

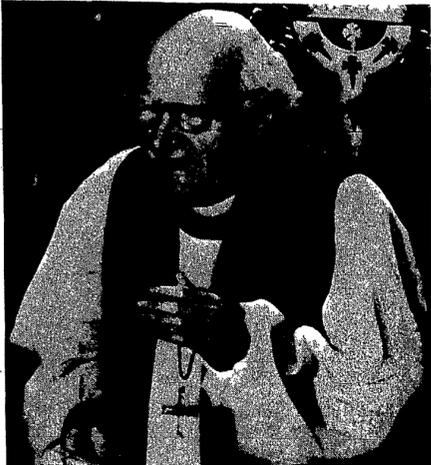
Anglican Clergy Push Methodist Merger

London — (NC) — A number of Anglican clergymen in Britain, in some cases with the approval of their bishops, defied the official rejection by their Church of a union with the Methodist Church by holding services and receiving communion with Methodists in each other's churches (July 13).

Sermons at these services made it clear that a new individual bishops and some clergy and Methodist ministers have decided to go ahead toward stage one of the unity plan without waiting for official sanction.

A News Analysis

Stage one, which was approved by the Methodists but rejected narrowly by a vote of the Anglican convocation, involved intercommunion and mutual recognition of ministries through a Service of Reconciliation. Objections, principally to the latter, by the strong Anglo-Catholic section of the Church of England was a major factor that swung the Anglican



ARCHBISHOP RAMSEY
... smile followed by defeat

vote below the necessary 75 per cent required for approval. Stage two, calling for complete union, was not involved in the voting.

Anglican Bishop William Greer of Manchester said in a statement read in his cathedral July 13 that he will be "very happy to give permission to those who ask for it for baptized Methodists of good standing in their own church to receive communion in the Church of England." He said he also saw no objection to any Anglican of good standing receiving communion in a Methodist church.

Such indications that a "rebel" group within the Church of England is shaping up over the merger issue were strengthened by the report that Anglican clergymen determined to go ahead with the unity project are setting up campaign headquarters here and are scheduling a meeting within two weeks to harden plans.

If the movement gathers any momentum, it could cause complications and embarrassment for both churches. Those taking part might eventually have to be disciplined, but they will no doubt have much sympathy. The Methodists, after all, accepted the unity plan by more than the required 75 per cent and the Anglicans in their final vote rejected it by a mere 6 per cent, with 69 per cent in favor.

Not only did a majority of both churches vote for unity, but over the long years of negotiations vast and previously unsuspected areas of agreement have been discovered, even between those on both sides who shrank from the present plan.

Some commentators have welcomed the rejection of the present controversial plan. The Methodists, who have come out of the affair with enhanced dignity, had reluctantly agreed to accept the Anglican episcopal system and also the mutual recognition of ministries, but these major obstacles had been bitterly opposed by strong minorities; and acceptance of the present plan could have produced greater disunity on these points.

This was a first well meant attempt. It has produced much friendship and understanding and with the general ecumenical movement progress-

ing among the Churches here a second effort may have much more chance of success in a few years' time.

Since the voting, both churches have expressed in public assembly their strongest desire for the unity talks to continue and for inter-church cooperation to be intensified.

New moves to unite the two churches are not, however, expected to begin for at least a year.

Since the vote the bishops of England have met privately and discussed the situation. It was no occasion for recrimination or a post-mortem, and still less for planning the next step. The general mood seems to have been summed up by Bishop Robert Stopford of London, leader of the Anglican side in the discussions with the Methodists.

"There must now be a period of reflection before we do anything," he said.

