our diocese.

PP or PAP?

Theodore M. Black, the former chancellor of the state's Regents, has a book out called "Straight Talk about American Education." And indeed there is straight talk from the feisty Mr. Black.

For instance, in a brief section on Planned Parenthood, titled "PP — or PAP?" he writes, "Planned Parenthood, Inc., began years ago as a well-meaning, civilized effort to help married couples to space the births of their children and limit their families ... Planned Parenthood was probably a legitimate descriptive title back then."

The author continues: "But it isn't now. The name should 'Planned Avoidance of Parenthood' as the organization's considerable energies are devoted to promoting every conceivable method of preventing births. Given our American penchant for acronyms, that title, I suggest, would be shortened to PAP — and 'pap' is baby food, hardly an apt sobriquet for an outfit that is almost hysterically anti-baby."

He then goes on to excoriate Planned Parenthood for the promulgation of hate literature which have been the subject of other editorials here.

While the appeal to bigotry in support of a position is a time-dishonored tactic, it is a relief to notice that more and more Americans are recognizing such efforts by PP or PAP for the low-life pursuit they represent.

and Opinions

What's Wrong With Nestle's?

Editor:

It is difficult to understand how the Nestle Corp. can be accused of being responsible for the deaths of millions of babies in the developing countries of the world. Because of the boycott publicity, I am "examining the issues" and have discovered facts that do not ordinarily appear in the press.

A few examples:

The Nestle company has continually revised its policies in order to comply, not only with the code of the World Health Organization, but with the individual codes of those countries which have their own.

Nestle clearly states on all its labels that breastfeeding is the best for infants. In the major languages of each area, with pictorial graphics where necessary, labels carry explicit instructions on the proper use of formula.

The "milk nurses" who are employed by the milk companies are in countries with the approval of government authorities. Their primary function is nutrition education and they actively promote breastfeeding.

Infant death rates are generally higher in backward rural areas where the benefits of science, including infant formula, haven't yet penetrated.

Most women who breastfeed begin supplemental feeding by the time the infant is three months old. Since the traditional foods used are mixed with the same contaminated water which is used with the infant formula, the use of formula can hardly be blamed for infant mortality. In fact formula is much more nutritious than any other food which is ordinarily available to the baby.

I would think that the

members of INFACI would be interested in doing all they can to make such nutrition available to those countries which are being deprived of its benefits. I see no sign of a program from them, which would educate the mothers who can't read on how to boil water and make it safe for mixing the formula.

Also, nowhere have I been able to find mention of just how Nestle seems to be in violation of the WHO code. Perhaps those who support the boycott of the Nestle Corp. have only examined one side of the issue.

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Unappealing Smorgasbord

Editor:

What a delectable a la carte menu of food for thought we were served in the Oct. 27 issue of the Courier-Journal. The appetizer on Page 1 encourages us to endorse the Stouffer boycott. This, I gather, on the principle that we cannot indirectly give aid to that arch villain, the Nestle Co. For dessert, on the next to last page, in a column on United Way, we find that contributing to United Way would not necessarily benefit Planned Parenthood. Well, maybe not financially, but how about the facade of respectability this morally objectionable agency receives by its inclusion in the campaign?

The Open Window column titled "Was Jesus a Pacifist?" caused a bit of digestive distress. Jesus said that when we lend we could do so freely without expecting a return. Asking excessive interest is definitely frowned upon. This should come as exciting news for DeSales Regional High School as it struggles to pay back its \$50,000 loan and nearly \$30,000 interest. Then we read in reference to an army of 12 legions of angels, that Jesus refused to accept

this military help. I wonder if the angels are aware that they have suddenly become a military unit. Perhaps the heavenly hosts should fly into the office of the Finger Lakes Social Ministries for some quick counseling on how to avoid the celestial draft.

Could a dilemma arise in which we might not be able to turn the other cheek? Suppose the Good Samaritan had happened on the scene an hour earlier. The unfortunate traveler was at that moment being savagely beaten, stripped and robbed. He cried piteously for help. The Samaritan was terribly distressed, but you see he was a peaceful man. "I'd like to help you," he said, "and I do have a walking stick. Perhaps I could beat them off, or at least frighten them away. But I am opposed to violence. If you can just hang in there until they finish beating you, I will be glad to bind up your wounds." This approach might work, except that the Good Samaritan might also be beaten and left for dead. Then who will help?

