

## Catholic-Jewish Conflict

Last week, in the course of an editorial entitled "Anti-Semitism," the newspaper of the San Francisco Catholic Archdiocese, *The Monitor*, mentioned some possible items of Catholic-Jewish conflict.

**In particular, the editor wrote: "We cannot accept the stance of some Jewish leaders in regard to the abortion problem and the right of Christian parents to receive State aid on the education of their children..."**

He added, of course, that "none of this deserves a denunciation of the whole Jewish community." And, indeed, the main purpose of the editorial was to denounce anti-Semitism, which some national Catholic news service had said vaguely was on the rise among Catholics.

Actually, it turned out, there was no evidence of a real rise of anti-Semitism among Catholic populace, but only the fulminations of a few loud-speaking extremists. They had always been anti-Semitic—but are now using the world situation to garner a little more publicity than usual.



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That, by the way, is the overall analysis of the Anti-Defamation League, which says that "while there is practically no anti-Semitism...anti-Jewish reaction has nevertheless shown itself on the fringes of the American society, as might well have been expected." And Lewis Cole, chairman of the National Jewish Community Relations Council, writes: "Reports that we have been receiving from all over the country, buttressed by our own analysis of editorials and other comment, lead us to conclude that expressions of anti-Semitism in

connection with the energy crisis have been almost wholly those of discredited fringe groups..."

The "fringe" person that Gerard Sherry, editor of the *Monitor*, particularly takes on, is Jesuit Father Daniel Berrigan whose vitriolic speeches against Israel as a "criminal people" serve "to stir the pot of anti-Semitism." Sherry writes that the Berrigan brother's attacks on the Jews are "an outrageous repudiation of their former stance in defense of peace and the rights of minorities."

It is in the course of his scathing denunciation of anti-Semitism that the Catholic editor mentions the issues of abortion and aid to parochial schools. He does so merely to make the point that Jews and Catholics can differ sharply on some public issues without descending to bigotry. Actually, there's no particular Jewish cast to the pro-abortion movement. There's very mixed opinion about it in the Jewish population, and it's certainly not a Jewish community issue. The JCRC, for example, not only doesn't have a position on abortion; it has never had the subject on its agenda.

**Aid to parochial schools is another matter. There's some mixed opinion about it in the Jewish population; but it is a Jewish community issue. The concern, of course, is with having the state intertwined with religion in any way at all. Jews haven't had a notably good time living under governments which were also in the religion business. Even in America, a Jew could not become a lawyer in Maryland until 1826, a generation after the Revolution, because that state's government was involved in religion.**

It is understandable that because of the difference in the history and experience of the Catholic and that of the Jew, there has tended to develop some differences on this subject. But there are developing some cross-tendencies. There is much more talk now in the Catholic community (especially outside the inner cities) that the Catholic school system is not a necessity. And there is more talk now in the Jewish community (especially within the inner cities) that a Jewish school system is a necessity.

The Supreme Court continues to insist as strongly as ever that tax-credit or parent-subsidy plans for alternative education must exclude religious educational institutions. And the majority of Jews will continue to feel a little more secure with that kind of ruling. But there will undoubtedly be some give-and-take. Religious schools are now getting some government help in terms of non-religious studies and the sky has not fallen. The era of sharp Catholic-Jewish conflict on that subject is probably on the wane.