

3 Major Faiths Unite to Push for Welfare Reform

Washington — (NC) — Three major religious groups — representing Catholics, Jews and Protestants — vigorously urged senators to pass the proposed Family Assistance Plan, which the groups claimed would reform an outdated welfare system.

The groups went a step further and suggested:

- Expanding unemployment insurance coverage to many others, specifically farm workers.

- Raising the minimum wage from \$1.60 to \$2 and extending its coverage.

Making these requests in joint testimony before the Senate Finance Committee were John E. Cosgrove, director of social development, United States Catholic Conference; David M. Ackerman, Washington staff associate, National Council of Churches, and Rabbi Richard Hirsch for the Synagogue Council of America.

Each group testified in favor of the controversial \$4.1 billion-a-year welfare revision plan before it passed the House in April but Senate testimony marked their first joint venture in support of the measure.

The Family Assistance Plan would guarantee an annual income of \$1,600 in cash and \$865 in food stamps to a family of four — “amounts too low for a country so rich,” according to the group’s testimony.

While favoring the basic thrust of the suggested welfare reform package the three spokesmen raised “serious questions” about it and expressed anticipation it would be strengthened.

“We would,” said the spokesmen, “raise the serious question of whether the program should not be wholly federally-financed and federally administered with national standards, instead of being administered via a “patchwork system” that changes from state to state.

However, the spokesmen urged that “rather than argue

about the appropriate level of government to administer this program, we should consider and set out to meet most effectively the needs of the people.”

Administration of the program is not the only objection that has been raised about the plan. Unlike the church groups, which urge larger financial allotments, some opponents have charged that the cost of the program will be too high.

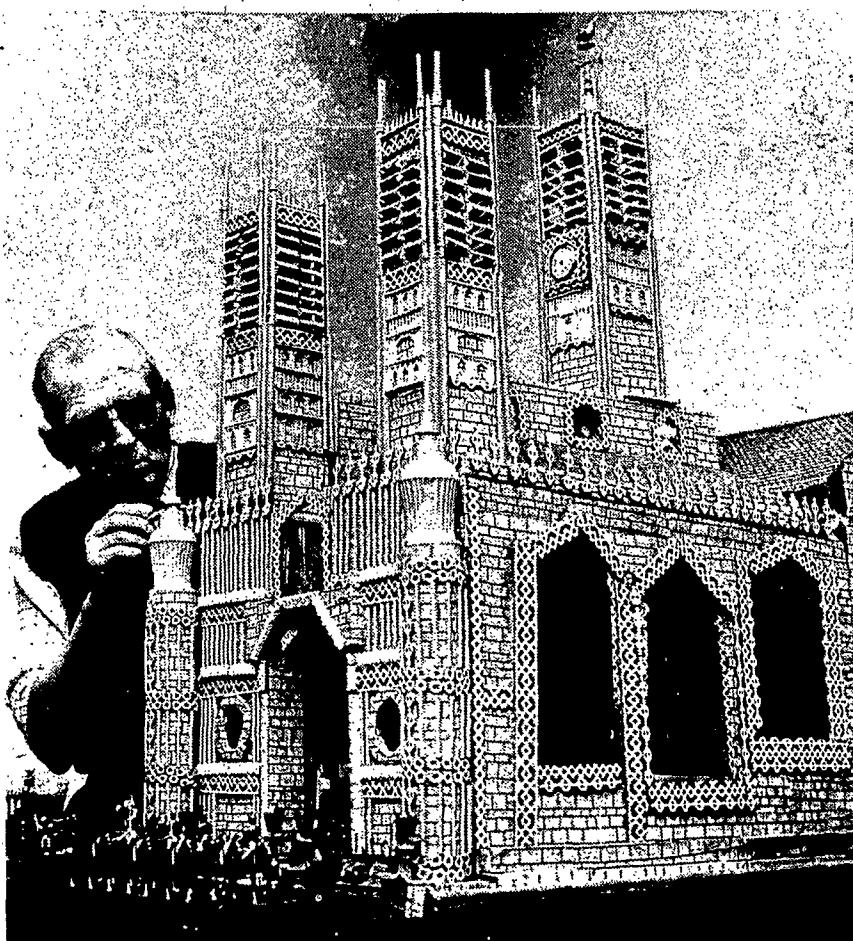
To ease fears about the plan and to try to get it out of committee without further delays, President Nixon has agreed to allow a year of field testing for the program he considers his most important piece of social legislation.

