

May 1988

President's Page

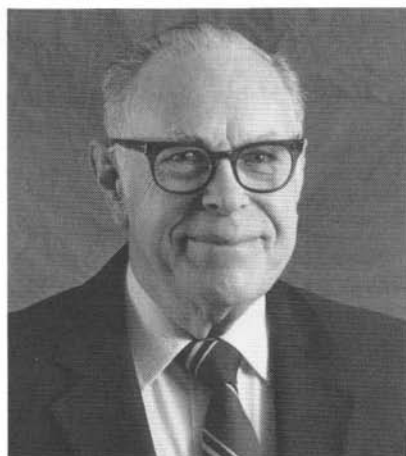
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Iceberg

The Barque of Peter in America appears to be in Iceberg country.

An ABC poll late last summer reports that 40 percent of Catholics want only “symbolic” attachment to Rome, that is, they will accept schism — an autonomous American Church independent of Rome.

And yet we are reassured by many in Church leadership that since Vatican II we are an evolving Church, and all is and will be well in our maturation as long as we think for ourselves.

Could it be that 40 percent of Catholics accepting schism might well translate into 40 percent of Catholic physicians? If so, how must this be addressed? How and when do we drop the anchor?

Rev. Richard John Neuhaus, an esteemed Lutheran clergyman, has befriended us by his singular analysis. His view is that this is the “Catholic Moment” in America; the time when we must reaffirm the essential principles rooted in the long and rich Catholic tradition; principles not formed or attenuated in the framework of the American polity.¹

Reflecting on the insights of Reverend Neuhaus, we must ever be aware of the responsibility that we, as Catholic physicians, have to make a seminal contribution to the moral and ethical life of our community.

We have been called to a renewal of action by Vatican II, not only as individual Catholic professionals, but also collectively through our organizations: The NFCPG, with its own organ, *The Linacre Quarterly*, is a prototype of the Catholic sources which must be a forceful participant in the “Catholic Moment”.

Let us remember that we are operating from our own rich tradition, which shall be the springboard from which to accept the Neuhaus proposition. We must attend our meetings, participate in well-planned seminars, read, study — in effect become immersed in the issues and debates as true apostles, not only in parochial concerns, but in all of the contemporary issues which are begging for the “voice crying out in the wilderness”.

And thank God for the nudge from Reverend Neuhaus.

— Thomas M. Hughes, M.D.
President, NFCPG

1. *National Review*: Nov. 7, 1986
July 3, 1987
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Toledo, Ohio physician is seeking an orthodox Catholic physician to join him in a rapidly growing occupational medical practice. The interested party should have at least a primary care background and be amenable to continuing education in the area of occupational medicine.

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