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THE VANGUARD

... THE CHURCH IN HUMAN RELATIONS

Volume 5, Number 1

January, 1958

That the Church May Lead

Lutheran Governor Acts

When a governor of a State defies the Supreme Court of the nation and in open rebellion uses State troops to thwart the purposes of the law, newspapers, magazines, the radio, and every other means of communication are used to bring his unpatriotic and disturbing action to the attention of the nation. But it doesn't stop here. Mr. Paul Simon, a member of the General Assembly of the State of Illinois, was traveling in the Near East at the time of the Little Rock episode. As he came down into the lobby of his hotel in Istanbul the morning after Governor Faubus had perpetrated his deed of anarchy, Mr. Simon's Turkish guide translated into English the morning newspaper headline about the Governor of Arkansas. Shortly thereafter, while the Governor's defiance of the authority of the Federal Government continued, Mr. Simon was in Beirut, Lebanon. There too he had an experience similar to the one he had in Istanbul: the headlines of the Beirut paper made known to the people of that far away land what the Governor of Arkansas was doing to nine Negro children of Little Rock and to human justice and the integrity of our nation.

Something not quite so spectacular happened in Minnesota in December. Our readers will want to know about it, though.

Governor Orville Freeman appointed Attorney L. Howard Bennett to the municipal court bench in Minneapolis to succeed Judge William D. Gunn. The newly appointed judge is a Negro. The appointment, according to all that we have been able to glean from ac-

(Continued on Page Four)

A LOOK AROUND

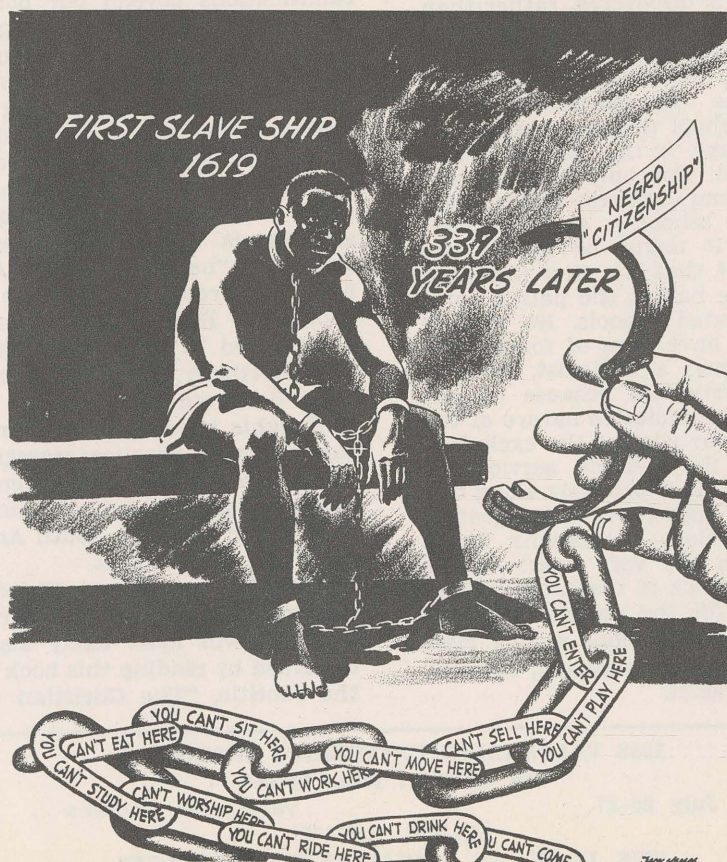
By Martin H. Scharlemann

1. An Anniversary

December 15 marked the 166th anniversary of the acceptance of the Bill of Rights. It was also the tenth anniversary of the Report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights, entitled "To Secure These Rights."

