

LETTERS

NATURAL COMPULSION

Sir:

For weeks the undersigned has been desperately fighting the natural urge of participating in the controversy of the issue of the Pastoral Letter. I must confess that I have given up assuming a passive attitude and thus given way to the natural compulsion in joining "the folks".

Permit me please, if I may, to thank Mr. John Mayoral for having given, through his letter regarding Dr. Lazaro's position, the boost which actually motivated me into action. In my humble opinion Mr. Mayoral's reaction reflects what to me constitutes the danger of the Pastoral Letter. Through a mutation the pastoral significance has ceased to be one of relevance in regard to the fundamental contents of the letter. Let me make myself a little bit clearer. Now it is not a matter of the contents of the letter, but the apparent and ever growing transfer of its interpretation to matters totally outside the sphere of action and meaning of the Bishop's letter.

Before indulging in an exchange of ideas I do want to make it clear that I am speaking as a private individual in defense of a principle which ought to be held in top priority in one's private life and profession.

Mr. Mayoral seems to possess a precise knowledge pertaining to the banning of books according to the Catholic Index. It would seem to be a contradiction that he be denied a concomitant knowledge of other Catholic positions regarding books (i. e. Pius XI's Encyclical "Divini Illius Magistri", Tertullian, Quintillian) in which the church has clearly expressed and permitted the use of works of art which though pagan in nature contribute to man's disposition towards intellectual refinement. Furthermore it would seem naive to assume that Mr. Mayoral denies any knowledge of art in the Catholic philosophy of education. Let me remind Mr. Mayoral that to Christian thought art is generally defined in terms of an Aristotelic position. Art, to Christian Neo-Aristotelic

thinking, is nothing else but a heightened or selective imitation of action and life. Thus consistent with this position, art must contain the ingredients of good and evil, and if reality is of any importance in art, then good and evil must be presented, but caution must be observed in the presentation of evil as evil and good as good so that they do not become confused and the ultimately evil thereby becomes in turn glorified.

But let me not depart from my original point, although what I have said will, I am sure, clarify Mr. Mayoral's doubts in regard to Mr. Lazaro's possible intervention in the relations between our students and literary works. Let me assure Mr. Mayoral that even though Mr. Lazaro could purposely try to intervene with reasons of his own he will absolutely rely on intellectual principles. And if this argument does not suffice, let me mention that the basic principle which governs the life of all the members of our profession is that education is nothing else but choosing the good, the true, the just, the beautiful, and the permanent rejection of the evil, the false, the ugly and the unjust.

I have mentioned in the first paragraph what to me conclusively is becoming a danger. Allow me to play the part of a Scotchman, and point it out in a question form. Perhaps I might have been reading into Mr. Mayoral's letter ideas which were not originally intended (as I suspect was the case with the Pastoral Letter). Should we not assume that Mr. Mayoral is in a subtle way possibly interfering with the liberty, and cohesively, through his doubts, affecting the freedom of any individual-librarian, professor, dean or rector to express himself on what is conclusively in his judgement and interpretation a moral pronouncement and not a "political" one as Mr. Mayoral seems to think?

Let me assure Mr. Mayoral that his two sons are in good hands, and for their sake let us hope, they continue to "expose" themselves to men of character, although they take the chance of

being affected by men who dedicate their lives to the principle of freedom and whose ideas are brought out not in a partially blind, biased and unjust democracy but, in an atmosphere of freedom and objectivity in judgement.

R. Aponte Hernandez
University of Puerto Rico
Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico
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SATISFACTORY REPLY

Sir:

I wish to thank Dr. Jose M. Lazaro, head librarian of the University of P. R., for his reply to my previous letter regarding his official position and the views he expressed in defense of the Catholic bishops' posture.

Dr. Lazaro's reply is entirely satisfying. We must be thankful to have in such a sensitive position as that of university librarian a man of his stature.

In his reply he states: "My Catholic convictions themselves, even more than any private inclination of my own, dispose me to respect the opinions of others."

This is a wholly admirable statement. What a pity that Dr. Lazaro's superiors, the bishops, do not exemplify in their recent utterances the same attitude as exhibited by this member of their flock. This seems to prove that at times the Flock can be better than the Shepherd.

John Mayoral
San Juan, P. R.

P. S.: I thank Dr. Lazaro for his invitation to inspect library exhibits and purchase orders. There is no need. I take his word for all it's worth.
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"PIONEERING AINT EASY"

Sir:

Please pardon the delay in congratulating the Star's prompt and valiant position regarding the unfortunate Pastoral Letters of the Bishops of Puerto Rico.

In just one year you have made out of the Star one of the outstanding newspapers even if "pioneering ain't easy," and I know that.

Ramon E. Bausa
San Juan, P. R.
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SUBSCRIPTION LOST

Sir:

Just a few lines to show you my point of view. I am a statehooder a hundred percent and I can't be for a paper that is against my feelings.

You are making island history by endorsing the dictator Muñoz Marin — well continue making history. Why didn't you stay neutral in this contest? A new paper like yours should have men inside that could think ahead, not boys like you have now.

Why don't you people try to build up a big paper and then make this big decision?

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Victor M. Figueroa
Santurce, P. R.