

Editorial & Opinion

PLO must earn Jews' trust

Guest Editorial

EDITOR'S NOTE: We received the following op-ed piece from Michael Winograd, regional director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, in response to articles about Israel in our December 15 issue. We present the essay here in its entirety in the interest of providing another viewpoint on this important issue.

By Michael Winograd

As Palestinian frustration gives way to optimism following the U.S. decision to talk with the Palestine Liberation Organization, Jews in America and throughout the world continue to experience the range of emotions familiar to those personally connected to the Israel-Arab conflict.

Should the words recently spoken by Yasser Arafat in Geneva come to be realized by action, American Jews might begin to reassess their longstanding attitude toward a man who has led a 24-year campaign of violence against their people. For now, however, there should be no mistake that anxiety overrides hope.

Memory is a fundamental part of the Jewish psyche. And one need not look too far into the past to see that Arafat has made a common practice of masking rejectionist PLO goals with moderate rhetoric.

Events as recent as those that transpired last June at the Arab summit in Algiers provide a striking example of the PLO double-talk that continues to taint the current atmosphere. During the summit, an unsigned English-language document authored by Bassam Abu Sharif, Arafat's personal press spokesman, was circulated among Western journalists. In it, Abu Sharif noted Israel's right to exist and declared a desire on the part of Palestinians to live peacefully with the Jewish state.

While basking in the subsequent praise from the international community, Arafat refused to endorse or even comment publicly on the document. Then one week before the November Palestine National Council in Algiers, the PLO chairman enunciated his

view on the document in the clearest of terms. The PLO is "opposed to a Zionist state," he said. "Zionism is a racist movement," and "we don't want a racist state in this area."

Is it any wonder, then, that the majority of American Jews have responded to Arafat's most recent pronouncement with deep apprehension?

Most American Jews and other supporters of Israel will not shed their doubts easily about an organization whose past excesses have terrorized much of the world. The PLO has long focused on Washington and the American public in an effort to win the trust and support that it considers essential to its cause. Now, as the organization begins its pursuit of American minds with increased vigor, the United States must make certain that mere rhetoric not be mistaken for words of moderation, and that PLO gestures are accompanied by tangible moves toward peace.

To start, Washington must insist that for the PLO to qualify as a party to negotiations, it must renounce its covenant, which calls for Israel's dissolution. Israel should not be expected to negotiate its fate with an organization bent on its destruction.

Second, the PLO should be encouraged in the strongest of terms to order an end to the violence that it has sanctioned and abetted at Israel's doorstep. To prove his intention of "peaceful coexistence" with Israel, Arafat must be willing to instill that notion in the collective consciousness of his people.

Third, the U.S. government must proceed with caution and refrain from pressuring Israel to deal with the PLO. To do otherwise would create a perception of an isolated and weakened Israel — a perception certain to be dangerously exploited by the PLO.

For American Jews and others who remain skeptical about PLO intentions, the key to that organization's acceptance lies in the PLO itself. It is not enough, either psychologically or practically, for the PLO chairman to utter the phrases prescribed by Washington. Those words must be bound by deeds.

When Anwar Sadat sought peace with Israel in 1978, he backed his words with action. By doing so, he initiated a breakthrough for peace and gained the respect of all Americans. For the U.S.-PLO dialogue to advance the peace process and win the confidence of American Jews, Yasser Arafat must do no less.

Holy Eucharist is frequently neglected privilege

To the editor:

What an awesome and extraordinary privilege has been given to us in the Holy Eucharist and so many of us take it for granted and don't really appreciate how truly blessed we are!

In the Old Testament, the chosen people were afraid to even say the name of God and referred to Him as Yahweh. They believed that if they saw God they would immediately die. Only the high priest was allowed to go into the inner chamber of the temple, called the holy of holies, where the tablets of the Ten Commandments were kept in the tabernacle and then, only on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

Our Lord prepared us for the coming of the Eucharist. He gave the Israelites in the desert manna every day as a foretaste of what was to be. He fed 4,000 and 5,000 with just a few loaves of bread and some fish. When He told His disciples that he was going to give them His Body and Blood to eat, many left Him. For the Jews, blood was the sign of life and they were, mistakenly, revolted at the thought of drinking blood. Jesus was saddened to see them leave and He asked the Apostles if they were going to do the same. To their credit, they decided to remain with the One who had the words of eternal life (John 6:66-69).

