

Another Setback for Aid to Private Schools

By CARMEN VIGLUCCI

The decision last week by a three-judge federal court to stop payments to private schools under the New York State Mandated Services Act constituted another setback in efforts to provide such assistance.

Although the injunction is only temporary, pending a challenge in the court against the constitutionality of mandated services payments, observers feel that it may indicate a negative attitude toward aid on the part of the judges.

This is the second year that private schools have received aid under the Mandated Services

Act which provides funds to offset the costs of such state-required services as record-keeping and testing.

Under the act, the Rochester diocese receives \$1.3 million a year, \$800,000 of which is ticketed for elementary schools. The payments are made twice a year and it is the second half which was enjoined by the court. It was due between April 1 and June 15.

Father Daniel Brent, diocesan superintendent of schools, said that many schools here would suffer because they had included such aid in their budgets and would have to find ways to cut back if the court eventually rules against the aid.

Asked what diocesan schools would do in general if such an

eventuality occurred, Father Brent said, "A program, the Interim Education Fund Plan, has been established and has been approved by the schools office and Priests' Council and now awaits approval by the Bishop.

"This plan," Father Brent explained, "was designed by the Interim Education Commission to help our schools in Monroe County survive without any government assistance."

Under the plan, a surtax would be levied on all parishes in the county, the proceeds would go into a pool and would be disbursed back to the parishes according to need.

The plan, however, does not cover towns outside of the county.

"We don't know what will

happen to those schools," Father Brent said. "They'll have to decide what they can afford. Money lost may have to be made up by parishioners but it's hard to guess."

All this, of course, would become academic, at least for now if the court rules favorably. Chances are, however, that regardless of the ruling the case will eventually reach the Supreme Court.

The injunction came on the heels of another federal court ruling which declared unconstitutional a parent-aid law passed in Pennsylvania. Under the law, which many believed provided a constitutional method of aiding private schools, parents would receive \$150 a year for each child

in a nonpublic high school and \$75 for each in nonpublic grade school. Payments were to begin in the Fall.

This decision, combined with the one that voided the New York State Secular Educational Services Law and with another federal court's overturning of a shared services aid plan in Vermont, is causing pessimism among aid adherents despite pledges by political leaders, including Gov. Rockefeller and President Nixon, to find avenues for such aid.

All of these decisions find their roots in last June's Supreme Court ruling that struck down the first Pennsylvania aid plan to aid nonpublic schools through purchase of educational services.

Women's Rights to Be Studied By U.S. Bishops' Committee

Atlanta (RNS) — The chairman of the Roman Catholic bishop's committee studying the role of women in society and the Church said he is inclined to support ratification of the equal rights for women amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Archbishop Coadjutor Leo C. Byrne of St. Paul-Minneapolis earlier reported to the nation's bishops at their Spring meeting here that his committee will send them a statement giving pros and cons on the amendment.

U.S. Report Denounced

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lower the minimum age requirement for permanent deacons from 35 to 30 years.

The move was calculated in an effort to provide more clergy from Catholic black and Spanish-speaking communities.

The bishops also voiced support for "Key '73", a massive evangelism effort planned for 1973 and spearheaded by evangelical Protestants.

Cardinal John Carberry of St. Louis said Key '73 offers the Catholic Church an opportunity "to stir up deep spirituality among our people."

He noted that the thrust of Key '73 is that each denomination is free to participate in a manner it decides.

This week's meeting represented the first time that the deliberations of the American bishops have been open to the news media and other observers, and most bishops appeared to feel comfortable with the new arrangement.

The bishops also:

- Eliminated the annual spring meeting and voted to hold a series of 12 regional meetings instead.

- Agreed that dioceses that permit first confession to be delayed until after first communion may continue to do so on an experimental basis.

- Approved a procedure for the development of a "catechetical directory" that would define norms for religious education in this country.

- Reorganized the central administrative structure of the church in this country to eliminate an operating deficit of nearly \$1 million. The principal savings are expected to come from the elimination of some middle-level managerial positions and a reduced commitment to Catholic relief services.

He said that while the amendment will give equal rights for women in many areas, it also means the elimination of safeguards and privileges for them.

"That's why we want to get as much information as possible," he told the bishops.

He said the proposed 27th Amendment has been ratified by 10 states and rejected by two. It requires the approval of three fourths of the states.

In making his report to the bishops' conference, Archbishop Byrne referred to a statement issued earlier by the independent National Association of Laity and eight Catholic women's organizations. It asked the bishops to ordain women to the priesthood and to support ratification of the equal rights amendment.

He said the theology committee of the bishops' conference has been asked to study the question of ordaining women "in as much depth as possible."

Whether his committee will recommend such a role for women will depend on conclusions of the theological study, Archbishop Byrne said at a news conference.

He noted that the bulk of Catholic theologians is opposed to ordaining women.

The statement by the National Association of Laity and some Catholic women's organizations asked each bishop to work actively for ratification of the women's rights amendment.

It also asked them to work "for the repeal of the oppressive statute which now prevents the ordination of women to the priesthood and to substitute in its place one that will give to women full human status in the Church by emphatically encouraging their ordination to the priesthood."

Heinz Choir Slated to Sing At St. Mary's

The Heinz Chapel Concert Choir of the University of Pittsburgh, under the direction of Dr. Don Franklin, will present a concert of choral music on April 23, 1972, at 8 p.m. at St. Mary's Church.

The concert will include selections from the Heiligmesse, by Joseph Haydn, The Lamentations of Jeremiah, by Thomas Tallis, anthems by Henry Purcell, and Response, a contemporary piece by John Celona written for choir, electronic tape, and organ.

The choir is on a spring tour and is made up of students from various graduate and undergraduate schools of the University of Pittsburgh. The concert is open to the public.

The eight women's organizations are the St. Joan's International Alliance, National Coalition of American Nuns, National Formation Conference, National Vocations Conference, National Assembly of Women Religious, Deaconess Movement, Leadership Conference of Women Religious, and the Ecumenical Task Force on Women in Religion.

Cherry Slated At Sports Night

Rochester Americans' coach Don Cherry heads the list of dignitaries who will be guests at the annual Sports Night Friday April 21 in St. Salome's school hall.

Also scheduled to sit at the head table are Duke Harris, leading scorer on the hockey club; karate expert Earl Smith of the Arnett YMCA, who will give a demonstration of karate; and Vito Costanza, coach of the City Catholic Champion basketball team.

Honored during the evening will be members of the school basketball team and the cheerleaders. The "Father Eschrich Memorial Trophy" will be presented to the team's most valuable player.

A spaghetti supper at 6:30 p.m. precedes the entertainment program. The event is sponsored by the St. Salome's Men's Club.



THE WILLKES

Willkes to Speak on Abortion

"Abortion — How It Is" will be the topic of a lecture, slide and movie presentation by Dr. and Mrs. J. C. Willke at 8 p.m. Monday, April 24 at the Towne House Motor Inn, 1325 Mt. Hope Avenue.

Sponsored by the Rochester Area Right to Life Education Fund, the lecture is open to the public.

Coordinating activities is Mrs. Jeanne Sweeney; and others on the committee are Mrs. Muriel

Trunfio, Mrs. Joan Hanna, Mrs. Kay Zeller, Bruce Zaepfel and George Goodwin.

VISIT TO BUCHAREST

Bucharest — (RNS) — Bishop Herman Dietzfelbinger, chairman of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID), arrived here April 6 for talks on ecclesiastical affairs with Patriarch Justinian, Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan and Archbishop of Bucharest.

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