

## Religious Issue\*

By Religious News Service

In an election in which predominantly Baptist Georgia gave Sen. John F. Kennedy as large a percentage of its votes as did predominantly Catholic Rhode Island, political observers in Washington have found little evidence that the President-elect's Roman Catholic faith hurt him in the 1960 election.

Georgia went to Kennedy by a margin of 302,000 to 239,000, almost 65 per cent. Rhode Island, with a population estimated to be 63 per cent Roman Catholic against Georgia's one per cent, went to him 287,000 to 144,000, almost the same margin.

Two states where observers thought they could see evidence of an anti-Catholic trend in 1960 were Oklahoma, which went to Nixon by a heavy margin, and Tennessee, which Nixon carried by nearly 75,000. However, both states went Republican in 1956, when there was no such issue—and when Tennessee's favorite was on the Democratic ticket for Vice President.

On the other hand, offsetting any losses, political observers were pretty certain Kennedy could not have carried Illinois, where his lead was only 6,000 votes or New Jersey, where it was 21,000, without the help of a strong Catholic vote which he undoubtedly attracted back to its normal Democratic moorings in the big cities.

To the extent that religion was an issue, it was to Kennedy's advantage in electoral votes.

This last view received support from a representative of the Elmo Roper poll-taking organization during a New York panel discussion sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

However, it was maintained during the discussion that a definite nationwide religious bloc vote probably helped Nixon in the popular vote column while aiding Kennedy in the populous Northern high electoral-vote states.

But Washington observers, nevertheless, found no hard to find any evidence of a religious vote.

If Kennedy's religion was an important issue in the Midwest, as many observers had said, then why did he carry Minnesota, but lose neighboring Wisconsin? The Catholic population in Wisconsin is much larger than in Minnesota. If religious bloc voting was an important feature, then it should have been just the reverse in these two states.

Incidentally, although Minnesota is predominantly Lutheran, Kennedy's advantage, percentage-wise, was a little better than in industrial Michigan or Illinois, both of which have big cities with large Catholic populations.

In Iowa, Kennedy lost heavily, a margin of 722,000 to 540,000, and some would blame religious factors in that predominantly Protestant state—were it not for the fact that the Iowans at the same time elected a Roman Catholic, Jack Miller, to the United States Senate. Miller, a Republican, defeated popular Gov. Herschell Loveless, the Democratic nominee. It is only the second time in Iowa's history that it has sent a Catholic to the Senate, the first being the late Sen. Richard L. Murphy (D.Ia.), elected in the 1932 Roosevelt landslide, who was killed in a tragic automobile accident in 1938.

It also is pointed out that Lt. Gov. Edward McNamara, the Democratic nominee for governor, a Catholic, ran ahead of Sen. Kennedy in Iowa, although he lost out, too, in the GOP landslide.

In Kennedy's own Massachusetts, there was clear-cut evidence that religion is not a strong factor in elections. At the same time that Kennedy was carrying his home state, as expected, with a majority of more than 300,000, Republican Sen. Leverett Saltonstall, a Protestant, was emerging victorious by a margin even larger over Mayor Thomas O'Connor of Springfield, his Catholic opponent.

In another Protestant-Catholic race in New England, the Democratic State nominee in Rhode Island, a Protestant, Claiborne Pell, astounded politicians by whipping his Catholic opponent, Raoul Archambault, Republican, by a considerably larger margin, 270,000 to 120,000 than Kennedy won the state. Some politicians had entertained the belief that Mr. Archambault, being Catholic and of French Canadian extraction, in a state with a large French-speaking population, might pull a very good vote against Episcopal, Anglo-Saxon Pell, who would probably ride in on Kennedy's coattails. It was Kennedy who wound up riding Pell's coattails.

Out in the Far West, meanwhile, to look at another Protestant-Catholic race, Sen. Kennedy won Nevada. Ex-Sen. George Malone, an Irish Catholic Republican, was trying a political comeback. Rep. Walter S. Baring, his Democratic opponent, however, put Kennedy in the shade by the margin by which he defeated Mr. Malone.

## Readings of Random

## Negro Children, Brimful Of Hope, Damned To Despair

By GERALD K. SHIRLEY  
Editor, Central California Register

Whenever you talk about racial justice, it is surprising the amount of negative responses one gets. In my last Reading I complained about the lack of interest on the subject from delegates to a national Catholic convention. My mail from several parts of the country confirms the view that some Catholics are as violently racist as some Non-Catholics we have been in the habit of condemning.

One reader went so far as to suggest, "If you like Negroes so much, why don't you immigrate to Africa?"

It is sad, really, when stuff like that comes from people calling themselves Catholic. However, it is not too surprising. I recall, not too long ago, the state head of one of our large Catholic societies telling me to my face that he would not have any Negro admitted to his organization. He didn't use the correct nomenclature for Negro either.

When you have organizations such as the Knights of Columbus which, despite denials from their national headquarters, practice discrimination on a state and local level, it is a small wonder that we get jawboning from the Urban League and other Civil Rights groups.

Normally, the Knights of Columbus aren't that bad. But discrimination is rampant to mass-

tership in practice in the North and the South by several Catholic groups.

The excuse is always the same. "We don't discriminate, but we have very high standards." What a laugh! I know some Negroes who could put many of us spiritually, culturally, and morally to shame. I know one such gentleman who is barred from membership in a professional Catholic organization simply because of his color.

