

Around The Country

Grace Without God?

Washington, D.C.—The Supreme Court has been asked to determine whether the following verse violated the religious freedom of a kindergarten non-believer:

We thank you for the flowers so sweet; We thank you for the birds that sing; We thank you for everything.

The DeKalb, Ill., couple who raised the question in the first place would like to drop it now, and quit while they're ahead.

The U.S. District Court, overturning a state court decision, agreed with Mr. and Mrs. Lyle A. DeSpain that the verse does constitute a prayer, even without the word "God" that originally gave the last line its meaning and rhythm.

The DeKalb County Community School is appealing to the highest court.

Riot Victims in New Homes

Detroit—(RNS)—More than \$180,000 was collected in a city-wide drive here to help 120 families set up housekeeping after being burned out during last Summer's rioting.

Among religious organizations contributing to the campaign were the Archdiocese of Detroit (\$15,900), the Inter-faith Emergency Center (\$11,590), Christian Science Relief Committee (\$3,000), and the Rev. James J. Reeb Memorial Fund.

"Homes by Christmas" was initiated by Prof. Sally Cassidy of Wayne State University when she discovered the number of persons made homeless last July.

The \$180,000 will provide down payments on homes, clothing, and furnishings for the families. Some families have already moved into new homes.

Catholics Approve of LBJ

Princeton, N.J.—(RNS)—A substantially greater percentage of Catholics than of Protestants approve of the way President Johnson is doing his job, according to the Gallup Poll.

A breakdown of a nationwide survey on the President's popularity showed 60 per cent of all Catholics approved of the chief executive's performance, whereas only 41 per cent of the Protestants approved.

A further breakdown of the most recent Gallup survey showed that President Johnson is most popular among clerical and sales help (51 per cent approval) and least popular among farmers (34 per cent). Among professional and business persons, there was 46 per cent approval.

Listed by the level of educational attainment, among those with a high school education than among those with a college background.

Campus Morals Not So Bad

Grossinger, N.Y.—(RNS)—About 80 rabbis who serve as spiritual counselors to Jewish students at private and public colleges and universities met here to explore questions of morality on the campus.

They generally agreed that morals among Jewish and non-Jewish college students were not so ethically disoriented from the past as some critics have claimed.

The rabbis are directors of B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations on non-Jewish campuses. Their views may be summarized as follows:

—The number of students using LSD and other drugs is probably exaggerated.

—Although students may have a just cause in protest demonstrations, their methods often do more harm than good.

—Most students are honest in their attitudes toward sex, and shun promiscuity.

—Students tend to question values in today's affluent society, but do not hesitate to take what it offers.

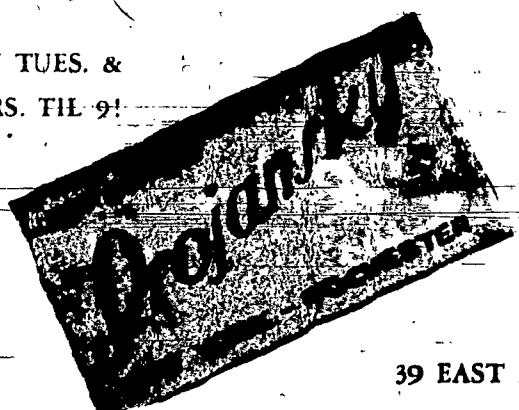
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Tablet' Irked

St. Francis No Hippie

New York—(RNS)—A comparison of modern hippies to St. Francis of Assisi made by Dr. Eugene Carson Blake went "far beyond the call of pastoral duty," according to The Tablet, weekly newspaper of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn.

The Jan. 4 issue of The Tablet made reference to a sermon delivered by the general secretary of the World Council of Churches at the First Presbyterian Church of Stamford, Conn., on Dec. 30.

In commenting on the contribution of the founder of the Franciscan Order (who lived in the 12th and 13th centuries), Dr. Blake said:

"Francis was a young man. His father didn't understand him. His father expected that Francis would become a pillar of the established society which he himself found good. But like many young men today Francis refused military service, he quit his educational preparation for the stable position in society that his father was preparing for him.

"In his father's eyes he became a hippie; poor and dirty, wandering and ecstatic, revolutionary and unstable. He burnt his draft card. He even believed in love and flower power.

"The difference was, however, that Francis' ecstasy came not from a drug but from prayer and immediate contact with the living God."

The Tablet editorial noted that hippies "deserve charitable consideration," but added, "the

situation being what it is, it takes a heap of doing to come up with something nice, convincingly so, about the unkempt ilk."

Dr. Blake, the statement continued, "went out of his way to find a likeness between today's hippies and medieval St. Francis of Assisi—hardly a compliment to the little poor man."

