

Editorial

Reflections on Days Past

In a June 10 letter to the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Catholic Conference urged members of that body to seek a diplomatic solution to the crisis in U.S./Nicaraguan relations and questioned our government's authorization of so-called "humanitarian aid" to the contra rebels in that country.

The letter, written by USCC General Secretary Monsignor Daniel F. Hoye, also questioned President Ronald Reagan's declaration of a trade embargo against Nicaragua. Monsignor Hoye wrote that the USCC "has consistently urged expanded diplomatic and political measures as the morally acceptable and politically realistic way of addressing the serious problems facing U.S./Nicaraguan relations." He further added: "We seriously question proposals which provide equivalent assistance even though not under the title of military aid."

"Efforts to provide genuinely humanitarian assistance both to Nicaraguan refugees outside their country as well as to needy and suffering people within Nicaragua without regard to their political views are worthy of serious consideration," Monsignor Hoye wrote. "While we must, in principle, be in favor of such aid, we are conscious of the enormous practical difficulties in providing truly humanitarian aid at the levels needed."

The USCC's point — that aid that is truly humanitarian in spirit must be directed to all needy Nicaraguans, not just those of certain political inclinations — was overlooked. On June 12, the House voted 248-184 to provide \$27 million in what was described as humanitarian aid to the contras. The House barred involvement of the

Central Intelligence Agency or Defense Department in handling the aid, which could be used to for such items as food, medical supplies and blankets.

The situation parallels one from the early 1970s. In Chile Salvador Allende, a socialist, had been elected president in what at least seemed to be a fair election. The Allende government quickly fell into disfavor with the U.S. government over its policy of nationalizing such national resources as mines and for an attempt at land reform. Allende's supposed communist leanings became a rallying point for a planned takeover by the Chilean military. The military's efforts, similar to those of the Nicaraguan contras, eventually gained the full support of the CIA. In 1973, Allende was killed, and for a short while it was thought "democracy" would be restored in Chile.

Today, however, we see that the Chilean government brought to power — with U.S. assistance has become a repressive and totalitarian military state with few, if any, "democratic ideals."

Granted, the Sandinista government is no paragon of virtue, and it clearly has communist tendencies. But, as the USCC recommends, cannot we better battle the spread of communism or totalitarianism through negotiation? Could we not better offer the Sandinistas attractive economic incentives in return for their efforts in "democratizing" their government? Would it not be easier and more effective to woo the Sandinistas from the communists than to convince them at gunpoint and run the risk of installing a contra government that may indeed resemble that of Pinochet's Chilean regime?

No Need To Respond To Lord's Accusers

To the Editor:

A response to the letter written by J.M. Weis (Opinion: "Concerned by Silence on Anti-Catholic Play," June 5) concerning Bishop Clark's silence regarding the play "Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You":

The Lord God answers questions when asked.

He responds to statements of Truth. But faced with His accusers, He answers

nothing.

Bishop Clark listened to God's voice and obeyed Him by remaining silent.

The Lord God does not defend Himself. He has no need to do so. He does not want us to defend Him.

He is our defender.

M.K. Jurusik
215 Lynwood Ave.
Elmira Heights

Missionary Father Seeks Funds, Religious Articles

To the Editor:

While thanking you and your readers for all the mission help given me while in Kannanalloor, may I request you once again support me financially to complete St. Anthony's shrine and chapel now under construction? Your intentions and those of your dear ones will be remembered in my

Masses and prayers.

You can be a servant of the missionary Church by supporting my new mission station in our various projects for the spiritual and socio-economic uplift of the unfortunates of the area. The stream of mission need is steady and unending. We need your vote of confidence.

My new mission field needs also rosaries, used Christmas and Easter cards, statues, medals, used clothes, used magazines, and other odds and ends useful in my work. They will be shared by many priests and nuns for the people. Kindly forward these items and your kind financial offerings to my new address:

Father Paul Cruz
Kadavur Church
Mathillil P.O. 691, 601
Quilon, Kerala, India

Send Catholic Writing To Foreign Missions

To the Editor:

Readers may like to mail their used Catholic pamphlets and magazines directly 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 and nuns who need Catholic literature.

Mary Conway
14 Castle Street
Cork, Ireland



"I HAVE A NIECE WHO'S GOING CRAZY BECAUSE SHE HAS FRECKLES. COULD YOU TALK TO HER, JOB?"

and Opinions

Writer Recalls Joy of Spirit Alive

To the Editor:

The memory of God's dance upon the green of St. John Fisher College (at Spirit Alive, June 8) will linger in my soul with the freshness of a warm spring wind as it moves, gently penetrating our inmost being with its earthy fragrance of a world coming back to life. Its tender embrace brings the sweet aroma of moist ground, of roses, dandelions, daisies and wee creatures that spring from His hands' caress of the earthiness, the everydayness of life and make these simple gifts most sacred.

