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## Letters...

Catholic Physicians' Guild

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# Letters...

## Letter from New Zealand

As I write, the Iranian hostages have arrived home in the USA and the free world rejoices. Felicitations to them and their families! The whole sad, stupid drama confirms one of my working hypotheses in life: there is no defense against drunks or fools. Add to this list, barbarians.

Our country, along with most others, has experienced in recent years a great increase of mindless violence, murder and rape. The divorce and abortion explosions are other facets of the same problem. So much evil must be diabolical in origin. A more subtle explanation can be found in Freud's observation that abnormal sexuality is always associated with masochism and sadism. Seven centuries earlier St. Thomas expressed it even more succinctly: impurity leads inevitably to violence. The sexual revolution, which has been facilitated by the medical profession, has much to answer for.

Nobody likes to admit that this country is a socialist one, even though the National (Republican-type) party is in power. Social security "from womb to tomb" has been the philosophy of the past 40 years. It has been kept afloat by continued good times, but now inflation (at 16 percent p.a. for the past five years) has brought the moment of truth. We used to be one of the wealthiest countries on a per capita basis. Now we are well down the list. Our wealth has been dissipated by sentimental social welfare, high taxation, bureaucracy and the 40-hour five-day week. At last we have returned to Saturday morning shopping, which was opposed by union marches, threats and intimidation.

The enterprising young have rejected this social security Utopia by emigrating in record numbers, but the loss is slowing. In spite of all this, the stock exchange index is at a record high and has increased 47 percent in the past year. Incredible!

The Accident Compensation Act is being reviewed. It aimed at a no-fault concept to eliminate prolonged litigation and even went so far as to compensate burglars and other crooks who had been injured in the course of their professional work. The cost was enormous. Criminals will now be excluded and other pay-outs are being trimmed.

The Human Rights Commission prosecuted a gas station owner who advertised for "a good, keen, Christian youth." This was held to be discriminatory against other religions. The prosecution failed. On the other hand, the Commission allows the employment of Moslem slaughtermen because the Islamic countries demand it. A fine distinction.

Are you sick of war, injustice, abortion, racism, feminism, the lot? So am I. And therefore I wrote a new children's book that was published only last month. It is just a fast moving bit of fun and laughs for children of all ages from 6 to 60 (*The School Detectives*).

Throughout the world all those who hunger and thirst after justice have been heartened by recent American legislative and election events which give some hope that society is reacting against the abortion holocaust. They pray that the USA will lead the world back to decency and sanity.

— H. P. Dunn, M.D.  
Auckland, New Zealand

## Correction on Review

To the Editor:

I must make a correction in something I said in my review of Philip Devine's *The Ethics of Homicide* (Nov., 1980). I said that Devine holds the killing of the severely retarded (those unable ever to speak), as well as other types of direct killing, to be morally justifiable. That was a mistake. While he denies that the severely retarded have intrinsic value as persons — arguing they are humans but

not persons — he also insists that the prohibition against killing should extend to them, in order to protect the whole community of the retarded. The substance of my criticism of his positions, however, still remains.

— Patrick Lee, Ph.D.  
St. Francis de Sales College

### Commending Father Zimmerman

To the Editor:

I want to commend Father Anthony Zimmerman for his insightful and constructive critique on the so-called "population explosion." I concur in his views completely. And I think every physician in the NCFPG should give his article and his conclusions thoughtful consideration — to counteract the anti-natalist propaganda which has become so widely accepted as dogma by those who share the Planned Parenthood mentality.

— James H. Ford, M.D.

### Two Comments on 'Genetic Engineering'

To the Editor:

Your August, 1980 issue contained an article entitled "Some Notes on Genetic Engineering" by Rev. Robert P. Maloney, C.M. who discussed, *inter alia*, the morality of artificial insemination. After noting the opinions of two 19th century moralists who approved AIH (and who subsequently repudiated such opinion, a fact which Fr. Maloney fails to mention, after the 1897 decree from the Holy Office declaring artificial insemination immoral), Fr. Maloney states that a number of reputable Catholic moralists, including Fr. Gerald Kelly, continued to approve of AIH after the 1897 pronouncement. In support of this statement, the author cited the following article: Gerald Kelly, "The Morality of Artificial Fecundation," *American*

*Ecclesiastical Review*, 101 (1939), pp. 112 ff.