"It is true that Francis chose to live outside the establishment of his day," The Tablet said, "but he did not thumb his nose at it in sophisticated, sophistic contempt."

"He didn't go out of his way to foul-up neighborhoods with noisy, obscene, obnoxious behavior. He lived chastely, and by word and example taught his disciples to love so too. There was nothing de-donistic or erotic about the kind of love he preached."

Saying that to compare the saint with the hippies "is far-fetched," the editorial concluded: "let's be kind to these troubled young people, but at the same time let's not run down by unsavory comparison the hard-earned reputation of the Troubadour of Assisi."

Closer Cooperation Seen Among Churches Here

Rochester—(RNS)—Strong possibility is seen here that Roman Catholics and Protestants will create a joint organization to carry on ecumenical activities.

Two avenues of joint action are possible, observers say. A new organization could be formed or Catholics could seek representation on the Rochester Area Council of Churches. A definite plan has not been determined.

It has been pointed out that the Council, as a "loosely-formed federation," could accommodate Catholic affiliation without changing its structure.

A four-member committee headed by Msgr. Charles V.

Boyle, pastor of St. John the Evangelist church and a leader in Catholic ecumenical action is "investigating the experiences of other areas throughout the country" where Protestants, Orthodox and Catholics have used affiliating forms in conducting projects of mutual concern.

"We both have a real interest in getting together," Msgr. Boyle said. "Relationships are growing closer, there are more joint committees on various things pertaining to the community as well as to the (Christian) faith. There is a growing awareness that as Christians we must work together for the faith and for community welfare."



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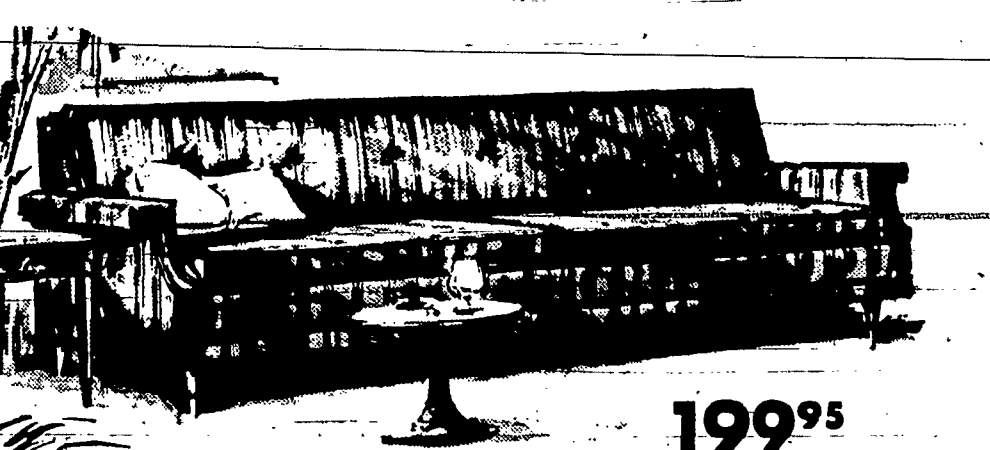


