

Technique of Agitation

By Dorothy Day

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*Summary: Distinguishes *The Catholic Worker* from other news publications: “The purpose of a paper is to influence the thought of its readers. We are quite frankly propagandists for Catholic Action.” (DDLW #198).*

Father Grady says that reading newspapers is a waste of time. One loses sight of the eternal. (But we hope you won’t take this to mean that reading THE CATHOLIC WORKER is a waste of time.)

After reading the *New York Times*, the *Daily Worker*, the *Federated Press*, the N.A.A.C.P. new service, the N.C.W.C. news service, *America*, the *Commonweal*, the *Sign*, the *Nation*, *The New Republic*, etc., etc., we bring out a December issue which only glancingly touches on such news as the recent lynchings, codes, sweat shops, housing problems and other news which demands critical comment.

Father Corbett came in to see us a couple of times last month. One day he came in to converse, and another day to criticize, and he left his ear phones off the second day, lest, I suppose, “we justify ourselves in our sins.”

“People say that you do too much criticizing,” he said, “and don’t point out all that is being done.”

We agree that much is being done—but so much more remains. “Never rest, never rest, there’s no peace on earth,” we say cheerfully with our patron saint of Teresa of Avila.

Hence we give much space this issue to detail plans and discuss Houses of Hospitality, our recent Round Table Discussion, ideas for a Catholic Workers’ School.

We are not giving you news such as you get in your daily paper. We are giving you ideas as to Catholic Action. We touch lightly on the hotel worker’s code, because hotel employees have come into the office and told us of the conditions under which they work.

We describe conditions of factory work for girls, because it shows the inefficacy of depending on codes (regulation) as compared to working for a renewal of the Christian spirit. Our date-packing story also shows the need of Houses of Hospitality for women workers at such wages.

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“You may think you are newspaper editors,” Father Parsons, the editor of “*America*,” said a few months ago in friendly comment. “But agitators is what you really are.”