

the "Profiles in Courage" award to Warren by the Chevy Chase chapter of B'nai B'rith. "Warren, said Kennedy, demonstrated that the Constitution is "not just a piece of parchment kept in helium...but it is a living force - a guide for contemporary answers to contemporary questions." But now, Kennedy said, he fears an "era of crisis, an era of retrogression and repression...era which will demand frequent profiles in courage if we are to survive as a free people." The signs, he said, "are small but they are ominous...and taken together they suggest a trend and a pattern." The symptoms, he warned, "give the impression...that "Z" could happen here." Among these symptoms, Kennedy recited:

- More wiretapping in more kinds of cases
- Pressures for no-knock searches and for detention without bail
- The use of scare tactics to discourage attendance at protest gatherings.
- Obsessive focus on the few lawbreakers in peaceful crowds of tens of thousands
- Growing use of domestic spies in schools, in political groups, at public meetings
- Verbal harassment of dissenters by political leaders
- Federal stockpiling of huge amounts of tear gas and equipping of several marshals with shotguns they do not need or want
- Court nominees chosen for their willingness to resist the constitutional mandate rather than for eminence in leadership
- A concerted effort to interfere with the freedom of the press led by the Number Two man in the Administration (Vice President Agnew).

The list comprised an indictment by Kennedy of much of the Nixon administration's efforts for a hard-nosed approach to crime and dissent.

S.J. Micciche, Globe Washington Bureau, 1970.

These fractured kids remind me of a description given by Rosemary Ruether in NCR, June 5, 1972:

"Adopting a fugitive style of life rather than submit to unjust laws of society."

I suppose those who cried the loudest for "law and order" were the Wall Street people:

It has been no secret over the years that some of the most consistent winners on Wall Street have been members of criminal organizations who have pilfered dozens of brokerage houses and banks with remarkable ease. But when Sen. John McClellan's permanent subcommittee on investigations opened hearings last week on crime in the securities industry, the Senators were served up one surprise: everyone, it seems, is now getting into the act.

The committee heard testimony from a glittering array of experts ranging from Attorney General John Mitchell to William Casey, chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission. But the principal witness was Assistant New York District Attorney Murray Gross, who for the last eleven years has watched Wall Street slowly but consistently lose the fight against crime. "I would call it a free-for-all" Gross told the committee. "Everybody is stealing - be it the messenger, be it the clerk or even supervisory personnel. According to Gross, law enforcement and the financial committee became aware of the "mushrooming" crime problem less than ten

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years ago. "In 1966" he said, "Wall Street spoke of thefts as high as \$9.1 million; in 1967 their figures reached \$37 million. Today, it is conservatively estimated at upwards of \$100 million.

Newsweek, June 21, 1971.

Street people soon enough run into the adults who want to use them for crime. What is shocking is when they find out it is a cop, a big businessman, a judge - the very bastions of morality, who run the show and run it with impunity.

Read about "plea-copping" if you want the nauseating truth about the "justice" your kids refused to respect. And be ashamed. I was talking recently with an old schoolmate friend of mine whom I hadn't seen for 25 years. Now a prospering lawyer-politician, he confided: "Paul, it is true what the kids are saying. I'm ashamed to tell you: In all my years of practice I never won a case that I didn't buy."

This country went paranoid about "hippies" just as it had about "commies" (in the days of McCarthy and loyalty oaths), "Japs" (when we incarcerated loyal Americans), Indians (the only good one being a dead one), Niggers (who could neither worship nor urinate in the same room with us), poor people (who stubbornly refused to pull themselves up by the bootstraps), etc. Next time will it be Christians? Will it be you? When the rights of one group can be subverted with impunity, then the rights of all are in jeopardy.

Senator Charles Percy may have put it better:

We must stop looking for solutions to our problems in terms of repression. We must begin to look for them in terms of responsiveness. If we are to maintain our institutions and the integrity of our society, we must find better procedures for the redress of just grievances...To assert that a government may ignore basic human rights to SOME degree in SOME cases is to show an underlying contempt for our democratic process.

James Crowley, Boston Globe.

"There are men - now in power in this country - who do not respect dissent, who cannot cope with turmoil, and who believe that the people of America are ready to support repression as long as it is done with a quiet voice and a business suit." Speech by Vice Pres. Agnew.

