

Bishops Should Use Television More, NCORT Aide Says

NC News Service
New York — The executive director of the National Catholic Office for Radio and Television (NCORT) said more bishops should participate in the programs being produced for the Church.

Charles Reilly said that he did not want to suggest that the Church be represented in broadcasting only by members of the hierarchy. "However," he stated, "bishops have not made use of the media to the degree that they should . . . there is a big potential for assistance to them in their pastoral work within their dioceses."

"Equally important, the national posture of the Catholic Church can be established with greater certainty and leadership if these men assume a prominent role with the broadcasting media," Reilly said.

NCORT was established by the American bishops in late 1965 and given two main responsibilities: to assist diocesan radio and TV directors in local broadcasting activities and to serve as an information bureau for the radio and TV industry at the network and group station level.

Next Jan. 1 the agency assumes responsibility for regularly scheduled network religious programs formerly produced by the Radio-TV unit of the National Council of Catholic Men.

Reilly said the office hopes to approach the new responsibility with "flexibility and creativity. The times are changing so fast that the rule book for 'religious programming,' if indeed there ever was one, has gone out the window," he said.

"There was nothing in the history of religious broadcasting that would have prepared anyone for association with a popular TV entertainment

program, nor was there precedent for guiding the investment of \$300,000 of someone else's money in an unparallelled project like the dramatization of the work of Michelangelo," Reilly said. (NCORT served as adviser for the show.)

Another NCORT official, Father Donald Connolly, coordinator of diocesan affairs, noted that the office's staff and budget are minimal "because of the hard press of other important priorities within the Church," but was optimistic about the future.

"As the Church realizes more and more the value of using the media, this part of the problem in getting the Church 'into the marketplace' should decrease," he predicted.

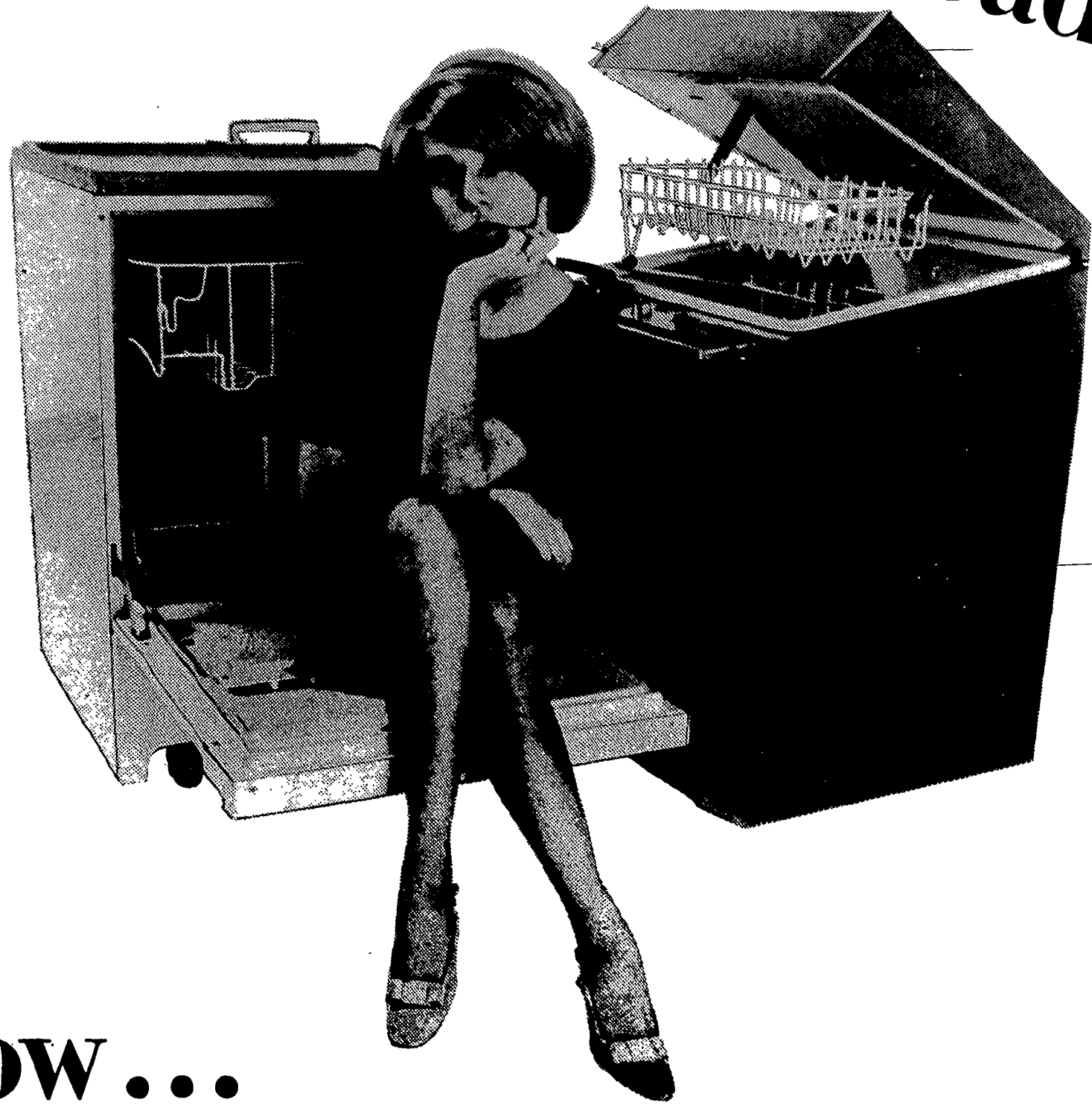
"The Catholic Church has been receiving a great deal of publicity lately, but it still remains a fact that little is known of the substantial reality of Catholicism," the priest continued.

