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US Backs State on Textbooks

Washington, D.C. — (RNS) — The U.S. Department of Justice has defended the constitutionality of New York State's textbook law, the controversial statute that permits the state to lend textbooks to parochial school students.

In a friend of the court brief, attorneys for the federal government told the U.S. Supreme Court that the New York law was "in furtherance of a valid, secular governmental purpose."

As the nation's highest court began hearings in the case, it also received an amicus brief from nine Jewish, secular and religious organizations asking that the statute be declared unconstitutional, and a brief from the attorneys for the six Roman Catholic parents from New York who have supported the law's constitutionality.

In their brief, the Justice Department contended:

"New York has recognized that the First Amendment effects a separation between church and state; but it also correctly recognized that the Constitution demands no wall of separation between the state and children who are its citizens."

The brief argued that the textbook aid program does not give aid to "sectarian institutions or sponsor the propagation of religion." It added: "Since the purpose and effect of furnishing the books are secular, the state is free to extend the benefits to all children."

The Justice Department pointed out that the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 permits loaning publicly purchased textbooks to sectarian schools. There, they contended, both the federal and state laws "involve similar constitutional values."

In answer to the argument that the students' constitutional rights to free exercise of their religion is jeopardized by the textbook statute, the brief said: "It is evident that no one is being coerced in the practice of his faith by the textbook loan program."

In the brief filed by the nine Jewish organizations, the New York statute is termed a "case of state financing of an aspect of parochial school education."

"It is a fiction to designate the provisions as one for loans and, even if it were not, free loans of public property to churches is as unconstitutional as gifts of the property. Similarly, it is equally a fiction to characterize the children rather than the schools as the beneficiaries of the statutory program."

The New York State Textbook Loan Act, which was enacted in 1965, was declared unconstitutional by a New York Supreme Court judge in August 1966. Four months later, the Appellate Division reversed the lower court's ruling, contending that one of the local school boards that had brought the suit against the State Board of Education did not have the right to do so.

The Court of Appeals, the state's highest tribunal, in a 4 to 3 decision in May 1967, ruled that the act was constitutional. This decision has been appealed to the Supreme Court.

A Shepherd Tends to His Flock



The Bread of Life . . .

Many heartwarming scenes such as these took place last week when Bishop Sheen visited Lakeshore Nursing Home on Beach Avenue, in Rochester, to offer Holy Mass.



A Word of Encouragement . . .



Time to Listen to Each One . . .



A Warm Handshake . . .

Diocese Joins Commission To Work for Inner-City

The Rochester Diocese intends to join an interfaith commission to activate a program for inner city action by the white church community of Rochester. Father P. David Finks, Bishop Fulton J. Sheen's Vicar for Urban Ministry, announced this week.

The commission of 36 laymen and clergy, selected by the Rochester Area Council of Protestant Churches and the Jewish Community Council and the Catholic Diocese, will meet Tuesday, May 7.

Their function, Father Finks stated, will be to discuss means of implementing the program formulated by an inter-faith gathering of Rochester clergymen after the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Bishop Sheen conferred with Bishop George Barrett, Episcopal Bishop of Rochester, Rev. Richard N. Hughes, director of the Council of Protestant Churches and Mr. Elmer Louis, executive director of the Jewish Community Council, in a preliminary discussion at the Pastoral Office on Wednesday, April 17.

The following Friday he authorized Father Finks to meet with Rev. Mr. Hughes and Mr. Louis to plan the composition of the respective denominational groups on the new commission.

Catholic representatives will probably be chosen from priests and lay-

men who already serve as advisors to Father Finks in his Council of Urban Ministry. The Council will meet this Saturday to suggest nominees to Bishop Sheen.

The 12-point program presented to the three religious communities in Rochester by a large gathering of clergymen on April 5 "was not mandatory," Father Finks said. "It was a guide line for an action program we hoped the churches and synagogues would collectively support, after proper study and evaluation."

"There are two significant notes about the proposed interfaith commission," Father Finks said. "The white church community is responding to the problems sketched forth by the black church community. The inner-city residents will be pleased to note this massive and united force declaring its renewed concern."