James Crowley, Boston Globe

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A LETTER FROM A DEAR FRIEND AND
MY REPLY

(This letter, somewhat disguised, is from an old friend I very much admire).

"Paul darling - May 20 - Aunt Martha's birthday, and I'm just home from Mass - Pentecost, the Feast of The Holy Spirit. I am sure that my dear little sister has a front seat "up there". She had her hell right here on earth all because she didn't know God - His great love for us - His generosity - His forgiveness when He knows we are truly sorry that we have offended Him.

Paul dear, DO YOU KNOW GOD? Horrified? So long I have wanted to write you but didn't know where to begin; where to go when I did begin; and when to stop. Today I decided to begin. I'll just ramble on. I don't know my Bible and am no good on quotes but I have had 80 years of living - always with God in my heart - so I should be able to write with a little wisdom.

Paul, you may not like much that I say but always remember I love you dearly - as a son - and feel that you are a little boy who has lost his way, and I am so anxious that you find it.

Paul dear, this is God's world. He created it and everything in it. Above all, He loves us more than you or I could ever understand. He wants us to be happy. He gives us all the graces we need, but He has given us "free will" - to do. Do you think He was unwise to give us that Free Will?

Paul - those kids you want so much to save and help are His kids. Do you think your love for them is greater than His love for them? Do you think He doesn't know their needs? It is so hard for us to understand, isn't it? Do you think He loves them less because you can't find a house for them; a place to say Mass for them; people to accept them?

Darling, you want to play God - find a Utopia for these kids to live their way.

Let's go way back to the time of Christ. He - the Son of God - didn't even have a house to be born in. When He started His public life He went out among the poor, the sick, the sinners, the lepers, the multitude. Did He ever have a house to care for any of them? I never felt He wanted to build a Utopia to save them, to treat them, to protect them. He preached - rather talked to them and gave them His love. Don't you think He felt frustrated - when He cured 10 lepers and only one came back to thank Him? He asked "where are the other nine?" He was human as well as the Son of God.

Remember the story about the sower who went out to sow his seeds? Some fell here and some fell there but only some fell on good ground and grew. But the sower never went back to sow any more seed where it didn't grow, did he?

Darling, this is one hell of a world but it is still God's world and He loves us. I know, dear, that you and I are just humans - but Jesus took on humanity. He was born a human baby; lived a human boyhood. He went as a human man to teach and preach so He too must have known all the frustrations and hurts of a human. That is a big subject and one I question and think about. Was Jesus a human all the way to His death on the Cross?

Now you are not another Jesus but you were trained and ordained to do His work in a very special way. I don't go along with your being or looking like - quote - a "freak". I can well understand your not wearing your clerical clothes but regardless of what you wear, you are a priest - not a social worker. You were sent by the Cardinal to be the Street Priest. As a Priest your job is a spiritual job - not a doctor, not a policeman, not a Hippie, not one of the street kids. You were insulted; hurt; given the run-around and so you - quote "threw in the towel and after 25 years of youth work retired from the scene." What does that mean? Was the job just too much for you? Think of the Mission priests who work so hard and so long often with so little results. You were sent as a missionary to the streets of Boston.

Paul, you are young, very ardent in your work but you have much to learn. I wish you would go away somewhere - a Monastery perhaps - and make a retreat. "Know yourself" - get rid of the hurts and frustrations and rancor in your heart over what politicians did and did not do; what your fellow priests did and did not do; the Church - And then find out your relationship with God. Are you working for Him as a Priest? Paul, a doctor, a social worker, or a policeman can't be a Priest. All work has its limitations; its own special kind of work. You can't be everything. We are all so infinitesimal, but if we hammer away on our one infinitesimal job and do it for God, accepting God's terms and His working conditions, I feel sure He will be pleased and that will be our greatest reward - to satisfy Him.

I hope, dear, that I haven't hurt you but Life is full of hurts and you are young enough to take them.

I won't say any more. I have a small picture of you on my dresser - a happy priest - and each day I say a little prayer to God to bless you and guide you. Paul, God wants your help; the poor little street kids need your help - (remember you are only a Priest).

