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THE VANGUARD

... THE CHURCH IN HUMAN RELATIONS

Volume 2, Number 3

November, 1955

That The Church May Lead

The editorial staff of *The VANGUARD* endeavors to present the total Christian view; its purpose is not to equivocate in the discussion of race relations, whether the specific topic be neighborhood housing, job and employment opportunities, civil rights, the desegregation of the public schools, international relations, foreign missions, the fellowship of the Church, communicant integration, or racial intermarriage. *The VANGUARD* comes to its readers with the conviction that Christianity has something to say in all areas of social living, including those just mentioned.

This paper does not address itself specifically to those who may desire to find an excuse, or an opportunity, to temporize or to maintain the status quo in race relations.

The members of the editorial staff are keenly conscious of the fact that all the racial ills of modern society will not be liquidated "over night." They nevertheless intend to place before their readers the Christian and the American ideal as the goal. *VANGUARD* readers are always to know what the ultimate is, though many steps must be taken before the goal has been reached. The specific interest of the staff is not merely social improvement, but in the final analysis the Kingdom of God and the honor of Christ.

It is anticipated that many who read will not understand, and some will take offense. Some will say, "This is not the sphere of the Church's interest;" "these men are radicals; they go too far;" "we must begin with the Church where we find it." Some may assume that because of the "weakness" of many, one cannot let the full truth be known. They may think one must be satisfied to leave the impression that nothing more is to be anticipated or advocated than what may be the amelioration of conditions generally conceded to be in need of im-



Mrs. Lillian Hatcher

Member of Board of Directors of the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America

provement, but that in the end the second-class status of those whose cause is being espoused will remain the accepted though altered pattern, one of second-class citizenship in the Church and in society, that skin color or ethnic origin may remain a factor determining the opportunity or lack of it in the basic social contacts of our society.

The VANGUARD has a quite different approach and hopes more and more to find the eye and the heart of those concerned people who, realizing the wrongness of racism and second-class citizenship in Church or nation, want the complete Christian answer now and want to know what the goal is before it is reached.

New Board Member and Membership Secretary

At the annual meeting of the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America, Mrs. Lillian Hatcher was elected to the Board of Directors of the Association. Mrs. Hatcher is a business wo-

man with much experience (especially in the field of race relations) that should stand her in good stead as she works with our Board. She is a member of St. Philip's Church in Detroit. Her pastor gives her the testimony that she is an intelligent and consecrated member of the church. Because of her experience, Christian consecration, and concern, we of the Association are very glad to welcome her as a member of the Board of Directors.

At the meeting of the Board held in Chicago September 30th Mrs. Hatcher was appointed Membership and Subscription Secretary. Through her office, personal memberships in the Association will be solicited. She will keep in touch with our local human relations societies and also communicate with individual members when their membership is about to expire. (For a listing of various types of Association memberships, see page 3.)

We receive Mrs. Hatcher into the circle of officers of our Association, wishing her the grace and power of God needed for her work. At the same time we desire to express our sincere thanks to the outgoing officers: The Rev. Martin E. Nees of Kansas City, Kansas, whose term of office expired, and to Miss Gertrude Fiehler and Mrs. Otis E. Finley, Sr., former Membership Secretary and Membership Secretary pro tem, respectively.

INSTITUTE JOTTINGS

The sixth annual Valparaiso University Institute on Human Relations was held on the campus of the University July 8-10. Approximately 180 persons attended. They came from twenty-one states, including New York, North Carolina, Louisiana, Oregon, and California.

A pastor from California who is a district official of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, after returning home from the Institute wrote: "More than I can express within the confines of this letter did I appreciate the opportunity to

(Continued on Page Four)

A LOOK AROUND

By Martin H. Scharlemann

(The Editor is more than pleased to announce that Dr. Scharlemann of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, considering the responsibility of sufficient importance, has consented to contribute a regular column to The VANGUARD.)

1.

Another dark spot has been added to the sad story of racial discrimination and segregation in America. It involved the murder of Emmett Louis Till of Chicago in a Mississippi community. This one local incident eclipses the massive decision of the Supreme Court. The brutality of the crime against this adolescent boy indicates how deep-rooted this evil is. If we ever get to doubting the sinfulness of racial discrimination and segregation, here is an incident to bring us up short, reminding us of the true nature of hatred.