This magnificent God of ours chooses to dance, both seen and unseen, within the heart of this great Church with such powerful grace that we do not even realize this dance, until a child's heart makes it seen.

What child's heart is this that moves the dance of love to visible form? Was it the children of our group, both young and old, who shared themselves so freely? Was it the

hearts of many young people who worked so hard to make Spirit Alive take place? Was it the children who, from their wheelchairs, produced such rhythm of demand to dance that movement was generated through our group, then out to others? Or was that child's heart the bishop's heart (that of Bishop Matthew H. Clark), who in love for the Spirit and for his people, would not refuse my arm in a dance of peace and joy?

It was of course all these hearts beating within the chamber of the immense heart of mercy and joy, that heart we live out of; and it is for that heart of the child Jesus that we seek to live. It is the raising of His life that directs the movement of our nurturing, of our parenting of a restless, delightful, rebellious, demanding, creative, indulgent, suffering, lovable world in which we live.

Paula Dumont
67 Palo Alto Drive
Rochester

On the Right Side

with Father Paul J. Cuddy



Letters to Public Persons

To Mrs. Dolores Lamb, C.C.D.
St. Ann's Church, Hornell

Do you remember when I was director of the Hornell Legion of Mary, how I urged the Legionaires to develop the apostolate of the pen? You and Ginny Hissong did take it seriously. As a professional reporter for the Elmira Gazette some time ago, you have a facility with the pen not given to many. Do you recall some observations? That more people read letters to the editor than any other section of the paper? When there is an issue, whether good or bad, why be silent?

Perhaps the most scholarly priest in our diocese is Father Joseph Egan of Elmira. He taught dogmatic theology for years at St. Bernard's Seminary, and his students still speak of his effectiveness as a professor. When he was assigned pastor of St. Patrick's, Elmira, he used his writing skills to instruct through his provoking and instructive parish bulletin. On occasion, he would write a blistering letter to the editor of the Elmira Gazette, correcting some error and elucidating some Catholic concern. It would be the most-read article in the paper. I often said to him: "Father Egan, you will go to purgatory for not using your gifts sufficiently. With the terrible things happening within the Church, who is more capable of defense and offense than yourself?" My nagging annoyed him, and once he tartly retorted: "That's the job of bishops. That's what they're paid for." Monsignor James McAniff made the same observation.

When my weekly article in the Courier-Journal was suspended because of severely restricted space during the recent period of transition, I was surprised — and pleased of course — that so many people took the time and effort to write to the editor asking for restoration. Now, On the Right Side is back, with its consistent theme of fidelity to the Holy Father and to the Catholic Church, offensively exposing those who undermine the Church, e.g. those dreadful priests and nuns and ex-nuns who haunt Donahue and such-like shows; proposing books that are helpful; and in the spirit of community, giving bits of news of people and events in the parishes.

It must be 50 years ago that Father Dan Lord, S.J. wrote a pamphlet: "How to Write a Letter." I wish I could find a copy. But if I were to write: "How to Write to an Editor, or a Television or

Radio Manager, to a Legislator or a Bishop," I would suggest:

- 1). Use the best quality paper and, if possible, a quality sheet with an impressive letterhead. One that reads "Office of the Mayor" or "Lamy, Salerno, Shapiro and Schultzenheimer, Attorneys at Law" would catch the eye and imagination of the editor, and he is psychologically conditioned to read with respect.
- 2). Keep the letter short and to the point. Some insist on writing essays.
- 3). Be courteous. When people are riled up, they tend to be vituperative.
- 4). Commend what is commendable. I do this frequently about good television programs.

Father Raymond Heisel, who is a kind of clerical Felix Unger, sent me a copy of a letter to the Courier-Journal editor which is a model: brevity, clarity, humor, on a quality-type paper with the impressive letterhead "Mother of Sorrows Church":

"Dear Editor:

Just as I was delighted to see the Courier-Journal showing signs of recuperation, along came the May 29th issue with a disappointment. I looked in vain for Father Cuddy's 'On the Right Side' column. This column was rated No. 1 in your own readers' survey. If your classified ads were in effect, I would submit this copy: 'WANTED: The return of On the Right Side by a columnist who carries a great deal of weight.'"

The 'weight,' of course, refers to my 230 pounds rather than a great influence.

Hope Andy's leg is better. With such a long internment with it, he must have memorized William F. Buckley's National Review. Why don't you get him "Death Comes for the Archbishop" by Willa Cather? I just got it again from the library and find it fascinating. Greetings to the Legionaires, Fathers Schmitt, Antinirelli and Gibbons, and to all the people of Hornell.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Father Cuddy's column was missing from the May 29 issue of the Courier-Journal because it did not arrive in the mail at our offices until well after deadline. Nothing unusual; the post office last week delivered to us a press release postmarked in mid-February. That release had been "found in a piece of postal equipment believed empty," and its delivery was accompanied by the Postal Service's sincere apologies.

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 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 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.