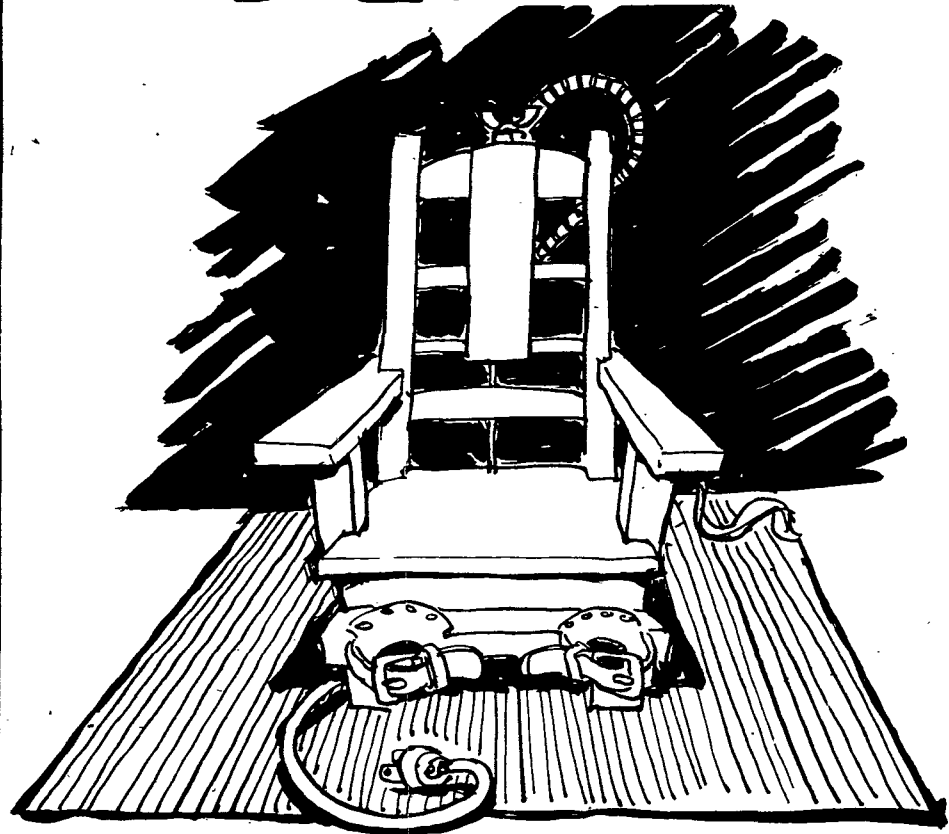


PEACE



... is the resolve not to steal God's & nature's prerogative of when life shall end.

KASNER

Priests oppose executions

To the editor:

We are Roman Catholic priests of the Rochester Diocese who have been meeting for nearly ten years to explore questions of justice and social ministry.

One of these issues is the death penalty. A bill reinstating the death penalty was recently passed by both chambers of the New York State Legislature, but subsequently vetoed by Governor Cuomo. Soon both the Assembly and the Senate will attempt overrides of the Governor's veto.

As teachers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we support our church's teachings that have been affirmed by Pope John Paul II, all the bishops of the United States and the bishops of New York State, including our own Bishop Matthew H. Clark. These teachings affirm our belief in the worth and dignity of each person, made in the image and likeness of God; in God alone as the Lord of life; and in Jesus who set the example for us when he both taught and prac-

ticed unconditional forgiveness.

Our diocese was the site of the first execution in New York State. While executions no longer are carried out in Auburn or anywhere else in the state, the great challenge for us is to find ways of dealing with crime and violence which show real justice and compassion; without resorting to the very violence and vengeance we condemn.

We urge all who believe in the gospel of forgiveness and reconciliation to write your legislators, urging them to vote against reinstating the death penalty in New York State.

Father Joseph Hart
 Father Michael Mahler
 Father Kevin Murphy
 Father George Wiant
 Father Daniel Tormey
 Father Joseph Brennan
 Father William Spilly
 Father Paul Brennan

Protests headlines of articles on Kleen Brite dispute

To the editor:

I write to protest what I consider your use of misleading headings in the two recent articles dealing with the Kleen Brite issue.

Your most recent article in the May 25th edition was entitled "Kleen Brite Pickets Draw Diocesan Support." A careful reading of the article leads me to believe that this heading is inappropriate, misleading and I suspect deliberately chosen for its dramatic effect regardless of the facts.

It appears to me that a few individuals within the diocese of Rochester, including some religious, have chosen to support the Kleen Brite pickets. That is a far cry from the diocesan support that the heading proclaims.

To begin with we have laws in this country which govern the rights of individual employees who wish to be represented by a union. These laws are enforced by the National Labor Relations Board which is involved in the Kleen Brite dispute.

Secondly I confess to a total lack of knowledge regarding the dispute between Kleen Brite and its employees but I assume the National Labor Relations Board is capable of sifting through the evidence and

enforcing the existing laws.

