

AROUND THE COUNTRY



Labor Post for Negro Woman

Mrs. Elizabeth D. Kooztz stands with President-elect Richard Nixon after she was named the first Negro to a high post in the new administration. She will be director of the Labor Department's Women's Bureau. Mrs. Kooztz, 49, was the first Negro president of the National Education Association. She is a Democrat. (RNS)

Moral Issues in Medicine Noted

New Orleans — (RNS) — The church can and should be helping overcome the "tremendous gap between health knowledge and health delivery," particularly in work with the underprivileged and such persons as alcoholics and drug addicts, Dr. Kenneth Mann said here.

In an address to the American Protestant Hospital Association, the Episcopal clergyman suggested that the church should sponsor plans "for a concentrated effort toward more effective provision of neighborhood health care" to augment community services.

The church also has an important role to play in studying moral issues involved in medical practice, Dr. Mann continued. Among the issues he recommended the church tackle were euthanasia, eugenic manipulation, abortion, artificial insemination, organ transplants, and prolongation of life.

'Every Line' Bible Study Begins

Minneapolis — (RNS) — About 15,000 members of the Evangelical Free Church in America have registered for the denomination's "Every Line in '69" Scripture reading crusade. During the course of the year they will read the entire Bible.

The Rev. Kenneth E. Meyer, secretary of Christian Education for the Church, said "We know that it is the Bible being read that allows God to speak to us as we live the Christian life and face our daily problems. Too many people have a Bible or more in the home, but rarely if ever open it to read it."

Seminary Cooperation Studied

Evanston, Ill. — (RNS) — Two Catholic seminaries, Divine Word and St. Mary of the Lake, are members of a new inter-faith organization set up to explore possible areas of cooperation.

The Rev. Charles U. Harris, president of Seabury-Western (Episcopal), heads the Association of North Side Seminaries of Metropolitan Chicago. Other theological institutions in the group are Methodist and Presbyterian.

Austin, Ill.: A Community Saves Itself

Chicago — (NC) — Nearly four years ago, the west side community of Austin was a quiet unobtrusive neighborhood of three-flat apartments; large, rambling, turn-of-the-century frame houses, and bungalows. The streets were rolled up at 9 p.m., and residents didn't give too much thought to the burgeoning ghetto of Lawndale far to the east.

But then owners, feeling the neighborhood was changing, neglected upkeep of their buildings. Unscrupulous real estate agents sold the neighborhood was going all black anyway, so why not sell their homes before the property was devalued.

For a while it worked. White families moved away. Negro families moved into rundown apartment buildings at nearly twice the rent of the former tenants because they wanted to escape the ghetto. Homes were sold low and purchased high.

Then the remaining white residents and their new black neighbors began to take stock of the situation. This was not what either wanted. The only answer was to work together toward creating and maintaining a racially inte-

grated, stabilized community. Out of this mutual concern, the Organization for a Better Austin (OBA) was formed. In its nearly three years, the OBA has fought a sometimes discouraging but tenacious battle against slum landlords, panic peddling and unscrupulous real estate practices.

An all-out effort is being made to get white families to stay and new white families to move in. At the same time, the OBA is helping Negro families find homes not only in Austin, but in the adjoining western and northern suburbs.

Mrs. Helen Jost, Metropolitan Housing Committee chairman, said OBA has been instrumental in moving about 400 white renters and 50 buyers into the Austin area.

"Realtors say that there's no market for whites in Austin," she said, "yet we've managed to prove otherwise."

One of the milestones in the struggle to force realtors to make all listings available to both black and white prospective renters, Mrs. Jost said, involved one particular real estate firm. After months of negotiations, the firm agreed to furnish the Metro-

politan Housing Committee with all listings available by that office.

"One of the problems we face," Mrs. Jost said, "is that all too often the reputable realtors aren't aware of the practices of their employees from the renting agent down to the building manager, who will not show homes or apartments to blacks (because of their own personal prejudices) or assume that no white couple would be interested in an apartment in a predominantly black neighborhood."

Working hand-in-hand with the OBA is the Community Service Center of St. Thomas Aquinas and Resurrection churches.

