of the country built the Cath-

olic schools, why can't the

more affluent support them?"

their appearances before state

legislators. Some of them have

predicted the possible closing

## Catholic School Plight Gaining Attention

The crisis of the parochial school system is a national concern. THE NEW YORK TIMES, for April 6, carried the following Page L article reflecting the attention of the secular press to the Church's worry over school closings and declining attendance.

By GENE CURRIVAN NEW YORK TIMES

A spokesman for the nation's Roman Catholic bishops has warned that the church's elementary schools will close their doors to almost two million pupils about half the envolument unless there is a vast upsurge in public support for Catholic education over the next six years.

This means that many of the 10,000 elementary schools in the nation may close despite aid expected from state governments.

The message to the Catholic laity, in substance, is that it must pay more if it wants to maintain quality parochial

The warning came from Msgr. James C. Donoghue, director of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education of the United States Catholic Conference in Washington, which represents the nation's Catholic bishops.

Monsignor Donoghue made the declaration in a recent interview while pondering a constant flow of reports from around the nation on school closings, decreasing enrollments, dwindling finances and a scarcity of teaching nuns.

These problems will receive close attention at a meeting of the Catholic Educational Association being held this week in Detroit.

In 1968, 360 Catholic elementary schools and 125 highschools were closed, and reports indicate many more closings will follow.

Enrollment in elementary and secondary schools has dropped to 4,982,927 in the current school year from 5,600,519 four years ago.

The decline of parochial education has implications for non-Catholics because a steady rise in the flow of students from church to public schools seems likely to jar some already over crowded urban schools without any compensating rise in school revenues.

Although the church makes public no overall figures on containment officials say the financial crisis stems from steadily mounting operating costs and decreasing revenues in the \$1.7-billion a year operation.

They say Catholic parents, who already support public schools through taxes, are rebelling against increased tuitions, averaging \$338 a year, and are sending their children to public schools.

In Boston, Richard Cardinal Cushing has made a direct public appeal for contributions.

He denied published re-ports that he would closedown the high school system, but he told the parents of 9,100 pupils in 14 high schools. that he was facing a debt of \$10-million and that the operating deficit for 1969-70 was budgeted at \$1.6-million, or \$177.78 a student

in Buffaio, Msgr. Leo E. Hammerl said the operating loss this year would be \$400, 000, with a \$1-million deficit in prospect next year. There have been no closings, but "the next two years will be critical," he said.

In Chicago, six high schools and one clementary school will close in June. Since June, 1967, 11 elementary schools and six high schools have been closed.

Monsignor Donoghue said that while government aid would be helpful, the answer to the problem was more support from the Catholic lay

There has to be a groundswell of public support," he said. "We have to know what the parents want. The bishops want to continue offering as much Catholic education as possible, but they can't maintain the present schools without help.

PRELATE MEDIATOR Buenos Aires — (NC) three-month-old printers' strike here has been mediated by Coadjutor Archbishop Juan Carlos Aramburu, whose messages to Leonardo Prati of the management group and union leader Raimundo Ongaro led to the conciliatory action.

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"If, the groundswell is acterized this as "bordering eat enough the bishops will on blackmail." He said he great enough, the bishops will knew of no bishop who conlisten. I am sure that if the templated closing a school scriousness of the present predicament dawned on the system. people the situation could be reversed. If the poor people

The total closing threat," he said, "is political and tactical. It may have some value in showing how parochial schools save money for pub! Many Catholic laymen have lic schools but I have my taken a different stand in doubts about its use. However, it seems less fictional than ever before. I haven't met a bishop who has built a new elementary school in the past two years."

schools.

In New York, a bill sponsored by Senator John J. Marchi, Republican of Staten Island, would give each pupil from \$50 to \$250 a year depending on need.

Other proposals include busing and the loaning of text books in Missouri, tuition aid of \$150 a pupil in Connecticut and payment of some teacher salaries in Michigan.

In Pennsylvania, where the million for private education,

ures to aid the parochial is trying to raise more than autonomy and computers are \$3-million from parishioners to guarantee continuance of the Catholic schools.

> Throughout the nation, bishops seem to be nonplussed with the situation. Many have ordered in-depth surveys, but in many cases the search for accurate statistics is unavailing as the schools are run under not one, but three systems - the dioceses, the parishes and the religi-

Coordination of facts, it has

few and far between.

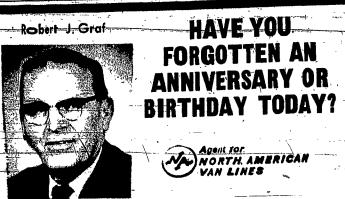
Viewing the national situation, Monsignor Donoghue said that even with massive government support, which he felt would not pay teachers' salaries or build schools, a cut-back in Catholic education would still be necessary unless there was continuous public support.

However, he said, the cutback will not mean schools for the elite.

Puerto Ricans," he said.

The nation's bishops, facing the necessity of denying Catholic school education to the bill. half of the elementary school

youths who would ordinarily receive it, appear to be wondering how much faith they can put in the faithful, who, they feel, must ultimately pay



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liturgy, education clergy disputes v ied subjects disc than 200 U.S. B their semiannual ed yesterday. Keynote addres Wednesday by John F. Dear-den

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Thursday night. Daily sessions a.m. to moon an permitted reports mittees followed

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