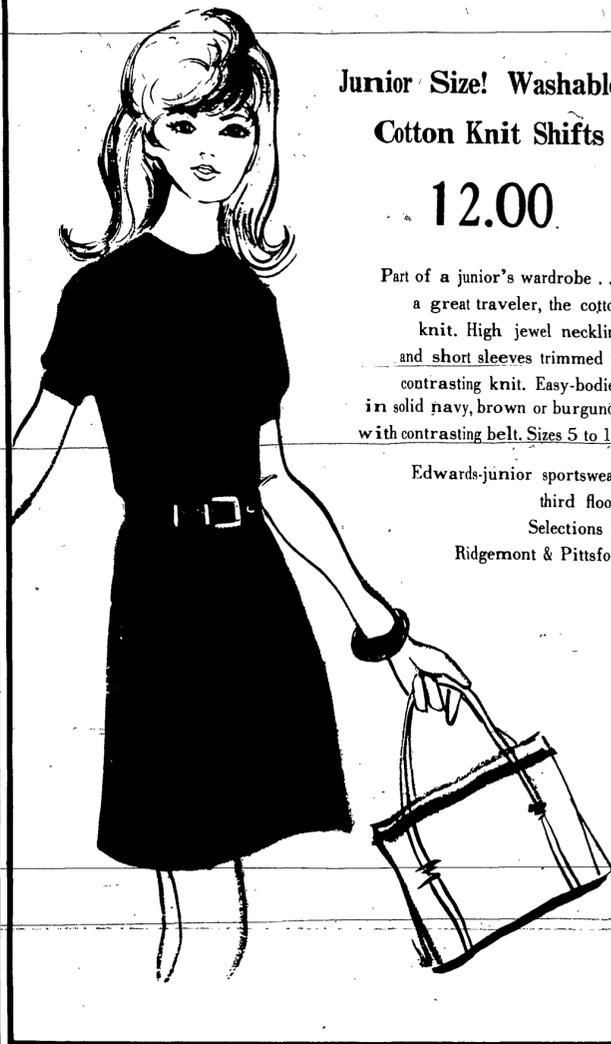
Anglican Archbishop Michael Ramsey of Canterbury, who is a disappointed man just now, is expected to speak on the subject at the convocation of his provincial bishops in the fall.

The Anglicans have paid due tribute to the heartening way the Methodists have acted in this business. The Methodists have repeated their wish to continue talks as soon as possible "in order that the momentum toward closer relations may not be lost."

The Rev. Brian O'Gorman, president of the Methodist Conference, has ruled that the issue will be kept alive and will come before the 1970 Methodist Conference to be considered anew with any new decisions by the Anglicans.

The Anglican bishops, in a unanimous statement said "the House of Bishops confirms its conviction that union between the Church of England and the Methodist Church must be achieved and asks that every bishop will take counsel with the Methodist district chairman in his area about the continuance and expansion of local cooperation."

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Chavez Demands Get Support of Bishops

Berkeley, Calif. — (NC) — Bishop Hugh A. Donohoe of Stockton told a workshop here that he considers farm labor leader Cesar Chavez' new legislative demands covering agricultural employees "very reasonable," and promised his personal support toward their passage.

Chavez, director of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (AFL-CIO), told a congressional labor committee in April that his union seeks exemption "for a time" from the Taft-Hartley and Landrum-Griffin restrictions on recognition and organizational picketing and the secondary boycott.

Bishop Donohoe made his statement of support at the conclusion of a farm labor legislation workshop at the University of California Newman Center. The program was sponsored by a number of

national and local church and labor groups, including the San Francisco archdiocese and the Oakland diocesan Commissions on Social Justice.

Bishop Donohoe emphasized that the right to organize is one of the keystones of the Church's social teachings and that this right must be recognized by all and positively encouraged.

The Mexican American leader has explained the UFWOC position as follows:

"We, too, need our decent period of time to grow strong under the life-giving sun of a public policy which affirmatively favors the growth of farm unionism. Only a strong union can deal effectively and on equal footing with the giant agribusiness corporations that run most of agriculture."

Even Rome Has Priest Shortage

Rome (NC) — The diocese of Rome is facing its own vocation shortage. This year only six priests will be ordained for the diocese of 240 parishes for 2.7 million people.

