

Bar Teaching Nuns, Priests, Suit Asks

Santa Fe, N. M. —(RNS)—A suit demanding that "all members of Catholic teaching orders be declared ineligible and forever barred from teaching in New Mexico public schools and dismissed immediately," was filed here in the State District Court by Harry L. Bigbee, local attorney. He announced that, if necessary, the action would be carried to the U. S. Supreme Court.

Religious Needed For Teaching Bishops Assert

Santa Fe, N. Mex.—Catholic Brothers and nuns have served for nearly half a century as teachers in New Mexico public schools because the public school authorities requested them and contended they could not make their system work in any other way. It was made plain in a statement issued by the Bishops of the Province of Santa Fe, which embraces the State of New Mexico, following a meeting here.

The statement pointed out that litigation now has been initiated in New Mexico courts to have the Brothers and nuns removed from their posts as teachers in public schools. The prelates expressed determination to defend the rights of the Brothers and nuns.

The statement in part follows: "In recent months it has emanated as a public issue from the State of New Mexico whether members of Catholic teaching Orders should continue as teachers in public schools of this State. The fact is that for nearly a half century Sisters and Brothers have fulfilled the educational needs of certain communities as public school teachers, their services being acceptable to those public school authorities who felt they could not solve their educational needs and problems in any other way.

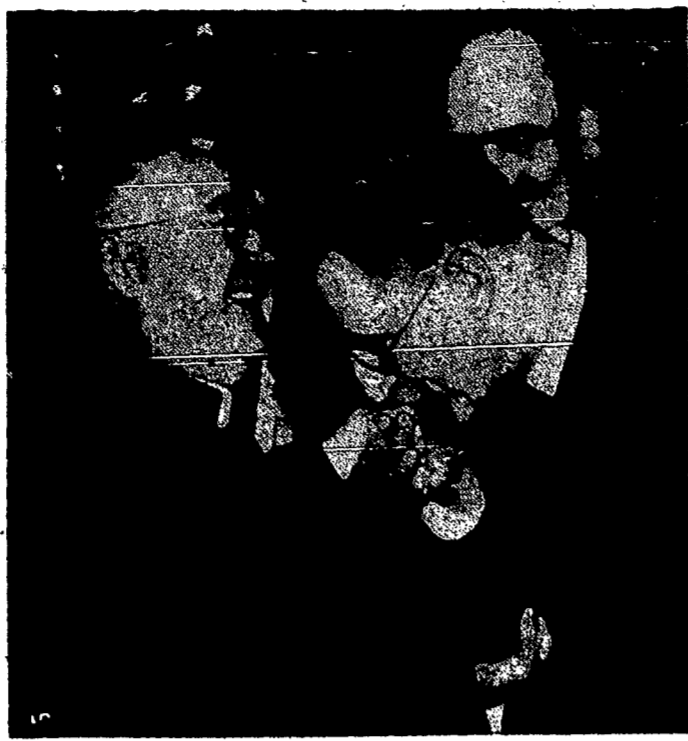
"The authorities of the Church in New Mexico have in no manner whatsoever entertained the much haunter and often misunderstood idea of so-called union of Church and State. It was only through a high sense of duty of her mission to promote the welfare of human society that the Church permitted Brothers and Sisters to accept the office of teacher in the public schools."

Named in the suit were 235 individuals, 145 of whom are Catholic nuns, brothers, and priests who reportedly are teaching in the public schools of New Mexico. Also named in the suit are the State Board of Education, Governor Thomas J. Mabry, State Superintendent of Schools Charles L. Rose and the Rev. William T. Bradley of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. The suit charges that Father Bradley, director of Education for the archdiocese, was given powers normally vested in a state education board, but adds that the specific nature of such delegation of power is not known.

OTHER DEMANDS in the suit request the following: (1) An injunction barring the budget auditor from making or approving school budgets paying public monies to religious orders. (2) An injunction against school boards paying or employing members of Catholic teaching orders in tax-supported schools. (3) No tax-supported schools in the state be operated on church-owned property. (4) That schools named in the suit be considered parochial institutions and not eligible for public funds. (5) That money paid teachers of Catholic orders be considered illegal use of public funds.