"And secondly, the response of the churches and synagogues is the first ecumenical thrust we have had on matters where our mutual consultation and action are so needed."

Among proposals urged on the desired commission were that area churches and synagogues support programs of economic development in Rochester for Negroes and other minorities, that pressures be used to change suburban zoning policies and that retail merchants be urged to employ more Negroes.

Negro Priests Meet

US Church Called 'White-Racist'

Detroit — (NC) — A group of nearly half of the Negro Catholic priests in the country called the Catholic Church in the U.S. "primarily a white-racist institution" and demanded changes in its attitude and action.

The denunciation came in a statement of the Black Catholic Clergy Caucus which met this week in Detroit in conjunction with the annual Conference on the Interracial Apostolate.

The caucus was attended by 58 of the 110 Negro priests active in the U.S. The conference is considered unofficial by the Catholic hierarchy but Detroit's Archbishop John F. Dearden spoke to the gathering.

The Black Caucus statement was handed to Archbishop Dearden in his role as president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. Among those who prepared the indictment was another prelate, Auxiliary Bishop Harold R. Perry, S.V.D., of New Orleans.

The conference, held almost on the eve of the spring meeting of the U.S. Bishops in St. Louis amounted to a lobbying effort designed to obtain broader support from the Bishops for easing racial problems across the nation.

The black priests were not alone in asking the nation's bishops to act decisively at their spring meeting.

The Catholic Committee on Urban Ministry composed of diocesan urban affairs experts, wrote the bishops their own letter over the signature of CCUM chairman, Father P. David Finks, vicar for urban affairs in the Rochester, N.Y., diocese.

They asked establishment of human relations committees throughout the white community. They also asked for education programs to change the attitude of white Catholics toward the racial crisis, and urged restraint on the part of law-enforcement agencies which must deal with disorder.

They also asked for new priorities within the Church and the nation as a whole to aid the nation's poor, and strongly urged Church support of community organization effort to "effect a true-transfer of power" to poor communities.

The black priests drew attention to two trends in the Church. They noted:

"The Catholic Church apparently is not cognizant of changing attitudes in the black community, and is not making the necessary meaningful and realistic adjustments.

— The black community no longer looks to the Catholic Church with hope. The Church will be totally rejected by black society — as it is

NCEA Meeting

Catholic Schools Aim for Heights

San Francisco — Catholic education at all levels appears headed toward new heights of competence and commitment after a week of discussions and addresses at the 65th annual convention of the National Catholic Educational Association here.

The 12,000 delegates who sought collectively to assess their problems and plan for the future shared a deepening concern for the Catholic schools' effect on the secular world.

Their outlook could be expressed as follows:

The spirit of religion will continue to prevail but in a much more subtle form, designed, especially at the upper levels, to have a much wider and less parochial appeal. It will include, as it does now at many universities, such as Fordham and Notre Dame, the discussion of all faiths by men of those faiths.

There will be more centralization of authority and finances and less fragmentation such as is now found in the individual, almost autonomous parish schools where pastors or heads of religious communities are in control.

From the convention-opening remarks of Bishop Ernest J. Primeau of Manchester, N.H., who asked: "Are we preparing white Catholic Americans to fit into American society, or are we preparing them to change American society," to U.S. Commissioner of Education Harold Howe's closing suggestions that Catholic schools launch a crash program of ghetto education, the problems of commitment dominated discussion.

An extension of the brilliant address by Commissioner of Education Harold Howe will be found in Commentary on Page 19.

According to the Rev. C. Albert Koob, executive secretary of the association, which comprises all Catholic educators in the nation, the most

revealing aspect of the gathering was a "feeling of confidence." This was considered of great significance as in most conventions in recent years there was a plethora of criticism coupled with an uneasiness about the future.

"We now feel we have arrived," he said, "and we know where we are going from here. We have a sense of direction."

The new confidence, he said, is based on mounting evidence that Catholic education is moving ahead out of isolation, broadening its scope, experimenting and competing up to its limited financial ability with the better secular institutions.

