

Bishops

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The other two main action items facing the bishops were a statement on U.S.-Vietnam relations and a 57-page document, titled "Doctrinal Responsibilities," aimed at improving bishop-theologian relations and setting guidelines for resolving doctrinal disputes.

The Vietnam statement, approved after lively debate and numerous amendments, calls on the U.S. government to enter into official dialogue with the communist government of Vietnam, but carefully avoids language that could be interpreted as approval of the Vietnamese government.

Several U.S. bishops with large Vietnamese populations in their diocese urged caution in any references within the statement to recent improvements in human rights and religious liberty in Vietnam, noting that despite the improvement Vietnam still has a long way to go before its people will enjoy full freedom of religion and human rights.

The statement argues that only through dialogue and improved relations can the United States and Vietnam resolve some of the concerns that have divided them since the fall of Saigon and reunification of Vietnam under communist rule in 1975.

The "Doctrinal Responsibilities" document, withdrawn from the bishops' agenda at their meeting last November when the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith expressed concern about some portions of it, was brought back to the bishops with a number of revisions that were made in consultation with Vatican officials.

Archbishop Oscar H. Lipscomb of Mobile, Ala., head of the Committee on Doctrine, which drafted the document, said the Vatican consultations "strengthened" the document without changing its basic ideas or thrust.

Approved by a vote of 214-9, "Doctrinal Responsibilities" outlines the respective responsibilities and rights of both bishops and theologians in doctrinal and pastoral matters, encourages formal and informal collaboration of bishops and theologians, and provides guidelines for resolution of doctrinal disputes or misunderstandings between bishops and theologians.

In separate actions the bishops also approved technical additions updating clergy-exchange agreements they have made with the bishops of the Philippines and Korea.

In addition to their study sessions on black and Hispanic evangelization, the bishops also participated in a study session and series of small-group workshops on issues involved in integrating Catholic social teaching into U.S. church and social life.

The bishops heard a variety of information reports, among them:

- A progress report on surveys regarding the life and ministry of retired bishops.
- A preliminary report on concerns of

responsible Catholic stewardship given the fact that U.S. Catholics give far less of their time and money to their churches than U.S. Protestants do.

- Updates on the progress of conference statements on the Middle East and on HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

- A report on the recent meeting of Catholic higher education leaders with Vatican officials on a possible papal document concerning Catholic colleges and universities.

- A report on the Vatican's serious annual deficits and the collection of \$12 million so far in a U.S. endowment fund designed to create a steady source of income for the Vatican.

- A request for new efforts to obtain public funding for the removal of asbestos from Catholic schools.

In his opening address as NCCB president, Archbishop John L. May of St. Louis reviewed the summit meeting of U.S. archbishops and Vatican officials in Rome last March and described it as a "bridge-building" experience that increased understanding on both sides.

Archbishop Pio Laghi, papal pronuncio to the United States, spoke to the bishops about the tensions and difficulties faced by priests today and their need for a strong spiritual life and encouragement and support — from their bishops and among

themselves — to meet the challenges they face.

At a press conference during the meeting Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick of Newark, head of the bishops' Committee on Migration, announced that his committee is urging repeal of employer sanctions in the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act because the bishops consider the sanctions unjust and discriminatory.

The public business of the four-day meeting was completed in the first two days. On Sunday, June 18, the bishops participated in a day of prayer and recollection. The final day, June 19, was devoted to meetings in executive session.

Club plans singles' dance

The Catholic Alumni Club of Rochester will hold a "Celebrate Summer" buffet dinner and dance Saturday, July 15, at the Rochester Airport Holiday Inn, 911 Brooks Avenue.