I further grant to any individual the right to protest if they feel an injustice is being perpetrated providing they do this as an individual. When they claim to represent any group I feel it is obligatory that they have the full consent and agreement of the group they claim to represent. This type of commitment by the diocese is, I feel, totally lacking in this instance and therefore your heading implies that which is totally untrue.

I am sure that there are many who would agree with me that involvement in union disputes is not a natural extension of Catholicism as claimed by Father Tracey, according to your article. I would much prefer to see the rights of the involved employees protected by the laws of our country.

It seems to me the diocese, the church and Christianity in general in this country have far more pressing priorities of a spiritual and moral nature than such things as whether Bill Bombard's job performance would improve if his bosses would leave him alone.

It appears to me a few shortsighted liberals, including some religious, have cho-

Questions statements from women religious

To the editor:

The heading of the article "Pope's letter attracts mixed local reactions" (*Courier*, April 27), is misleading I found, because the Religious interviewed pretty well agreed on the one theme, "The Pope's letter is deficient in one or more aspects." No one voiced full support for the contents. And what little approval was conceded, was done in an obviously restrained manner.

I sincerely doubt that these comments and attitudes reflect or represent the positions of all the Religious in the diocese. Why, may I ask, were the interviews so unrepresentative of diversity or are we to believe that there is only one view existent in the Religious communities?

It was also interesting to note how the value of a Christian or Catholic education was peremptorily dismissed and/or disparaged by several of the Religious including the Diocese of Rochester's vicar for religious. For example, the article stated that Sister Banick, Diocesan vicar for religious cited "studies now indicate that Catholics as a group are among the best educated, wealthiest groups in the country, and that their need is no longer necessarily for religious-based schools."

Underlying Sister Banick's viewpoint is, I believe, a conception that priority in preaching and teaching the Gospel should be given to the poor. I submit that the mission of the Church is to address spiritual needs that transcend all class and social conditions. I cannot see that the better off economically an individual is, the less need there is for evangelization, indeed there may well be more.

As for the need of vocations, they (the Religious) came down very hard on the continuing necessity for more vocations in the traditional sense, stating that the needs formerly met by traditional religious are now adequately filled by lay people "especially women," who "are increasingly being recognized as partners in ministry with sisters, brothers and priests."

Now I recognize the important role many women fulfill in the ministrations of church life today and I fully appreciate their contributions. For the most part, I believe the majority of such women perform these duties from a sense of urgency brought on by the sad personnel deficiencies apparent in so many aspects of the Church. I believe that most of them have no "ulterior motives" in performing their duties; they do

not regard themselves as "professionals" but are there through their faith and love of the Church. Most of them, I believe, would be well contented to withdraw if qualified replacements could be found.

I am therefore at a loss to explain the reaction of religious who are content with the trend of decreasing vocations in their ranks. I think there is a strong correlation between their outlook on the necessity for Catholic education and the concurrent withering of vocations in the traditional sense.

Now if we place these developments, i.e. the deflowering of Catholic education and religious vocations in the context of the subjective, anti-magisterium, free-wheeling, anti-authoritarian theology all too prevalent in certain quarters of the Church's membership, we can better understand the cause and roots.

Bishop Clark's record in preparing the stage for this outcome should not go unnoticed. That includes for examples, the Charles Curran endorsement, his weekly confirmation of Richard McBrien's muddled and unstable column, his long neglect of attention to education and vocation problems until recently when they have been pounding on his door, etc., etc.

If the Bishop is launching a drive to strengthen education and recruit more priests and religious and then we are thus informed by this article of no great urgency for them, where pray tell are we going? My opinion, and I believe many others will concur, is that the Bishop does not have his house (diocese) in order. How can he expect to achieve his professed objectives when some in his own administration believe in policies and actions that are not only at variance but inimical to their success?

Is this why we can experience an interview of Catholic high schoolers (*Courier*, "As Teens See It," April 20) in which all four replied in favor of women priests? This is typical of the crosscurrents in our Diocese and if Bishop Matthew Clark is not ultimately responsible, who is?

The Bishop should stop waffling. He should, if he is able, issue a comprehensive exposition of where the Diocese is going when it extricates itself from this whirlpool of conflicting objectives.

William T. Hammill
 Clardale Drive
 Rochester

sen this issue to proclaim themselves champions of the underdog and wrap themselves in the mantle of social justice. Surely they can find a better cause.

To summarize I take no position in the Kleen Brite dispute but rather I write to protest your inappropriate headings on articles dealing with this issue. I would hope that the officials of the diocese would reject the claim of your heading indicating diocesan support or at least let you know discreetly that they would appreciate more caution in the future.

When you have an official statement issued by the Bishop of the Diocese of Rochester indicating support of the Kleen Brite pickets we will have another situation to discuss. Until then I consider your heading poor journalism or a deliberate attempt to mislead which ill serves the diocese and its members.

Walter C. Ervin Jr.
 West Third St., Elmira

EDITOR'S NOTE: It is our understanding that the Urban Services, Spanish Apostolate and Black Ministries representatives who support the union effort are acting not as private citizens, but in their official capacities as diocesan employees.