To observe this double anniversary, the American Jewish Committee prepared and released a record of the progress in civil rights from 1948 to the beginning of 1958. This brochure is entitled, "The People Take the Lead". Its major theme is the contribution

made toward the advancement of civil rights by legal action and by the numerous voluntary associations that constitute the United States. Oddly enough, the chapter on religious, professional, fraternal and civic societies is the shortest and least exciting, largely because churches have dragged their feet in this matter. The list of steps taken by religious groups against racial discrimination is not impressive. Despite this fact, however, Mr. Irving M. Engel, president of the American Jewish Committee, could say, on the day his brochure was released, "The momentous civil rights gains during the past decade represent the



Courtesy Religious Drawings, Inc., Waco, Texas

greatest achievement in the advancement of freedom and equality since the Emancipation Proclamation."

"One of the most important milestones was passed only recently," wrote Dorothy Tilly, Director of Women's Work, Southern Regional Council, in her chapter on **Citizenship** "when the Congress of the United States broke an 82-year deadlock to adopt a civil rights law guaranteeing the Federal protection of the right to vote. This new law," she added, "stands as graphic evidence of the changing civil rights climate in our country over the past decade."

2. Patron Saint for Integrated Schools?

Last year Mr. Erich H. Krentz resigned as principal of a west side parochial school in Chicago, because certain obstructions were placed in his way so that he was not able to enroll Negro children. This school year Mr. Krentz is serving as principal of interracial St. Stephen's School in the Englewood neighborhood, where 23 Negro pupils attend the school with 131 white children without friction. It is often the parents, Mr. Krentz discovered, rather than the children who harbor feelings of prejudice.

Possibly there is something to the name "St. Stephen". For a church school that goes under the same name in St. Louis is also integrated. Not only Negroes, but Chinese and Japanese children attend this school — again without friction. It might be appropriate to suggest that the first Christian martyr be named the patron saint of integrated schools. He himself seems to have been of foreign extraction and a Hellenist. He suffered martyrdom because he advocated the inclusive nature of the Church over against the exclusiveness of the Temple services in Jerusalem. It is precisely along this line that opposition to integration often develops: Christians forget that it is the very heart of the Church's work to reach out toward all races for the purpose of transcending all divisions among men, whether they be national, cultural, or even racial.

Modern War and The American Churches

The author of "Modern War and the American Churches" was asked to prepare a statement about his book which could, with a degree of relevancy, be published in **The VANGUARD**. Author Ralph Luther Moellering is pastor of First Immanuel Church of Chicago. He is known to be and is a man of prophetic vision who, despite many handicaps placed upon him by some who should have supported him in his endeavors, has successfully integrated Negroes and members of other racial or ethnic groups into his more than 100-year-old church.

Knowing the courage and spirit of the author of the book, our readers will be interested in this statement which he has written for **The VANGUARD**. We found the book thought-provoking and challenging, as is everything else that we have read coming from the pen of this fearless young Christian pastor.

The Author's Statement

That the racial question has ramifications beyond our borders, and is deeply ingrained in global issues, has become an undeniable fact. The world is in ferment. People of darker skin long oppressed under the arrogant domination of "white" nations are rising to demand a "place in the sun." As nuclear war threatens, and Russia and America seek to woo the "neutralist" Afro-Asian bloc, the "color question" is unavoidable. How minority groups are treated in the United States, how Northern politicians connive with Southern senators to bury civil rights legislation, how American churches practice segregation or integration, have a tremendous effect on the success or failure of our foreign policy in South America or the Middle East.

Ethically sensitive Christians who have a conscience about racial injustice will most likely also be disturbed by reading this book with the subtitle, "The Christian Con-

science on Trial from 1939 to the Cold War Crisis of Today." In the broadest sense good human relations cannot be advanced without coping with the problem of war. Negroes, Orientals and Caucasians bled and died in World War II and the Korean War. For what purpose? All races and nationalities can worry together about the baneful consequences of radioactive fallout. All humanity can tremble together with a common terror in contemplation of a nuclear holocaust. How deplorable that such ghastly thoughts must become a compelling force in causing us to overcome racial conflicts, and the motive in calling upon all Christian people everywhere to unite in seeking possible solutions designed to avert mass suicide!