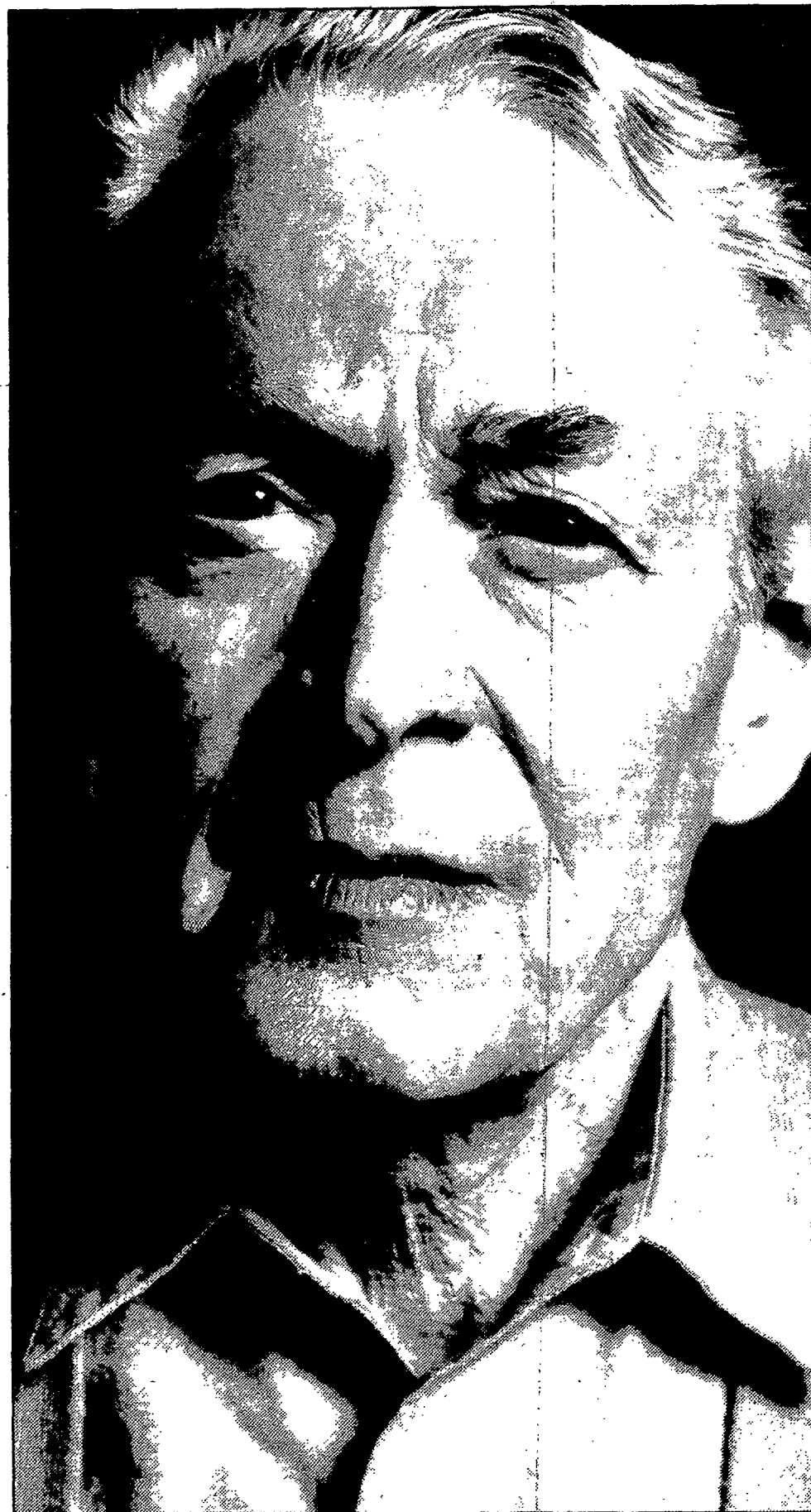
Cash bar will be at 6:30 p.m., followed by the dinner at 7:30 and dancing at 9 in the Turn of the Century Lounge.

Tickets cost \$20 for reservations made before July 1. The cost will rise to \$25 after July 1.

Reservations may be made by sending a check payable to Catholic Alumni Club of Rochester to: CAC of Rochester, 3 Sun Valley Drive, Rochester, N.Y. 14606.



AP/Wide World Photo
LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON — Seven-year-old Ricky Sherman and his father, Robert, speak at a news conference in Chicago Wednesday, June 14. Ricky told reporters that — because he and his father are atheists — the phrase "under God" should be deleted from the Pledge of Allegiance.



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