Take back that "towel" that you threw in and be content, no matter how small the results may look to you, with what you can accomplish, as long as you are working for God. He will be satisfied.

My love and prayers always

Mary Clark

Dear Mary:

As my oldest friend you certainly have the right to offer suggestions and don't be worried that I might take them the wrong way. Any man who is impervious to criticism soon becomes strange and inhuman. J. Edgar Hoover was a great man who ended up a hindrance simply because he shut off all avenues of criticism.

No, I don't "know God". I think I never shall completely. I keep getting glimpses and perhaps when I am your age will have gotten it together enough to be sure of what He asks of me. But I think I do know humanity and its sufferings and therefore Jesus, at least His human side.

Yes, I think the gift of free will is that which separates us from the animals. Did I sound as if I was ungrateful for it?

And yes, these "are His kids and He loves them more" than I do. And knows better their needs. You might say the same for the million Biafrans who starved to death or the 6 million Jews gassed. But in no way does that diminish our obligation to work for the alleviation of their suffering. How do I play "God" as you put it, in trying to help them? Did Mother Teresa play God in working with the dying in the streets

of India? Jesus fed the multitude before He preached to them and any good missionary knows you must feed the belly before attempting to feed the soul. Why does it seem to you that I am trying to find Utopia? All I tried to do was keep them alive and that seems to me to be the least, the very least we Christians can do. I am a human being before I am a Priest and it would be inhuman to pass by or overlook the human needs of survival in order to do the priestly things like preaching. Mother Teresa - is she doing social work and ignoring her calling as a Nun because she tries to ease the physical death of her castaways and also, but not primarily, prepare them spiritually. Did you know that like me she shucked her religious habit and adopted the dress of the poorest of her people? She too received criticism for "looking like" the ragged, poor instead of like Mary who wore starched head-dress and black dress.

Before I am a priest, I am a man and most importantly a Christian. I can not stand one day and hear the words Depart from me, you cursed... I was hungry and you gave me no food, thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me... and justify my omission with the excuse: O but I guess they didn't tell you Lord: I am a priest. All the more reason you should have understood. But of course I understood but you see I was doing priestly things. I was offering Mass and I was preaching and ... Perhaps you fulfilled all your duties as a priest but you had other more profound obligations as a Christian and to fail to discharge them on the grounds you were too busy doing priestly things does not excuse you. We had a surfeit of priests who were willing to preach to and bring the sacraments to my enslaved black brothers in the south of your country but where were those priests to lead the drive to free them?

We had numberless priests willing to become chaplains and bring the sacraments to soldiers to sustain them in their slaughter of innocents. But where were the priests to cry out against the immorality of your wars? An abundance of priests chaplained your jails and prisons and stood in the midst of a system that was destroying men under intolerably inhuman conditions, stood and offered Mass and left. It took an Attica to begin reforms. Where were the priests who were Christians first?

I tried to be a Priest and had my Mass shut down and now I stand accused of not being a priest to my people. The irony of it. These kids wanted me to marry, baptize and anoint and I could not, and now I guess I have given the impression that I would not or wished not to.

I was not a doctor or a policeman (God Help Us) or a hippie. Have I given the impression that I was?

I know what prompts your letter. You are concerned for me, worried that I might shrivel up in rancor or disillusionment. If you could see me, you would know that is not an imminent possibility. Remember most of what you are reading was written and lived several years ago. It is written only to instruct: lest we do it again to the next "out" group as we did it in Fr. Coughlan's time to the Jews - and Catholics went along; in World War II time to the Jap-Americans - and Catholics went along; as we did it in the McCarthy era to "Commies" - and Catholics went along; to the blacks, the poor, the migrants and now the long hairs - AND CATHOLICS WENT ALONG.

Well anyway thanks for taking the time and the interest to try to make me see things more clearly.

There is a song out now:

"They would not listen, they're not listening now,
perhaps they don't know how.
They would not listen, they're not listening still,
perhaps they never will."

It remains to be seen who is not listening - me or they.

I love you and think of you often and all the wonderful times I had with you and yours in those halcyon days of yore. Please God some of your love of God and life has rubbed off on me.

Peace, soon Father Paul

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF?

