

Editorials

**Barriers
In the Heart**

When considering their pastoral letter, "The Challenge of Peace," the bishops of the United States were aware that among their tasks was convincing a large segment of the American population that their safety is not cradled in nuclear arms. The bishops, although their principal raison-d'être is spiritual, do not live in a vacuum. They, too, are Americans; they, too, have lived through the recent wars; they, too, have run the gamut of emotions connected with the dropping of the atomic bombs in World War II and the subsequent tensions that have brought us to this present-day crucible.

That is why, as Bishop Matthew H. Clark stresses, they realize that in order to remove the gloom of the nuclear oversoul, a change of heart is needed among vast numbers of Americans and, yes, Russians, too. Obviously, many, if not most, of them have personally experienced this transformation already. They know that the peoples of the world must be re-tooled for peace, spiritually and industrially.

With these things in mind, it is interesting to read the Vatican communique issued in conjunction with the announcement of the theme of Pope John Paul's

1984 World Day of Peace message, "From a new heart, peace is born." That phrase could be incorporated neatly into the letter by the U.S. bishops; it is synonymous with the change of heart, which Bishop Clark so often mentions.

The Vatican says that the pope believes that the conversion of hearts is "the basic path toward the attainment of peace."

"The grave threats to which peace is being subjected in many parts of the world" was also noted. But, the Vatican added, in spite of such uneasiness, "the undertakings promoted by governments, institutions and international organizations, as well as the mobilization of thousands of individuals, groups and churches in favor of peace, encourage one to have hope."

Further, the Vatican said, "From every individual is required the sacrifice and renunciation of those already existing barriers and the heart that prevent the attainment of peace between nations and within a single nation."

More and more, it is obvious that the Church is becoming unified in its opposition to the ways of the world which have endangered not only humankind but the very planet put here by God Himself.

If nuclear war is unleashed, there will be no place to hide. The Church is trying to avoid such an eventuality by instead releasing onto the earth a pervasive spirit of morality from which there also will be no place to hide.

Form or Substance?

Many of us, and probably particularly some lawyers, are vulnerable to the form-over-substance syndrome. Such types become so engrossed and concerned with "the book" that they overlook the heart of the matter. "The baby out with the bath water" is a cliché which applies.

From a strictly spectator viewpoint, this attitude was involved in the recent case of the questioned home run hit by baseball's George Brett. Because he had used a bat with too much pine tar on it, his crucial hit was disallowed and he was declared out. This happened despite the fact that the rule concerning pine tar was put in the book for an entirely different reason and that the substance had nothing to do with the home run itself.

In other words, the whole purpose of the game was being forgotten because of an irrelevant regulation. And so found the president of the American League in reversing the umpires who had really done no wrong in "going by the book."

Does anyone ever get the feeling that such obedience to form rather than substance happens too often in other strata of life -- for instance in the Church?

and Opinion

Metro Police Favored

EDITOR:

In November, a referendum for the consolidation of the police forces in Monroe County will be placed before the citizens of the county. This will bring to closure an issue with a 25-year history of discussion. After consideration of the alternatives, the Department of Justice and Peace of the Diocese of Rochester supports the Metro Police concept and is asking people to reflect seriously on this important and complex issue. The issue merits support because there are questions of justice, equity and cooperation underlying the plan. As it is presently being proposed, the plan will correct the unjust way present police services are provided and prevent the reduction of vital services, specifically education, to city residents. Moreover, the Metro Police plan is the product of community dialogue, negotiation and cooperation.

It is unjust for some towns to access the sheriff's patrol subsidized by the entire county, while residents of the city and 10 other towns and villages pay for their own police forces. Even more unjust is that the city provides police protection and traffic control for thousands of city workers, shoppers and theater patrons, who make their homes in the suburbs. Consolidating police services in the county and switching the mode of police funding from property taxes to sales tax distributes the tax burden more equitably. The sales tax rate will have to be increased from 7 percent to 8 percent to accomplish the funding level. This, of course, is of concern, especially for low income and fixed income families. It is important to realize, however, that low and fixed income families spend a far greater percentage of their incomes on food and housing (non-taxable items), thus the increase in sales tax will be felt least by these families.

The City of Rochester has a serious financial problem despite its sound administrative practices. It has had to resort to reduction of services to balance its budget, since it is unable to freely tax its wealth. The point has

finally come where the city can no longer reduce its services without jeopardizing its residents. The Metro Police force would allow the city to use the funds formerly spent for its police force to continue its quality services to city residents.

The city has the largest concentration of low income people in the county. Historically, a quality education has been the key to providing economic independence and advancement. A quality education is clearly at risk if the city does not receive a significant injection of funds.

Finally, some might see this issue as political. Upon close examination of the history of Metro Police, however, you will discover that it has been largely free from political and partisan rhetoric. Consider the Democrat and Chronicle editorial of Feb. 19, 1979, commending county legislators for "their restraint in avoiding political rhetoric that could polarize debate." Consider the City Newspapers editorial of April 28, 1983, applauding "county legislators from both parties (who) persisted, forgot their traditional differences and worked, in public and in private for an unpopular cause." Consider the many principals in the discussion -- City of Rochester officials, county legislators (from both parties), business leaders, the League of Women Voters, police agencies, town and village officials, church groups and private citizens. The Metro Police proposal is an example of cooperative community planning. A much better model of government and living than the usual, highly publicized, parochial conflicts of our Monroe community. Since it is projected that a defeat of this referendum will destroy the spirit of cooperation created around this plan, it is even more imperative that thorough consideration be given it and to what is at stake for the future of our community.

