

AROUND THE WORLD



Catholic Journalist Dies

London — (NC) — Edward J. Macdonald, a leading figure in British Catholic journalism for nearly 50 years, has died at the age of 68. He had been ill for nearly three years.

Mr. Macdonald was the son of a Boston doctor and, though he came to England at the age of 11, he never gave up his U.S. nationality.

Most of his professional life was spent with the Universe, a British Catholic weekly. He also did freelance work and for many years wrote on Catholic affairs for the Times of London.

One of the outstanding phases of his career was his connection with Gilbert K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc and their Distributist League, a socio-political movement for the defense of human dignity and private property against both monopolistic capitalism and state collectivism. He was an assistant editor of the league's magazine, G.K. Weekly, which disappeared with Chesterton's death in 1936.

Finds Abortion Gets Priority

London — (NC) — A Catholic doctor accused some consulting gynecologists this week of using their influence to get priority treatment in free hospitals for women seeking abortions.

Women needing other operations have to wait, according to Dr. Joseph Dignan, general practitioner in East London and a member of the Catholic Doctors' Guild.

He said in a letter to Pulse, a medical weekly, that such specialists are not allowed to charge fees at the free state hospitals, so they ask for a fee of up to \$300 beforehand.

Before the Abortion Act came into force nearly a year ago, Dr. Dignan said, he could always select the hospital to which to send a patient.

"The alarming thing is that a woman from say Birmingham can get a bed in a London hospital this way, while women living in the hospital's catchment area may have to wait 12 months for ordinary gynecological treatment. Even women from abroad, particularly from Scandinavia and America, are getting abortions in London in this way," Dr. Dignan added.

Site of Pope's Baptism Blasted

Brescia, Italy — (NC) — An early morning dynamite explosion March 4 at the church where Pope Paul VI was baptized ripped the structure's ancient doors and sent a wave of shock and dismay through the townfolk of Concesio, near here.

A splinter from the door chipped a stone tablet next to the baptismal font. The tablet, installed in March, 1966, commemorates the Pope's baptism there on Sept. 30, 1897.

Police described the explosion as the work of persons who knew how to handle high explosives. It reverberated through all the homes of Concesio's 7,500 inhabitants, including the Pope's birthplace.

Conference Set on 'Unbelief'

Vatican City — (NC) — On the initiative of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Believers, an international symposium on "The Culture of Unbelief" will be held in Rome, March 22-27.

The University of California is the scientific sponsor, according to Msgr. Antonio Grumelli of the secretariat.

Among the participants are four theologians: Prof. Harvey Cox of the Harvard Divinity School, a Baptist; the Rev. Martin Marty of the University of Chicago, a Lutheran; Father Henri de Lubac, S.J., of France, and Father Rene Marie, S.J., of the French magazine, Etudes.

New See Gets African Bishop

Vatican City — (NC) — Tanzania's Peramiho has been raised to the rank of a diocese with the name of Songea and a Tanzanian bishop.

The new diocese numbers a quarter of a million Catholics in a total population of 400,000. It had been under the care of the Benedictines of the Congregation of Sankt Ottilien since 1927.

The new Ordinary is Bishop James Komba, 46.



APOLLO 8 STAMP

The U.S. Post Office Department has revised its Apollo 8 commemorative stamp to include the words from Genesis, "In the beginning God . . ." Originally the stamp had the simple designation "Apollo 8." But in response to numerous requests from across the nation, the postmaster general ordered the stamp revised to include the first phrase of the Bible, honoring the reading from outer space by astronauts on Christmas Eve. (RNS)

Chavez Union Plans to Sue Birch Society

Fresno, Calif. — (RNS) — The grape-pickers union led by Cesar Chavez has announced plans to file suit against the John Birch Society, the California Right to Work Committee, as well as a group of growers, charging that all conspired to operate illegally an anti-Chavez worker group.

The action by the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, the Chavez union, was triggered by a report to the U.S. Secretary of Labor.

In the report dated Feb. 22, the Agricultural Workers Freedom to Work Association, an anti-Chavez unit, charged that the state's largest grape growers secretly promoted and supported the workers' organization which was formed to undermine the efforts of the Chavez group.

According to California law, sponsorship by employers of labor unions or associations such as company unions formed in opposition to union activity is prohibited.

The report said that among the orders given to the AFWA, as part of the plan to stop the efforts of UFWOC, was one to "picket advertisers of Catholic Register which supported Chavez and UFWOC until John Giumarra, Jr. told us to stop."

AWFWA picketing of the "Central California Register" advertisers took place in August 1968 and the diocesan newspaper's managing editor, Gerard E. Sherry, said the publication had a revenue loss estimated at \$20,000.

CAPITOL HILL

ROUND-UP

Albany — Production, at least reporting out of bills from committee, is on the increase as the Legislators are eyeing an April adjournment.

Another indication is the setting of final report dates for Committees. Assembly Speaker Duryea set Mar. 21 as the last day for the last committee (Ways and Means) to make its final report of bills.

Statistic: For the record the latest complete figure on bills is 11,563. Senate: 4,971; Assembly: 6,592.

Among those 11 thousand is one shared-time bill worth mentioning. It's Senate 3438, sponsored by Senator Thomas Laverne of Rochester.

