



Comment

**PAUL
CARPENTER**

If the mighty fall,
let it not be
done by hysteria

Sunday school could be a little confusing sometimes. When the teacher got to the part about what happened in Lot's cave, she kept insisting that Lot was a man of virtue and we should not ask so many questions.

She was similarly selective about King David, emphasizing his defeat of Goliath with a slingshot, but skimming over the part where he said the love of Jonathan was "more wonderful than the love of women." She skipped to David lamenting the battle deaths of Jonathan and his father, King Saul, and David's famous line, "How are the mighty fallen!"

The Methodists loved that line, because Methodists were not very mighty in our town during the height of the hysteria over McCarthyism and the witch hunts of the 1950s. Methodists and Lutherans were treated like subversives by the mighty and conservative Roman Catholics and Baptists.

In those days, we pinko Methodists liked that stuff about the fall of the mighty.

In 2002 — long after I had decided that even Methodists were too eager to impose dogmatic beliefs on others by force — I took a step back and spoke in defense of the Roman Catholic establishment.

That was when allegations of sexual abuse by Catholic priests were exploding. In that 2002 column, I warned against the kinds of hysteria I had seen in the McCarthy era and at various other times.

It cannot be denied that the Catholic Church played a leading role in one tragic wave of hysteria. It was that church that pushed phony sexual abuse prosecutions like the McMartin Day School case in California and others across the nation. Thousands were persecuted and their lives and families were destroyed on the basis of "recovered memory" psychobabble by quack "therapists."

But in the new 2002 orgy of hand-wringing, when they started using recovered memories to prosecute Catholic priests, I spoke as strongly as I could against the kind of hysteria that drives such bunk.

Since Thursday, we've seen a series of sensational stories about the widespread sexual abuse of children by priests in the Philadelphia and Allentown dioceses — and allegations that priests were systematically protected from accountability by the highest levels of church hierarchy.

These allegations were not from quack therapists, but from a comprehensive grand jury investigation steered by Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham.

A "scathing" grand jury report, the stories said, listed more than 60 priests, including a dozen in the Lehigh Valley, who raped or otherwise molested hundreds of children. The report said one 11-year-old girl was raped by a priest, who then had her undergo an abortion to kill his offspring. Other horrors, often involving boys, abounded.

The abuse was deliberately covered up, it was reported, by two former archbishops, Cardinals John Krol and Anthony Bevilacqua. Allentown Bishop Edward P. Cullen also was portrayed harshly, for "perpetrating an unwritten policy of obfuscation and excuse-peddling in dealing with sexually abusive priests."

However, it seems that no one will be criminally prosecuted, because the statute of limitations has expired.

It will not be easy to contain the rage against these men. For one thing, leaders of the Catholic Church have long represented the most powerful force demanding tyrannical sexual repression in America.

Their grotesque hypocrisy, now so obvious, needs to have consequences — statute of limitations or no statute of limitations — and it will cause me no sorrow if I soon can say *how are the mighty fallen*.

Nevertheless, I feel as strongly as ever that any consequence must be the result of provable individual behavior.

Hysteria must play no part.

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Katrina evacuees settle in Easton

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Red Cross helps Valley ready for emergencies

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LOCAL

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2005

THE MORNING CALL

SECTION B 1

Dally wants hearing on school loans

Lehigh Valley College is in state lawmaker's cross hairs over high interest rates.

By Sam Kennedy
Of The Morning Call

A state lawmaker has called for a House consumer affairs hearing on the high-interest loans of Lehigh Valley College students.

Rep. Craig Dally, R-Northampton, asked for the hearing to be held in the Lehigh Valley. He warned Sallie Mae,

the company that processed and owns the loans, that if necessary he will seek a subpoena forcing it to appear.

Such a hearing would be a first-of-its-kind, putting the nation's No. 1 student loan provider and the No. 2 for-profit education company, LVC parent Career Education Corp., under the same spotlight.

It would be a public forum specifically for and about students and their high-interest loans. LVC students would be asked to describe to lawmakers how they came to be indebted to Sallie Mae.

At least one local lawmaker on the House Consumer Affairs Committee, state Rep. Douglas Reichley, R-Emmaus, has thrown his support behind the idea.

The Morning Call reported in May that LVC, formerly known as Allentown Business School, steered some of its 1,300 students toward high-interest loans that left many with overwhelming debt. Some students of the Center Valley school had Sallie Mae loans carrying 15.375 percent interest — a rate normally associated with credit cards, not historically cheap student

loans.

As a result, some students were on track to pay back more than \$100,000 — roughly three times what they borrowed — for an associate degree earned over 18 months.