In the area where archeologists uncovered the Dead Sea Scrolls, the following letter was recently found. While purporting to be a communication from Joseph of Arimathea to Jesus of Nazareth, readers are warned that no scholarly recognition has yet been forthcoming nor has the Sacred Congregation yet passed on its authenticity.

My dear Nephew Jesus:

Arimathea

Shalom:

First let me assure you that I am with you 100%. While some of what I have to say to you may sound harsh, believe me it is because I seek your own good. Will you do me the courtesy of explaining the following:

We are judged by the company we keep, it is written, yet you are seen constantly in the company of men of questionable background and character. Do you know of any other young yet respected clergyman who behaves in this fashion? People are rightly shocked to see their leaders lounging about the countryside, cavorting with n'er-do-wells, at odd hours. It gives scandal. You are seen at the wrong times in the wrong places with the wrong people.

You are a clergyman not a social worker. This feeding them and all - you should not try to be policeman and social worker and counselor and all these things. Feed them the word of God.

You can't play God, trying to do so much. If you have faith you know God loves them more than you do. Can't you leave something to Him?

About this incident with the money-changers: To interrupt a service, lose your temper, become violent - this won't get you anywhere. Many who were with you until that incident have realized you are going too far and they have turned away. Do you want to lose them all? I am as grieved as you are at the brazen mercenaries but one wonders if you don't attract more flies with honey than gall.

"He looks like a bum", they are saying - no apartment; feet dirty - the shame of it - a woman having to wash your feet in public. Hair disheveled bouncing all over the landscape. Your father gave you better example. What

a shame to bury your talent for carpentry. How do you support yourself? You could be arrested for vagrancy or loitering or obstructing the camel paths - and consorting with prostitutes. What has come over you?

Now about your language! Rowdy words are your animadversions upon the Scribes and Pharisees. Are you courting the media? Headline grabbing? You criticize the clergy in public and in language unbecoming a gentleman.

All authority is from God, and we must respect it even when it appears excessive.

Slow down. You'll wear yourself out and be no good to anyone at the rate you are going. These problems have been around a long time and you are no Messiah who is going to solve them.

Stay in the Sanctuary where you belong instead of out in the marketplace. As often as you go among men, you will come back less a man. No work of God is done after 9 at night. Your prayers would benefit them far more than this frenetic activism.

Some day I had foreseen a promotion for you but you've blown it. Having criticized your Superiors, you can hardly expect them to reward you, now can you?

If you have no self-respect, at least think about your poor Mother. How must she feel when people ask her: "and what does your son do?" Why from the time you were 12 and so impressed the teachers and the clergy she hoped you would get your degree, become a Rabbi and bring respect and honor to the family. You had everything going for you, - a fine mind, a healthy body, attractive appearance, a way with words. What right have you to bury these talents. God is not mocked.

You presume to break church laws like those governing the Sabbath and then excuse your actions by saying "the Sabbath is for man not man for the Sabbath." Well just whom do you think you are? You know more than the Church authorities? If they make a law they know what they are doing. It's your place to respect it. Or work within the system to change it. And what is so wrong with wide phylacteries? Haven't you better things to do than criticize small vanities and marks of respect?

You young radicals think you can change the whole world overnight. Well you can't. I agree with your goals and with your principles but these things take time. You won't get anywhere antagonizing the authorities. You have to get your degree and work through the system. Get status - position and power and then people will listen to you. You might learn from your friend Judas who seems to be sensitive to the ways of the world and tries to work within prescribed boundaries.

Believe me when I tell you I am on your side. I want the best for you. I'm older and wiser and you've got a lot to learn before you go rattling the doors of prominent, respected people.

Did it ever occur to you perhaps these people you champion have made their pallets and should lay on them? If they will not pull themselves up by the bootstraps why should you get involved? Others haven't had it so easy either but they managed. What had your own kind when they came over from Egyptian bondage? "Lace-drape Jews", they called us and put

up signs on the porticos: "Jews need not apply."

I was at the services the other day and the Priest took me aside and spoke of you. He well remembers you and how you used to help around the Temple. "I don't approve of what he is doing, well-intentioned though he may be", he said. Your cousins were with me and were obviously embarrassed and ashamed of you. Did you ever think of them? Why can't you be like the Priest - you used to admire him. Everyone respects him. "Our beloved Priest" they always say at banquets. Who says things like that about you?