This bill provides for shared-time enrollment. It authorizes pupils in non-public schools to enroll for special courses (driver education, vocational training, among

others) in nearby public schools.

It would also insure a proportionate amount of state aid would go to the public school on behalf of the pupil. (Without that provision the state wouldn't be picking up any of the cost of such shared-time enrollees.)

The bill is in the education committee and since there is no required "final reporting" date in the Senate as there is in the Assembly it is impossible to predict what or when action will be taken.

The Committee Bill on criminal abortion is expected to contain provisions that would make New York one of the easiest places in the country to obtain an abortion.

Scheduled for inclusion, according to reliable reports, is a section that would legalize abortions when there was a "substantial risk" the baby might be physically or mentally handicapped; or when

the baby might be considered to be potentially harmful to its mother's physical or mental well being.

Despite reports you may have read there is no indication an easy Abortion bill will be passed this year.

Certain newspapers favoring the easy abortion bill, however, will continue to report a favorable "climate" because they continue to talk to "favorable-legislators."

What is certain is that a strong pro-abortion publicity barrage is going to accompany the bill through the legislative process. Therefore, those opposed must also constantly remind legislators and officials of their opinions. The intensity of the campaign is expected to continue right through the close of the session.

Q. Is it possible that with over 11,000 bills pending the Legislators are planning to quit by Easter? What happens to all the bills?

A. Less than 10% of about 1,000 or less, of the bills actually will become law. The remaining ones will either face defeat on the floor or (for the great majority) never be reported out of committee.

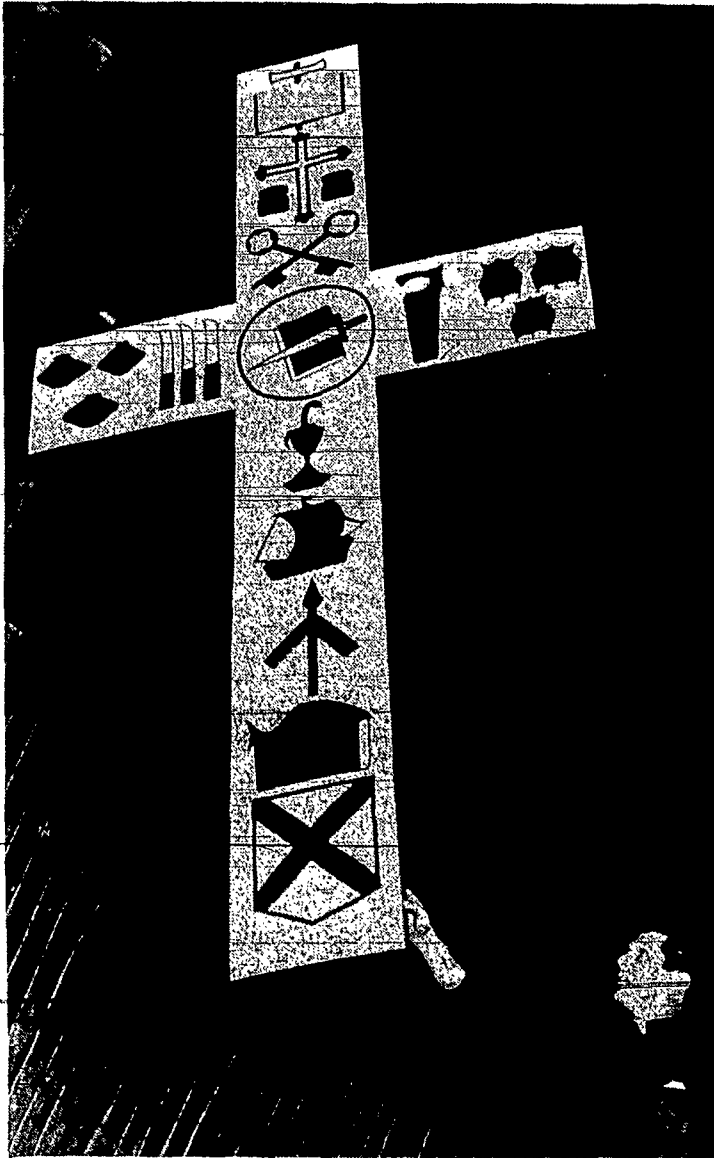
Q. Isn't that an awful waste? I mean having all those bills printed and thrown away.

A. Some effort at reform in this area is already underway. This year for the first time joint bills (introduced in both Senate and Assembly) will still be active next year if not passed this year. Obviously a great many of the 11,000 are trial balloons, personal campaigns, and duplicates of other bills introduced by other legislators.

Q. Well if they're so interested in saving state money why can't they do it in the Legislature?

A. A good question for your Senator or Assemblyman. Why don't you write and ask him?

This column is prepared weekly, during the legislative session, with the cooperation of the New York State Catholic Committee in Albany. If you have any questions or comments about your state legislature or government, write to Capitol Hill Round-Up, in care of this newspaper.



Lenten Symbols

The Rev. W. E. Lauterbach adjusts the Apostolic Cross hung in St. Paul's Lutheran church in Albion to illustrate the message of Lent. The cross represents the Church of the Apostles founded on the cross of Jesus Christ. From top to bottom, symbols stand for the Apostles in the following order: Thomas, Simon the Zealot, Andrew; and left to right, James the Great, Bartholomew, James the Less and Matthew. (RNS)

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