This confidence was manifested in the face of a bleak financial outlook, discontent by many teachers, both lay and religious, who are seeking their own organizations for a greater voice in school affairs, and even requests by teaching nuns for salaries on a par with those of lay teachers, who now comprise 42 per cent of the total.

But the most strenuous challenge to Catholic schools came from an outsider, Commissioner Howe. Joining with Bishop Primeau and Father Koob in an analysis of the problem, Howe stated that Catholic schools are especially well prepared to deal with the crisis of ghetto education and will be especially guilty if they do not act.

Historically located in the cities and unimpeded by political interference, the Catholic schools of the nation are, according to the Commissioner, from a practical standpoint best suited to work in the ghetto. But there is another reason dictating (Continued on Page 2)

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'The Progress of Peoples'

Barbara Ward's Column

To Appear in Your Courier

Barbara Ward, author of the Courier-Journal's new column, "The Progress of Peoples," is the well known British author, economist and lecturer, now Albert Schweitzer professor of international economic development at Columbia University.

Lady Robert Jackson in private life, she was educated at Oxford University and the Sorbonne. She became assistant editor, The Economist, London, in 1940, was made a governor of the B.B.C. in 1946.

A member of the Pontifical Commission on World Justice and Peace, Miss Ward brings the

focus of Catholic thought to the great problems of our time, applying principles to fact, with a skill that has made her an incisive, perceptive, yet easily understood commentator.

Barbara Ward speaks to men and women of good will, with whom she shares buoyant hopes for a better world. In this series she will try to answer the reader's question, "What can I do to help make this present moment in history a starting point toward a better tomorrow?"

Read Barbara Ward's new column, "The Progress of Peoples," beginning May 10 in the Courier-Journal.

Prelates to Expose Bias, Archbishop Declares

Detroit — (RNS) — Archbishop John F. Dearden of Detroit said here that the National Conference of Catholic Bishops will devote its energies in the coming months toward "getting at the sources of racial bias in America."

The president of the NCCB made the comment following a talk he delivered to the Interracial Clergy Conference on the Interracial Apostolate.

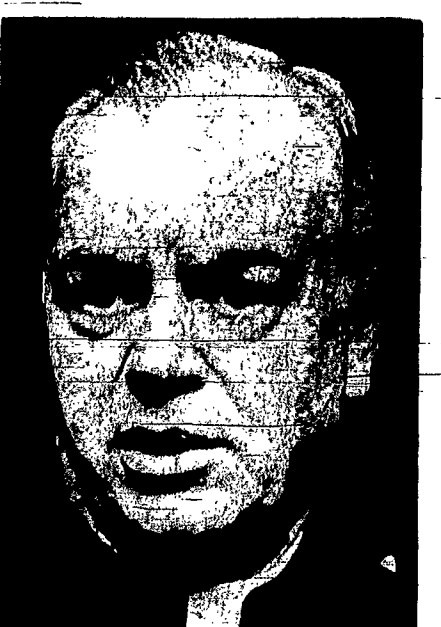
"The bishops must identify these sources so that people will recognize prejudice for what it is, and thus move toward a change in attitude," he said.

"As for deprived Negroes themselves, the bishops must do everything within the limits of their resources to alleviate their deprivation and suffering."

In his own archdiocese, Archbishop Dearden has announced the diversion of \$1.5 million in Archdiocese Development Fund money from building construction to a series of programs to help residents of the inner city.

He expressed "great concern" over a recent Gallup Poll which showed that 53 per cent of American church members and 57 per cent of Catholics believed that the church should not become involved in social or political issues.

"Many people can save their consciences and dull their concerns by regarding this as a purely political matter," he said. "That is why you in



ARCHBISHOP DEARDEN

your work must emphasize constantly that these are religious and moral matters. The subtleties that people use to dull their consciences can be recognized as fraudulent by anyone with a Christian sense."

Archbishop Dearden told delegates that "yours is one of the most challenging apostolates in the Church in this century. Your presence among these poor people is evidence of the Church's desire to bring Christ to the poor and the disadvantaged, which are the Church's own."