

U.S. Backs Pa. Parochial In High Court

Washington, D.C. — (RNS) — The U.S. Justice Department has petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court to uphold a Pennsylvania law which reimburses private and parochial schools for certain "secular educational services."

Acting as a "friend of the court," the Justice Department said that the state statute bears similarities to the 1965 Federal Education Act which permits state aid for textbooks and busing in non-public education. The court has upheld that law.

The three-year-old Pennsylvania Non-Public Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides some subsidies toward salaries of private, parochial school teachers who teach "secular" subjects.

The Justice Department conceded that faculty pay was "different" from funds for buying books or providing transportation. However, it argued that the Supreme Court has also said that "purpose and primary effect" are the chief criteria in determining when states can aid non-public education.

Acting Solicitor General Daniel M. Friedman presented the brief. He said the Pennsylvania program constitutionally qualifies under the "benevolent neutrality" principle announced last year by the Supreme Court in upholding the non-taxable nature of church property.

Friedman said the reimbursement for teachers did not have the effect of advancing religion.

The Supreme Court is due to hear arguments in December on an appeal from the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals which last November upheld the Pennsylvania law.

A number of plaintiffs, including the American Civil Liberties Union, took the case to the high court. They charge that the program violates the "no establishment of religion" clause of the Constitution.

Deaconesses

Achieve Equality

Toronto, Ont. — (RNS) — The House of Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada has approved four steps which will establish deaconesses as members of the diaconate. The bishops agreed deaconesses should be licensed by bishops in the same way as deacons; should take their place at synods on the same basis, should be on the same salary scale, be admitted to the clergy pension fund and have the same fringe benefits as deacons.

NEW BISHOP

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI has appointed Msgr. John Njenga, 41, general secretary of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Kenya, as the new bishop of Eldoret in west-central Kenya.

Bernadette's Back . . . Unrepentant

By ERNEST OSTRO

Omagh, Northern Ireland — (NC) — Bernadette Devlin, Northern Ireland's fiery civil rights leader and member of Parliament, appears to have changed her tactics slightly since her release from prison Oct. 20.

In her second public appearance since her release, Miss Devlin declared that if rioting broke out in Londonderry, her home base, she would probably go there and try to stop it. Miss Devlin had been jailed on charges of inciting to riot.

Miss Devlin stated her attitude toward violence and politics at a village open-air meeting here in the pouring rain. She made it quite clear that she is unrepentant and as much of a rebel as ever.

But the youthful member of the British Parliament for mid-Ulster said she feels the time for rioting is over, at least for the present.

Miss Devlin said that rioting cannot help to achieve her aim of destroying the capitalist system, which she feels is responsible for all the "troubles" and wrongs in both Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

Miss Devlin is a supporter of a united, socialist Ireland.

She was careful to note that her anti-rioting position — although she would not agree that she had ever supported mindless rioting as an effective means of social change — does not come out of any feeling of generosity toward Maj. Chichester-Clark's Unionist government of Northern Ireland.

Violence would be permissible, she said, only if the oppressed people have tried every other means of achieving their ends and righting injustices without any success.

She also made it clear that she thought her actions in the Bogside of Londonderry in August 1969 — for which she received her prison sentences — were justified.

Petrol bombing is morally justifiable, she said, because police were attacking innocent men, women and children with more sophisticated weapons such as batons, gas and guns.

"If I could throw two petrol bombs at once and considered it was effective against the capitalist system I would do so," she said. "At the moment I do not think it would be effective; an act of violence would not work in the interests of the working class at the moment."

Miss Devlin has now taken her seat in the Parliament in England.

The big question for Miss Devlin now is: how can she reconcile her revolutionary philosophy with her representa-

tion of a constituency in the British Parliament? This question, perhaps more than any other, is likely to determine not only Miss Devlin's immediate future but also to play a significant role in the trends in Northern Ireland.



