

Kueng - Rahner Debate Continues

Chicago — (RNS) — The debate between two of Europe's leading Catholic theologians over papal infallibility continues with little ground being given by either side, according to a report published here in Christian Century magazine.

Involved are Father Hans Kueng of Tuebingen University and Father Karl Rahner, S.J., of Muenster University. Both schools are in Germany.

The Century report was written for the Aug. 26 issue by L. Bruce Van Voorst, head of Newsweek's bureau in Bonn, who has previously discussed the same topic in the ecumenical weekly.

According to Van Voorst,

Father Rahner, who is 68, has announced his retirement from Muenster for health reasons.

The disagreement between the two theologians started in early 1971 over the Swiss-born Father Kueng's book "Infallibility? An inquiry." The volume questions the doctrine that the Pope is infallible when he speaks ex cathedra on faith and morals, as taught by the Vatican Council I and restated at Vatican II. He says there is no biblical basis for such a dogma.

Father Rahner feels that Father Kueng skirts dangerously close to Protestantism in his arguments against infallibility. He said in January 1971, that the Tuebingen professor con-

tradicted the whole Catholic tradition, especially since the Reformation.

Van Voorst reported that in late Summer the debate had come to focus on "Protestant vulnerability." Father Rahner's "challenge to Kueng is to show how, if not by way of papal infallibility, truth is to be defined for the Christian — by whom or what," the Century report said.

Whereas Father Rahner thinks "a Catholic Church without papal infallibility will ulti-

mately be doomed to Protestant sectarianism," Van Voorst quotes Father Kueng as saying Father Rahner is "intentionally a servant of the Roman system."

The Tuebingen professor accuses Father Rahner of giving the Vatican a "blank check" so that "in Rome, as in Moscow, the party cannot really err."

Father Rahner's most recent response to Father Kueng points out what he sees as three weaknesses in "Infallible?," according to Van Voorst.

"Father Kueng argues there are no infallible propositions but only an 'abiding in truth of the church' and then insisting on the truth of this single assertion with absolute commitment.

"Kueng must argue that there are no objective criteria available for judging when and where such propositions are to be made in the church. I'd say that, the Protestant believes there is indeed a criterion: the Holy Bible; and the Orthodox

Christian would say there is a criterion: the first ecumenical councils; and the Catholic says: this higher authority is the Bible with the magisterium — in concrete terms, the bishops and, where necessary, ultimately the Pope."

● Father Kueng does not say clearly how he defines error. "I get the impression," Father Rahner said, "he means only 'inadequate' or 'imbalanced.' But then he should say so..."

Father Kueng puts the burden of proof in supporting infallibility on Father Rahner, who said: "Granted, papal infallibility is more difficult to demonstrate than used to be assumed, but that's not the point..."

"Let him try proving from Holy Scriptures and tradition that Jesus of Nazareth really is what both Kueng and I understand him to be; namely, Christ the absolutely binding figure. Let him try it; it's just as perplexing as 'proving' the infallibility of the church."



Head Set

Nun delegates to the fourth annual meeting of the National Black Sisters Conference in Pittsburgh display a variety of headdress. From left, Sister Martin De Porres Gray, a Pittsburgh Sister of Mercy and President of the NBSC, wears an Afro hairdo; Sister Callista Robinson, a Franciscan nun from Little Falls, Minn., is dressed in a modified nun's habit; and Sister Myrna Rose Joseph, of the Holy Family Order from New Orleans, wears an African-style Gayla, a headdress some black sisters are adopting. (RNS)

Church Constitution Perplexes Cardinal

Detroit — (RNS) — John Cardinal Dearden of Detroit, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, expressed "reservations" about the proposed fundamental law or constitution of the Roman Catholic Church and suggested the world's bishops give it more thought and discussion.

The document, called "Lex Ecclesiae Fundamentalis," has been increasingly criticized by leading Catholic churchmen throughout the world, many of whom claim that it unduly reinforces papal authority and is overly legalistic in its approach.

Cardinal Dearden found several areas of agreement with another critic of the draft document, Leo-Joseph Cardinal Suenens of Malines-Brussels, Belgium, who described the document as a threat to ecumenism and the collegiality of the bishops, and a denial of the open spirit of Vatican II.

"I have a number of reservations similar to those that Cardinal Suenens expressed," said the Detroit prelate.

Cardinal Dearden, who becomes the highest ranking U.S. Catholic prelate publicly to find fault with the document, said the basic issue is how this concept of fundamental guidelines for the Church, discussed during one of the earlier bishops' synods in Rome, can be realized in law.

Cardinal Dearden, in stating that the bishops of the world should give the law considerable thought and discussion,

added that if the document does come up for debate at the upcoming World Synod of Bishops, starting Sept. 30 in Rome, it would only be a "very brief matter."

The draft document in its present form was severely criticized by the Canon Law Society of America for allegedly reversing some progressive steps taken by Vatican II. The Institute for Religious Science in Bologna, Italy, charged that it was aimed at stopping Church renewal.

Foremost proponent of the draft document has been Jean Cardinal Danielou, the Jesuit theologian, who argued that the People of God need a charter. He said that "law is first of all an expression of divine will" and "it outlines the objective design for each man."

Cardinal Dearden is the only member of the American delegation to the impending synod of bishops to question the draft proposal.

Speaking of the synod itself, the cardinal said he believed the bishops "would emerge with a broader awareness of the way in which the contemporary world is affecting the mission of the Church everywhere."

Commenting on the two major topics of the synod — world peace and justice is "far more priestly ministry, the prelate observed that the question of peace and justice is "far more pressing" because it affects the total human condition of mankind.

