

Patrick Gray, R.C.

By GARY WILLS

L. Patrick Gray has a funny idea of the FBI's mission. During the last presidential campaign, he admittedly gave speeches in areas where the election might be close. He admittedly did this at the request of Nixon reelection workers. They said this did not constitute a political act, since he only did it to "carry the FBI's message to the people." If election workers thought it might help the campaign, that was their problem (or blessing); he would not "take up a cudgel for Richard Nixon" — to quote his own testimony from last week's confirmation hearings.

Well, how did he carry the FBI's message to the people? Senators quoted from one such speech, in which he praised the expansion of the GNP, and said the country is "on the threshold of the greatest growth in our history." Gray could only defend that assertion by saying love and praise for America is part of the FBI "message."

That is one of those defenses more damaging than the accusation itself. If the FBI is in the business of puffing American economic might and propagandizing the country's own citizens, it is more dangerously full of a sense of mission than we had feared.

Some of Gray's other responses were just as unimpressive. Asked why he had not followed up this or that lead in the Watergate case, he said he had not been asked to. Even when an accusation had been made, he did not check it out, because "No one sent any recommendation to me." I thought it was the FBI's job to investigate — i.e., to find out things. How can it find out what is there to be examined, when it must wait for a recommendation to examine it? This daintiness where the White House is involved is not paralleled in the FBI's treatment of the press or of the anti-war movement.

There is another aspect of Gray's nomination that is disturbing — his religion. This is a touchy matter. One does

not want to disqualify a man on the grounds of his religious belief. On the other hand, men should not be favored on those grounds, either; they should not be considered super-qualified because of their faith. J. Edgar Hoover, though not himself a Catholic, heavily favored them in his employment practices, especially during the heat of the Cold War.

There is a disproportionate number of Catholics not only in the FBI, but in other security and military agencies in America. This has led to a certain chumminess between church and secular officials. I gave one instance of this in my book, "Nixon Agonistes," telling how a priest slipped secret FBI information to Richard Nixon during the Hiss trial. That episode tends to undermine the Nixon administration's shocked state of virtue when it finds "leaks" made to Jack Anderson or the New York "Times." It also puts in a new light Nixon's nomination of his good old Catholic friend, Pat Gray, to succeed Mr. Hoover.

There have been recent cases of

prosecutorial enthusiasm uniting church and state authorities — as when the chancery of the Baltimore Archdiocese handed over the most intimate letters in its files to agents trying to indict and convict anti-war priests. Agents who are graduates of Catholic colleges can be very winning when they go back to their old priest friends for some "patriotic" assistance.

It was natural, I suppose, to put up a Catholic as Hoover's successor. Only "the real thing" can approach Hoover's own admiration for the Church's hard line on things like communism. But that is just the trouble. It was too natural — an appointment where religion seemed to "overqualify" a man. It should not, in this case, compensate for the disqualifications that Gray has manifested on other grounds entirely.

I, as a Catholic, am not happy at the prospect of continuing the use of Catholics as spies upon their co-religionists. I resent this, not for the harm it does the nation (though it does some of that), but for the harm it has done to the Church.

Money for North Vietnam?

By William F. Buckley, Jr.

There are mixed feelings, to say the least, concerning the proposed economic aid to North Vietnam by the United States. Hanoi loosely calls it "reparations," thereby giving aid and comfort to those in this country, who, viewing it as such, are opposed to it. Reparations after all signify one of two things: either the acceptance of a moral debt; or, in the absence of a morally completed formula, the acceptance of defeat. A country can pay reparations — as it is universally hoped Israel will do to Libya, in the case of the destroyed airliner, no final military point having been proven. France, after 1870, paid over huge reparations to the Kaiser's Germany in simple recognition of France having lost the war.

Those in America who are sensitive to the implications of our paying reparations are quite rightly sensitive to the symbolic meaning that might be inferred by the transfer of money to North Vietnam. We do not by any means concede any moral

obligation to North Vietnam and we do not by any means concede a military defeat by North Vietnam.

So what is the meaning of a proposed economic aid to North Vietnam? In a curious way, it would have been easier to swallow having decisively beaten North Vietnam. Under such circumstances it might have been accepted as work-a-day charity by the victor for the vanquished such as was shown by the U.S. a generation ago towards Germany, Italy, and Japan.

But we find ourselves now in the equivocal position: we are a power neither humiliated morally, nor defeated by the enemy. Nor vanquisher of the enemy and yet, they talk routinely about giving North Vietnam \$2 or \$3 billion, a huge per capita outlay, and huge in its potential implications.

There are those whose opposition is based primarily on the deteriorated balance of payments — we cannot, they thunder, increase our economic debt abroad. This argument, though

statistically useful, is defecated, and will not carry the weight of the argument in a controversy in which passions are the primary tender. Those who favor aid to North Vietnam have got to make the point that we are investing via that aid in a stability which is otherwise far less easy to attain, and here is where a little Yankee ingenuity is in order.

There must be a dozen and a half ways of infusing money into North Vietnam of a sort that will not assist it in remounting its war of aggression.

