

Pope Thanks Methodists For 'Generous' Act

Vatican City —(RNS)—Pope Paul's "profound Christian joy" over a United Methodist "Resolution of Intent" to drop all comments derogatory to Roman Catholicism in its Articles of Faith has been conveyed to a leader of the U.S.-based denomination.

The pontiff's response was contained in a letter from Jean Cardinal Villot, Vatican Secretary of State, to Dr. Wesley Hole of Los Angeles, a layman who is secretary of the United Methodist General Conference.

It was the first official Vatican reaction to an action of the General Conference (highest legislative unit) in April, 1970. United Methodist lay and clerical delegates stipulated that all anti-Catholic references would be omitted in a revision of their Articles of Faith. The revision is not yet complete. The statements in question date from the 18th century.

According to Cardinal Villot's letter, the "generous and far-sighted action" represented by the resolution removes "bitter and harsh controversy which in the past has often affected Christians."

Letter Expresses Papal Concern For Deaf People

Paris — (RNS)—Pope Paul's concern for the deaf was expressed in a letter by Jean Cardinal Villot, Vatican Secretary of State.

The letter was addressed to the secretary general of the World Federation of Deaf people which was holding its sixth congress here on its 20th anniversary.

"From the bottom of his heart," Cardinal Villot wrote, "the pontiff hopes for the cure of all who are afflicted with deafness, for their human development, for their active participation in the life of the world."

"The Holy Father rejoices in all that is being done in different countries to detect deafness in children at an early stage, to enable individual deaf persons to obtain professional training, and to help them enter into deep communion with those who surround them."

The letter added that the Pope also wished to encourage all who involve themselves in "fraternal and courageous" work for the deaf, "especially those who occupy themselves with providing religious assistance."

Pro-Abortionists Map Campaign

New York — (RNS) — More than 1,000 women from 25 states gathered here for a conference called by the Women's National Abortion Coalition to plan a coordinated campaign for legalization of abortion.

A majority of the convention voted to campaign at the state and federal levels on three issues: repeal of all laws against abortion, opposition to forced sterilization and ending restrictions on contraceptives.

A caucus called WISE (Women for the Inclusion of Sexual Expression) walked out of the convention when they failed to have the "lesbian issue" and "free, quality abortions on demand" tied to the national campaign. The WISE group was supported by Kate Millet, author of "Sexual Politics."

Courier-Journal

China Decision Makes Sense To Pearl Buck

New York — (RNS) — U.S. acceptance of the reality of Communist China is "common sense," according to author Pearl Buck, famed for her books on China.

In the wake of an announcement that the U.S. will vote for a United Nations seat for Peking, Miss Buck discussed "the two Chinas" in an article on the "Op Ed" page of the New York Times (Aug. 4).

The U.S. has recognized only Nationalist China since the Chiang Kaishek government fled to Taiwan in 1947.

Miss Buck said the U.S. can accept Peking and "with good conscience can continue our relations with Nationalist China as best we can until such time as the Chinese themselves decide to unify."

She judged that the U.S. did not create the division and cannot heal it. Miss Buck wrote that the split goes back to 1917 when Sun Yat-sen accepted Russian support and, in 1921, recognized the Communist party. Chiang's repudiation of the Communists and his war against them completed the division, she said.

Cardinal Suenens Attacks 'Scandal' of Disunity

Louvain, Belgium —(RNS)—Leo Josef Cardinal Suenens, Archbishop of Malines-Brussels, called here for the demolition of the "Berlin walls" that, he said, "have divided Christians for centuries."

In an address Aug. 2 at the opening of a meeting of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Belgian Primate said that "division and disunity in the church . . . should simply not be tolerated by Christians."

"We do not have the right to accept an ecclesiastical status quo, which is our collective sin and a scandal for the world," he told 135 delegates. "We must prepare, with tenacious courage, for concrete and practical progress along our painful path toward unity."

The 51-year-old Faith and Order Commission, which became a major constituent part of the WCC in 1948, has been concerned with practical steps toward founding a fellowship of Christian Churches. Since 1968, it has included Roman Catholic members, although the Catholic Church is not part of the WCC Assembly or the pol-

icy-making Central Committee.

The theme of the Louvain conference, which will end Aug. 13, is "The Unity of the Church and the Unity of Mankind."

Cardinal Suenens emphasized that any confusion of the two unities entailed the risk of reducing the church to "a social service," while, on the other hand, "to separate them" would mean "ignoring the fact that God loves all men."

The prelate said the church never could become "a social service — a kind of spiritual Red Cross."

"Its real task today," he said, is "to proclaim the dignity of man and to save him from the technological jaws of modern society."

LAVERNE NAMED

State Sen. Thomas Laverne and Vincent L. Tofany, state commissioner of motor vehicles, have been named Rochester chairmen of the sixth annual Labor Day telethon to benefit Muscular Dystrophy Associations of America.

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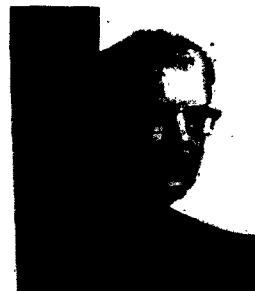
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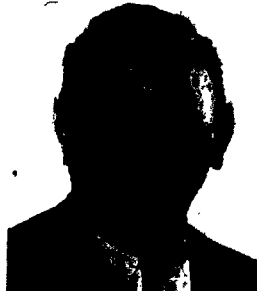
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