The figure was disclosed in Rome's diocesan review. Although Rome every year sees hundreds of men ordained priests, they are for the most part students from other countries or even other Italian dioceses.

Rome has long struggled with a priest-shortage, but in the past has frequently compensated by absorbing priests from other Italian dioceses and from abroad. Moreover, many of the city churches are staffed by Religious orders or congregations which have their headquarters in the city.

'Monk for Month' Proves Popular

Elgin, Scotland — (NC) — A "be a monk for a month" experiment at a Scottish Benedictine priory has attracted over 200 inquiries from all over the world and the first recruits have been accepted.

Under the plan, selected persons can live the full life of the community for periods of about a month. Prior Alfred Spencer, O.S.B., said:

"We feel there are many who are uncertain about their vocation and who do not wish to interrupt their studies or give up a job. They would welcome this short period of full community life to help them decide whether God is calling them to the monastic life."

A person who feels the experimental month has shown that he should continue can either leave to arrange his affairs before returning or continue without leaving. The month counts as part of the postulancy period.

Viet Catholics Hit Thieu Peace Plan

Salon — (NC) — A predominantly Catholic political party is opposing any change in the Vietnamese constitution.

Sen. Nguyen Gia Hien, chairman of the Greater Union Force party, said President Nguyen van Thieu should give a clearer explanation of his recent proposal for ending the war and should tell the people if a constitutional change is necessary to implement the proposals.

The proposal has already been rejected by North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front (NLF).

Thieu suggested principles to govern national elections in which opponents of the government could participate:

- The National Liberation Front (NLF), the political

arm of the Viet Cong, could participate in the elections if it renounced violence;

- An electoral commission to insure equal opportunities in the elections could be set up and could include representatives of the NLF;

- An international body should supervise the elections;

- The timing and conditions of the elections could be discussed with those opposing the Saigon government;

- The government will abide by the results of the elections.

The South Vietnamese constitution does not provide for nation-wide elections prior to September 1971.

don't let the elegant bottle scare you...



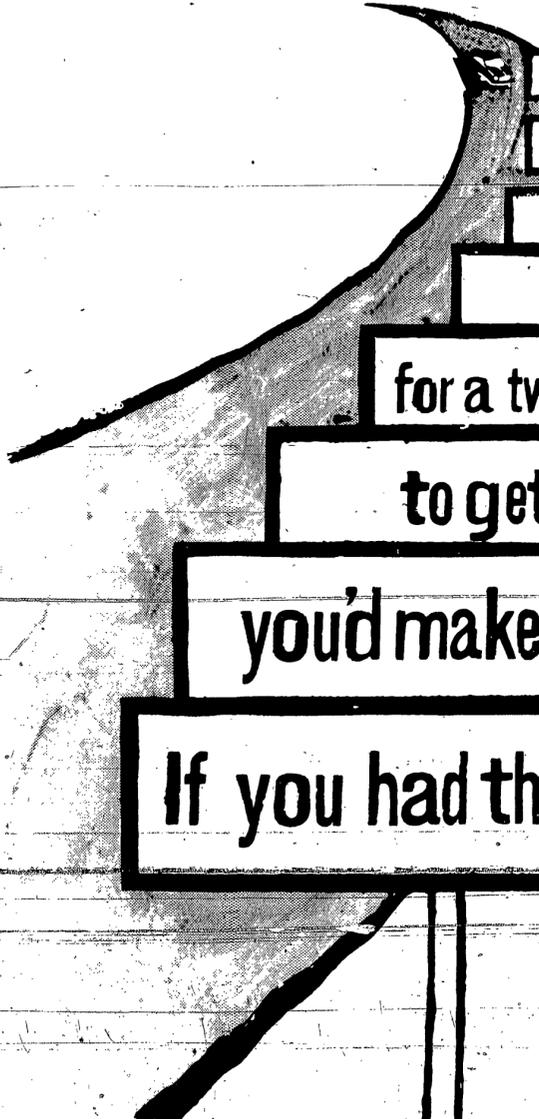
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