"In the heat of the discussion about celibacy, birth control and hierarchical authority, few people realize the personal relationship between individual Catholics and Christ, which is enhanced and nourished through the sacraments."

"There is very little attention given to the tremendous problems involved in dealing with the aged, with orphans, with homes for unwed mothers, with migrants, with the Spanish-speaking in the United States, with racial and other minority groups."

"NCORT's efforts . . . will be concerned with presenting a balanced picture of Roman Catholicism," Father Connolly said. "Such a balance will indicate that Catholics have a great deal of good about them as well as some things that need to be improved. No one need ever be ashamed or confused about the religious structure which helped to form men like St. Francis of Assisi and Pope John XXIII."

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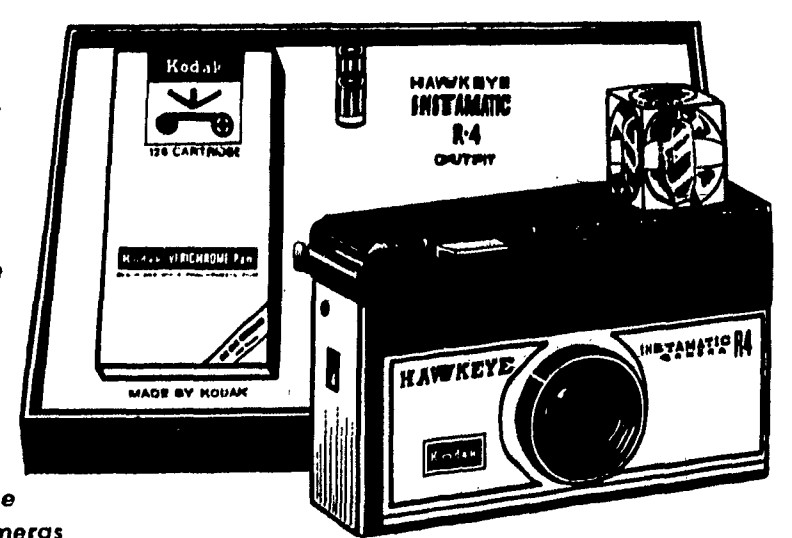
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'Medicorps' Sets Help to Biafra

Rochester's "Operation Medicorps" has raised \$7,000 and will send a doctor to an Ivory Coast camp for Biafra refugee children, the organization reported this week.

Dr. Frederick D. Rose, chief medical resident at Jefferson Medical College Hospital in Philadelphia, will be the first doctor sponsored by the group. He formerly served in West Africa as a Peace Corps volunteer on loan from the U.S. Public Health Service.

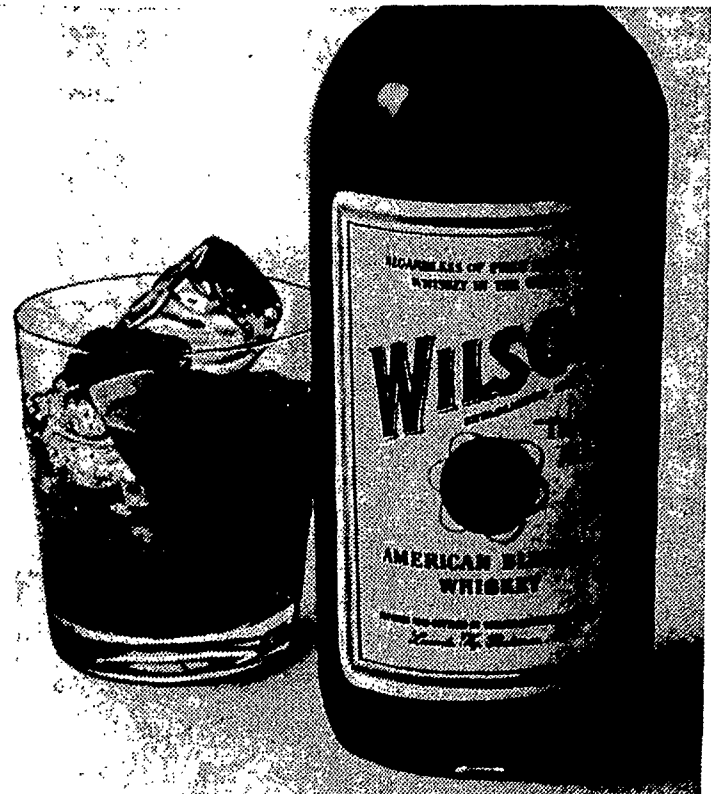
The local fund-raisers, mostly young people, organized in October with a goal of \$2,300, the estimated cost of sending one doctor into the Nigeria/Biafra area for three months. About 30 doctors are prepared to go on such short-term duty, according to the Boston-based Medical Support Committee. The Rochester group intends to continue soliciting funds toward their transportation and living expense.

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