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He Supports Boycott

EDITOR:

"Anti-Formula Protest at New Hotel" in your July 20 edition stated: "In a solo counter-protest, left, Roy Fries carries a message that hits closer to home."

I resent the fact that you printed my picture and used my name without anyone even talking to me. How did they know me?

A number of people ("good Catholics") criticized me because of the misconstrued impression caused by your coverage. They presumed that I was not in favor of the Nestle's boycott. The truth is, as I've stated on the radio, "I hope that Nestle's is put out of business" -- and a lot of others, too, who place the dollar before people or God in their worship.

The reason for my walking, legally, with my picket sign was to point out the tokenism and hypocrisy of the whole affair. If only one person showed up from each of the 70 sponsoring groups (mostly churches), there'd have been six times as much "people power" as the "nearly a dozen" you told about. And they accomplished nothing but a lot of innocuous news coverage.

Where were the nuns, priests, ministers?

In the past, I have personally appealed to many of the 70 groups to get involved (more with than the tokenistic can of beans or discarded clothing contributed to the unknown "poor") in the serious local problems of, as Father Laurence Tracy was quoted in the daily paper: 1. "... an extreme housing emergency;" 2. the exorbitant rents caused by the policies of Community Development (5,000 vacant lots, 1,484 boarded up housing units, according to the last census, thousands of property code violations, etc.); 3. evictions; 4. the ongoing rat crisis (now a genuine plague on my own street, but completely ignored by our so-called news media), and 5. unemployment.

And though it doesn't apply quite as much to babies, starting last October, appealing to many of the "70" in attempts to get a

complete directory compiled and posted of all possible emergency housing for the homeless of our town -- and finally gave up. But God, at least, was on the side of the homeless. We had a very mild winter.

Though the Rochester diocese outdid the Protestants and Jews, the total beds (by the poorest Catholic churches) wasn't even tokenism.

Let's face it: The Church is dead in "Sick City, U.S.A."

Maybe it's trying to be "born again" by the charade of being concerned about babies dying 10,000 miles away while ignoring Rochester babies -- and their parents.

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Retreat Described

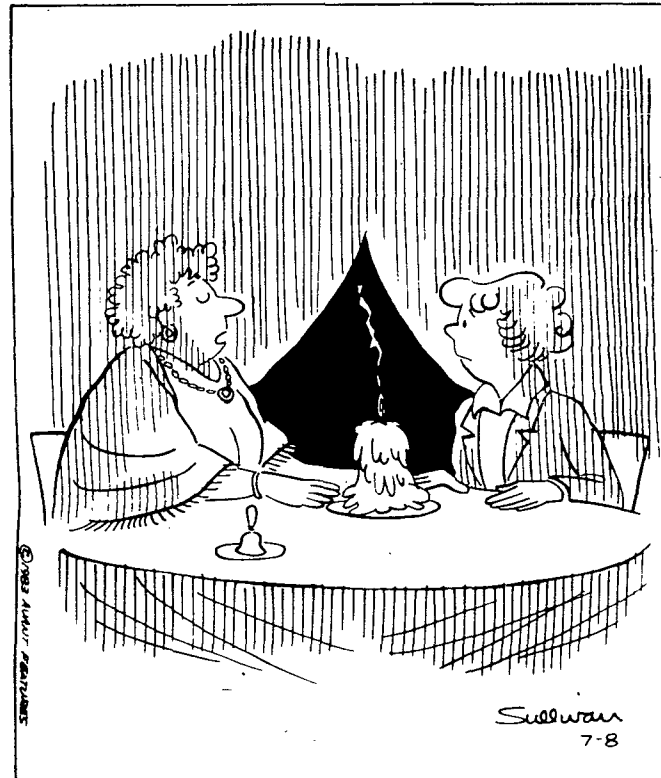
EDITOR:

I am still deliberating on Rochester's first "Faith and Sharing" retreat that I attended over July 4 weekend. Besides being on staff, I also was a retreatant.

Making the retreat were seven religious (one an animator), two priests and 61 lay people/ Of the 61, nine were teenagers and the rest ranged to 80 plus. There were five in wheelchairs, two with slight handicaps, one with a hearing handicap, some with mental handicaps, a few with heart conditions and a few with epilepsy. As the weekend rolled on, we all realized that all who don't practice the Gospel are spiritually handicapped.

There were teens from a Greece reality group who came just to carry luggage to rooms in Murphy Hall (old Becket). After being settled in our rooms, we all met in the assembly hall to get acquainted. The talented music ministry called us to be seated and the two animators (speakers), Marie Paradis, CSJ, and Mario Galeazzi, both of Toronto, and we sang our theme song, "Here I Am, Lord."

My expectations were fulfilled as something happened and I saw it unfold right before my eyes. I saw a man, a professed introvert, who came with a chip on his shoulder, melt in the midst of agape love. I saw people with



"I CAN HEAR HIM... IT'S A PLAINTIVE CRY. HE'S CALLING FOR HIS PORTABLE AIR CONDITIONER."

Reactivating The CCC

EDITOR:

During 1983, the National Association of Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni (NACCCA) is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the CCC.

The NACCCA is trying to locate about two million former members and persons who were connected or affiliated with the CCC during the 1930s and 1940s. It is known that many of these persons reside in New York and areas serviced by the Courier-Journal.

I am sure that many of your readers have often wondered what became of the CCC. You can tell them the CCC lives again in the NACCCA. It is a young and growing organization with chapters in many of the states throughout the nation. And one of its major objectives is to have the CCC reactivated.

Anyone interested in the organization can write to NACCCA, Arlington Blvd., Suite 318, Falls Church, Va. 22042 for further information and literature.

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