

Race Bias

Nation's 'Most Serious Evil'

CHICAGO (AP) — The National Conference on Religion and Race has urged Americans to work, pray and act to eliminate all racial barriers in this country.

Some 400 conference delegates adopted a statement calling for the removal of barriers in housing, equal opportunity in employment, education and at the polls.

The appeal to the conscience of the American people was read at the close of the conference by Msgr. Daniel M. Cantwell, chairman of the Catholic Interracial Council of Chicago. He was chairman of the committee which drafted the statement at the conference, convened by representatives of the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish faiths.

The statement said that racism is "our most serious evil" and called for its eradication "with all diligence and speed."

It appealed to the American people to "seek a reign of justice in which voting rights and equal protection of the law will everywhere be enjoyed; public facilities and private ones serving a public purpose will be accessible to all; equal education and cultural opportunities, hiring and promotion, medical and hospital care, open occupancy in housing will be available to all."

THE FULL statement follows:
An Appeal to the Conscience of the American People

We have met as members of the great Jewish and Christian faiths held by the majority of the American people, to confer together concerning the tragic fact of racial prejudice, discrimination and segregation in our society. Coming as we do out of various religious backgrounds, each of us has more to say than can be said here. But this statement is what we as religious people are moved to say together.

I
Racism is our most serious domestic evil. We must eradicate it with all diligence and speed. For this purpose we appeal to the conscience of the American people.

This evil has deep roots. It will not be easily eradicated. While the Declaration of Independence did declare "that all men are created equal" and "are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights," slavery was permitted for almost a century. Even after the Emancipation Proclamation, compulsory racial segregation and its degrading badge of racial inequality received judicial sanction until our own time.

We rejoice in such recent evidence of greater wisdom and courage in our national life as the Supreme Court decisions against segregation and the historic, nonviolent protests of thousands of Americans. However, we mourn the fact that patterns of segregation remain entrenched everywhere—north and south, east and west. The

spirit and the letter of our laws are violated and broken. Our primary concern is for the law of God. We Americans of all religious faiths have been called to recognize that racial discrimination and segregation are an insult to God, the Giver of human dignity and human rights. Even worse, we all have participated in perpetuating racial discrimination and segregation in civil, political, industrial, social, and private life.

And worse still, in our houses of worship, our religious schools, hospitals, welfare institutions and fraternal organizations, we have often failed our own religious commitments. With few exceptions we have evaded the mandates and rejected the promises of the faiths we represent.

We repent our failures and ask the forgiveness of God. We ask also the forgiveness of our brothers whose rights we have ignored and whose dignity we have offended. We call for a renewed religious conscience on this basically moral evil.

II
Our appeal to the American people is this:

SEEK a reign of justice in which voting rights and equal protection of the law will everywhere be enjoyed; public facilities and private ones serving a public purpose will be accessible to all; equal education and cultural opportunities, hiring and promotion, medical and hospital care, open occu-

lance in housing will be available to all.

SEEK a reign of love in which the wounds of past injustices will not be used as excuses for new ones; racial barriers will be eliminated; the stranger will be sought and welcomed; any man will be received as a brother in his rights, your rights, his rights, your pain, his pain, your prayer, his prayer.

SEEK a reign of courage in which the people of God will make their faith their binding commitment; in which men willingly suffer for justice and love, in which churches and synagogues lead, not follow.

SEEK a reign of prayer in which God is praised and worshipped as the Lord of the universe; before whom all racial idols fall, who makes us one family, and to whom we are all responsible.

In making this appeal we affirm our common religious commitment to the essential dignity and equality of all men under God. We dedicate ourselves to work together to make this commitment a vital factor in our total life.

We call upon all the American people to work to pray and to act courageously in the cause of human equality and dignity while there is still time. To eliminate racism permanently and decisively, to seek the historic opportunity the Lord has given us for healing an ancient rupture in the human family, to do this for the glory of God.