However, a reading of the above-referenced article shows that Fr. Kelly disapproved of artificial insemination. In that article, Fr. Kelly distinguished between artificial insemination or fecundation (whereby fertilization is achieved not as a result of sexual intercourse but as a result of the insertion of sperm into a woman's vagina by an artificial process), and artificial aids to fecundation (whereby the procreative purpose of an act of sexual intercourse is assisted by the use of artificial aids).

He concluded: 1) artificial insemination, by husband or by donor, was immoral because procreation was achieved apart from the expression of the unitive good; and 2) artificial aids to fecundation were probably licit because they served to facilitate the fruitful expression of the unitive good. Fr. Kelly's conclusions subsequently were confirmed by Pope Pius XII in his September 29, 1949 address to the Fourth International Congress of Catholic Doctors wherein he stated:

By speaking this way (i.e., that artificial insemination is to be entirely rejected), we do not necessarily forbid the use of artificial means whose sole purpose is either to facilitate the natural act or to assist the natural act . . . in attaining its purpose.

— Michael Vaccari, Esq.  
Corona, N.Y.

To the Editor:

Thank you very much for sending me a copy of Mr. Michael Vaccari's letter and offering me an opportunity to reply. I am convinced that dialogue among those who seek the truth is always helpful, so I appreciate both Mr. Vaccari's comments and your giving me the chance to respond.

Mr. Vaccari mentions first of all that I failed to state that after the 1897 decree from the Holy Office the two 19th-century moralists repudiated

their earlier opinions. His observation is correct. My article would be clearer if I had made this fact explicit.

Secondly, Mr. Vaccari states: "A reading of the above-referenced article shows that Fr. Kelly disapproved of artificial insemination. In that article, Fr. Kelly distinguished between artificial insemination or fecundation (whereby fertilization is achieved not as a result of intercourse but as a result of the insertion of sperm into a woman's vagina by an artificial process), and artificial aids to fecundation (whereby the procreative purpose of an act of sexual intercourse is assisted by the use of artificial aids)." Mr. Vaccari maintains that Fr. Kelly approved only the latter. I am afraid that this is not accurate. Fr. Kelly does make the distinction mentioned above, but he also treats a separate case, of which Mr. Vaccari makes no mention. He describes it (page 111) as "a means of insemination that would involve no abuse of the sexual processes." It was this separate case which was approved by the moralists to whom I alluded in my article. Fr. Kelly shares their opinion, as is evident on page 115: "There is a very solid extrinsic authority for permitting this type of artificial fecundation between husband and wife and it seems justifiable on intrinsic grounds." The case which he is treating is different from what Mr. Vaccari calls "artificial aids to fecundation." This is evident on pages 111 and 112

of the article. It is quite clear on page 113 that Kelly agrees with Vermeersch and others in maintaining that the means described may be used, even apart from sexual intercourse, since the means itself is not sinful. Kelly refutes the objections and states "... it seems that some further proof or declaration of the Holy See is necessary before it can be said apodictically that they (the couple) do not possess in common a right to propagate which allows them, by mutual consent, to have recourse to some extraordinary means of propagating which is not in itself sinful" (page 113). Fr. Kelly reiterated this view in *Theological Studies*, VIII (1947), pp. 106-110.

Mr. Vaccari states that "Fr. Kelly's conclusions subsequently were confirmed by Pius XII in his September 29, 1949 address." On the contrary, it would be accurate to state that Fr. Kelly's opinion, mentioned above, was negated by Pius XII. This is all the more apparent from the fact that Fr. Kelly, in the Dublin, 1955 printing of *Medico-Moral Problems* (pp. 118-119) recognized that Pius XII's 1949 statement rendered this opinion "historically interesting but not solidly probable."

I hope that these few thoughts respond clearly to the objections Mr. Vaccari has raised.

— Robert P. Maloney, C.M.  
Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Word was recently received of the tragic death of Dr. Mariano Alimurung of Manila, an eminent cardiologist who was robbed and fatally beaten in his Miami, Florida hotel room last November while attending the Congress of the American Heart Association. Dr. Alimurung was a past president of the International Federation of Catholic Medical Associations, chairman of the department of medicine at Santo Tomas College in Manila, and a corresponding editor for *Linacre Quarterly*. Sincere sympathy is extended to his wife and family.