After you are dead and buried the world will go on, just as it is. People will soon enough forget you. Don't lose your own peace of mind, your own joyous little ways, your position in the community for the sake of a few headlines. The rumors at the Gate grow daily.

You're upset about conditions? Well we all are. Don't you think we care and are trying to correct them? Babylon wasn't built in a day. These things take time. You are digging your own grave, I fear.

You think these new-found friends of yours are so loyal but I tell you blood is thicker than water. O yes, while the "gravy caravan" is thriving they are so fraternal but they'll go their ways and won't even know you if you get into trouble. That Peter is an illiterate boor, a common fisherman. And what is it with this John who keeps mooning around like a queer? Why, some of them I hear go gamboling about half in the nude while fishing. Unseemly and bad example to our youth. I wouldn't be surprised to find one of them completely unclothed one of these days.

Give it some thought. This is not the raving of an old man jealous of youthful zeal. We all love you and know your zeal. But youth must be tempered with realism. Don't come looking to me for bail if you get arrested. Simply because I'm on the Sanhedrin doesn't mean I am free to protect you.

I've already taken a great deal of riding from my contemporaries over you. So please, for the love of God, if for nothing else, rein in your enthusiasm. You don't see the other young clergy upsetting the people, do you? Do you think you are better than they? How many of your classmates keep in touch with you? Few, I'll wager a week's denarii. You'll be ostracized and then what? And for what? For the love of Moses, Jesus, (pardon my language) will you stop and think.

Have you taken leave of your senses?

I was talking with your mother just the other day down at the market. She says she seldom ever sees you and is worried sick. Well might she be. You never had any concern for her anyway. The gall of you at 12 to tell her you had to be about your father's business while she was nearly out of her mind looking for you.

You have this thing for the poor. All well and good! But what about the wealthy? Don't they have souls? Can they help it if they are rich? To be concerned about the poor is fine but need you descend to their level? Next thing you'll be on welfare, God forbid. Deserting the good and the faithful for the bad and evil is sinful. If you are not careful you will soon become identified with them.

Your cousin John is a credit to us. He too is concerned and outspoken, but he knows enough to go off to the desert and pray and fast and

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be circumspect. People respect him. That is the type of holiness you might well emulate. Even Herod speaks well of him. He'll go far.

Since your father's death, I have felt a responsibility for you and I hope you won't think I am interfering by my strong words.

Does it do any good to stir up the people, breed discontent with their lawful authorities, incur the wrath of the officials? What has it accomplished? I hear that many of your early followers have abandoned you over some kind of cannibalism you are espousing. Now really, Jesus, there is a limit. Where do you find such nonsense in the Scriptures? I don't object to urging your people to become concerned and active, but the activity is for laymen. Your place is to preach and pray and not to be out on the streets, a clerical cop-out.

Now about your being seen drinking with Samaritans. As you know, I am not prejudiced. I think they are fine people. Some of my best friends are Samaritans. However your faith can suffer if you don't cherish and protect it. And your virtue, in the case of women, is even more to be guarded.

I hesitate to tell you this but I have had a rescript from the Chief Rabbi himself. His Holiness is most concerned about the delicate political balance that exists. The church must retain her freedom of the sacred signs. Rome has been most generous and relations are amicable. But seditious remarks such as you are making could, if generally accepted, hinder the work of the Church. Is that what you want? He has asked me quietly to remonstrate with you to consider the burden he carries which your actions do little to alleviate. Daily he receives letters of complaint about your unprecedented involvements.

I sometimes wonder if you would even go so far as to disgrace us by refusing military conscription if a war should come. Well what else am I to infer from your pansy, unpatriotic pacifistic remarks? Can't you balance them with explaining to people the just war theory?

I received a visit only yesterday from two agents inquiring into your background. They wanted to know if you had ever been a member of the Essemes? Next thing we know you will be organizing the corn-gleaners and picketing outside the superstalls.