We have the tremendous favor and glorious honor to receive the Lord Himself

Right to Life could finance advertising for Birthright

To the editor:

I might suggest that the executive director of Birthright who wrote about the high cost of publicity speak to the executive director of Right-to-Life who, judging by the number of full-page political ads it ran in the papers, has pro-life money to burn.

Any monies we might have given Right-to-Life will henceforth be donated to Birthright and we'll cast our own votes, thank you.

Kathy Crane
Martinot Avenue
Rochester

into our tabernacle — our body — every day. God is as close to us as when He was formed in the womb of The Blessed Mother — in a different way of course, but still intimately united with us. Truly marvelous and beyond belief if our Lord had not willed it so (John 6:53-56).

This privilege was not granted to Adam, the father of mankind; nor to Noah, God's faithful servant; nor to Abraham, our father in faith. Omitted too were Isaac and Jacob and all the other Old Testament patriarchs and prophets. David and the Jewish kings and the other mighty rulers of ancient times were all excluded. Even the nine choirs of heavenly hosts were not granted this fantastic and intimate prerogative.

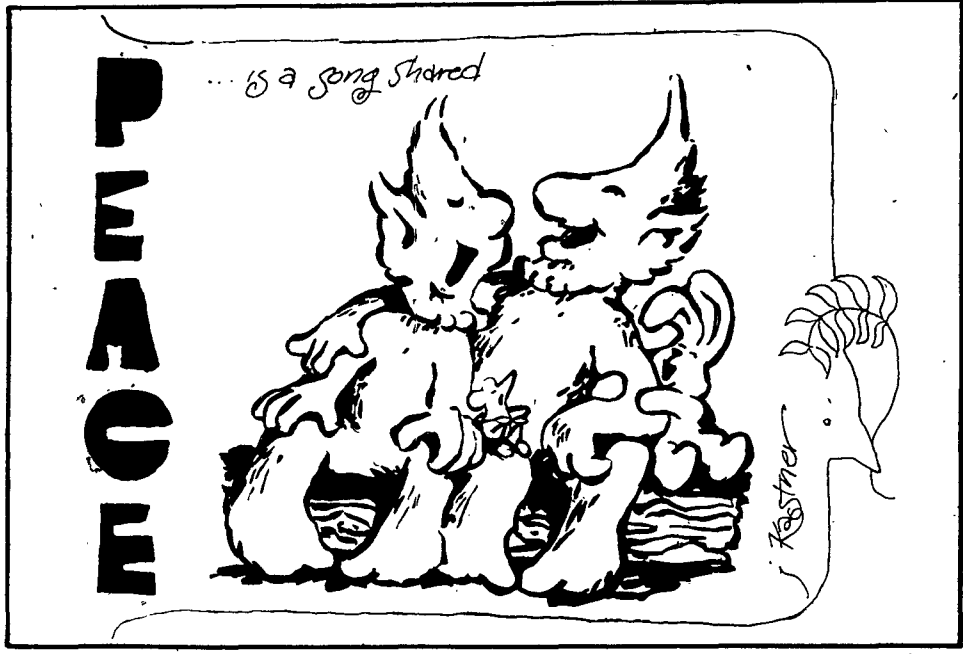
When we are in church, we are granted a special audience with our Universal King hidden in the tabernacle under the species of bread. We are under the same roof as Him! Wouldn't it be inspiring and uplifting if our people would return to the practice of silence in the presence of the Living God.

We can never be worthy of this magnificent privilege. He alone has made us worthy by His sacrifice on the cross. And how can we prepare to receive Him and properly thank Him? We can ask the Immaculate Heart of Mary and all the angels and saints to adorn our soul with their prayers, works, joys, merits and sufferings as so many jewels to honor and welcome our God before we humbly receive Him and ask them to thank Him with us.

And what do we do about this? If we can, do we stop in just for a minute to tell the Lord that we love Him, are sorry for all the wrong we have done, ask for help to do His will or just reverently keep Him company? Those who do this and receive Him devoutly and lovingly will, I believe, be especially singled out for honor in the hereafter.

Perhaps God is permitting us to experience the ever escalating shortage of priests, without whom there is no Holy Eucharist, as a way to make us more appreciative and responsive to God among us.

