

# Amnesty Urged for War Resisters

Washington, D.C.—(RNS)—An interreligious conference has called for total amnesty for resisters to the Vietnam war.

Amnesty is "not a matter of forgiveness but . . . (is) the law's way of undoing what the law itself has done," the group said.

A four-page statement on the controversial issue was adopted by 200 persons from Protestant, Jewish and Roman Catholic groups. It was addressed to the nation's religious communities.

The meeting was called by the National Council of Churches, in cooperation with the U.S. Catholic Conference and Jewish organizations.

"Amnesty would demonstrate that America is still capable of a communal moral act," the statement said. "It would be bitterly ironic if we were to make peace with the peoples of China and Southeast Asia but persisted in vindictiveness toward those of the young generation who refused to share in the brutalities and destruction of the war."

## Black Students Arrange 'Week' For Public

The Black Awareness Coordinating Committee at Rochester Institute of Technology has arranged art and photography exhibits and a series of entertainments for students, alumni and the general public.

Their week begins Wednesday, April 26, with a free performance at 3 p.m. by Black Drama of Buffalo, in Ingle Auditorium. Earlier, during the school day, students from the RIT Upward Bound program at 50 W. Main will be campus guests of the committee.

Thursday, in Ingle Auditorium, Joanna Featherstone will read her poetry at 8 p.m. and stay for a discussion and refreshments, all free to the public.

The Sound Track and Soul band will play for dancing Friday night in the College Union cafeteria; admission, 75 cents. At 8 p.m. Saturday, tribal-jazz singer Leon Thomas will perform in the gym; tickets, \$2.

A soul food supper (\$1.75) in the college cafeteria from 4 to 6 Sunday evening, April 30, will be followed at 8 by a local talent show (free) billed as the Joe Jones Spectacular.

At 8 p.m. Tuesday, May 2, Dr. Charles Hurst, president of Malcolm X College in Chicago, will speak in Ingle Auditorium; no admission charge.

## Foster Parents Plan Party

All foster parents of the area are invited to spend a social evening April 20 at the county's Department of Social Services auditorium on Westfall Road. Dessert and coffee will be served. Donations are asked for bake sale to be held during the evening.

The gathering is sponsored by the Monroe County Council of Foster Parents. Mrs. John Farron of Honeoye Falls, president, said the organization was interested especially in reaching foster parents associated with the Catholic Family Center.

### ELECTRONIC CONCERT

"Two by Arel," a tape concert featuring electronic music by composer Bulent Arel, will be presented at the Nazareth College Arts Center, Wednesday, April 12, at 8:30 p.m.

The conference envisioned total amnesty for those who have fled, those jailed or held in stockades, men who have served sentences for resisting, those charged but not yet tried, and Vietnam veterans receiving less than honorable discharges.

"The only exemption we countenance is for those who have been convicted of violence against persons, and even these should have their cases reviewed individually," the statement said.

In varying degrees, a number of religious groups have supported some type of amnesty. Among these are the National

Conference of Catholic Bishops, the United Church of Christ, and the American Baptist Convention.

The interreligious conference held that amnesty would not "dishonor the consciences or acts of those who fought or died. Our hope is that by abstaining from all punitive acts, against both those who prosecuted this war and those who refused to participate . . . we shall affirm a spirit of humanity that will stand the nation in good stead as it makes peace with itself and with the world."

A call was issued to the nation to meet its obligations to the families of those killed and to "Vietnam-era veterans." The statement continued:

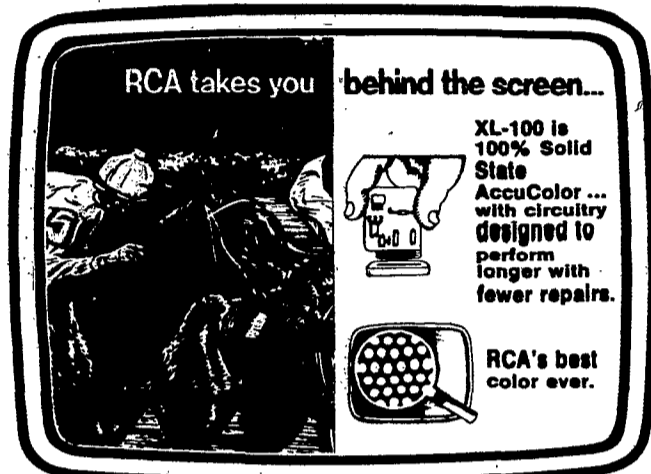
"One quarter of the 5.3-million veterans of the Vietnam era do not have a high school education. Of those, only 12 per cent have used the GI bill for any purpose. The unemployment rate for black veterans in the 18-to-24 age bracket is 21 per cent. At least 60,000 . . . veterans are addicted to heroin. Many others report spiritual and emotional crises because of their war-time experience."

More debate resulted in the adding of this sentence: "God alone determines the purity of any man's motives."

The Rev. William Sloane Coffin, Yale University chaplain and long-time anti-war spokesman, was chairman of the committee which drafted the statement.

Co-chairmen were Dr. Robert V. Moss, president of the United Church of Christ; Henry Schwartzchild, representing the Synagogue Council of America, and Catholic Auxiliary Bishop John Dougherty of Newark, N.J.

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