2.

Only rarely does one come across a theological statement on human relations in their profoundest significance. But we discovered a purple passage of that nature in the Pastoral Letter of the Protestant Episcopal bishops, prepared by them last summer in Hawaii. It reads as follows: "When God entered our world redemptively in Christ, He identified Himself with our humanity. He put Himself at our mercy, and when we had done our worst, He was raised up in power. He is calling us who are His people so to identify ourselves with our brethren that we put ourselves at their mercy, offering our gifts and our service to them without the will to control or take credit. Only through death can we share in the resurrection power." We have never seen the implications of the redemption stated more eloquently in terms of our responsibilities toward others.

3.

The true nature of *apartheid* recently showed itself in a ruling by the government of the Union of South Africa. The decision concerned a young man named Stephen Ramasodi. This lad of sixteen years, a pupil at St. Peter's School, Rossettenville, Johannesburg, was given the opportunity to complete his education here in the United States, at Kent School. This was the chance of a lifetime. This was a test of the integrity of the South African government and its professions of interest in people of various races.

That government first of all refused

to issue a certificate of character. The Department of the Interior would not grant a passport without this certificate. Finally Stephen was informed by his government that the passport had been refused on the grounds that it was not in the true interests of the boy to allow him to go to America.

This arbitrary decision was made possible by the fact that the Bantu Education Act places all African education under the Minister of Native Affairs. This raises the question: At what stage in the development of African society will an African father be allowed to accept for his son an American scholarship of this kind? The answer is, Never! And *apartheid* shows itself for what it really is: discrimination of the grossest kind.

We Americans are often told that *apartheid* means the creation of separate racial societies, each one pursuing its own way of life and all of them enjoying the benevolence of the State. This myth has now been exposed. It is evident that the government of South Africa is an instrument of Afrikaner nationalism, interested in pursuing domination, but not justice.

A Bibliography On Race Relations

The Lutheran Human Relations Association of America has prepared a *Bibliography on Race Relations*. An executive of the Board for Parish Education of The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod commented on the Bibliography as follows: "This is by far the most extensive bibliography of its kind in our circles and should prove to be very helpful to those who are interested in this subject."

The Bibliography was "prepared for pastors and laymen -- for all people of the Church who are interested in the race question, especially as it applies to the Church. Materials listed are intended to give either the religious or the scientific approach to this question, or both. The list includes books, brochures, pamphlets, essays, magazine articles, tracts, and publications." A brief and concise description and evaluation of each item is given as a guide for the person desiring to study race relations further.

The publication is mimeographed on eleven 8-1/2 x 11 pages and sells for fifteen cents. A limited number is available. In ordering, please remit in postage, addressing your order to Lutheran Human Relations Association of America, c/o Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana.

From A "Jewish" Christian

Dear Editor: Eight years ago my family and I joined The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod. I am of Jewish ancestry and have been very perturbed by a hidden problem which is prevalent not only in our Church but in all church bodies.

I was about eight years old when I first became conscious of race prejudice and how it hurts. During school hours my friendship and fellowship with our neighborhood children was fine, but as soon as school was out and we were nearing our respective homes my playmates would drop away from me so their parents would not see us together. They were taught not to associate with "that Jewish kid." I grew up rather withdrawn, terribly self-conscious, with an inferiority complex. I guarded my racial background and told no one. I evidently don't look Jewish, as people are surprised when they find out.

My mother is not a Jewess, and my father not an Orthodox Jew. In fact, he is, I am sorry to say, a heathen. I have often wondered if his bitterness toward the church was not the result of all the discrimination and prejudice he has experienced. I was allowed to go to Sunday school with the children who didn't have any race prejudice, or whose parents didn't -- it would be more correct to say. All through my school years I attended the neighborhood Presbyterian church. I married an Episcopalian. We were not happy with our church affiliation, so we decided to shop for a church home. The Lord led us one Sunday to our Lutheran church. Within the first year our children and I were baptized and my husband and I and two of our children have been confirmed. We are an active family in the Lord's work and find great joy in it. Many of the church meetings and meetings of committees have been held in our home.