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SIDS Ad Unfortunate

Editor:

The Oct. 27 issue of the Catholic Courier included an advertisement titled, "Crib Death, What You Must Know to Save A Baby's Life." The text claimed that medical research within the past six months had discovered ways to prevent crib death and that it is now 100 percent preventable if you purchase their book. The Western New York SIDS Center became concerned regarding these claims and the attempt to play on the fears of parents. Efforts to obtain information regarding the contents of this book were unsuccessful but due to the inquiries of SIDS centers nationwide, the

authors of this ad have decided to withdraw this claim and refund the money already sent.

There is no method which has been proven to prevent SIDS. Much active research is currently directed toward detecting high risk infants and prevention of SIDS throughout the world. Several of these projects are in Western New York. Currently there is no reliable test for identifying the

infant who is high risk for SIDS and there certainly is no method of prevention which meets the claims of this unfortunate advertisement. To make such a promise to parents is to play on their emotions and increase the guilt felt by those who have lost an infant to SIDS.

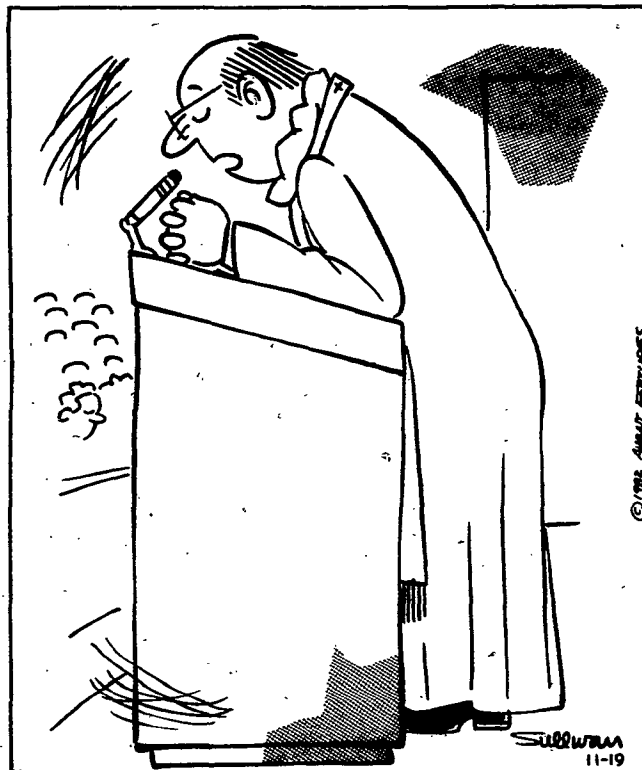
The Western New York SIDS Center would like to encourage parents and others with concerns regarding sudden infant death syndrome to call us at 275-7758 or contact your pediatrician.

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Backs Peace Academy

Editor:

The Human Development Committee of St. John the Evangelist Church gives its strongest support to legislation establishing a National Peace Academy. We wish to encourage the active



"LET'S ALL BOW OUR HEADS NOW AND MEDITATE ON HOW MUCH IT COSTS TO HEAT THE CHURCH."

support of the Courier-Journal and its readers as well.

The National Peace Academy would serve as a national center to teach, refine, develop and coordinate research in the science of peacemaking; i.e., take top-notch people from all walks of life, give them the finest training possible in the science of peacemaking, then send them back into society, here and abroad. They would move on to positions in local, state and national government, private organizations, foreign service, the armed forces, corporations, labor unions, welfare services and international organizations.

Eventually there will be a worldwide reserve of experts in peacemaking who will work for creative alternatives to violence — and who will be available to spot and cool off trouble spots before they reach the explosive point. Some will emerge in positions of power and influence where they well may be able to shape the destiny of the human race.

Conflict is inevitable and contains the threat of massive violence. It is imperative that we begin a national program to train experts to creatively manage conflict and to deal with the domestic violence that increasingly threatens the safety and security of every American here at home as well as the international conflicts which threaten the very existence of our world as we now know it.

The United States has four military academies and five war colleges devoted to maintaining peace by armed forces. Isn't it time we had at least one national institution dedicated to creating the conditions of peace by affirmative means?

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