In his suit, Bigbee charges that the violations cited "are not isolated situations but part of a plan or scheme of officials of the Roman Catholic Church to introduce teachings of Catholicism in all public or tax-supported schools."

'DEV' MEETS THE CARDINAL



New York-born Prime Minister of Eire, Eamon de Valera, kisses the ring of Francis Cardinal Spellman as the two meet at luncheon reception given Irish leader in New York. (NO Photos.)

Frisco Hails De Valera In St. Patrick's Parade

San Francisco — (NC) — This City of St. Francis has just had the greatest St. Patrick's celebration in its history. It was a week-long tribute to the Patron Saint of Ireland, marked by the presence here of Eamon De Valera, former Prime Minister of Eire, for five of those days. Highlights of the celebrations were the Solemn Pontifical Mass, Sunday in St. Mary's Cathedral, at which Archbishop John J. Mitty of San Francisco presided, followed shortly afterwards by a colorful four-hour parade up San Francisco's famed Market Street, Sunday afternoon.

De Valera, Gov. Earl Warren of California and Mayor Elmer P. Robinson of San Francisco attended the Mass and later took part in the parade. "Mr. De Valera was grand marshal of the parade. In line were hundreds of uniformed bands, drill teams, bugle and drum corps, military and fraternal organizations, and floats gayly decorated in the "Auld Sod" theme. De Valera arrived at the San Francisco airport early Friday afternoon, accompanied by Gen. Frank Aiken, his aide and former Irish finance minister, and Liam McGowan, feature editor of the Irish Press of Dublin. Mayor Robinson extended the city's greetings at a San Francisco Press Club dinner Friday night. The former Prime Minister spoke at a public mass meeting at the civic auditorium Sunday night. Nine hundred persons honored him Monday at a luncheon given by the Ancient Order of the Hibernians, with Archbishop Mitty, Phil Gibson, State Supreme Court Justice, and military and civic leaders present.

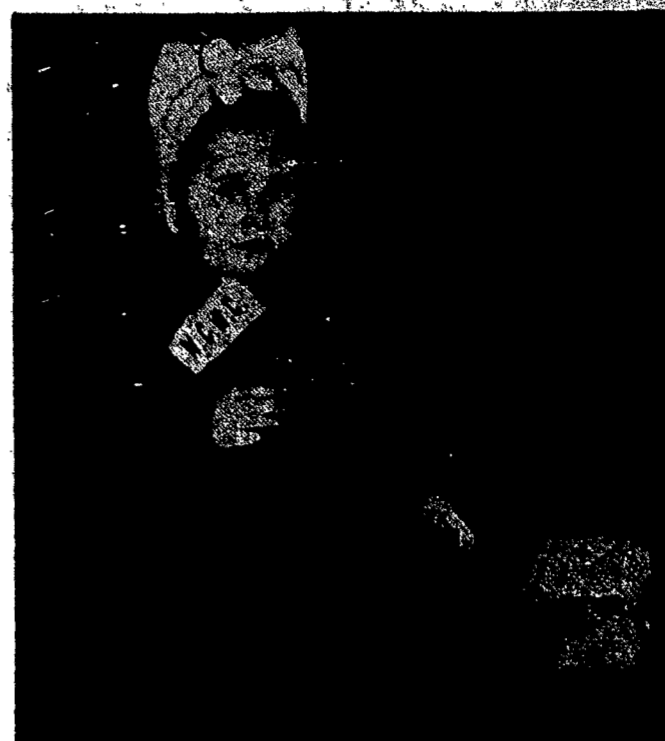
Court Decision Does Not Halt Released-Time

New York — (RNS) — Church leaders, recovering from the first impact of the Supreme Court decision in the Champaign case, appeared to be growing more confident that the decision would not immediately affect released-time programs carried on outside public school buildings.

Reports reaching Religious News Service from various parts of the country indicated such religious instruction programs are operating as usual and local churchmen did not anticipate any changes for the time being. School officials were proceeding cautiously. In some instances conferences had been arranged between churchmen and public education authorities to discuss the Supreme Court decision. In other cases boards of education have asked their legal counsel for an interpretation of the high court decision as it might affect local conditions.

