

AROUND THE COUNTRY

Catholic College Wins Court Fight

Montpelier, Vt. — (NC) — The Vermont Supreme Court has ruled that public assistance to a religious institution need not violate the U.S. Constitution.

The majority opinion noted that "the barrier between government and religion is one of degree, with neutrality the principal guide and final command."

"The mere fact that public funds are expended to an institution operated by a religious enterprise does not establish the fact that the proceeds are used to support the religion professed by the recipient."

The case concerned St. Joseph the Provider College in Rutland, which had sought assistance from the Vermont Educational Buildings Finance Agency to help construct a new dormitory.

Support Grape Pickers, Bishops Urge

Wichita, Kan. — (NC) — The Kansas Catholic Conference, comprising the bishops of the state's four dioceses, has issued a statement supporting efforts of the grape workers of California to "organize into a union of their own choice in order to, through collective bargaining, achieve a living wage and decent working and living conditions."

The bishops urged the people of Kansas to "cooperate with efforts being made to secure these goals."

St. Cloud, Minn. — (NC) — Bishop George H. Speltz of St. Cloud has issued a statement in support of the California grape workers who have been seeking wage and work reforms in California's San Joaquin valley.

Bishop Speltz, in his statement, urged the people of the diocese to "refuse to buy California table grapes in support of the California efforts for farm labor wage justice."

Archbishop Says: Love Thy Neighbor

San Antonio — (NC) — For centuries Christians have ignored the central truth of Christianity, and now Catholics especially must learn to see God in the faces of the unlovely and the lowly poor, Archbishop Robert E. Lucey declared in a speech on race and religion. The San Antonio prelate addressed the annual convention here of directors and moderators of the National Federation of Christian Life Communities.

"What is the central truth of Christianity?" he asked. "It is the law of love, that great religious truth — love thy neighbor as thyself."

As an example of "Christians who hate their neighbors," the archbishop referred to the clamor that arose over integration of the New Orleans archdiocesan school system, calling it a "scandal." He also alluded to "these good Catholic people" who have cursed priests and Sisters for marching with their black people in demonstrations.

"If the social doctrine of the Church has been taught in our schools, it's simply been ignored," he said.

Episcopal Bishops Warn Of Law-Order Polarization

Augusta, Ga. — (RNS) — Bishops of the Episcopal Church unanimously warned here that the nation is being polarized into "extremes of the political spectrum" over the slogan "law and order."

The bishops, in a long and stormy session ending a five-day meeting with bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada, declared that the "law and order" phrase is being used as a screen behind which are hiding "repressive forces, desiring to see no change in the nation's life."

At the other pole, forces "desiring social change and neglecting the necessity for public order and discipline, give the impression of anarchy." The two positions "feed on each other and polarize the nation."

The paper concluded with a paragraph which speaks of the conscience of the individual:

"Some call simply for 'law and order,' neglecting the deep social causes that lead to discontent, and giving the impression that 'law and order' mean sheer repression; while others, desiring social change and neglecting the necessity for public order and discipline give the impression of anarchy."

The Episcopal House of Bishops passed by a substantial majority a resolution reaffirming its 1967 stand in favor of selective conscientious objection.

Last year, during the Church's General Convention, the House of Bishops approved a resolution asking that the government allow those opposed to particular wars a classification as conscientious objectors, but the Church's "lower house" — the House of Deputies — defeated the measure.

The position remains, then, an official stance of the bishops, but not of the entire Church.

As approved here, they affirmed the right of a draft-age man to object conscientiously "to participation in a particular war" though he may not embrace a general position of pacifism.

It urged that this be written into Selective Service laws.

SERRA LAUNCHES DRIVE

Chicago — (NC) — The Serra International Foundation has begun a formal campaign to raise \$1 million for use in stemming the vocation crisis in the Catholic Church. Campaign proceeds will enable the association to foster and promote extensive programs and research on attracting more young people to religious life and will help present religious to reinforce their dedication to their vocation.

INTERRACIAL SCENE

Diocese, City in Rights Fight

Lackawanna — (RNS) — The Diocese of Buffalo will take the City of Lackawanna to court in a dispute over property and civil rights.

About 60 acres bought by the diocese as part of the Our Lady of Victory Church complex is at issue. Negro groups had approached the diocese with an offer to buy the property, planning to use it for home-building. While negotiations went on, opposition to the sale for Negro use grew in the predominantly white neighborhood.

The Lackawanna Common Council then passed a zoning ordinance redistricting the property's use as "exclusively for parks and recreation." City leaders claimed that they had been studying the property as a possible park area for two years.

Bishops Have 'Soul Food'

Augusta, Ga. — (RNS) — Forty bishops of the U.S. Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada left their joint session here to have a "Soul-Food Supper" in a poverty-pocked section outside Augusta.

They were invited by the Hyde Park Improvement Association, comprising 250 to 300 Negro families. There they were served typical Southern food — fried chicken, black-eyed peas, turnip greens, etc.

The families live in Hyde Park, which has no sewage disposal, running water, paving and street lights. Their purpose in extending a bid to the bishops, was to thank them for help the Episcopal Church has given them — and to give the bishops an opportunity to see what life is like in Hyde Park.

Warning on Racism Issued

Chicago — (RNS) — Churchmen of minority races will not accept a united Protestant Church unless "full representation of all takes place," the top executive officers of the nine denominations in the Consultation on Church Union (CCU) were warned here.

Dr. Charles A. Spivey Jr., executive director of the National Council of Churches' Department of Social Justice, urged the church officials at a CCU executive committee meeting to recognize that black churchmen "will not only be speaking up but acting up to get rid of racism in the church."



Jesuit College Honors Roy Wilkins

Roy Wilkins, (center) holds the 1968 Excelsior Award from St. Peter's College in Jersey City, N.J., after it was presented to him by Thomas J. Walsh (right), chairman of the St. Peter's board of regents. Greeting Mr. Walsh is Father Victor R. Yanitelli, S.J., president of the Jesuit college. The award this year was presented to the executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for his leadership in that organization and his achievements as chairman of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights since its formation in 1949. (RNS)

Get Off Sideline In Racial Dispute, Catholics Told

St. Louis — (RNS) — Catholics here were warned by Archbishop John J. Carberry that they "cannot sit on the sidelines and complacently watch 20 million brothers in Christ being denied housing, employment, education and adequate health care because of the color of their skin."

Archbishop Carberry addressed one of a continuing series of programs called "Bridges to Understanding" held here to acquaint Catholics with the problems of race and poverty.

"The Catholic Church in America has traditionally been identified as the Church of the poor, the Church of the impoverished, immigrant who came to the land of the free and the home of the brave to escape poverty and oppression in the land of his birth," Archbishop Carberry said.

"It is incongruous indeed to think that he and his children could adopt the role of the oppressor of his fellow American, the Negro, the Mexican, the Puerto Rican and the poor white."

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