But soon race prejudice raised its ugly head again. We never told anyone about my Jewish background. How often the "so and so's, you know, those dirty Jews" were discussed by different fellow Christians after our meeting was over and we were having refreshments. After a while I became accustomed to it and would listen in silence, bewildered, asking myself the question: "Are these people truly Christian? How can they feel and talk as they do?" My husband would become very upset and at times I would hold him in check with

my foot upon his under the table. Afterwards I would say to him, "What's the use? They just don't understand."

I have learned over a period of thirty-five years to keep silent, for it happened so often that when it became known that I was of Jewish extraction I would lose my friends. Doors would slowly but surely close in my face. I felt, if I were to have fellowship, the secret must be kept. Not a happy condition to live with when in reality you yourself are doing what Christ would not want you to do. "Where is my faith," I would ask myself, and gradually in later years I have been able to tell a few. Some results are heart-warming and others are as in earlier years.

We have moved to a larger city now and in our new church home the feeling is more acute than it had been in our former congregation.

Our minister said in the Bible class, "We must remember that Christ was a Jew, and we as Christians should not persecute them." One member responded vehemently, "All Jews are no good; there isn't a good one among them." I later asked her if I should leave the church fold, since I was one of those "no good Jews." She was very much upset and since that time has come to some understanding of the problem.

Why do I tell you all this? Because I feel we have a hidden problem in our churches and a most serious one. A Negro member of a sister congregation said: "I would rather be a Negro than a Jew. When I approach people, they either keep silent or leave me, and I don't have to be humiliated in silence as Jewish people often are."

I feel we should have Bible study on human relations in regard to all races. Sermons are needed to open the eyes of our Christians who don't realize how much anguish their conduct causes many members. It's extremely hard to understand these race problems unless you yourself have been ostracized.

Yours in Christ,

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MISCELLANEA

"God in Our Confused World" is the title of a pamphlet written by Professor John Strietelmeier of Valparaiso University. It is the first of the Lutheran Round Table Series to be published by the Board for Parish Education of The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod. This Board is rendering a most needed service to the Church by publishing this pamphlet. If brought to the attention of other

denominations, it could serve the whole Christian Church. There is little literature of this description that has been published by Lutherans or other denominations that is comparable to this pamphlet. It is not only a concise and clear presentation of the confusion in which the world finds itself today in the midst of a world-wide social revolution; it shows too the implications of the race question for the weal or woe of Church and state.

With unique boldness characteristic of the 34-year-old author, he challenges the Christian believer to look squarely at the modern world, to face its problems realistically and with understanding, and to apply the dynamics of Christian faith to the problems and opportunities confronting him.

Twenty-five cents per copy. 27 pages. Order from Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo.

"Services Rendered" is the caption of a one-page mimeographed sheet available in quantity from the office of LHRAA. It lists the services being rendered to the Church by this organization.

The next issue of *The VANGUARD* will carry a statement on the Till case. It will also bring to its readers an article entitled "The Farce of 'Force'," an answer to the objection, "You can't use force."

Harper's Magazine (Nov. 1955) pub-

lished a worthwhile article on race relations with the title "The Churches Repent." Reprints are available.

Since *The VANGUARD* is the mouthpiece of the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America, the Association's Board of Directors has requested its Executive Secretary to take over the responsibility of editing it. The thanks of the Board and of the Association are herewith publicly expressed to the former editor, Professor Victor F. Hoffmann.

Institute in Portland, Oregon, as reported by the president of the Portland Lutheran Human Relations Society, Professor Karl Keller: The first annual Human Relations Institute to be sponsored by the Portland Chapter of the Lutheran Human Relations Association was held on the campus of Concordia College, Portland, Oregon. An interested audience of more than one hundred crowded the library of the College to hear the following speakers: Professor Paul Harms on "The Bible's Answer to Racial Stereotypes;" Mr. Paul Simon, of Troy, Ill., on "Missouri Backgrounds in Race Relations;" and a panel discussion on "Personality Aspects of Discrimination." Members of the panel were: The Rev. Victor Meyer, pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (interracial), Seattle, Wash., the Rev. Lee Owen Stone, pastor of St. Philip's Episcopal Church (interracial), Portland, Mr. Robert Trappe and Mrs. Carl Winn,

The Lutheran Human Relations Association of America

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both of Portland. Speaker at the dinner that closed the Institute was Mr. C. F. Merrfield, Senator in the Oregon State Legislature, who spoke on "The Church in the Community."