Bro. Carpenter In Mission Post

Brother Ralph Carpenter of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart has been named coordinator of the society's mission efforts in New Guinea and Latin America. He is the first brother to be advanced to this post.

Brother Carpenter, formerly of Rochester, also was the first American black to enter the order. He celebrated the 25th anniversary of his profession last year. For the past several years, he has been attached to the Sacred Heart retreat house in Youngstown, Ohio. He recently took up his new job in Geneva, Ill.

Pope Urges Catholics To Christian Witness

Caracas, Venezuela — (RNS) — In a message to the first Inter-American Catholic Congress here, Pope Paul VI urged Catholic laymen, as Christians, to bring the dimension of "evangelical testimony" to humanitarian efforts in the world.

To the urgent social, political and economic endeavors of the day, the pontiff said, "Christians must bring the certainty of being — and feeling — redeemed, freed, through the merits of Jesus Christ and of being destined to rise again from the dead."

The papal exhortation was contained in a letter sent to Jose Cardinal Quintero, Archbishop of Caracas, by Jean Cardinal Villot, Secretary of State.

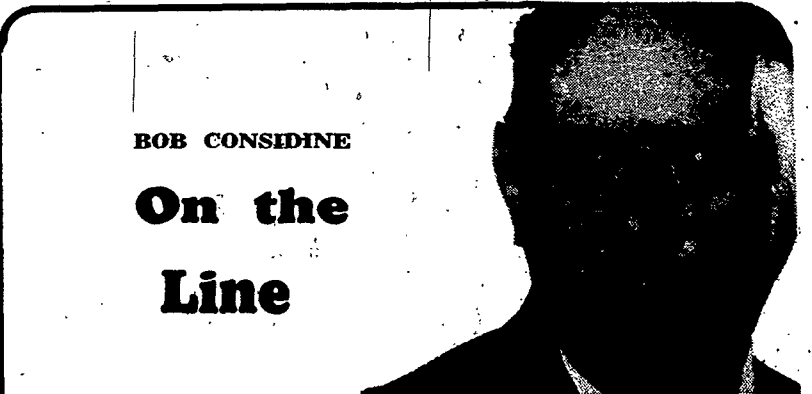
The congress, organized by the Rome-based International Federation of Catholic Men, opened here Aug. 23 on the theme, "The Integral Development of Latin American Man."

Catholic Programs Lose HUD Funds

Portland, Maine — (RNS) — Three Catholic school programs have been denied the use of \$155,000 in Model Cities funds by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) because of the U.S. Supreme Court decision which struck down aid to non-public schools.

The three are the Cheverus High School Achievement Program, the St. Dominic's Pilot School Project and a special education resource teacher team operated here by St. Joseph's College. The Cheverus project has spent \$9,500. A Model Cities official said ways would be sought to recover the money.

The projects had been granted Model Cities money under a program to alleviate poverty in Portland's inner city.



BOB CONSIDINE

On the Line

The world went to pieces during my vacation, so I'm cutting it short and taking up column-writing again. No sacrifice is too great, as President Nixon remarked at the \$50-a-plate dinner at the Waldorf Astoria before flying to the summer White House in his \$9 million Air Force One.

Taking advantage of my absence, the President froze Howard Hughes' salary, and Mayor Lindsay joined the Democratic party. Without an invitation. Vice President Agnew was released from the administration's doghouse long enough to bark on ABC-TV's "Issues and Answers," that he doesn't consider Treasury Secretary Connally a rival for the world's worst job.

A song I once composed in Saigon, to the tune of "Tea for Two," — I called it "Ky for Thieu, and Thieu for Ky" — was brusquely removed from the top tunes list. Joe Namath tore a knee in a senseless exhibition game demonstrating what a bad defensive back he is. New York Police Commissioner Pat Murphy discovered corruption in the department and will be awarded the coveted William Marcy Tweed Medal for Perspicuity. The dollar had its greatest nautical test since G. Washington threw one across the Rappahannock. The buck was pushed into the dirty pool of international banking, to see if it would float, and to everybody's astonishment, it did.

I could have told you and the principals and principles involved all about this in advance, if I had not been holed up in Allenhurst, N.J., contemplating Lake Decay.

I could have alerted the nation because I am a card-bearing Columnist.

The columnist deputizes himself as ombudsman to the world, its peoples, and the hu-

man condition. He may be ducking the office shlock, but that doesn't mean he'll be shy about writing a column instructing the President and the Secretary of Treasury on the steps they should take at the end of the 90-day freeze. His golf handicap is 38, but he can be critical of Jack Nicklaus' closing round of 68 in the big tournament at Philadelphia.

He feels compelled or divinely instructed to tell the President just what Chou En-lai has up his Oriental sleeve. He had no qualms about urging Congress to save (or bust) Lockheed. He has to look up the spelling of botulism but can tell if a can of soup contains it without tasting the soup. He, not Gil Hodges, really knows what's wrong with the Mets.

He presents his plans for stopping the wars in Indochina, the Middle East, Pakistan and Sudan, and then is astonished to learn that he can't stop his kids from fighting.

He hasn't been in church since he was christened, but he writes about the Pope's next step in the matter of priestly celibacy. He couldn't win his letter in beanbag while in college, but feels required to tell Vita Blue what's wrong with his slider. He finds it upsetting not to get a congratulatory note from J. Edgar Hoover after revealing exclusively the name of Hoover's successor. He was all for printing the Pentagon Papers—you'll recall his stirring phrase "the people's right to know" — but was very angry at one of his client newspapers for printing one paragraph on Page 44 about his divorce. He believes that every typographical error that appears in his column is part of a continuing conspiracy to make him look like an idiot.

There's no species quite like him.

I mean us.