A summary of typical situations in various parts of the country follows: In Roanoke, Va., where the religious education program is strikingly similar to the one in Champaign, educators and churchmen have adopted a "wait and see" attitude and seem to be in no hurry to throw away a program on which considerable time and money have been spent. Over 3,000 grade school children in Roanoke city schools are taking religious education classes in school buildings on school time. Educators and churchmen in Minnesota declared that the Supreme Court decision will not affect operation of released-time classes in that state. They pointed out that Minnesota law permits students, with parents' consent, to be released from school to attend religious instruction. An estimated 25,000 students attend religious instruction classes in the state. Churches or other places of worship close to the schools serve as "classrooms." LOS ANGELES — city schools will continue to allow students to leave classes 40 minutes a week for religious instruction outside of school, pending a county counsel ruling on the Supreme Court's decision. Dr. Edwin C. Keback, chairman of the committee on weekly religious education for the Pennsylvania Council of Christian Education, said he interpreted the Supreme Court ruling as meaning that schools may still grant released time for pupils to receive religious instruction provided the classes are held in local churches instead of public school buildings. FROM COLUMBUS, Ohio, it was reported that the Ohio Council of Churches has ordered continued operation of its widespread church-school program. HAROLD C. HUNT, Superintendent of Chicago schools, said he did not believe the Supreme Court ruling would affect Chicago, as there is no religious education in the schools proper. However, about 25,000 students in this city are granted releases from classes one hour a week to attend religious instruction in churches. In Indianapolis, Ind., he plans are to go ahead with weekday religious instruction under terms of the Indiana state law which permits the release of school children for religious instruction up to 120 minutes each week on condition that none of the taxpayers' money is used. Classes are always held in churches nearest the schools and never in the schools themselves.

INTRODUCTION TO AMERICA



A little Polish girl, one of thousands of displaced persons, arrives in America aboard the Marine Flower, at New York. Arriving with her were a group of former Polish guests from the American Zone in Germany. The girl, Mary, Catholic, is a member of the Resettlement Council, an agency of the War Relocation Authority, which will place them in homes and jobs. (NO Photos.)

Catholicism In Rural Areas Found Weak

Urban living has become so common among American Catholics that present numbers cannot be maintained unless the trend is reversed, according to a study just completed by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, entitled "A Survey of Catholic Weakness." Sponsored by Bishop Joseph H. Schickman of Peoria, Ill., the study is based on a survey of the Catholic population in the United States. It is believed that the Catholic urban and rural population is not, says Magr Luigi G. Layti, conference secretary, in his introduction to the survey. However, Catholic youth leave the land, he contends, at a rate higher than the American average, so that the number of Catholics is actually falling off as an accelerated rate in the rural districts where it has been weaker since the beginning of the century. The reason, it is said, seems to be the increasing influence of Catholic schools and leadership.

Oldest American Bishop Dies at 85; Priest 62 Years

Rapid City, S. Dak. — (NC) — With the death of the Most Rev. John Jeremiah Lawler, 85-year-old Bishop of Rapid City, for whom a Solemn Mass of Requiem was offered today in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception here, the United States hierarchy lost its oldest member. Bishop Lawler gave 62 years of his life to the priesthood and served the Episcopate for 38 years. The funeral Mass was offered by Bishop William T. McCarty, C.S.S.R., who succeeded Bishop Lawler in the Rapid City See. Bishop McCarty became Coadjutor Bishop of Rapid City with the right of succession last May. The sermon at the Mass was preached by Bishop Lawrence J. Sheehan of Minneapolis, and burial was in Calvary Cemetery. Bishop Lawler was born on August 4, 1862 in Rochester, Minn., the son of John and Elizabeth McElligott Lawler. He received his early education in private schools of Rochester and then entered the St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee. He made his theological and philosophical studies at the University of Louvain, Belgium, and was ordained at Hechin, Belgium, on December 19, 1885.

Comparing the rural strength of church groups with membership exceeding 100,000, the Catholic Church comes 2nd among 36 such groups. Figures are taken from the statistical yearbook "Census of Religious Bodies of 1936," but the comparison is weighted because Catholicism is geographically concentrated. It is estimated that the present position in rural areas is better than reported, the study contends.

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