

Editorials

ERA Compromise

Liberalized abortion continues to bring divisiveness to our society. The latest instance lies in the tabling of the Equal Rights Amendment by the Republican wing of our state legislature.

Actually, the situation is somewhat like a compound fracture. Gov. Mario Cuomo caused the first crack when he insisted on reviving the ERA bill even though 1. it had already lost in a referendum after a bitter and costly battle, and 2. in the interlude, the amendment was directly connected to liberalized abortion by a federal court in Pennsylvania.

True, many legislators and others oppose ERA regardless. They are not the point here. But when the governor imposed his will on the state political scene by revivifying the dormant ERA issue he forced many adherents of women's rights to choose between them and liberalized abortion. Thus the second fracture when the Republicans tabled the issue.

Those who cannot support ERA without an abortion disclaimer ended up the villains of the piece. They are seen as male chauvinists, as obstructionists and worse. Militant women's groups will be demeaning them; the governor, who cast the bitter seeds in the first place, will be looking for political hay. It is time for those who share the fear of abuse of ERA as presently worded to offer support to these legislators.

And why not a compromise? Let the governor and the legislator go back to the drawing board, and insert the abortion exclusion on the amendment, and see what happens. Isn't it possible to secure "equal rights" for the unborn (females and males) as well as those already able to speak for themselves?



Zoo Campaign

A bear cub provides the official photo for the Seneca Zoological Society's public campaign to raise \$500,000 for Seneca Park Zoo improvements. Contributions may be sent to Zoo Fund, Box Zoo, Rochester, N.Y. 14601.

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 S., Rochester, N.Y. 14607.

Opinions should be brief, typed, double-spaced, no longer than 1½ 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.

and Opinions

Pro-Lifers Going Strong

EDITOR:

This year the National Right to Life Convention took place in Kansas City. The commitment and enthusiasm of the right-to-lifers continues to run high. One of the very positive sights was the presence of 11 representatives of different religious denominations. Rev. Jerry Falwell, featured breakfast speaker, noted that he could not think of any other place or issue where leaders of Evangelicals, Baptists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Methodists, Nazarenes and Catholics could sit at the same table, focused on the same goal.

Cardinal Bernardin, pro-life chairman of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, talked on "Linkage and the Logic of the Abortion Debate." Noting sadness as the product of evaluating the abortion policy of the 1973 Supreme Court, he nonetheless saw pride as the justifiable result of evaluating the efforts of thousands of volunteers who are committed to reversing the present national policy and re-establishing respect for the right to life as a national policy.

He said, "Creating space to change law and policy is a precondition for what must be accomplished." Citing that for a Catholic conscience the direct killing of innocents is always morally wrong either in abortion or as non-combatants in war, he went on to say that abortion is not a "single issue," not even a single kind of issue but an issue about the nature and future of the family, about equality under law and the issue of life and death.

He asserted that whatever promotes respect for the child cannot help but promote respect for all humanity and that when humanity is threatened at its most defenseless point, we have no choice but to stand up in its behalf.

Convention workshops dealt with legislation, new developments in fetology, in vitro fertilization, genetics, drugs and devices, ERA, China and compulsory abortion. The workshop that impressed me most was one by Dr. Bernard Nathanson, presenting a monogram of a baby of 10 weeks gestation being aborted. The fetus was thrashing and attempting to get away from the suction device that was on a search and destroy mission.

A representative of the president addressed the convention and showed a film of the president welcoming the conventioners and pledging his support.

Anyone wishing further information, should call me at 328-6400. I have a list of tapes, movies and printed materials from the convention.

Anita Maruggi
Human Life Commission
650 W. Main St.
Rochester, N.Y.

Natural Way The Best

EDITOR:

Once again we are walking in nature like an elephant in the china cabinet. So C. J. Briejer, a Dutch scientist of rare understanding, sums up our use of weed killers.

Seldom is the question asked, what is the relation between the weed and the soil? Perhaps, even from our narrow standpoint of direct self-interest, the relation is a useful one. Soil and living things in and upon it exist in interdependence and mutual benefit. Presumably, the weed is taking something from the soil, perhaps it is also giving something to it. A real example was shown by the parks in a city in Holland. The roses were doing badly. Soil samples showed strong infestations by tiny nematode worms. Scientists of the Dutch Plant Protection Service did not recommend toxic chemical sprays or soil treatments. Instead they suggested marigolds be planted among the roses. This plant, which a purist would really consider a weed in any rosebed, releases an excretion from its roots that kills the soil nematodes. The advice was taken. Some beds were planted with marigolds, some left without. The results were striking. With the aid of the marigolds, the roses flourished, in the control beds they were weak and drooping. Marigolds are now used in many places for combatting nematodes.

