

July 21, 1960

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Dear Comrade in Arms:

Let us hope the Arms of the Spirit — the principal one of which is the Sword of Faith!

I have been pondering for sometime a show down with the Catholic fanatics on the A.A. front. I have asked myself: "Cui bono?" — because there is no doubt, not on the level of theory, but on the ground floor of fraternal charity, we would be the first to admit the A.A. movement has done much to help men stop and stay stopt drinking. Yet think what Fr. Matthew accomplished with a simple prayer-sustained pledge!

However, there is an doubt,,as see letter and reprint contained therein (received this day, July 21, 1960), that the Catholics in A.A. are emphasizing more and more the concept of alcoholism as a disease primarily and basically. They are therefore preaching and teaching contra the teaching magisterium of Mother Church; and we have them attacking as unscientific and outmoded the good old fashioned sensible position of the Church.

I believe therefore the time is ripe for you (possibly through Cardinal McIntyre??) to ask the Holy Office for a declaration on this matter, before the ineffection becomes the Modernistic allergy of our day.

Fundamentally, the whole concept of the dignity of the human entity is at stake. If man is not responsible for his reaction to vicious evil habits — if his compulsions are something he is not morally responsible for both in their initiation and continuance — then Calvary becomes a delusion and redemption a worn-out farce! Why save men, if what they need is medical treatment and the erasure of the sense of guilt as a hang-over of medieval and primatial fears?

The whole weight of non-Catholic psychiatry and the field, at this moment overwhelmingly non-Catholic, is to eliminate from the human syche the sense of guilt. It is inevitable that this strong and quasi-scientific field of research of a budding branch of

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intellectual research should not affect the thinking of thousands of Catholics, and this adversely to the truth. One of my own priests has just been directed by his family physician to a non-Catholic psychiatrist in Chicago for long term treatments — family will help with the expense. Problem — run away from responsibility!

Well, do we ask Rome for a show down or do we sit back and turn the other cheek? Being of Irish origins, you know my answer. Our Lord Himself, by using the word "cheek", limited the necessary forbearance to twice!

Carry on in Spiritu,

Servant General.