

Tax Credit Boosters Seeking Big Push

Washington (NC) -- Tuition tax credit supporters are looking for leadership from the Reagan administration and Senate to push tax credit legislation. They also are asking Catholics in the pews to push those Washington leaders.

Strong support from the administration and Senate leadership are "imperative" to move tax credit legislation forward in the Senate, said Msgr. Daniel F. Hoye, U.S. Catholic Conference general secretary.

"Otherwise there is a possibility that this bill will remain indefinitely stranded far from the goal it ought by now to have achieved," Msgr. Hoye said. "This would be a tragic waste of a splendid opportunity and one which its proponents would find difficult to accept."

Msgr. Hoye issued the statement after the Senate Finance Committee voted May 24 to approve a tuition tax credit bill.

The Committee for Private Education has launched a

drive to promote "speedy, favorable action" on the legislation. Key to the drive is a nationwide effort to get 30 million church-going Catholics to write their representatives telling them they want tax credits.

Members of the Committee for Private Education include the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Citizens for Educational Freedom, the Daughters of Isabella, the National Catholic Educational Association and the National Council of Catholic Women -- all working with the USCC.

The supreme office of the Knights of Columbus in New Haven, Conn., has distributed more than 5 million cards which show sample letters to be sent to members of the Senate and House of Representatives.

Virgil C. Dechant, supreme knight of the Knight of Columbus, said he has written to every Catholic bishop heading a diocese

asking his help in informing pastors, parish councils, Catholic school personnel and parishioners about "the importance of this legislation."

"I promise you the best efforts of our members and their families in this important work. Sustain us in our effort by your continued leadership and move others to join us in this apostolate. We shall never have a better opportunity to succeed," Dechant said.

The tuition tax credit measure passed the Senate Finance Committee 11-7 but opponents have threatened to filibuster in the Senate to prevent passage of the bill. The proposal would give parents tax credits for up to half of the tuition they pay to send their children to private or parochial elementary and secondary schools.

The maximum credit this year would be \$100, next year's maximum would be \$200 and the following year's would be \$300. Families with

annual incomes of more than \$50,000 would not qualify.

Under an anti-discrimination provision the credit would be denied to people who send their children to schools which have racially discriminatory policies.

President Reagan has spoken out repeatedly in support of tuition tax credit legislation but it died last year in the Senate.

Edward Anthony, director of the USCC Office for Edu-

cational Assistance, said, since the measure is tax related, it should be placed on a tax bill from the House. Tax legislation originates in the House. "What bill, the timing, the scheduling for floor action -- it's all a leadership question."

Anthony said passage of the bill is "a matter of the White House working closely with the Senate leadership and putting pressure if necessary to see that the bill comes to a vote."

Fr. John Reedy



Looking for the Lord

The Pastoral And New Orleans

A problem: What is the church teaching on war and peace for the Catholics in the Archdiocese of New Orleans?

On his return from the bishops' meeting in Chicago, Archbishop Philip Hannan stated his deeply-felt conviction that there is much in the pastoral statement on war and peace which is unrealistic, naive, wrong.

He made it very clear to his people that he did not regard this pastoral statement as authoritative church teaching which requires their assent or obedience.

In almost every other diocese of the United States, the pastoral will be presented as an authoritative teaching document. The statement itself identifies a number of judgments on which people of good will can differ, but the total wording leaves no doubt that the majority of American bishops regard this statement as a serious exercise of their teaching authority.

In practice, I assume that the Catholics of the Archdiocese of New Orleans will respond to the pastoral pretty much as will those in other dioceses.

Some will give it no attention; some will read it (more likely summaries of it) and be persuaded by the presentation; some will accept parts of it and disagree vehemently with other parts.

But Archbishop Hannan's public dissent highlights a problem which needs attention -- the significance of joint statements by national conferences of bishops.

While Vatican II recognized and recommended such conferences, their authority in joint action is still ambiguous. At present, the local bishop exercises teaching authority in his own diocese; the college of bishops, when acting in union with the Pope, exercises teaching authority over the whole church. Everything else -- all shared efforts of bishops in a region or a nation -- falls into a murky, gray area.

Officially, the Vatican

seems to prefer it this way. To the extent that a local bishop adopts a position worked out with others, this becomes an exercise of his own teaching responsibility.

If he doesn't accept the results of a shared effort, he is not bound by it. Technically, then, it would have no authoritative force in his diocese.

Obviously, there is a problem here.

The time, the effort, the study which went into the formulation of this pastoral was far greater than that which any local bishop could devote to a teaching statement.

The bishops did not rubber-stamp a document whipped up by their staff. They did their homework, consulted with their own experts, prayer over the issues. They made the teaching their own.

Finally, they adopted it, not by a narrow margin, but by an overwhelming majority.

In any commonsense judgment, we have to see this as a much more substantive effort than would have been possible for an individual bishop.

In fact, most of these men recognize that they don't have the resources in their own dioceses to formulate significant teaching on many of the complex social issues of the day.

They know that they must deal with these issues in a collegial effort.

But the church still doesn't attribute any particular weight to such joint efforts on the part of a conference of bishops.

The Vatican has a long memory. It remembers painful problems in dealing with national groups of bishops. Administrative control can be exercised more easily when each bishop must deal individually with Rome.

Nonetheless, the situation in the church has changed. The bishops are collaborating in the exercise of their authority, and the church benefits from such collaboration.

Eventually, church law will have to recognize the special character of such efforts in the formulation of teaching documents.

Some of the Catholics in New Orleans would like to have such a clarification right now.

Summer's A-Comin', So Is Family Camp

Christian Family Renewal, better known as Family Camp, now in its 15th year, will send its "amens" echoing once more through the hills of Italy Valley, beginning July 3.

Six one-week sessions for families are offered at Kamp Koinonia (from the Greek word for fellowship) on Italy Valley Road between Naples and Penn Yan, equally accessible from every corner of the diocese.

Families may arrange to stay in the cabins or may choose to bring their own campers. Providing an unusual combination of retreat and vacation, the camp offers all meals in the main lodge, peer group sessions in the morning for children and adults, free time for family recreation in the afternoon, as well as Mass and assorted prayer experiences throughout the week.

A large, well-supervised pool on the grounds, hiking trails, a book-and-snack store, a well-stocked craft lodge, ping pong equipment, volleyball, softball and staff imagination all present potential for family fun.

Auriesville Rosary Rally Set July 10

Stella Masuzzo, Rochester coordinator for the National Rosary Rally at the Auriesville, said last week that the event would take place July 10 and would feature Father Philip Bebie, a Passionist priest who has just returned from China, where he brought the statue of the "Pilgrim Virgin."

A film about the Fatima apparitions will be shown on the hour from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; stations of the cross will begin at 10:30 a.m., and be repeated every hour on the half hour. St. Henry's Church Choir will present a concert at noon; the rosary procession will begin at 2 p.m.; Mass will be celebrated at 4 p.m.

Reservations and further information are available from Mrs. Masuzzo, 334-5516. In addition, she asked persons going to the event privately by car to notify her.

Further information is available from Christian Family Renewal, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624, telephone (716) 621-2638 or (716) 328-3210, ext. 54.

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