That's just one of the many possible examples of how to control nature with safe, nonchemical ways.

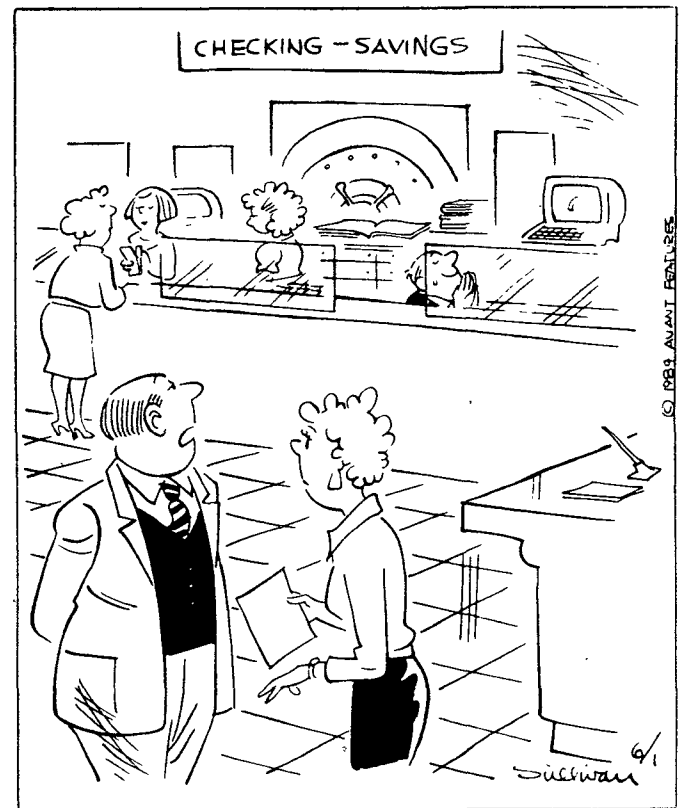
Mary Rita Crowe
2052 E. Main St., Apt. 74
Rochester, N.Y. 14609

Pastoral Challenged

EDITOR:

One of the more disturbing aspects of the bishops pastoral letter, "The Challenge of Peace," is that the bishops withdrew their support of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War because of what they termed "proportionality."

This meant that the bishops believed the suffering and devastation would be greater in Southeast Asia if anti-Communist forces continued to fight.



"QUICK, CATCH OUR EXAMINER BEFORE HE LEAVES AND TELL HIM I'D LIKE HIM TO DO A DOUBLE CHECK!"

Today, however, we know that is not the case. The bloodbath in Cambodia, the boat people in Vietnam, are reminders that death, suffering and loss of freedom increased when we abandoned Indochina to the Communists.

Three million dead in Cambodia as well as thousands of boat people from Vietnam all lost their lives after the Communists took over in 1975.

Those remaining in Indochina today are without freedom with the exception of being free to follow the party line.

Now the bishops are again advocating pacifism in the face of Communist aggression.

I have read the bishops letter and am now in the process of reading it again and the message of avoiding reality seems to pervade.

What is not discussed is the reality of the Soviet war machine and the fact that it is at least as destructive as ours.

Rather than dwell on the destructiveness of a nuclear holocaust ad nauseam, we should listen to President Reagan's message of "peace through strength."

Peace with justice demands strength. Peace without strength leaves the question of justice in the hands of the adversary.

Certainly our adversary, the Soviet Union, with its vast system of labor and extermination camps has little regard for justice.

Pacifism in the face of this atheistic adversary could conceivably result in a loss of life similar to an all-out nuclear war.

If we refer to history we find that nations do not attack one another unless there is a significant imbalance of military strength.

Since wishful thinking is no substitute for military strength, let us not dwell on nuclear horror stories that can have no other purpose than to weaken our resolve to remain militarily strong and free.

Robert Bart
PO Box 594
Ithaca, N.Y. 14851

Best Wishes To Pastor

EDITOR:

We parishioners at St. Patrick's in Seneca Falls will deeply miss our pastor, Father Conboy, who is leaving our parish after six years to go to St. Margaret Mary.

He has done so much for us all, especially working with the young people of the parish, festivals, fundraising, inspiring sermons and eulogies, visiting the sick and also supporting community activities such as the Seneca Falls Hospital. He has carefully maintained our church properties.

We will miss him very much and our prayers go with him in his new assignment.

Mrs. Lena Solometo
225 Daniels St.
Seneca Falls, N.Y.

Literature Needed

EDITOR:

Readers may like to mail their used Catholic pamphlets and magazines to the foreign missions.

If those who wish to do so will please send me self-addressed envelopes, I will give them the addresses of missionary priests who need Catholic literature.

Mary Conway
14 Castle St.
Cork, Ireland