In the final chapter of the book entitled "The Problematic Future; The Christian and Hydrogen Warfare," the author throws out the challenge to theologians to use their influence and intelligence in halting the march to disaster. Among the disturbing questions raised are these: Does the traditional Lutheran concept of a just war have any relevance to modern warfare? What can be done to stop the trend toward permanent militarism? What shall the churches say and do about conscription for a nuclear war? War as an instrument for defeating communism is ruled out as unthinkable.

The bulk of the book is concerned with an objective report on how American church bodies reacted to our involvement in World War II and the Korean War. Various personalities in the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod, some living and some deceased, are quoted in rather embarrassing and regrettable statements. It should be salutary for the members of this church body to see the glaring mistakes which are made when an unthinking and blind obedience is rendered to a secular government. The failure of our church to register any protest whatsoever against such unnecessary brutalities as the saturation bombing of the defeated enemy and the postwar treatment of Germany seems like a most glaring defect.

Preliminary chapters focus attention upon ~~the~~ Biblical material

1958 VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE
ON HUMAN RELATIONS

July 25-27

Valparaiso, Indiana

MAJOR ESSAY:

"WE LOOK AT RACIAL INTERMARRIAGE"

which has been used by militarists and pacifists to defend their positions.

The book is intended to stimulate thinking among our readers on how Christian witness can best be preserved during wartime. It may be ordered from the American Press, 489 Fifth Avenue, New York City, at a cost of \$2.75.

Perhaps some future study might be made to show the interaction between racial unrest and the threat of war.

Integration Techniques

The Question

A Negro mother came to the church office to inform the pastor that she and her family—all of them members of a Lutheran church in another city—had recently moved into the community. The pastor welcomed her and her family to attend the church services. Anticipating the next step, that the family would soon request being accepted as members, he brought the matter to the attention of the church council. It was to his own chagrin that he later confessed to his friends that members of his church council were more ready to practise what he had preached than he had courage to believe they would. When the matter of accepting the Negro family into the fellowship of the congregation was brought to the council's attention, a member of the council replied to this effect: "Why do you ask, Pastor? Isn't it our God-given responsibility and privilege to receive into our fellowship those for whom Christ died and who together with us make confession of His Name?"—That was in the State of Minnesota.

It Happened in Missouri

A Negro family had moved into the suburban community in which the church in question was to be found. The pastor of the couple informed the pastor of this church about them, telling him that they were members of his downtown church and that he would be glad to arrange for a transfer of membership. The pastor of the suburban church was glad for the opportunity to welcome a family of more swarthy

complexion among the many members of paler faces. He thought, however, that there would be some opposition within his congregation to the acceptance of the Negro couple. And he asked the church council to vote on the matter. The vote was negative, and the pastor has been trying ever since to live down and to work out of the congregation the baneful influence of that negative answer. **In the Buckeye State**

It happened in Ohio. A men's organization was preparing a program for a celebration of some kind. A member of another congregation with special talent, the kind that the group was looking for, was found. The person who brought the name of the talented person to their attention said, "But he is a member of St. Philip's Church." A new convert to the church who didn't know that St. Philip's was the congregation on the other side of the railroad tracks and was made up largely of Negroes, queried: "Why do you ask? What difference does it make whether the gentleman is a member of St. Philip's Church or any other church, if he is one with us in faith and has the special talent needed?" When the new member of the church was told of the constituency of the St. Philip membership, he said something to this effect: "If you vote on this matter and thus question the acceptability of a person because of his race, I shall be disillusioned, and the decision I made to join the Lutheran Church will become a matter of doubt to me."

No matter what the response to the question may be, the question

1958 Human Relations Workshop

Place:

Concordia Seminary

St. Louis, Missouri

Time: June 23-27

For pastors, parochial school teachers, and other professional church workers.

Scholarships: About half of the twenty scholarships still available at this writing.

For further information, write, Lutheran Human Relations Association of America, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana.