Jerry J. Paladino
R.D. #1
Rock Stream, NY



School employees question tone

To the editor:

The article headlined "McQuaid brainstormers win" by Rob Cullivan in the Nov. 3 issue was read with interest and not a little dismay.

Mr. Cullivan had every right to be proud of the McQuaid team and we applaud the team's effort.

There were, however, two points in the article that merit an alternative approach.

Team members at Hilton are chosen on their academic merit and not on any other basis. Mr. Cullivan's reference to our captain and her knowledge of baking bread was totally unnecessary. Christine Robillard is not "just another pretty face."

Secondly, the comments on "publicly funded counterparts" and "privilege of the enlightened" were not only not necessary, but were somewhat offensive. This would seem to indicate an elitist attitude that we hope this newspaper does not foster.

Judith G. Gagnier and
Thomas E. Dowd
Hilton Central School

It might behoove the Courier to proofread articles submitted by Mr. Cullivan. We both work at Hilton, are proud of our schools and the caliber of our students.

We would like to think that the financial support we have given McQuaid over the years through raffles and walks is not being used to create an attitude that does not befit the fine tradition of McQuaid.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Courier-Journal regrets any offense caused by this article. All C-J articles are both edited and proofread before publication, but in this case the rush of deadline led to an unfortunate lapse in judgment. We should point out, however, that the reporter intended the remarks in question to be humorous — which they clearly failed to be — not as a criticism of the Hilton school system or its students.

Staffers decry display of militarism

To the editor:

We, the pastoral staff of St. Mary's (Rochester), want to congratulate the City of Rochester on the completion of the Main Street Project. Along with city and county officials we, too, hope it will be an important phase in the continuing rebirth of the city.

The celebration marking the reopening of Main Street was highlighted by a holiday parade. Indeed, it was a fitting way to observe the event.

Our delight turned to disappointment and dismay when, after Santa Claus arrived, what to our wondering eyes did appear but military might — tanks, arms and soldiers!

How sad! At a time of year when both the Jewish and Christian faiths celebrate events of light and peace, the parading of military might seemed both out of place and inappropriate for the occasion. This is particularly true

given the large number of small children in the crowd. What kind of a message do we want them to take home, to take to their heart?

There is a time set aside each year to remember those who have fought to defend us. Memorial Day parades and oratory justly pay tribute to those who gave their very life for us all.

This time of Hanukkah and Christmas calls us to peace. Instruments of war have no place in parades of this season.

Rochesterians can be proud of a renewed street and city. We celebrate that accomplishment best with friends, neighbors, bands and floats, but not tanks and guns.

St. Mary's Pastoral Staff

EDITOR'S NOTE: This letter was signed by Father James Lawlor, St. Mary's pastor, and nine members of the parish staff.

Coming home to roost on pro-life education

To the editor:

It is interesting to observe that one of the noted public castigators of the Project Life sit-ins is vice president of our diocese's board of social ministry. P. David Finks (in a commentary in the Nov. 16 Democrat and Chronicle) decries the "noisy, single-issue extremists" demonstrating against abortion at the local clinics. Perhaps Mr. Finks would be interested in knowing that the Division of Social Ministry worked tooth and nail several years ago to dismantle the diocese's Human Life Commission. Do you know what the purpose of the Human Life Commission was? "To develop a pro-life consensus by education, com-

munity organization and political action" — which Mr. Finks maintains in his article should be going on instead of sit-ins! Perhaps if the organization for which Mr. Finks works had not destroyed the Human Life Commission, we would not need sit-ins today. Chickens always come home to roost, don't they?

By the way, the Project Life people are not single-issue folk. They just have some priorities in their lives — so did the prophets before them (see Matthew 5:12).

Father David Mura
St. Michael's Church
Penn Yan

C-J Letters Policy

The Courier-Journal wishes to provide space for readers throughout the diocese to express opinions on all sides of the issues. We welcome all signed, original letters about current issues affecting Church life.

Although we cannot publish every letter we receive, we seek, insofar as possible, to provide a balanced representation of expressed opinions and a variety of reflections on life in the Church. We will

choose letters for publication based on likely reader interest, timeliness and a sense of fair play. Our discerning readers may determine whether to agree or disagree with the opinions of the letter writers.

We reserve the right to edit all letters. Mail them to: Courier-Journal, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, NY, 14624. Please include your full name as well as telephone number and complete address for verification purposes.

Courier-Journal

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