It is not too late to put on the brakes. I've heard some of your speeches quoted and find them in general to be free of heresy and dogmatically correct although there are several areas in which I would disagree since obviously they traduce common teaching. For example, your soft-line on adultery and by contrast your hard-line on the hypocrites. And have you disavowed that cleanliness is next to godliness? What is this I hear of your misgivings about the death penalty? That you embarrassed and intimidated the people into a stay of execution? That you urged them to neglect their duty?

I expect the most common complaint I hear about you is that you seem to have lost your Hope. Hope is a virtue but you tend to make people feel hopeless. That is a terrible thing to do to people; they have little else to keep them going. The news at the Wailing Wall grows worse daily. Have you no happy thoughts to uplift?

We had a young clergyman here who ran off and got divorced. No one was surprised although it caused great scandal. He had been aping you in many of your ways. Good riddance! Vow-breaker!

And what of the bad example you give also to our youth who are hard put as it is to maintain the ways of our forebears. Will you have them on your conscience? Instead of counseling children to be Moses-like, I suppose there will be those over-zealous parents who will be saying instead: Be Jesus-like. Do you want that on your conscience too? You know how people can misinterpret. "Go and sell all you have", you counseled one young fellow. Indeed! And become a vagabond like yourself?

I feel sorry for you, Jesus. Your life could have been so productive, instead of self-destructive. I wonder if you are obsessed with a compulsion to destroy yourself?

You aren't doing those drugs, are you? I've heard about them boiling the leaves of the Dead Sea apple trees and snorting the stuff. I hope you realize apples lead to hard stuff. How else can I account for some of these lurid pseudo-mystical experiences reported of you?

I will look for you at the marriage feast to which we are both invited next fortnight in Cana. Tell Mom I'll see her there. All my best to your cousins.

Peace!
Your loving Uncle,
Joseph

PREDICTIONS AND RUMORS

This chapter will be as rambling and anecdotal as were the wider ranging rumors touched off each time I publicly broached my conclusions or anticipations.

One rumor was that I had no time for parents of runaways who sought my intercession; that I harbored runaways; that I refused to call parents or police unless a kid wanted me to do so. Only the last is true.

I guess I talked with hundreds of parents of runaways from all over the world. I still have a handmade sweater from Oslo knitted by a grateful mother of a Norwegian girl who ran to Boston. But I'm sure some thought I gave them short shrift. To tell the truth, it was a waste of my time to listen to their story, take down all the descriptions - blue jeans, long light brown hair, army jacket, etc. - that fitted thousands of kids. I reached out to every kid with or without a description. But I listened anyway because it helped the parents feel better. Some were angry when in response to their directions to be called I replied: only if your son gives me permission. It's true I might save your child from the destruction of the street, but if she runs again (as many do) she would not come near me. And neither would the 99 who come down the pike after her.

I recall an incident where I talked with the parents, and having extracted their word they would not use force, set up a meeting with their daughter in my "office" - a booth at Hayes Bickford's. When the parents failed to convince her to return home, Ma got hysterical, ran outside and got a cop to arrest her. She ran away again, two months later, and again the parents called me. I listened but I refused help. That incident cost me dearly and I never made the mistake again. All future meeting places had a rear exit and I made sure the kid was next to it with me running block.

From so many adults came either sounds of silence or of violence and it is difficult to gauge which was more frightening. "He is a disgrace to the priesthood and should be defrocked" claimed a mother who had watched me in old clothes on the excellent Mike Ambrosino Show on Channel 2. Yet it was me she called when her daughter subsequently ran away. I had to explain to her that the reason why I did not wear the Roman collar was not that the youngsters would reject me -- I could come in a paper bag and they would be open. Rather it was that every adult Catholic drunk wanted to beat me up because my hair was long. So cut your hair? My family tells friends I need it long to relate to kids but that is not so either.

In the alleys and flop houses, crash pads and hang outs to which my work took me the shocked clucking of adults who saw the Roman collar and concluded that I was an erring priest convinced me that the reputation of the priesthood was better served without my advertising. But isn't it ironic? Isn't that exactly where the collar should be habitually seen? I know a nun who threw off her habit, adopted the dress (sari) of her poor people, attracted hordes of novices and even today speaks to countless admiring Catholic American audiences. They call her Mother Theresa. But of course - her people are black, or is it brown? Well whatever.

