

Anti-Convert Bill Defeated In India

New Delhi, India. — (NC) — The lower house of the Indian parliament registered an almost unanimous vote to defeat a non-official bill to ban all religious conversion work in India.

The bill was voted down after a speech by Prime Minister Jawahar Nehru who said that the proposed legislation might "produce evils and difficulties."

MR. NEHRU said that the real decision in the matter should lie with parliament's Christian members. Let them decide, he said, adding that no one wanted coercion and deception to be practiced.

It is most undesirable, he stated, to create a feeling of "oppression and suppression" among Christians.

After condemning the "rousing of religious feelings" in some parts of India, Mr. Nehru singled out the recent incident in a village in Bihar state where a Catholic Church was desecrated by a mob of fanatic Hindus.

CHEERS GREETED the premier when he declared: "This was a disgraceful occurrence, and absolutely against the spirit of law, and of the constitution and what India stood for."

The incident occurred when the Hindu mob invaded the church during celebration of Mass and, after assaulting the priest and his congregation, scattered the Blessed Sacrament over the sanctuary. The prime minister also spoke in appreciation of social welfare institutions sponsored by Christian missionaries.

\$1-Million Home For Girls Opened

Montreal. — (NC) — His Eminence Paul-Emile Cardinal Legier, Archbishop of Montreal, officiated at the solemn blessing of the \$1-million Maria Goretti Center, which was erected through his initiative to serve homeless girls in Montreal.

It has been estimated that more than 40,000 girls have come to Montreal in recent years to live in the city of 1,500,000 population. Often, it was pointed out, the girls are without funds and without guidance.

The modern center has private rooms and accommodations for 25 persons. There are 40 beds at all times available for girls without funds. The private rooms have reading and radio facilities. There are many forms of recreation at the center, including bowling, skating, tennis and folk dancing.

Chicago Cardinal Hails Role Of Noted Negro Singer

Chicago. — (NC) — Harry Belafonte folk ballad singer, paid a visit to His Eminence Samuel Cardinal Stritch, Archbishop of Chicago, at the Chancery Office here as a prelude to the singer's appearance in a solo benefit concert for the Catholic Interracial Council of Chicago at the Shubert Theatre.

THE CARDINAL told Mr. Belafonte, who was made an honorary member of the council's board of directors, that he considered him one of the most important artists in America today, and as a Negro artist, the most important.

With the world as it is today, and with such events as those which happened recently in Louisiana, the Cardinal said that the Church was exceptionally proud of Mr. Belafonte and the humility and integrity with which he had pursued his career.

The Cardinal expressed himself as pleased that the singer was going into the full range of Negro folklore, bringing forth the songs of the Negro culture and the strength of his people, as the Cardinal knew them in his early days in his native Nashville, Tenn.

THE CARDINAL also made the vital point that Mr. Belafonte through his appeal to wide masses of people, and his own example, could have a more potent result with thousands of persons, attracted by his enter-

tainment, than is often accorded to the official pronouncements of the Church.

Mr. Belafonte's appeal was direct and immediate, whereas pronouncements often go unappreciated because of the urgency of daily life, the Cardinal said. He added that as a result Mr. Belafonte has a tremendous responsibility.

Archbishop Guillermo Plant, Apostolic Delegate to Mexico, presided at the ceremonies and blessed the crown. It was the first such dedication in any nation, Archbishop Luis M. Martinez of Mexico City did not officiate because of illness.

The crowds witnessing the ceremonies here included Indians, humble working men and women, employers and professional men dressed in dark business suits, and women wearing high Spanish combs and silk lace mantillas. The ceremonies took place the day before the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe was celebrated throughout Mexico.

Medical Missions Sent 23 Abroad Philadelphia. — (RNS) — With its two latest departures, the Catholic Medical Missions have sent a total of 23 medically trained nuns to foreign fields this year from the motherhouse at nearby Fox Chase.

Bound for East Pakistan this year were Sister M. Christine R. N., of Queensville, N. Y., and Sister M. Lourdes Cosgrove. The group of 23 consisted of three doctors, 11 nurses, four pharmacists, two medical technicians and a hospital administrator.

Nine are in Pakistan; four in India; seven in South America; and three in Africa.

Virgin Hailed As 'Queen Of Work'

Mexico City. — (RNS) — Representatives of Mexican workers and employers placed a golden crown on the statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe and proclaimed her "Queen of Work."

Crowds, totalling 300,000 persons witnessed the ceremony at the Guadalupe Basilica near here.

CLASPING HANDS in front of the statue, Raul Chavez, representing workers, and Pablo Diaz, spokesman for capital and employers, pledged in the name of their groups to lay all economic problems before the Queen of Work and solve them in a Christian spirit.

TEARS OF emotion streamed down the faces of many onlookers as the huge throng recited a prayer consecrating Mexico to the Queen of Work and then sang the Mexican national anthem. They also pledged themselves to uphold a Code of the Queen of Work which sets forth principles governing good relations between workers and employers.

