

Editorial



Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

Love Life

Eight-month-old Steven McDonald, his brother David, and friend Joe Gregorio of the New Covenant Fellowship in Penfield, listen attentively to speakers addressing a crowd of more than 100 people gathered at the Liberty Pole Saturday, May 11, during a Pro-Life rally that originated at St. Mary's Church. See story, Page 6.

and Opinions

Notre Dame Sisters Take Stand on Policy Toward Nicaragua

The following is a statement, agreed upon by the Provincial Chapter of the School Sisters of Notre Dame of the Wilton Province during a meeting April 26 and 27, which endorses the sanctuary movement and states opposition to the policies of the Reagan Administration concerning Central America. The delegates to this chapter represent more than 600 sisters working mainly in the northeastern part of the United States, according to Sister Jeannette Blatz, SSND, provincial councillor.

To the Editor

We, the Provincial Chapter of the School Sisters of Notre Dame of the Wilton Province, affirm and support the workers in the sanctuary movement. We particularly extend our support to those workers and refugees who were arrested in January, 1985, by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Many American religious women and men have lived and worked with Central Americans, and we have received personal testimonies of situations in these countries. They testify that these people are truly fleeing persecution, torture and death.

We defend the Salvadorans and Guatemalans as "political refugees," and we reject their classification as illegal aliens by the United States government and the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

We join with the sanctuary movement in public by rejecting the present stand toward Salvadorans and Guatemalans coming into our country. We join with the U.S. Catholic Conference urging Extended Voluntary Departure status for our brothers and sisters from Central America.

Furthermore, we oppose the Reagan Administration policies of military aid to these countries and any military intervention in Central America.

Trip to Nicaragua Should Include Visit with Contras

To the Editor:

In his letter "Seek the Truth About Nicaragua" (Opinion, May 1), John E. Milich claims to know the situation in Nicaragua because of his recent visit there.

Naturally, the Sandinistas were obliging and showed Mr. Milich alleged contra atrocities and how much better off the Nicaraguan people are now. All we have to do, according to Milich, is to fly to Nicaragua and see for ourselves.

During the Vietnam war there were glowing reports from people who traveled to Indochina and told us how misguided our policy was in that part of the world. As it turned out, what visitors saw was what the communists wanted them to see: It should be recalled that the genocide and mass exodus from Indochina began after, not before, the fall of Indochina in 1975.

Now, with a similar situation in Central America, critics of U.S. policy like John Milich advocate support of yet another Marxist government.

Sources, which I shall document, tell a different story.

J. Michael Waller, writing of his visit to the Nicaraguan Democratic Force in a newsletter called "West Watch," stated that "over 7,800 people were summarily executed by the revolutionary government."

The Council of Inter-American Security publishes the "West Watch" newsletter and is located at 122 C Street, N.W., Suite 330, Washington, D.C. 20001.

This council is composed of such people as President L. Francis Bouchey, who was secretary of the Public Affairs Discussion group to the U.S. mission to the Organization of American States, and Dr. Lewis A.

Tambo, director on leave, who is the U.S. ambassador to Colombia.

Another source of information is the coordinator of Public Diplomacy for Latin America and the Caribbean State Department, Mr. Otto J. Reich.

Writing in the April 19 issue of the Wall Street Journal, "Moscow's Aid to the Sandinistas," (Reich) said: "The claim that the Nicaraguan arms buildup is primarily a defensive move — a reaction, among other things, to increased activity by the contras — is an echo of Sandinista propaganda. The arms buildup started long before there was any significant 'contra' activity. Moreover, a tank-heavy army is ill-equipped to fight guerillas."

Arturo Cruz, the opposition candidate in last year's Nicaraguan election who withdrew charging election fraud, stated that only 1

percent of the 15,000 contras are "Somozistas," followers of the late Anastasio Somoza. In addition, Cruz said the Sandinistas have silenced the press, intimidated the opposition, battled the church and seized private property.

Adolfo Calero, the commander-in-chief of the main rebel army, said that with U.S. support, "we have kept the Sandinistas at bay. We have kept them inside Nicaragua. Had it not been for us, you would see Sandinista expeditionary forces fighting in El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica and Honduras" against U.S. backed governments.