Sidney Callahan in N.C.R. tells the story: "Eight years ago a minister in our town warned against drugs among the young. The outcry was such that he was forced to back down and retreat from the fray, battered and bruised. At that time everybody knew that while drugs had crept up the Hudson from Manhattan as far as Yonkers, they had not come to our middle-class enclave. Nor would they, since family life was intact here (i.e. no lower class Negroes) and the community was sophisticated and strongly organized, filled with public-spirited and caring adults. It can't happen here.

"Then, there was a drug death which made national headlines. But this young well-to-do-girl came from a crazy-mixed-up broken family, and she only lived in our town because she had been dumped here on her grandmother when her family fell apart. She didn't count. Other drug tragedies, which also didn't count, soon appeared. Some lower class kids who lived down by the railroad tracks became addicts: one died, several left town.

So far, all the kids on drugs could be explained away. The fringe kids from poor broken families. The rich spoiled brats from alcoholic pillars of society - too much money and their families never eat together, as our chief of police explained. His memorable speech to the PTA in which he publicly came out for the death penalty for marijuana pushers, marked the moment when everybody began to take drugs seriously."

Whatever happened, I wonder, to the disgraced minister? Did he later on receive the gratitude of the community? Was the silly police chief subsequently removed for his criminal negligence in not knowing what he should have known? Not in any community I have visited - and this story was enacted everywhere, Were I to divulge what I anticipate coming next on the youth scene, the same chiefs and superintendents of schools are still in office, still ready to deny it. I should like to indict for criminal negligence the adult officials - police, school, community - who generally denied or diminished the seriousness of the drug problem in their bailiwick and who had the temerity to lampoon those who assessed it correctly.

When I left my parish in Braintree, a girl called in tears - the man at the bank said: "Well, we got rid of him." I reassured her that the transfer was at my request and her banker was a Rotarian - a group I had publicly rebuked for its racism and from which I resigned. While Braintree was rejoicing that I was no longer around to clutter up the rectory and church with undesirables the following appeared in the Braintree Forum: "June 21, 1970. Old West Church in the Beacon Hill area of Boston faces a critical deficit this year which could cripple their programs for this summer. Of unusual interest to Braintree residents, particularly parents of teenage youth, is that last summer more Braintree young people came to Project Place for help than from any other suburban town...."

For the first time they learned that I was still working with Braintree kids. And still am. You see, people like us make the undesirable visible, shaming and angering the community. They "don't want to hear it" and we force them to.

Here's a letter I sent to the Parish Council in my old parish when they were debating the wisdom of acceding to the request of some parishioners that I be allowed to say Mass there:

I have been asked to respond to recent attacks upon my Apostolate:

- 1) Regarding a recent drug education program in Weymouth:
It is true that on three occasions a row of women in the rear cheered lustily:
 - (a) when my fellowpanelist opposed my suggestion of reducing the penalties for marijuana to a misdemeanor. The next week President Nixon said: "the answer is not more penalties.... but more information and understanding". He himself has evolved from the position of recommending felony proceedings to a mitigated form of misdemeanor. Dozens of other studies will attest that my position while not the only one is certainly not radical.
 - (b) When my fellow panelist defended his scare movie and its inaccuracies. In a report delivered to Mayor White a few days ago my words were paraphrased: "when the young and inexperienced are told to expect devastating bodily and mental damage from the use of marijuana, they soon enough discover that these things do not come about and are then likely to discredit everything that is told them about drugs generally, and to feel that if marijuana didn't hurt us, nothing else will." To tell young people, as the authority in this film did, that the only people she knew who tried marijuana and didn't go on to heroin were six people all of whom ended in the electric chair before they could go on to heroin typifies "the ignorant and insulting posture of the anti-drug crusader who substitutes zealousness for information and moral righteousness for sensitivity", in the words of Robert L. Levey.

My position was and is that there are two opinions. I do not contend that mine is right nor the only one. I ask only that young people be told the truth--not given to understand that an opinion is a substantiated and accepted medical fact. Indeed, if marijuana leads inexorably to heroin then we'd best all flee America for it is estimated that 12 million Americans have experimented with marijuana. If my fellow panelist is correct, there will shortly be 12 million heroin addicts in America--an utterly intolerable number for our economy to support.