Dally, a member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee, requested the hearing in a letter to Rep. Robert Flick, chairman of the House Consumer Affairs Committee, and he threatened the subpoena in a letter to the head of Sallie Mae.



Rep. Craig Dally ... warns he may issue subpoena

LVC PAGE B9



Rich Schultz Special to The Morning Call

DRUMMERS from the Manchester Pipe Band of Manchester, Conn., perform in the Pipe Band Competition at the Celtic Classic in Bethlehem on Saturday. Below, a player from the Schenectady Pipe Band of Schenectady, N.Y., participates in the contest.



Piping a tune of their own

Some of the top bagpipe bands in the country come to Bethlehem for Celtic Classic contest.

By Matt Assad
Of The Morning Call

While his high school friends were playing guitars and drums, John Bottomley spent most of his time on an instrument that annoyed his neighbors, was frustratingly difficult to learn and repelled girls better than a pair of thick glasses held together with masking tape.

That was more than 30 years ago, but Bottomley, of Bethlehem, remains part of a tight-knit worldwide fraternity of musicians who play the bagpipes because they love it —

CELTIC PAGE B2

Priest tells parish he attempted to alert

St. Isidore's pastor says he warned archdiocese of now-defrocked priest

By Hal Marcovitz
Of The Morning Call

A Bucks County priest told his parishioners at a Mass on Saturday that he tried to alert officials at the Philadelphia Archdiocese that a fellow priest was obsessed with child pornography, but despite his warnings the clergyman was simply transferred to other churches and permitted to remain active in the priesthood.

The Rev. Frederick J. Riegler made his comments three days after a Philadelphia grand jury report condemned Cardinals Anthony J. Bevilacqua and John Krol, the former archbishops of Philadelphia, for concealing reports of sexual misconduct by priests. Riegler, pastor of St. Isidore's Roman Catholic Church in Milford Township, said archdiocese officials were well aware of the Rev. Edward K. DePaoli's obsession with child pornography, yet during the 1990s Riegler encountered him on the clerical staff of a church in Philadelphia.

"How did he get here?" Riegler recalled asking himself at the time. "What were they thinking?"

Riegler and all other priests in the archdiocese were instructed by Cardinal Justin Rigali to ad-

ON THE WEB

To read the letters from Cardinal Rigali and Bishop Cullen, visit mcall.com

MASS PAGE B4

Summit Hill celebrates return of pieces of history

Two cannons that had been sold are rededicated at park.

By John J. Moser
Of The Morning Call

Like a Union soldier returned home from battle triumphant, two Civil War cannons unwittingly sold to a private collector in 2000 were proudly put back on display at a Summit Hill memorial Saturday.

The guns, their polished bronze shining in the sun at Ludlow Park, were rededicated in a ceremony filled with reverence for the soldiers'

sacrifices they represent and anger at forces that speakers say threaten their memories.

Quoting from the memorial's original 1914 dedication, attorney Carole Wildoner-Walbert said the cannons are "a symbol of conquest — not of war, but of right over wrong. Right will always prevail over wrong."

Wildoner-Walbert, a history aficionado who sued Pittsburgh-area collector Kenneth Watterson to get the cannons back, said right triumphed when they were returned.

The federal government granted the cannons to the borough to honor Civil War veterans and they were displayed for about 85 years. But

in 2000, the borough's American Legion, wrongly believing it owned the guns, sold them to Watterson, who replaced them with replicas.

It was two years before a Panther Valley School District history teacher and his students, trying to do rubbings of serial numbers and other identifying marks, discovered the original cannons were gone.

The borough reached an agreement to refund Watterson the \$70,000 he paid, plus interest, and went to Venetia, Washington County, to retrieve them in February 2004.

Since then, they have been undergoing restoration to



Mustafah Abdulaziz Special to The Morning Call

ATTORNEY CAROLE WILDONER-WALBERT, Summit Hill Councilman David Wargo, center, and state Rep. Keith R. McCall, D-Carbon County, gather next to one of the recovered, restored Civil War cannons at Saturday's ceremony.

CANNONS PAGE B2



LEHIGH VALLEY COLLEGE, has some students who, because of high interest rates, will have to pay back more than \$100,000 in student loans for associate degrees earned at the Center Valley school. Its parent company, Career Education Corp., is the No. 2 for-profit education company in the country.

Morning Call file photo

Phillipsburg man indicted in theft

By Jay Richards
Special to The Morning Call

A Phillipsburg man was indicted Wednesday by the Warren County grand jury for allegedly stealing guns. Sean L. Kimball, 26, of 568 Elder Ave., was indicted for theft. According to prosecutor's office documents, Kimball in January stole a 9 mm pistol and a .22-caliber revolver from a home in Washington, N.J. Also indicted in separate cases were:

■ Matthew Dunstan, 31, of 106 S. Courtland St., East Stroudsburg on a heroin possession charge. Prosecutor's office records said Dunstan possessed less than a half-ounce of heroin in Blairstown Township on April 8.

