

# 3 Faiths Back Family Aid Plan

Washington—(NC)—The administration's family assistance plan, being reviewed by the Senate Finance Committee, will soon receive a boost from three major religious bodies urging that the bill should be passed because it establishes a nationwide minimum benefit for the working poor.

Representatives of the United States Catholic Conference, the National Council of Churches and the Synagogue Council of America are expected to present testimony in support of the bill in September.

John E. Cosgrove, director of the USCC's social development department, in a letter to directors of state Catholic conferences, said his office considers the House-passed bill "one of the most important pieces of legislation to come before the Congress in many years."

He added that the nation's Catholic bishops have already announced support for the principles outlined in the bill.

Cosgrove said that the three religious bodies would testify that need strengthening, including the basic income level of only \$1,600 for a family of four." But he said "the important thing is to establish a nationwide minimum family assistance benefit and to aid the working poor. This bill does these things."

A spokesman for the social development department said the religious bodies would specifically recommend that section of the bill requiring mothers eligible for aid to register for work training programs be made optional.

He said the groups would also urge that the family assis-

tance benefit be eventually increased to what government studies indicate is an adequate income. He cited a Labor Department survey noting that an income of \$5,913 represented a modest standard of living for a family of four.

## Bishops' Agency Resettles Cuban Doctors

Miami — (NC) — More than 200 Cuban doctors yearly are relocated in the United States by the Migration and Refugee Service of the United States Catholic Conference.

They enroll first at the University of Miami for special, intensive brush-up medical courses that not only teach them English but also prepare them for state medical examinations.

John E. McCarthy, director of the USCC's Migration and Refugee Service said many of the doctors have been placed in areas where physicians are badly needed, including the Appalachia region of West Virginia, smaller towns in such states as North Dakota, Iowa, and Mississippi, and in communities from coast to coast that have large concentrations of Spanish-speaking residents.

Since 1961, the year a large number of Cubans began to flee their country, some 2,200 doctors have escaped to the United States. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare reports more than 90 percent were registered by the Migration and Refugee Service.

The Migration and Refugee Service is 50 years old and worldwide.

# Don't Neglect White Ethnics, Nixon Advised

Washington — (NC) — America cannot afford to neglect the needs of its white ethnic minorities, President Nixon was told here, because to do so would further polarize society and might lead to more hostilities between blacks and white ethnics.

Seven representatives of the U.S. Catholic Conference (USCC), including Bishop Joseph L. Bernardin, USCC general secretary, made that plea to the President at a White House meeting.

The USCC group emphasized the need for steps to give white ethnics, many of them working-class Catholics in northern cities, a sense of fuller participation in the American mainstream.

Bishop Bernardin said the group pointed out that "ways must be found in which ethnic whites and blacks can work together to build community in urban America in the 1970s. We cannot afford to emphasize one group at the expense of another," he said, "but instead must seek to give all a fuller sense of participation in national life."

President Nixon, according to Bishop Bernardin, was receptive to the group's proposals.

"The president was sympathetic and informed on the subject," the bishop said. "He made it clear that the administration is anxious to work with others in developing meaningful solutions to the problems of ethnic Americans."

During the meeting, Msgr. Geno Baroni of the USCC's task force on urban problems reported to the President on the workshop on urban ethnic community development sponsored last June by the conference's Urban Task Force and the Catholic University of America.

He told of the recommendations of the workshop, including a proposal for a federal inter-agency task force to review possibilities for assistance to ethnic communities under existing federal programs.

The USCC group also discussed with the President problems of the Spanish-speaking in the United States, as well as efforts being carried on to aid this group by the Catholic conference and related agencies.

In this connection, Msgr. George G. Higgins, director of the USCC urban life division, noted the role played by the U.S. Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee on Farm Labor in helping to settle the California grape strike. Msgr. Higgins is a consultant to the committee.

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