The President said he would accept a test period, as outlined in an amendment to the bill by Sen. Abraham A. Ribicoff (D-Conn.), in exchange for the committee’s giving the Senate “a chance to work its will on this issue and the bill.”

Under the Ribicoff amendment, welfare revisions would be enacted into law but would provide for 12 months of field testing in several areas of the country selected by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. If testing were successful, the full program would take effect Jan. 1, 1972 — six months later than originally requested by the administration.

The groups said they were “most distressed” by a recommendation to eliminate the federal contribution to the “unemployed fathers program” and make the program optional. The program would for the first time permit benefits to a family even though the father was not working but living in the home. The plan does require job training and registration for employment.

Those not required to register for employment or training, Cosgrove said, include wives of family heads, female-family heads with children under age six, family heads who are ill, aged or disabled, children and those working full time.



Throw Away Cathedral

Freddie Brasher, a 74-year-old, retired butcher from Crowthorne, England, works on a 4-foot-high model of England’s Lincoln Cathedral made almost entirely from objects people throw away. Matchboxes, meat skewers, bleach bottles, egg boxes, hair spray cans and other items have all gone into the cathedral model. When finished, he hopes to put it on display to earn money for charity. (RNS)

Mission Unit Votes Self Out Of Existence

Notre Dame, Ind. —(RNS) — About 500 delegates to the 24th national convention of the Catholic Students’ Mission Crusade passed a resolution here advocating termination of the 52-year-old agency which provides information on the missions to Roman Catholic Schools.

CSMC will be gradually phased out during the 1970-71 academic year, with most of its activities being handled on a diocesan basis by the two principal Pontifical Mission Aid Societies in the U.S. — the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and the Association of the Holy Childhood.

In the resolution passed at the closing session, the students declared that they were “deeply convinced that the historic circumstances and opportunities of a new era call upon them for even greater awareness of and dedication to the missionary effort of the Church in the decades to come.”

The resolution recommended that Catholic students “inform themselves through some central source of information and communications of the missionary activities of other students across the country.”

Mauriac Dead at 84; His ‘Deep Faith’ Noted

Paris — Francois Mauriac, who described his novels as an expression of “the Catholic universe of evil,” died Sept. 1 at the age of 84.

He was hailed as “a witness to his faithfulness and his profound faith” in a Vatican telegram to his family.

L’Osservatore Romano, the Vatican newspaper, wrote of him as “a man of orthodox faith and constant practice,” but it noted that “many of his novels alarmed Catholics because of their pessimism, their factual presentation of vice in all its turpitude and its tragic consequences and a continuous, so to speak, obsession with sin.”

Mauriac was injured in a fall more than a year ago, and never fully recovered. He left a widow and four children.

Toward the end of his life, he said, “We live in a polluted world now. It is time for me to go. The future is very, very black because these times sin against nature. Man should turn back to simple values.”

Mauriac published more than 100 books in 60 years of writing. His novels of French middle-class life earned him international renown, and in 1952 he was awarded the Nobel prize for literature, “for the penetrating psychology and artistic intensity” of these novels.

Among the most famous of them are *The Desert of Love* (1925); *The Vipers’ Tangle* (1932); and *The Pharisiennes* (1941). His only work in genre in about 30 years was the novel finished on his 80th birthday and published in the United States this year as *Maltaverne, A Novel About A Young Man of Long Ago*.

Mauriac was born at Bordeaux on Oct. 11, 1885, the youngest of five children of a prosperous middle-class family. His father died when Francois was 18 months old.

He described his childhood as narrow, unhappy, introverted, and dominated by his mother and her religious views. His 23 novels all dealt with some aspect of the problem of evil, probing such themes as the disintegration of an arranged marriage; of a son twisted by his mother’s destructive love; of a father and son who lusted after the same woman.

He supported the Republicans against Franco during the 1936-39 Spanish Civil War, wrote for the underground resistance press during the Nazi occupation of France, backed the struggle for independence by Algeria and other French colonies after World War II, and was an ardent admirer of former French President Charles de Gaulle.

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