"A pound of interracial experience is worth a ton of talk." — Arkansas Council on Human Relations.

itself is morally wrong. It is wrong to ask a congregation of fallible, sinful people, even such as have been sanctified by the Spirit of God and now constitute the membership of a congregation; it is wrong to ask them to decide a matter which has been decided in the eternal council of God and revealed in His Word, the Holy Scriptures. It is not within the right of a congregation to reject a person from the fellowship of Christ in the church because of his race or ethnic background. To do so is idolatry—giving to men the power that belongs to God alone. And to ask a congregation to vote on the eligibility of such a person because of his race is equally sinful.

Proper Christian integration techniques eliminate this question.

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Church Under Scrutiny

By The Rev. John Schroeder
Tell City, Indiana

Hale Smith, the Negro composer, gave me a book which expresses his skepticism concerning Christianity as a motivating force toward correction of the social problem. The author, son of an Abyssinian Baptist minister, who was once an ordained "preacher" himself, apparently has lost his faith in Christ, judging the Savior's attitude by that reflected in "white religion." He seems to rebel, in terms bordering on the blasphemous, against "washed clean in the blood of the Lamb," "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as WHITE as snow," and other concrete expressions of free grace which he interprets as symbols typical of "white supremacy Christianity."

Apparently the new concept is that, robbed of everything culturally his, the old field Negro was forced to adopt his master's religion, and that the progressive Negro, denying the superiority of any master race, must also reject the religion of the master. The bitterness, in fact, seems to go back even farther, to the days of slavery. The author submits the premise that slavery would not have been a profitable business had not Christian missionaries conditioned the African to trust white men, only to disillusion him through pronouncing blessing in the name of the Triune God on the slaver. (Historically, of course, inter-tribal raiding parties did much of the actual capturing, while the white slaver reaped huge profits.)

Nevertheless, the church is un-

der constant scrutiny to prove that it practices what it should preach — the all-encompassing love of Christ. I am sure that these intelligent and powerfully phrased indictments from within and without are indicative that apathy may camouflage a most destructive rock of offense. God's strength alone can help us clear away the stumbling blocks of social prejudice and the debris of doubt which have, in many instances, obliterated the one foundation on which souls are built into an holy temple to the Lord.

Salaries Unpaid ... And Then

When the Board of Directors of LHRAA met in November, the treasurer reported that he was not able to pay salaries — those of the Executive Secretary and his secretarial assistant. The bottom of the barrel had been scraped; any more scraping would have been futile. The Board members were concerned. They were willing to pay their own meeting expenses (traveling cost, etc.). But what could be done to get the Association out of the red, at least sufficiently so that salaries could be paid.

The president and the secretary began to write to members of the Association's Advisory Board, to interested congregations, and to friends of LHRAA; and the dilemma was turned into a blessing. Gifts, membership contributions, new membership contributions, checks from congregations and congregational auxiliaries, began flowing in in amounts of \$1.00, \$2.00, \$5.00, \$10.00, \$25.00, \$50.00,

and \$100.00. On January 16 we can write that all salaries have been paid and that there is enough money on hand to pay all loans and bills, with a few hundred dollars left over toward the expansion of the work of the Association as planned and greatly needed.

This information is being passed on to our many friends who stood by us so loyally when the going was hard. It is an expression of our thanks to them. It is meant to encourage them. Sustained and consistent contributions will make it possible to meet our modest budget of \$9,750 for this year and give us opportunity under the blessing of God to carry to completion our accepted program for the year.

Andrew Schulze

Lutheran Governor Acts

(Continued from Page One)

counts that have reached us, was well deserved and promises to uphold the best of jurisprudence tradition. Obviously, the appointment was not made to gain Negro votes, since the Negro ballot potential in Minnesota is still insignificant. The appointment was no doubt a mark of statesmanship, an expression of foresightedness, and an act of courage.

Governor Freeman is a Lutheran, we are told. If there is a moral involved for governors and those of less renown, perhaps it will be found in the words of our Lord, "Go, and do thou likewise" (Luke 10:37b).

Andrew Schulze

LUTHERAN HUMAN RELATIONS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana

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