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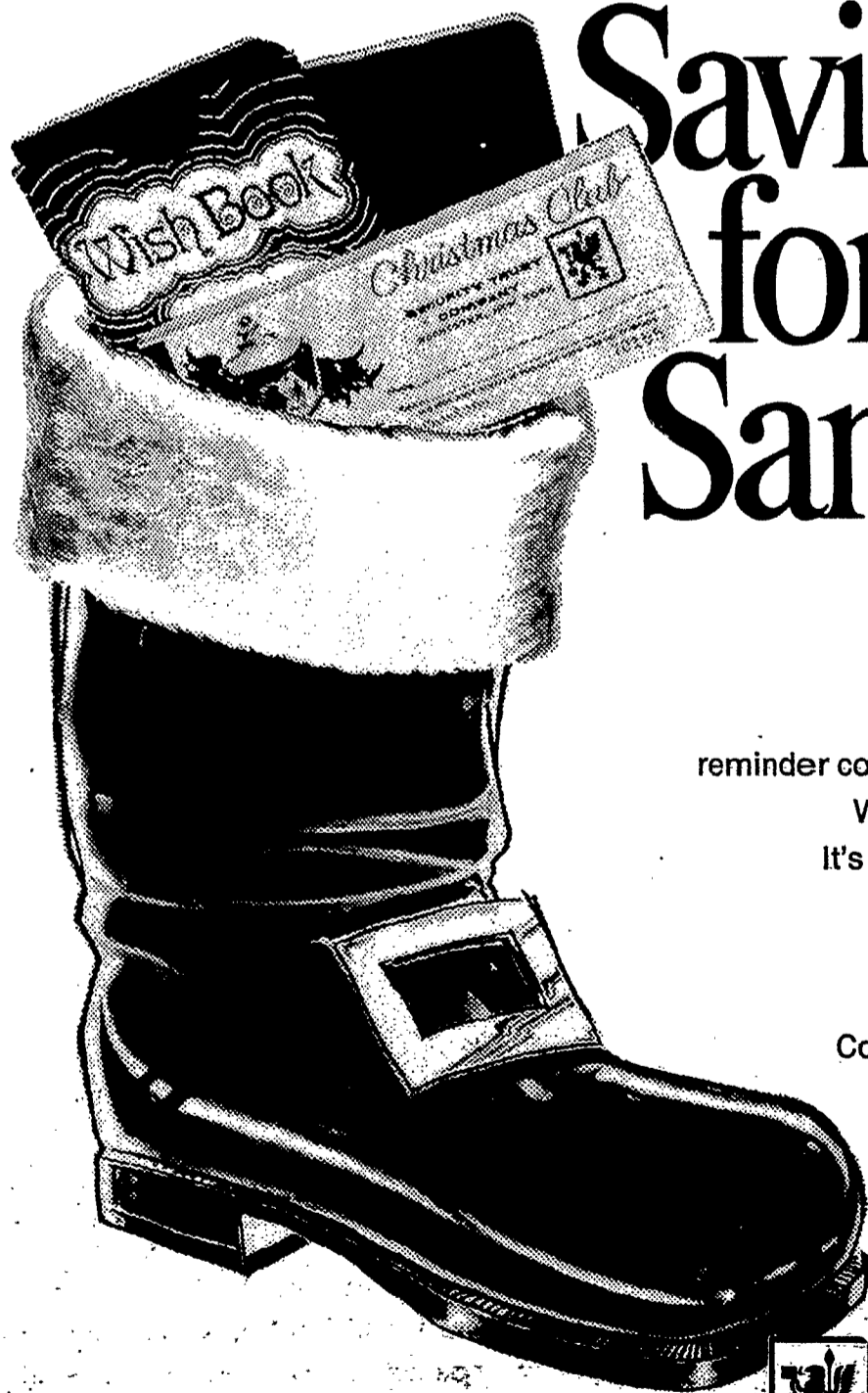
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