Obviously the \$2 billion in aid should be channelled towards the construction of facilities in North Vietnam which are proof-vulnerable in the event of North Vietnamese treachery. For instance, vast new facilities for Haiphong Harbor combined with a pledge not to put anti-aircraft installations within X number of miles of such installations: this is merely suggestive.

And above all, we should call on China and the Soviet Union to contribute equally not only in North Vietnam but in South

Vietnam. Granted the likelihood of success particularly in South Vietnam is slight, still, the cogency of the suggestion could very well put the Russian and the Chinese aggressors on a significant defensive, and that is worth a very great deal. We should not let the subject go in the United Nations. We should keep it alive through speeches by our diplomats around the world, at meetings of the World Bank — everywhere.

Finally, on the moral problem: ought one to help restore the economy of an aggressive nation, my feeling is that the pragmatic point is the principal one to make: Do we advance the cause of peace and stability by doing so? The business of making fine entries in the moral ledger is a very important thing to do — one which should occupy and preoccupy our philosophers. But at best the dialectic between the moral and the practical is vaguely harmonious, and in the current situation, we must proceed with steady reference to the real objective.

Letters

Blasphemy

Tom Mascott, and his open blasphemy of religion, God, Jesus, the Second Coming, and the faith of Christ's followers (Commentaries, March 2) provoked me to the point that I must bother to reply to him and his illusionary camp of atheists.

Addressing himself to what he termed the "right" question, "... necessity to confront the problems which beset us with real fervor, not the escapist faddism of a cultist ideology," Mascott never bothered to explain how he would deal with these problems, but instead devoted the remaining assault to exploiting those who find Jesus as the answer.

I cannot allow Mascott to delude my thinking to the level of another shallow entry in the explanation of life contest. His idea of rational reality takes on the same one-dimensional view that he attributes to followers of Christ whom he so readily condemns. He seems to suffer from a genuine inability to see matters from another person's viewpoint and compensates for this by lashing out at anyone whose ideals differ from his own. In effect, his own belief is merely a rebellious reaction to the beliefs of others.

Nearly every major religion I can think of faces the coming of death and its consequences to each man. Mascott fails to deal with death logically and again finds his sanctuary in disposing of the beliefs of

others. "How like a simple fairy tale their whole myth is," he muses. Dealing with reality on a rational level requires a man to face every stage of his life, not excluding the reality and consequences of death.

The absence of this basic truth from Mascott's statement is unfortunate. In closing, Mr. Mascott, I must say how like a tragedy your whole life must be.

Lynn Keesecker

Forever

Not being an atheist but a Bible believing Christian I like to react on Tom Mascott's commentary in the Emerald of March 2, 1973.

The only reason that I write is that I want him and other people to know that he is wrong. At the same time though I realize that I can not convince him or anybody else of this, as whether you believe in God or not depends on faith and that is something only He can give.

What I am disappointed about is that Tom does not go into objectively explaining why atheism "makes more sense". He basically only attacks Christianity by telling me what is wrong with it. He does not give me any "scientific evidence" for the fact that atheism is

right. The evolution theory is, the word says it, a theory and not a truth.

It is kind of funny to read that Tom subjectively feels that "it is the necessity for modern man to confront the problems which beset us with real fervor, not the escapist faddism of a cultist ideology". I happen to agree with him because Christianity is not an ideology in that it is based on facts and truths. It gives a person the necessary vision to really confront the problems.

If somebody asks me to prove that there is a God, I like to return: "Why don't you prove that there isn't a God." Whereas nobody ever has been able to give me that proof (Tom neither), I have all evidence that He does exist not only in that I can read His infallible Word (the Bible) in which he clearly explains to me how I am supposed to live in order to be the person that does "not close his door (and mind) to the real world, which we all must function in as usefully as possible" (to use Tom's words) but also through the experience of His daily presence in my life.

I regret that the commentary is not more than an emotional attack. How otherwise can I explain the "abortion" of the Lord's Prayer? It seems to me that it is not based on any real knowledge about either Christianity, atheism or evolution theory. For example, does Tom know that authoritative evolutionists (also Darwin) did admit that evolution, in critical areas,

is based on some very questionable assumptions?

Well, Christianity is not based on any assumption but is based on the reality of a truly existing God, Who revealed Himself in the Bible and Who goes on to reveal Himself in the daily life of every Christian. He was, is, and will be forever. And we with Him!

Albert Wesselink
Graduate, Bus. Adm.

Editorial rhetoric

With regard to yesterday's (Feb. 28) editorial, it is not the scenario of the return of the POW's, but Emerald editorials themselves which are "becoming insufferable".

The editorial rhetoric of late has been the type of heavy-handed, knee-jerk liberal thinking one would expect from a person who has become overwhelmed by his own sense of power.

John Stewart's proposal to end ASUO subsidy to the Emerald (unless meaningful policy changes are made) seems more intelligent with every passing issue. I suggest that the editor start using his head — or stop using his pen.

Mike McPherson
Jr. Economics

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