Of all the possible questions about integration and racial justice, the most agonizing to me, as a concerned colored child, is the mind of many sociological, economical and cultural factors that simple act of the children acts as a beam of light and a spur to action.

There they stand, brimful of hope, bursting with potentialities, but also damaged to despair. In the eyes of a wonderful little human person, wounded by prejudice, all the theorist of racial pride dissolve in the bitter salt-taste of human tears.

What segregationist is low enough to walk up to a ten year old boy, who wears his dreams on his sleeve, and be callous enough to tell him that he is cursed by a vengeful God, and that he must remain forever frustrated, merely because he is colored?

What harassed home owner, worried by economic possibilities, but the heart to look again that the right relations of various racial or national groups to one another in the community is a moral problem—a matter of objective right and wrong. It cannot be adequately or effectively treated in any other way. The Church has made it plain that legal

lives, locked on the bottom rung of the social ladder, merely because he is colored.

What worried administrator, of a hospital or a parish, or of a school, who has the gall to look squarely at a Negro child and tell him that he has no place in "our" establishment. My "our" parish, in "our" establishment, in a professional Catholic organization simply because of his color.

The tragedy is that no segregationist, no home owner, no administrator who meets a little Negro child, the photo-walks that shield us, keep us from ever meeting a Negro as a person. A white man can live a whole life-time without ever being put in the position of seeing the Negro as anything else than "one of them", one of those people, one of a

hostile, locked on the bottom rung of the social ladder, merely because he is colored.

What progress is to be made, it must happen that white persons with non-colored persons as persons, will see them as human beings with all the human capacities, needs and hopes that the white person has.

For the Catholic, this is of eternal importance. For, if we cannot see the Christ Child in the colored child, we will not see the God-man in the colored man, and if we fail to see Him there, we will also fail to see Him for all eternity.

The Church has made it clear and

completely reprobate—is itself a mortal injury. It is a crime against human nature and as such is an offense against God himself.

Catholics have to face the problems in that light. They have to rise above the mob and consciously accept the teaching of the Church.

Catholic societies will have to discipline themselves better in this regard. If we are having Catholic newspaper editor pictures giving their leaders of Catholic organizations giving their Bishop money for their charities that these same leaders cannot see it in their hearts to apply elementary teachings of the Church in their organizations.

A charitable contribution never earned a sin.

So very often you hear the remark, "Well, they may not admit Negroes but they help the Bishop in his building fund campaign." So what? A checkbook cannot solve a conscience.

All this is very unpleasant to many people, but it has to be said and said often. Our Bishop established the norm for Catholic activity in regard to racial justice in their statement of several years ago.

Our Bishop's teaching on racial Justice was not meant merely for this diocese or that diocese; it was meant for all Catholics—North, South, East and the West. There are no excuses to be made, and we must all stand and be counted.

## Urgent Need Continues

My dear People:

For eleven years now I have asked you to Thanksgiving Clothing Collection in 1949, you have given 1,250 bags of usable clothing and shoes.

This is indeed an excellent record of your charity, and I am deeply grateful to you. The urgent need, though, continues, and Christ in His poor still pleads with us for help.

May I ask, then, again this year that you take your 1 bag of usable clothing and place designation by your name. Your gift will make your Thanksgiving Day that much more sincere.

With a blessing, I am,

Your devoted Shepherd in Christ,

John E. Tracy  
Bishop of Rochester

How difficult to believe that he would have done better than Kennedy, over-all in the nation.

Adlai E. Stevenson would probably have done better than in 1956 or 1952, but would it have been enough better to defeat Nixon?

On the whole, political observers in Washington think that Kennedy's Catholic religion may have hurt him in a few areas, but helped him in others, and the overall effect on a close election was close to negligible.

Catholic Senator-elect Miller won the Republican ticket in Protestant Iowa, a state Republicans carried; Ex-Sen. George Malone lost in the Republican ticket in Nevada, which the Democrats carried. Catholic Senate nominee O'Connor, with the Democratic nomination in Kennedy's own Massachusetts, couldn't win against a popular Protestant opponent. And Catholic Archambault trailed his old ticket in Rhode Island, the most predominantly Catholic state of the union against a popular Protestant.

Thus, the religious affiliation of a candidate appeared to be of very little significance compared with his political affiliation and the personal popularity of his opponent.

The "religious issue" seems to have created much heat, very little light, and almost no votes at all.

## Governors Proclaim Religion In Life Month

New York — (RNS) — Governor of 30 states proclaimed November as Religion In American Life Month. It was announced here by Dr. Earle B. Pleasant, national director of the NAL, whose program to increase worship attendance in our institutions is the deep conviction that religion is the source of our participation and freedom.

The governors, including N.Y. Governor Nelson Rockefeller, urged that regular family attendance in a house of worship be an essential part of this observance. A national campaign, costing by \$3,000,000 worth of printed advertising in November throughout the country, is being conducted for the efforts of all churches and synagogues.

White Badge For Peace

Durham — (INC) — Durham's spokesman McElroy has proposed that white people who want to assure Negroes of their friendliness in old wear a white badge.

Rialto also is sponsoring campaigns in 600 cities in which community groups have organized local efforts to block the O.M.L. said such a badge could help in an attendance drive. Cooperating in these programs or its Latin equivalent "Pax," says Javet, Kiwanis and Lions clubs, energy groups, councils.

He said they might be counterfeited while making the counters while also making the counterculture.

In their proclamations, the governors said that from state to state, the friends of the colored Negroes have on the word "Peace" on their badges or their Latin equivalent "Pax."

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