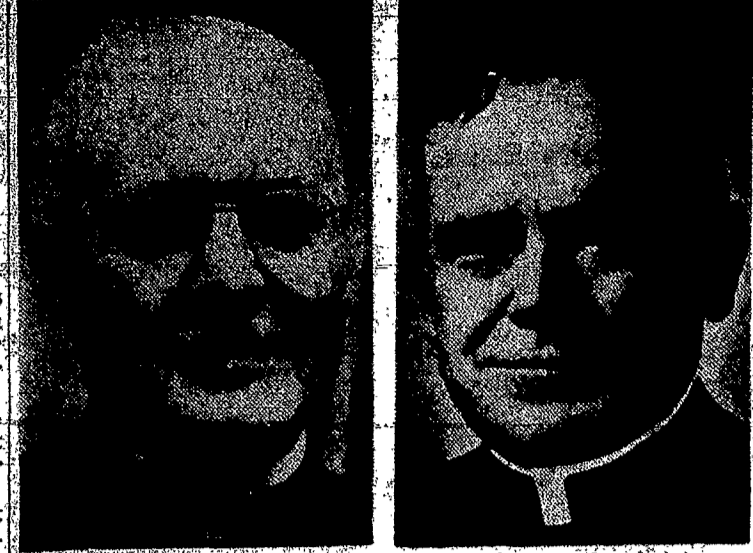
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New Bishops Two newest members of the American Hierarchy are: (left) Monsignor Philip J. Furlong, pastor of New York's St. Thomas More Church, who was named Auxiliary Bishop to Cardinal Spellman in the Cardinal's capacity as Vicar of the U.S. Armed Forces. Photo right is Monsignor Stephen A. Leven, pastor of St. Francis Xavier Church in Enid, Oklahoma. He was named Auxiliary Bishop to Archbishop Robert E. Lucey of San Antonio, Texas.

High Court Upholds Sunday Sales Ban

Springfield, Ill. — (NC) — The city of Evanston, Ill., has adopted a Sunday closing law which may become a model for other Illinois cities in the future and perhaps even other recreational commodities.

Six other state supreme courts have upheld similar ordinances—Colorado, Michigan, Maryland, Minnesota, New York and Washington. The U.S. Supreme Court has also ruled similarly.

IN THE WAKE OF the court decision, Evanston's Corporation Council Rex Bollinger has announced he plans to file charges in 125 cases for violation of the ordinance. Grand jury hearings are scheduled to begin January 3, Penalties range from \$25 to \$200 under the ordinance.

A. L. Sargent, executive director of the Illinois Municipal League, says his office will send copies of the ordinance and the Supreme Court opinion to all Illinois municipalities of 5,000 or more population. He said the ordinance probably would be used as a model by any city desiring a Sunday closing law because it has been proven legally sound.

Ministers Plan Suit To Remove Crucifix From Park

Hammond, Ind. — (RNS) — Protestant churchmen here are going to court in an attempt to get a crucifix removed from a public park at nearby Highland.

The Rev. Calvin Phillips, president of the Greater Hammond Ministerial Association, said the suit will be filed by three laymen with the "moral support" of his group.

THE 20-FOOT crucifix was erected at Wicker Park last October by the Knights of Columbus as a memorial to American war dead. The Roman Catholic laymen's organization plans to put up such crosses in other parts of the county.

Mr. Phillips said the lawsuit will contend the crucifix is a "sectarian religious symbol" and its location on public property violates the constitutional principle of separation of Church and State.

The court action was decided upon by the ministerial association at a meeting here.

The association issued a statement saying "we would have preferred to see this issue settled quickly and privately without the rancor and hostility that is bound to come from a lawsuit."

"But as ministers we bear a heavy responsibility for the defense of religious liberty as guaranteed in the American principle of separation of Church and State," they stated. "It is an obligation we cannot forfeit. Therefore, we find no alternative but to encourage recourse to the courts of our land."

Protestant, Eastern Orthodox and Jewish clergymen had protested the erection of the crucifix early in October. Spokesmen for these groups, as well as for Catholics of the area, subsequently met in Highland and discussed ways of settling the dispute. Representatives of the Knights of Columbus did not attend the meeting, reportedly preferring to leave the matter in the hands of the courts.

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Archbishop Rummel Appeals To Racists

New Orleans. — (NC) — An appeal "to let justice and charity take the place of hatred and prejudice" was made by Archbishop Joseph F. Rummel of New Orleans to the churches, Archbishop Rummel asked from the leaders of those who had opposed the Negro priest "an expression of sincere sorrow over the grievous offense which they committed."

He called upon them "to consider prayerfully the teaching of our Holy Catholic Church about the dignity of every true priest of God and the respect and confidence which we owe to his person and services."

The day following the reading of the Archbishop's letter, the parish pastor, Father Clement Meyer, S.V.D., sent members of his congregation a card and asked that they sign it. The card said the offense was regretted and henceforth the parishioners would accept any priest sent to them.

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