'Segregation Forever'

Birmingham — (NC) — Alabama's people have been cautioned by 11 ranking clergymen of the state against "inflammatory and rebellious" statements of opposition to possible school desegregation.

The religious leaders' appeal for moderation came three days after the defiant inaugural address of Gov. George Wallace who promised a cheering throng in Montgomery that he would maintain segregation.

Among signers of the clergyman's statement was Catholic Auxiliary Bishop Joseph A. Durik of Montgomery.

Other signers are two Methodist ministers, two Episcopalians, a Baptist, a Presbyterian, a Greek Orthodox and an official of the Christian Churches of Alabama.

THE STATEMENT said that "hatred and violence" have no sanction in "our religious and political traditions." It said that "many serious social problems may not be ignored by the whims of individuals."

"In these times of tremendous tensions and change in cherished patterns of life in our beloved Southland," the statement said in part, "it is essential that men who occupy positions of responsibility and leadership shall speak concerning their honest convictions."

"It is clear that a series of court decisions may soon bring about the desegregation of cer-

tain schools and colleges in Alabama.

"Many sincere people oppose this change and are deeply troubled by it. As Southerners, we understand this.

"We nevertheless feel that defiance is neither the right answer nor the solution. And we feel that inflammatory and rebellious statements can lead

only to violence, discord, confusion and disgrace for our beloved state."

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"Our vision in most instances," he said, "does not comprehend the sins of society and public morality."

Priests must do more reading of good social studies and economic analyses, he said, and get first-hand information from the people in movements such as unions and the professions.

Inter-Church 'Task Forces' In Race Crisis Areas

Chicago — (NC) — Organization of interreligious task forces to fight racial discrimination in crisis areas was one of scores of proposals offered by workgroups at the National Conference on Religion and Race.

The 12 workgroups were "the guts of the conference," as one rabbi expressed it, because the participants "let their hair down" and many made hard-hitting suggestions designed to fight discrimination on the local level.

THE SESSIONS were barred to the press, but a report on the proposals made at them was submitted on the final day (Jan. 17) of the conference, convened by the three major faiths of the U.S.

The workgroups stemmed from four forums on specific topics and each of the 12 workgroups was broken down into three discussion sections.

The proposal for establishment of interreligious task forces came from a workgroup in the forum entitled "The Role of Church and Synagogue in a Racially Changing Community."

"Inner-city task forces," the proposal said, "should be formed on an interreligious basis to provide teams of skilled workers for areas of racial and social crisis."

The report on suggestions made by workgroups in this forum was submitted by Dennis Clark, executive secretary of the Catholic Interracial Council of New York.

Soviet Prelates To Visit U.S.

New York — (NC) — More than 20 Soviet church leaders will arrive here Feb. 27 for a three-week visit of this country, the National Council of Churches announced.

The delegation is expected to include representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Armenian Church, the Russian Baptist Church, the Orthodox Church of Georgia, the Lutheran Church of Estonia and the Trans-Carpathian Reformed Church.

Prelate Speaks On Council

University Heights — (RNS) — Protestants and Roman Catholics were guests at a dinner here at John Carroll University where a report on the Second Vatican Council was the principal topic.

Auxiliary Bishop John F. Whealon of the Cleveland Roman Catholic diocese talked to an overflow crowd of more than 1,000 Protestants, Catholics and Orthodox in the Catholic school's auditorium.

Before the dinner, Bishop Whealon and more than a dozen Catholic priests dined with Protestant and Orthodox clergy.

Segregated Sandwich

Chicago — (NC) — The larger issues in racial discrimination took a back seat to some segregated humor for a few minutes at the National Conference on Religion and Race.

A delegate stepped to one of the floor microphones and said: "I encountered a case of discrimination right in this hotel. When I ordered a chicken salad sandwich, it came to me with a little flag on it saying: 'white meat only.'"



