

ERA Passes 1st Hurdle In Assembly

Albany --The State Assembly last week approved a state Equal Rights Amendment without any abortion exclusion by a lopsided vote of 118-30. The bill was sponsored by Gov. Mario Cuomo and by the Democratic and Republican leaders in the Assembly.

The proposal states: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the State of New York or any subdivision thereof on account of sex." Rochester Assemblyman Gary Proud, Democrat, offered an amendment to keep the ERA from being used "to grant or secure any right relating to abortion." The Assembly defeated the Proud measure, 85-64, on the grounds that it wasn't needed and could confuse debate over ERA.

The Assembly thus ignored a last-minute appeal from the State Catholic Conference on behalf of the Proud amendment. It cited the March Pennsylvania court decision linking abortion with an equal rights law.

J. Alan Davitt, executive director of the Catholic conference, called the ERA proposal "not an economic equity measure but a pro-abortion funding tool," and said it is "unacceptable in its present form."

"Under no circumstances should legislators, committed to justice for women in our society, allow themselves to be hoodwinked into supporting this subterfuge of an amended equal rights amendment," Davitt said.

In a letter to all legislators, Davitt urged that the proposal be amended with exclusionary language re-

garding abortion or it could lead to a constitutional guarantee of "the right to an abortion and funding thereof" in this state.

He pointed out that discrimination based on gender "is a grave injustice which the Catholic Church has historically opposed. It is our firm belief, however, that the fundamental right to live... is of greater significance and demands the protection of the law."

The State Catholic Conference has decided to oppose the ERA because of a March 9 court ruling in Pennsylvania which cited the "unqualified language of the ERA" and used that to invalidate a state law which prohibited using state funds to pay for abortions. Not to pay for abortions, the court said, is to "unlawfully discriminate against women" and is a violation of the Pennsylvania ERA.

In 1974 and 1975, the Legislature approved ERA but voters rejected it in 1975 by 1,950,990 to 1,470,213.

Senate Majority Leader Warren Anderson, Republican of Binghamton, is expected to introduce the measure in the Senate. Sen. John Marchi, Republican of Staten Island, plans to introduce the abortion disclaimer in that house. Both houses must pass identical measures, thus if the Senate approves the amended measure, it must go back to the Assembly.

In addition, an amendment must be passed by two separately elected legislatures before it goes to referendum. That would be November 1985, at the earliest.

Professor Retires

After 30 years of teaching public accounting at St. John Fisher College, Robert J. DuPlessis, professor of accounting, is retiring, according to a college news release.

During his tenure at Fisher, DuPlessis was promoted to assistant professor in 1957,

associate professor in 1960 and professor in 1965. He was chairman of the division of business administration during the early 70s, chaired the Department of Accounting from 1974-80 and served on several academic committees

DuPlessis says he has ambivalent feelings about retiring. "I'm looking forward to retirement but I would like to continue teaching a little, maybe one course."

DuPlessis, who holds a bachelor of science degree from the University of Rochester, completed course work at the U. of R. for a master of arts degree in economics. In 1952 he received his CPA certification from the State of New York.

Fisher Student Honored

Mary Beth Moll, a senior communication/journalism major at St. John Fisher College is a 1984 recipient of the Judy Weis Achievement Award.

The award, in honor of Judy Weis, the first congresswoman from Western New York, has been given annually since 1964 to the outstanding college woman in Monroe County who shows leadership, cares for her community and has rendered community service.

Moll was nominated by James E. Seward, chairman of the communication/journalism department. "Betsy's contributions on and off campus are an eloquent testimony to the spirit of the award," he said.

During her years at Fisher, Moll has served on the Social Affairs Committee and as president of the Advertising Club. In addition, she has also worked as assistant producer/coordinator of the Teddi Project Dance Marathon and as publicity director of the Video Club.