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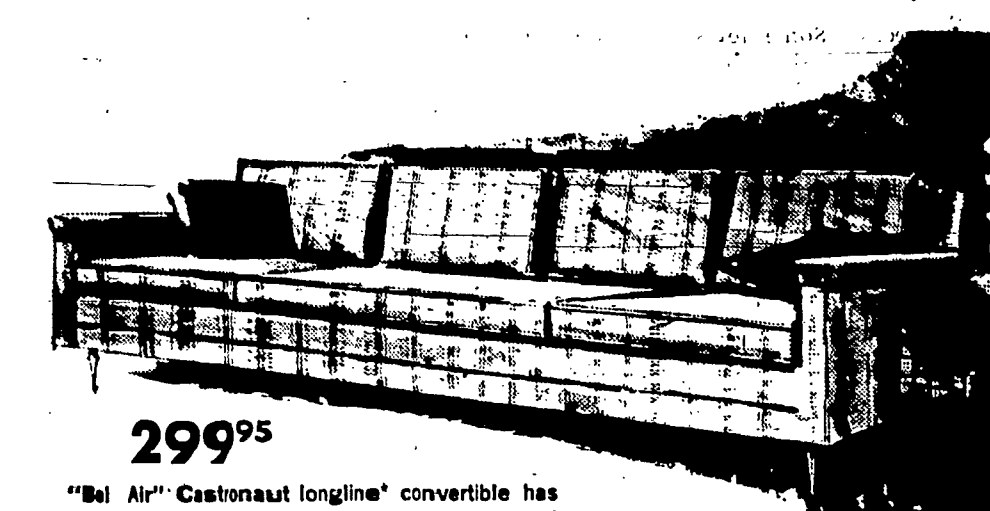
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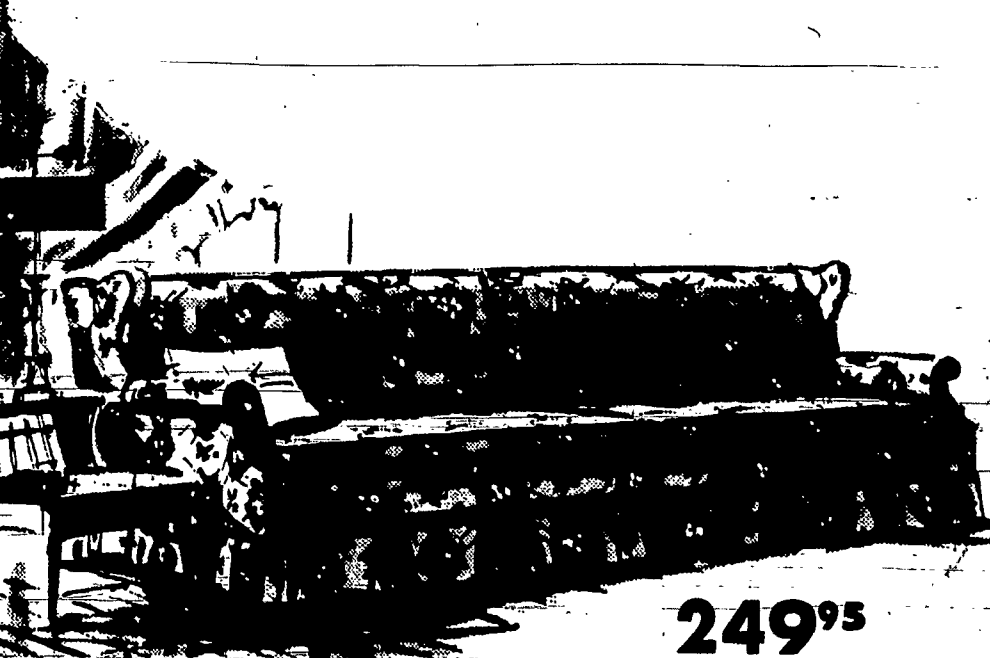
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MARCH C

ISSUE OF INFLATION HAS MUCH AT STAKE

By HENRY Central Press Washi

WASHINGTON—One of the papers printed a cartoon re Johnson's warning that the econ serious inflation is under way. was the comment that "maybe

No one will risen in recent numerous was some other sec But there is a vigorous econ to the point c was on this f focused.

Many econo of the conditi Johnson and some of these the record per and could be the real dange cession that 6 if additional tr ing stream at a time when the ec This, in fact, has been the mai Hill who oppose Johnson's tax- Wilbur Mills, chairman of the mittee, this faction insists that not the administration experts h Those concerned with the thr opposition is playing a dangerous win or lose on the question of w

RETRIBUTION—Among other session of Congress rejected the federal land to the Arizona con park.

To some, the action was puzzl clear.

Glendale is in the congressio R-Ariz., and it was this same R national television appearance, a said some congressmen were so wheel a wheelbarrow.

SONG AND DANCE—Preside speech, called his Republican o soldiers" among other things. His the following exchange of quips a House press briefing.

Reporters asked if Johnson pl farewell party for Congress, and be called "the nay-sayers ball!" A White House press secretar occurred the U.S. Marine band March of the Wooden Soldiers."

Congress Me At Draft Law

(NC News Service)

Washington—The draft law and its administration are expected to come in for attention when Congress returns here Jan. 15.

The topic has continued to be a live one, even with Cor gress. Some legislators are dissatisfied with th efforts Congress made last Jun toward amending the draft law They claim it just "inkered with an act that is 25 years o and needs to be brought up t title.

The debate last summer tur ed largely on deferments an who would get them. Some pei sons were beginning to as whether engineering and science students were impar ant to the country than youn men preparing to be teacher The controversy simmering o the holidays had to do chief with a directive Selectiv Service Director Lewis B. Hersh sent to some 4,100 local drai boards on Oct. 26. He told th draft boards that those who er gage in "illegal activity whic interferes with recruiting should be made immediatel subject to draft.

In a position paper which he been drawn up at the Selectiv Service headquarters only i recent days, the local drai boards are told that "where h (the registrant) engages in activities inimical to the nation interest in the local board i legally and morally require t end the delay in his militar service (his deferment)."

These development sho



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