The purpose of the Institute, to awaken interest, increase understanding, create sound attitudes, and provide stimulus for effective Christian action in meeting human relations problems as they arise in our church and community, was well served. The Christian Church cannot afford to lag behind all other institutions in our society in meeting the problems which through its Gospel it is so admirably fitted to deal with best.

Officers in the newly organized Portland Chapter are: Professor Karl W. Keller, president; Robert Trappe, vice-president; Helen Pape, secretary; and Donald Kuehl, treasurer.

Little Wonder That. . .

The letter "From a 'Jewish' Christian," found elsewhere on these pages, presents a life story that should not only awaken a sympathetic response in the hearts of its readers but also a feeling of guilt on the part of many of us and a plea for God's pardon. For one need not move very far among church people without finding the same unchristian prejudices that caused so much anguish of soul to the writer of the letter. Little wonder that we have been successful in winning few people of Jewish background for the church of modern times. Wonder is that people like our correspondent remain faithful to Christ and His Church despite the many rebuffs they receive and the seeming apathy of many leaders in the Church who raise no voice in solemn warning about the unchristian treatment of these brothers and sisters of our Lord.

In future issues *The VANGUARD* shall speak out on this subject with

greater frequency and it is hoped with growing clarity, to the honor of the greatest Jew of history, our adorable Lord Jesus.

The VANGUARD will welcome further correspondence on this subject, especially from people of a similar background -- Christians of Jewish ancestry.

Deep In The Heart Of - - -

I attended the Southeastern District Convention to present an essay. One of the newsworthy events there was the acceptance into the District of the twelve Negro congregations within its area. The Washington newspapers picked this item up immediately and played it large, even though the convention itself did this without fanfare of any kind. I think that this is the sort of development which we will certainly want to take notice of in *The VANGUARD*. The Southeastern District includes the Carolinas, Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. This is certainly a very significant step. Everyone felt that it was an historic moment; and yet the matter was accomplished without calling special attention to it. Perhaps you could include this item as a matter of news in the next issue. --Martin H. Scharlemann.

Institute Jottings

(Continued from Page One)

attend the sixth annual Human Relations Institute at Valparaiso, and the fact that I had a small part in this Institute. For me they were most fruitful days, days of inspiration and growth for the Kingdom work of Christ. I was particularly impressed with the wonderful lay participation in the Institute, and the sense of fairness which permeated the thinking of the lay men and women in the field of human relations. Much credit for this is due to your fine leadership in this field

of endeavor of our Church. In our prayers we shall include you and all those who are in a position of leadership in the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America. Yesterday I preached a sermon on the subject, basing my thoughts on Romans 10, verses 11-13, theme: 'Whosoever.' The sermon was well received in my congregation."

This national Institute acts as a rallying point for people concerned about the problems and opportunities implicit in modern race relations.

A statement and several important resolutions were adopted by the Institute and will be presented to our readers as space permits.

The Institute Proceedings have been printed and are available at the office of the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America (Address: c/o Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana) at 50 cents per copy. This 52-page booklet, attractively bound, contains the above referred to statement; all important resolutions; the main essay, "Christ for the Crises," presented by the Rev. Paul Hansen, of Denver, Colorado; the banquet address, "We Challenge Some Axioms," by President Thomas Coates of Concordia College, Portland, Oregon; the sermon on race relations delivered by the vice-president of LHRAA, the Rev. Karl E. Lutze, of Tulsa, Oklahoma. The Proceedings also contains much of the material presented by the speakers on the following four panels: Communicant Integration (an informal discussion); Communicant Integration—How It Works; What Science Has to Say about Race; The Future Ministry (a discussion by theological students). Included also is "A Brief Description of the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America."

The next annual Valparaiso University Institute on Human Relations is scheduled for July 13-15, 1956.

LUTHERAN HUMAN RELATIONS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana

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