'Peace as Mission of the Churches' Preliminary Report of a Consultation At the Evangelical Academy Loccum, Germany, May 7-10

An informal translation. The American representatives were Bishop Matthew H. Clark of Rochester, Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Sullivan of Brooklyn and Edward Doherty of the U.S. Catholic Conference, Washington, D.C.

The Churches are coming to grips with the ethical aspects of nuclear deterrence. They agree already that nuclear deterrence cannot be a lasting solution. But they are also firmly in agreement that an intensive and possibly protracted effort will be required to find and implement alternatives which will prevent war and assure security. This was the subject of consultations in an ecumenical symposium on the theme, "Peace as Mission of the Churches," attended by representatives of seven churches and church organizations from the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, the USA and the Soviet Union.

On the basis of official church statements which have been published in recent years, experts and members of church commissions and working groups discussed for three days both the theological and ethical questions of current efforts to preserve and promote peace and the political implications which derive from the Christian commitment to peace. In the process it became clear that the "unqualified no" (Nein ohne Jedes Ja) of the

Reformed League is to be understood as a radical call to conversion and change and in no way as a renunciation of politics. The ethical toleration of nuclear deterrence, on the other hand, does not exclude recognition of existing systems for deterrence but requires its modification in accordance with certain criteria which were specified.

The participants were in agreement that the primacy of politics in the preservation of peace must be restored including a policy of reducing and renouncing force, the recognition of the principle of mutual security, and the promotion of international social justice as the supporting pillars.

The church representatives agreed after an evaluation of the discussion to continue the consultations at a time to be agreed on. A group of experts should be established to observe and assess developments in the field of armaments and strategy on the basis of accepted criteria and to report at regular intervals to the respective church bodies. The churches represented at Loccum were the German Lutheran Church, The Reformed League, and the Catholic Church in the Federal Republic; the Lutheran Churches of the German Democratic Republic; the Russian Orthodox Church of the Soviet Union and from the United States the Lutheran Church in America and the Catholic Church.

Auburn Parish Group Outlines Plans to Promote Pastoral

The following letter was sent to Bishop Matthew H. Clark by some parishioners of St. Mary's Church in Auburn.

Most Rev. Matthew Clark,

We are a group of parishioners of St. Mary's who have participated in the discussion series on the bishops' pastoral letter, "The Challenge of Peace: God's Challenge and Our Response." The discussions have led us to a greater understanding of the Church's historical teachings on war and peace, the moral dilemmas posed by the defense strategies we live with daily, and the application of Christian morality to our actions as citizens and to governments as a whole. Even more importantly, we were granted an opportunity to confront our own beliefs and actions and to pray together for the courage and knowledge needed to truly understand peacemaking.

In this process we also came to appreciate the courageous stand our bishops have taken in examining the respective roles of religion, politics and prayer, and in taking a firm stand on controversial issues which lead us away from the road to justice and peace. We want to thank you personally for your efforts in bringing the letter to fruition and in emphasizing its message via the discussion series occurring

at parishes throughout the diocese. In particular, we often mentioned the example you have set in pursuing peace and justice by 1. speaking at the peace rally in Romulus last October; 2. holding the hearings which preceded the rally where you firmly and gently reaffirmed the intent of the letter; 3. sponsoring peace and prayer observances throughout the diocese, and 4. by continuing peace and justice work done by the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry.

The letter and your action have inspired us to begin to formulate plans for meeting the challenge of peace at St. Mary's. So far we have written to our legislators regarding the MX missile system and plan to write a series of articles on the pastoral for our parish newsletter. Future plans include a Rosary Rally for Peace and social justice projects here in Auburn.

Again we thank you for helping us to come closer to an understanding of today's world and to see ways in which we can live out the peace shown to us by Christ our Lord.

The letter was signed by Nancy Evangelista, Linda Fitzsimmons, Joseph Dorsch, S.B. Chamberlain, Peg Herstine, Kathleen Bothwell, Sister Dolores Bachman Linda Amoia and Edwin F. Britton.

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