In the March 3 issue of the Miami Herald, a major article stated: "Two West Germans linked to the Baader-Meinhof Gang are now officers in the People's Sandinista Army. One is in charge of the a counter-intelligence unit. The other commands an artillery battalion."

Finally, from the May 3 issue of the National Review magazine: "Managua, Nicaragua, is now the reunion center for alumni of Baader-Meinhof, Red Brigades, Montoneros, PLO terrorists and numerous others."

These sources indicate to me that the Soviet-supplied Sandinistas intend to continue their oppression of the Nicaraguan people and export their Marxist revolution throughout Central America as soon as the contras are no longer a problem.

However, for those who are not convinced that the Sandinistas are Marxist tyrants, a trip to Nicaragua might be in order, but only if a visit to the contra forces be included in the itinerary. That way, both sides would be heard from and the decision, if one was reached, whether to support the Sandinistas or the contras, would not be based on a one-sided visit with the Sandinistas.

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Controversy Continues on Defense, Nuclear Winter

To the Editor:

In your editor's note (attached to Opinion: "War Horror" Is Communist Goal," May 1), you stated that "more than one reader misunderstood the editorial" (re: "Close the Book," April 17). Might it not be that we did not misunderstand the editorial but looked behind it, to the source of its wisdom — Carl Sagan and others of his persuasion? Sagan and his group have conjured up a vision — a War Horror — called "Nuclear Winter" for their own purposes, just as opponents of the Strategic Defense Initiative try to degrade that system with the label "Star Wars" for their own purposes.

One of the greatest rabble rousers of all time once said: "When I ply the masses with rational ideas, they fail to understand me. But when I arouse the right emotion in them, they follow the simple slogans I give them."

Just as many decry the deficit to cover all fiscal and monetary problems, others chant

"Never Again" or "We Shall Overcome" for partisan interests. Millions of Americans were sent "Over There" to "Make the World Safe for Democracy" while thousands were blown to bits on Iwo Jima and Okinawa "Remembering Pearl Harbor." We still have not digested the lesson of the "Vietnam Era."

Those are all emotional appeals, not rational ideas. It is no easier for those who suffered in WW II to forget "Pearl Harbor" than it is for the Jews to forget the Holocaust, blacks to forget slavery or Vietnam veterans to forget the horrors of their experiences.

Now, we are confronted with an appeal for a "Nuclear Freeze." This, too, is a slogan, not a rational idea. If a nuclear freeze were a rational idea and its proponents really were against nuclear war, they would go the next step and come out against all wars, get on an

Aeroflot jet and parade up and down in front of the Kremlin on alternate weeks. The rational point to consider in the world conflict is what the "enemy" says it wants — not what we want it to want. The Soviet Union wants a nuclear freeze, a maintenance of the status quo. President Reagan wants a nuclear reduction down to zero weapons, but unfortunately he has not provided his supporters with a simple slogan to follow.

In your editor's note you said we should not "be pacifists or allow ourselves to be controlled by forces whose beliefs are abhorrent to us. But we must find a way to avoid that by some means that will not cause the annihilation of mankind." You propose a rational idea and there are some who believe that a means has already been found. Their slogan is "Peace through Strength."

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Return to the Rosary

To the Editor:

The month of May is with us again, and we are reminded to say the rosary. How many of us will take the time?

We are also reminded of the Hitler atrocities and the war of Vietnam.

I would like to remind us of the apparitions at Fatima and the promises the Blessed Mother made so long ago. She said pray the rosary every day and return to God. If not, there would be terrible wars and punishments.

We did not follow her advice, and today we can look back and see the fulfillment of

her warnings. The communists have their way in many places, and abortion, murder and all kinds of crime run rampant in our streets. The Catholic Church is ridiculed and threatened.

We have another chance now to listen to Our Lady. Take the time to say the rosary each day — at least one or two decades. Peace of mind will be your reward and eventually peace on earth.

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Guidelines

The Courier-Journal welcomes your opinions. Letters must bear the writers' signatures, full addresses and telephone numbers. They should be sent to: Opinion, Courier-Journal, 114 S. Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607

Opinions should be brief, typed, double-spaced, and 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 writers' own styles.

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