■ Bonnie L. Smith, 50, of 940 High Street, Alpha, for cocaine possession. Prosecutor's records say she possessed less than a half-ounce of cocaine in Alpha on July 23.

Jay Richards is a freelance writer.

LVC FROM PAGE B1

He said his concern about high-interest loans has been stoked by calls and letters that have "inundated" his office. He said he didn't know the exact number, but that his office responded to a dozen by forwarding forms to file complaints to the state attorney general office's Bureau of Consumer Affairs.

ON THE WEB

■ For archived stories on the controversy, visit www.mcall.com/lvc

"Young college students and their families," he wrote in his letter to Flick, "have contacted my office to express frustration and outrage with usurious lending rates." Steve Miskin, a spokesman for House Republicans, said Flick is aware of Dally's request but has not had a

chance to consider it. Flick, R-Chester, plans to meet with Dally this week to discuss the matter.

Reichley said he "will certainly urge" the chairman to agree to hold the hearing. "I have no doubt that he will consider very favorably the request," he said.

In his letter to Sallie Mae, Dally complained that the Reston, Va., company did not address his questions in an earlier letter, in June.

At that time, the Bushkill Township lawyer asked Sallie Mae about its relationships with other colleges in the state; how many high-interest loans, and at what dollar volume, it has made to students in the state; and what it does to inform students of high interest rates.

Sallie Mae spokesman Tom Joyce said Friday his company was in the process of formulating its formal response to Dally's second letter. Created by the federal government in 1972, Sallie

Mae became a private company, SLM Corp., last year.

Some of Sallie Mae's loans have higher-than-usual interest because the company lends to people who have poor credit ratings and would otherwise be unable to come up with the money for tuition, Joyce said.

He said his company takes issue with Dally's characterization of its loans as "usurious."

"It's false, untrue and without any legal basis," he said. He noted the Sallie Mae loans provided to LVC students originated from Stillwater National Bank in Stillwater, Okla., where it operates under Oklahoma state law.

Dally and Reichley, nonetheless, are not alone in their concern about the matter.

Last month, Career Education of Hoffman Estates, Ill., disclosed that the Pennsylvania attorney general's office asked LVC to turn over records on its recruitment practices and financial aid

policies. A lawyer for Career Education, the second-biggest chain of schools in the country, said the request was probably spurred by recent articles in The Morning Call. The newspaper reported in April that LVC used hard-sell sales tactics that were sometimes misleading. The follow-up story in May focused on high-interest loans.

LVC — which offers training in a variety of subjects, from massage therapy to computer networking — has denied wrongdoing. School President Virginia Carpenter said last month, "We intend to fully cooperate. ... We're really looking forward to this as an opportunity to share what our practices are."

Also investigating Career Education are the U.S. Department of Education and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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Businessman who didn't make repairs freed from 1 prison

By Tyra Braden
Of The Morning Call

A Whitehall Township man who took money to do work for two Moore Township homeowners in the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan but didn't finish the jobs won't have to spend more time in Northampton County Prison.

Eric C. Hill, 38, of 2032 N. Lehigh Ave., will remain incarcerated in Lehigh County Prison, where he awaits sentencing on six misdemeanor charges related to his former business, Advanced Restorations.

He faces multiple counts of receiving stolen property and writing bad checks, according to Lehigh County court

records. Hill said he was to be sentenced next month and expected to serve three to six months in prison.

Hill, who represented himself, said he served seven months on the Northampton County charges.

Homeowners Joseph E. Cesanek of 2202 Yost Road and Kelly Kleiber of 2201 Yost Road filed private criminal complaints against Hill, who pleaded guilty June 6 to two counts of theft by deception.

Northampton County Judge Stephen G. Baratta on Friday sentenced Hill to a prison term of time served to 18 months.

Assistant District Attorney Michael Thompson said Hill took \$754 from one client and

\$948 from the other.

Cesanek in his complaint says on Sept. 19, 2004, he gave Hill a check for \$734 to get rid of more than 3 feet of water in his basement; Kleiber's complaint says only that Hill failed to perform work for which he was paid on Sept. 21, 2004. Hill on June 6 repaid Cesanek and Kleiber in full, Baratta said.

Hill told Baratta he had done

part of the work but was delayed in finishing. He said he offered the clients partial refunds, but they refused.

"I'm a lousy businessman, your honor," Hill said. "I've since folded the business."

Hill said he is now in bankruptcy, in part because clients wouldn't allow him to remove rented equipment from their property.

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