

News service unfairly reports British activities

To the editors:

Black History Month (February) was celebrated in 1990 by Mrs. Margaret Thatcher dropping all economic sanctions against South Africa. Thatcher also took time out from her schedule to make a special trip to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France to ask the other European nations to follow her much less than noble efforts.

This year, 1991, Britain's conservative government is celebrating by buying 25,000 tons of coal from South Africa. Where is this coal going? To the six Irish counties still under British control known as "Northern Ireland," a place where native Irish people — usually called "Catholics" — experience two and one half more unemployment than their British counterparts — usually referred to as "Protestants." Northern Ireland Electric, a public utility uses the coal to make electricity for the British colony. Every time a person turns on a light he is helping apartheid. A white coal miner in South Africa makes five times the salary of an African coal miner with equal skills.

Fr. O'Malley recalled

To the editors:

A good number of parishioners of Holy Trinity, Webster, New York, want everyone to know that Father John Patrick O'Malley was a beloved member of our Parish Family for more than two years. He was an intimate part of our daily lives. Father said Mass daily here, he took a role in preaching until recently, he was very much a part of our summer vacation school, our elementary school, our school of religion, and our local nursing home, Maplewood Nursing Home. We want you to know that we are grieving too.

Mary Ann Penlon
Pamela Schultz
Mary Lou Cariale
Kathleen Donaket
Leo Kester
Helen Kester
Patricia Bishoping
Holy Trinity, Webster

Prelate appears lost

To the editors:

The article in the *Catholic Courier* dated Jan. 24 quoting Chaldean Catholic Patriarch Raphael I. Bidawid of Baghdad has to have outraged anyone who believes in the almighty, whatever name you might be comfortable with. If in fact this clergyman has been quoted accurately, the Pope must still be experiencing nausea from their conversation in Rome. We don't know from the article what Pope John Paul II replied to this diatribe but certainly public censorship, at the least, should have been invoked.

Rather than ramble on, which could easily be done, the only statement which fits the patriarch is: "How can the sheep find their way when the shepherd is lost?"

Douglas Curran
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Stop articles on gays

To the editors:

I am writing to request that you discontinue articles about former priests and nuns who have become homosexuals and lesbians and their opinions. We all know or should know that such practices are an abomination to the Lord. Read Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and Romans 1:24-28.

I live in Penfield and I don't believe people out here are interested in such immoral behavior.

Ray Guinsbeck
Rochester

What concerns me most about the whole affair is that African Americans are kept uninformed about the coal purchase. Associated Press, which is well aware of what is happening in Northern Ireland, did not feel these facts news worthy. Associated Press would not want to be the one to stop Margaret Thatcher from speaking at the Republican National Convention. We could not have African Americans not buying British products! Associated Press is now keeping African Americans uninformed in the 90's as it has kept Irish Americans uninformed about Northern

Ireland in the 70's and 80's. Recently there were many AP releases concerning bombings. You hear of shootings and bombings in Northern Ireland and we are told it is a religious problem. You wonder why a church has never been destroyed. It really doesn't wash does it?

Associated Press never talks about the fact that until 1968 you had to own property to vote in Northern Ireland. Native Irish people, being poor, had no voice in the government. AP never speaks of censorship, torture, jury-less trials, visa denials and internment, all of which are part of

Northern Ireland. The very fact that the highest office in the land, Secretary of Northern, is appointed not elected is never mentioned. It seems to follow that this should be the place to benefit from a black man who has to ride a hot, filthy bus a long distance to get to work. There he will spend hours on his knees in a four foot mine shaft for slave wages. Thank you, Associated Press, this is your third decade of unjust reporting concerning Northern Ireland.

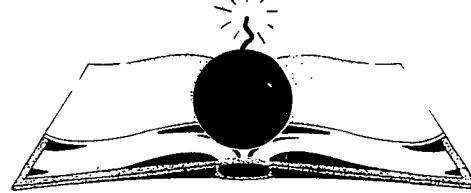
Michael F. Larson
Ontario

'Good News' does not embrace just war

To the editors:

In reading the letter to the editors of Mark Scibilia-Carter (*Catholic Courier*, Feb. 7: "Jesus set example of pacifism for followers"), I found the answer to my discomfort of the bishop's and my pastor's recounting of the "just war theory" in the past few months. I found these so disconcerting, that I didn't read past the opening paragraphs and, therefore, must confess that I know nothing of the theory. Placing the word "just" and "war" in the same title seems to me an oxymoron for the followers of Jesus.