Famed Missionary

Tucson, Ariz. — (RNS) — Here is an artist's conception of Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, famed priest who pioneered in Arizona and much of what is now the southwestern U.S. Although Father Kino died in 1711, this is believed to be the first portrait ever painted of him. Artist Frances O'Brien of Tucson produced this likeness by studying 21 sketches of other members of the Kino family. The painting will be used to produce a statue that will be erected in Statuary Hall, Washington, D.C. During his mission career, Father Kino mapped many areas not previously explored by white men and established 19 missions over a wide area of the southwest.

Italy's Films Rated Morally Offensive

Rome — (NC) — Every third movie produced in Italy in 1962 was morally objectionable, according to the Catholic Motion Picture Center here.

In a balance sheet published by Msgr. Francesco Angelicchio, ecclesiastical consultant for the center, 77 out of a total of 216 movies produced in Italy were considered "morally negative."

Of the 77 objectionable movies, 48 were banned and 29 were labeled "unadvisable." Msgr. Angelicchio noted that these figures, compared with figures on movies produced in other nations, show that Italy is the greatest offender in turning out morally objectionable films. He said that France runs a close second.

Mission Plea

A benefit dance will be held at the Harps Club, Buffalo Road, Rochester, the evening of Saturday, Feb. 9, for the Franciscan Brothers of Ireland. The order has extensive missionary stations in Africa. Brother Benedict Minnock is now in Rochester on a tour of the United States to ask contributions to his order's mission program.

Episcopal Clerics Hear Abp. Shehan

Baltimore — (RNS) — In an unprecedented appearance before 100 Protestant Episcopal clergymen here, Roman Catholic Archbishop Lawrence J. Shehan of Baltimore predicted three revolutionary results from the work of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council.

These Council achievements, he said, would be:

1. Greater authority for bishops through the establishment of regional or national councils of bishops.
2. Decisions by most of these bishops' councils to use the vernacular in the sacraments and in the Mass, except for the Offertory and Canon (essential parts of the Mass).
3. "A real effort to give the laity a more significant role to play in the Church," but no change in the structure of the Church itself.

By accepting the invitation of Episcopal Bishop Noble C. Powell of Maryland, Archbishop Shehan became what is believed to be the first Catholic prelate here to address a gathering of Episcopal clergymen.

The 64-year-old Baltimore prelate spoke at St. Michael's and All Angels Episcopal church parish house.

After discussing the work of the Council, Archbishop Shehan engaged in an hour-long question-and-answer session with the clergymen, an organization of Episcopal clergymen.

He noted that the unusual meeting was evidence of the "marked change" in the relations between Catholic and non-Catholic Churches since the beginning of the Ecumenical Council.

"Ten years ago, I can't imagine myself being invited to address a group like this," the prelate said.

"And I can't imagine myself having accepted," he added.

London Prays For Unity

London — (RNS) — London's famed Trafalgar Square was converted into an ecumenical meeting place when more than 1,000 Anglicans, Roman Catholics and Free Church members, defying snow and a biting wind, gathered together to join in silent prayer for Christian unity.

The rally — similar to others held at Coventry, Birmingham and other cities — was sponsored by the Conference to Promote Prayer for Christian Unity whose members are made up of representatives of the various religious bodies. The Catholic member is Father Herbert Kildary, local secretary for the Chair of Unity Octave, an annual worldwide observance inaugurated by the Franciscan Friars of the Attonement in the United States. The Octave begins every year on Jan. 18 and ends Jan. 25.

Msgr. G. Wheeler, administrator of the Catholic Cathedral in Westminster, read from the New Testament and the Rev. D. Greaves, minister of the Methodist Central Hall at Westminster, led the prayers.

Convert In Chad

Frelburg — (RNS) — A new departure in Swiss Roman Catholic missionary activity was seen here in the announcement that the Federation of Swiss Cappucin Converts will establish a group of contemplative nuns at Moundou in the Republic of Chad, Central Africa.

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