Father Edward J. McKenna of St. Thomas said "this place (the center) is basically the Church trying to do what it should have done 10 or 15 years ago, that is, work with and in the community."

"The real enemies of the people are the unscrupulous realtors," Father McKenna said. "Four years ago there were about 60 realtors in the Austin area. Today there are about 160, most of whom recently moved into the area to take advantage of the situation."

While the major aspect of

the combined program of the OBA and the Community Service Center is directed toward real estate practices, another is an energetic model block project.

There are two model block areas within Resurrection and St. Thomas parishes. Purpose of the model block project is to renovate deteriorated absentee-owned buildings; prevent blight from spreading; assist owners to receive rehabilitation loans; provide comprehensive building inspection by the city, and take court action when necessary.

Assistance to the home owners in the project area include cooperation by tenants, landlords, community groups and individual block clubs through landscaping, painting and decorating to create a desirable and attractive community.

Since the project was started, 47 buildings were cited in court action for violations and a more rigid inspection program has been worked out with the city building commission's office.

Need for a citizen "watch dog" committee was emphasized by Father Charles R. Tobin of St. Thomas, in the constant effort to combat city building code violations.

3-Point Plan Settles Newark Issue

(NC News-Service)

Newark — A three-point agreement apparently settling the explosive controversy over racial policies in the Newark archdiocese was announced here by Archbishop Thomas A. Boland and 20 inner-city priests who had accused him of "racist" attitudes.

The compromise agreement was announced Jan. 17 following a five-hour meeting at the archdiocesan chancery between the archbishop and the priests.

The agreement covers the following three points:

1. Establishment of an 18-member committee of inner-

city priests, blacks and Puerto Ricans to meet with the archbishop within two weeks on inner-city and racial problems.

2. Appointment of a vicar general with responsibility for inner-city problems. This will be a new post in the archdiocese.

3. A meeting between the protesting priests and the archdiocesan personnel board to discuss changes in assignments for inner-city church personnel.

The 18-member committee which is to meet with the archbishop on inner-city problems is to be made up of six inner-city priests, six black

people and six Puerto Ricans. The members will come from Newark, Jersey City and Plainfield, the three largest cities in the archdiocese and the locations of the parishes in which the protesting priests work.

Father James McManus, chairman of the Inner City Priests United for Christian Action — the group formed by the protesting priests at the time they presented their charges — said the new vicar is to be a priest living and working in the inner city.

He said this step would help to open new channels of communication with the archbishop. One of the priests' complaints has been that they were unable to present the needs of the inner city directly to the archbishop.

The "demands" originally made by the priests included the following:

— That the archbishop name a committee of inner-city priests to act as his advisors; that black lay leaders be chosen to work with this group as an "action council," and that the archbishop meet with his inner-city advisors one hour each week.

• That the archbishop "in-

stantly" transfer pastors in black areas deemed to be insensitive to community needs.

• That a team ministry be permitted in inner-city parishes.

• That pastors be required to make all church facilities in the inner city available for use by the community.

In a reply the Archbishop said: "No one can truthfully say that I have not made every effort to bring to reality those plans which I have felt could be of advantage, whether for spiritual or temporal goals, for the disadvantaged in our midst. It is also true that I cannot respond to every wish nor can I carry out every desire."

University Supports Newark Archbishop

South Orange, N.J. — (NC) — Contradiction of an alleged "racist attitude" in the administration of Archbishop Thomas A. Boland, of Newark, as charged by a group of 20 diocesan priests, came from Seton Hall University here.

Citing the school's policies and actions on racial issues under the prelate's leadership during his 16 years as president of the Board of Trustees, the University's statement said that "its records preclude any possibility that the President of our Board is a racist."

The policy of welcoming and aiding black students was specifically detailed. Fifty-one black students are presently enrolled, receiving \$73,800 in aid.

The university reported that it also has operated three Upward-Bound programs for 310 black students and four Head Start programs aiding 650 students. Faculty and stu-

dents have annually conducted store-front classes in slum areas of Newark preparing disadvantaged black adults for state high school equivalency tests.

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