It is plain to me that such a work would never spring from Jesus. As was pointed out in the previous letter, Jesus had plenty of reason to do so, but we find it not in the Gospels. One could say that He had another mission and could not be concerned with political strategy. But one might say that He also knew a better answer and that the mission that He carried out, even to his death at the hands of His enemies — my word not His — is the answer.



I find it even more interesting that He did not condemn the Romans, who at the time were raping the land of his countrymen, the land of His Father's own chosen people. He did not join or condemn the zealots, who were fighting to free this land from the oppressors. Nor did He choose to ignore the reality of war in this world. Rather, he chose to say: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God."

Is this document (the just-war doctrine) a search for forgiveness from our fellow humans for the destruction that we might decide to bring upon them? Is it to satisfy a need to excuse our inability to follow the example of the One we call Lord? In either case, our motives are ill founded. If we held out the hand of Christ's peace to our

fellow humans instead of the sword of our justice, forgiveness for our trespasses would be forthcoming from them and for theirs from us. If our sin causes us to fall short of Jesus's example, as oft time it will, the Father's forgiveness is forever available.

What place does such a document have in the church? I can only sense that it has no place. Jesus established and blessed His church to bring His "Good News" to all people. That "Good News" was taught by His preaching and His example. His church should concern itself with bringing forward His teachings and His example no matter how formidable they might be for us to emulate. That "Good News" contained the message of His Father's forgiveness. His church must make a path available to this forgiveness, if and only after we have failed to live to His teachings and His example.

Paul Marx
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Peacemaking is a requirement of Christian beliefs

To the editors:

In Feb. 7, *Catholic Courier* ("Bishops' view of war criticized during rally.") It is not the Bishop's view that should be criticized, but those Catholics who would support war. A war that has claimed over 150 of our patriotic Americans. ... The American people have been misguided into believing that it is unpatriotic to oppose the

U.S. policy of war. WAR IS NOT A NINTENDO GAME, WAR IS MAIMING, WAR IS SUFFERING, WAR IS DEATH.

The sale of American flags has been brisk. It is a sad commentary for many Christians that patriotism has regained popularity as a result of the U.S. entering into war. It is a sad commentary for many Christians that it took a war to bring a whole new appreciation for our dedicated military. They are and have been the best of America. It is a sad commentary for many Christians who believe that to support the war policy is to support the soldiers. There is only one way to support our soldiers and that is to want them home safe and sound and that can only be accomplished by being AGAINST THE WAR POLICY — THAT'S PATRIOTISM.

We should heed the words of Pope John Paul II: "Today the scale and the horror of modern warfare — whether nuclear or not — make it totally unacceptable as a means

of settling differences between nations. War should belong to the tragic past, to history; it should find no place on humanity's agenda for the future." Also the words of Anglican Bishops in 1988, "War as a method of settling international disputes is incompatible with the teaching and examples of our Lord Jesus Christ."

We are called to be peacemakers. Peacemaking is not an optional commitment, it is a requirement of our faith by our Lord Jesus. The content and context of our peacemaking is set not by political agenda or ideological program, but by the teaching of his Church. (The Challenge of Peace, 333). When just one Christian believes that this is a just war — we have failed as Church. ...

Thank you Bishop Clark and all those of the Faith Community who issued a NO WAR statement. This is the true teaching of Jesus Christ.

Susan Stehling
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Victor

Church rules regulate all sexual preferences

To the editors:

Regarding the stance on homosexuality and church teaching of former Jesuit John J. McNeil, I ask the reader to read this statement from the article on him in today's *Catholic Courier* (Feb. 21: "Former Jesuit still dissents on homosexuality"):

"The former Jesuit criticized the church for teaching that it is acceptable for a person to have a homosexual orientation, but sinful for him or her to express that orientation in homosexual activity."

Now I ask the reader to change one word in this statement and read it again:

"The former Jesuit criticized the church for teaching that it is acceptable for a person to have a heterosexual orientation, but sinful for him or her to express that orientation in heterosexual activity," with an emphasis on sexual. Both are correct. Heterosexuals are just as oriented as homosexuals, just as attracted by each other, and just as forbidden to seek sex outside marriage. Heterosexuals can choose celibacy just as can homosexuals. Not everyone gets drunk and/or has sex. We're all living by the same rules. So what is McNeil's real problem?

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