

People and Events Of the World and Nation

Catholic Conference Asked Court to Drop Abortion Unit's Suit

Washington (RNS) — The U.S. Catholic Conference has filed for dismissal of a law suit that an abortion rights group lodged in an attempt to have the Church's tax-exempt status revoked.

The Abortion Rights Mobilization along with feminist and religious advocates of legal abortion, brought the suit on grounds that the Church's anti-abortion activities violate the Internal Revenue Service code which restricts the political participation of non-profit institutions.

In its motion for dismissal, the USCC denied any violation of the IRS regulations and asserted further that these restrictions were unconstitutional "because they impose an excessive burden on the USCC's exercise of the rights of freedom of religion and free speech while serving no compelling governmental purpose."

The suit, filed in the federal court for the Southern District of New York in October 1980, named the IRS commissioner and the secretary of the Treasury as defendants for having "done nothing to enforce the law" against alleged violations by the Roman Catholic Church. The USCC was added as a defendant in January.

The U.S. Attorney's office also filed for dismissal on March 30.

Apostolic Delegate Complains to Bishops About Critical Articles

Washington (RNS) — The pope's representative in the United States has complained to the American Catholic bishops about articles appearing in the Catholic press which he said were critical and disrespectful of the Church's teaching authority and of the pope himself.

"The impact of such criticism is heightened when columns are syndicated and widely circulated," wrote Archbishop Pio Laghi, the apostolic delegate, in a letter dated April 27.

The letter, which expressed the concern of the Vatican Secretariat of State, prompted a rejoinder from the leadership of the Catholic Press Association that said printing information on dissent clarifies, rather than causes, problems in the Church.

The reference to syndicated columns is being viewed by many in the Catholic press as an attempt to crack down in particular on Father Andrew Greeley, although the archbishop mentioned no names in his letter.

Father Greeley, who writes two weekly columns, one for secular dailies and one for Catholic weeklies, has frequently criticized the Church's position on birth control. His acerbic style has often upset Church leaders.

Barbara Jackson, Advocate for Poor, Dies in London

London (RNS) — Barbara Ward, famed British economist and a leading Roman Catholic laywoman, died May 31 at her home near here following a long illness. She was 67.

Miss Ward, who was granted a life peerage with the title, Baroness Jackson of Lodsworth five years ago, was an articulate and dedicated spokesman for the developing nations and a champion of the rights of the poor everywhere.

Through her writings, books and the counsel she gave to leaders of many nations, she convinced thousands,

especially the members of her own Church, of the necessity of aiding those held back by poverty and lack of education from attaining a fair share of the world's resources.

A prolific writer, she authored more than a dozen major works on economic development. She was a longtime supporter of the United Nations and served on several of its commissions. She was named by Pope Paul VI as one of the lay auditors who attended the later sessions of Vatican Council II.

(Her weekly column appeared in the Courier-Journal.)

Conferees in Capital Adopt Toughest Abortion Aid Limits

Washington (RNS) — House and Senate members conferring on a supplemental appropriations bill ratified the most stringent limitations ever placed on federal funding of abortions.

Under the new bill, Medicaid funds cannot be used to pay for abortions except when they are necessary to save the life of the mother. Under present law, such funds also can be used for abortions in cases of incest or rape reported within three days.

The conferees rejected a measure passed by the House that would have forbidden medical insurance payments for abortions for federal employees.

Parents Obligated To Provide Sex Ed, Bishops Unit Says

Washington (RNS) — New sex education guidelines issued by the U.S. Catholic Conference say that Catholic parents have an obligation to provide formal instruction on sexual questions for their children.

The guidelines also emphasize that parents must be involved in all phases of developing and implementing sex education programs.

The text declares that a sex education program should not be imposed upon families, but adds that if parents do not want their children to attend "a prudently planned program based on these guidelines, they should remember they have the responsibility to seek alternative forms of formal education in human sexuality for their children."

Bishops, WOC Say They Disagree On Most Key Issues

Washington (RNS) — The American Catholic bishops and the Women's Ordination Conference have issued an interim report in which they agree to continue their dialogue but note disagreement on most of the topics under discussion.

The bishops and the women participants, who advocate ordination for members of their sex, do agree that while "the Church teaches that human persons reflect an image of God, there is an inconsistency not only between teaching and practice but also within the teaching itself."

The joint statement also says that for the purposes of the discussion, "we believe that the concept of complementarity is not an appropriate model for accepting women as members of the Church because it too often implies a 'separate but equal' notion that is, in fact, not equal."

The text notes that while the bishops accept the traditional notion that pope and hierarchy constitute the teaching authority of the Church, the WOC views the Church's present leadership strictures as historically developed and not explicitly instituted or intended by Jesus Christ. The bishops consider the present hierarchical structure as immutable whereas the women believe it can be changed.

St. John Knights Slate Mass

Auxiliary Bishop Dennis W. Hickey will preside at the celebration of the 64th annual Field Mass of the Knights of St. John and Ladies Auxiliary, at 10 a.m., Sunday, June 21, at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery.

which prayer is offered for deceased members of the organizations. After the Mass the names of those who have died in the past year are read and Taps are sounded as uniformed members stand at Present Swords.

Following the rites, Bishop Hickey, who is spiritual director of the Rochester Temple, Noble and Exalted Degree of the Holy Cross, will be invested with the cross that is emblematic of his status.

Martin Stephan is chairman of the event during



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