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The Vanguard

Lutheran Human Relations Association of
America

1963

The Vanguard (Vol. 10, No. 6), Aug 1963

Lutheran Human Relations Association of America

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THE VANGUARD

... THE CHURCH IN HUMAN RELATIONS

Volume 10, Number 6

August, 1963

"Those Awful Demonstrations"

An uneasy feeling — often one of anxiety — comes over the person who reads or listens to a news report of another "demonstration." For many a person, any thought of changing life as we have it now is a disturbing thing. For others, fears of lower property values, loss of business, interracial marriage and a dozen other fears assume overwhelming proportions. The very thought of violence — of stones, and cursings, and fists, and shattered glass and rifle blasts — can make one feel sick inside. For some the thought of the inside of a jail, indignities, and police brutalities evokes memories that like tender sores refuse to heal and be covered. There occurs to others the possibility of separation — even of death. These are the reasons different people react in different ways to word about demonstrations. This is why it is hard to be undisturbed and indifferent.

The superficial solution is readily suggested, "Well, why don't they stop the demonstrations?" Presumably "they" can be anyone: police, Negro leaders, the demonstrators themselves, or their parents, or the white "power structure" that stubbornly resists desegregation efforts. Small difference who does the stopping, as long as they stop.

Two immediate solutions might be offered as sure-fire. No. 1: Negroes agreeing unanimously that they are happy with conditions as they are. No. 2: White people whole heartedly welcoming the Negro into every aspect of economic, political and social life. Neither of these seems likely — in the immediate future at least.

The Negro is unhappy. Vast numbers of people will respond, "But he shouldn't be." At this point a long list could be adduced showing instances of near impossible conditions of existence for the Negro in north and south. Deprivations, frustrations, and experiencing of injustice could be tallied. But it is beyond the point of waiting for the white man gradually

and eventually to become aware of the Negro's condition. There are those who say, "It's a matter of education." If he has not been able to learn it in 300 years, the demonstrators seem to say, we will use audio-visual aids, in the best tradition of education. And the medium of demonstration fills the bill.

It is past the time to argue whether this is the best way — or whether it is the way "we" would do it. Demonstrations are here. One doesn't meet 150 people in the street and say to them, "You ought to get those city officials to sit down and read a book by Lillian Smith — or the Bible." Demonstrations have proved effective.

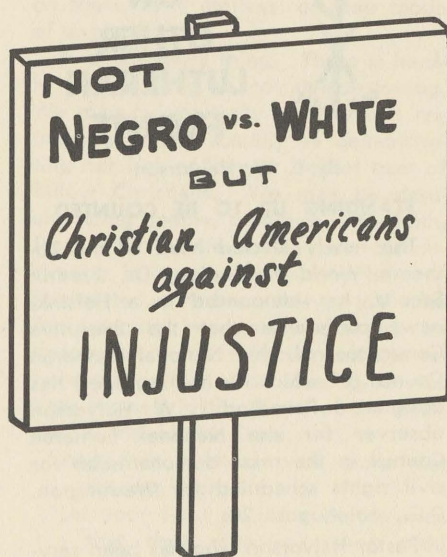
An article about New Orleans last fall reported that sit-in and similar demonstrations had apparently been fruitless for 2 years. Then suddenly in September it was made known that there were fruits. About 60 lunch counters were integrated, by their owners. Similarly, after the violent outbreak following this year's Easter season demonstrations in Birmingham many lamented the display, insisting it was fruitless. Little by little the word came from Birmingham that

things had indeed happened there as a result of the demonstrations. For one thing, almost immediately the public libraries were opened to Negroes. Not much later public golf courses (previously closed in response to a court order that they be desegregated) were reopened. In just recent weeks some of the major downtown stores declared their lunch counters desegregated.

So demonstrations continue. And they will continue. They are apparently the most effective instrument thus far found to win for the Negro his hopes, his dreams, his identity, his full citizenship. In nine years the historic Supreme Court School Desegregation ruling has enjoyed less than 10% compliance. The NAACP's persistent and orderly pursuit of rights via the courts, criticized for years as radical, too fast, too demanding, suddenly appears by contrast to be conservative, traveling almost at snail's pace.

But the danger for men of either race who view the entire phenomenon as the Negro's struggle is that they fail to see that all America is affected adversely by the perpetuation of the segregated system. To keep any citizen of our community from developing to his fullest potential and capacity for production to the common good is to cripple individuals and to deprive our communities and nation of great natural resources. This is at one level folly. But for the man who is willing to be confronted by God, it is the realization of a great sin, the sin of not helping a creature of God develop his full stewardship of the gifts God has given him.

Statistics recall that in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod had efforts for outreach among Negroes in the years of its history been as effective as effort among whites she would now count in her membership 229,000 Negroes rather than an estimated 16,000. Why the failure (and it must be scored as such)? For one thing, much of this work was administered from a structure serving Negroes in Africa and America. A "foreign mis-



CAN THE DEMONSTRATIONS SAY THIS?



DIALOG ON RACE AT YOUTH CONVENTION

When plans were made for a convention of Lutheran youth to be held in Washington this summer, those responsible for the program wanted a fresh way to present the problems in race relations. They decided to call on a well-known figure of the entertainment field, Dick Gregory. Known to many for his appearances on TV, this man's picture and name have been appearing with increasing regularity in connection with what is sometimes called the Negro's Struggle for Civil Rights, but might more properly be regarded as an effort in which ALL Americans ought to be engaged to help America grow up to full maturity and accord to all its people liberty, justice, dignity and full participation in the stream of American life. Dick Gregory was to describe the situation as he saw it — interracial tensions, the role of the demonstration, the role of the church, the future. The Walther League had invited LHRAA Field Secretary Karl E. Lutze to be on hand to be interviewer and participant in the dialog. **The VANGUARD** has asked a member of the convention counseling staff to present herewith her evaluation of the event.



AND YOUTH GOT THE MESSAGE -- LOUD AND CLEAR

By Mrs. Bruce Johnson

No teen-ager itself, the 70 year old Walther League, as the official youth organization of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, assembled in convention in Washington, D.C., July 28 - August 1. Thirty-two hundred of the nation's youth were on hand, to be entertained, to find company, to have something to do. How did they react when, in one of the program features, a comedian — not a clergyman — told them he'd rather "starve to death helping anyone in America, or the entire world, trying to gain freedom than to live a rich man without it?" They were roused to standing and thundering ovation. Youth and the adult counselors there wondered if they had been caught in their slumber, and they began to wonder if part of the "church back home" isn't slumbering. Questions flew fast and furiously across the convention floor, and they went to their Bible study and discussion groups wrestling with the contradictions they saw between word and deed in the Church, and with their own fears and blindnesses.

Why did the Walther League arrange its program like this? The Walther League isn't a group "out there," a sub- or super-human abstraction we can easily dismiss as a "they" who either please or disappoint us who watch from the outside.

The truth, thank God, is that the Walther League leadership which plans conventions from second story offices in Chicago is only so many conscientious Christian individuals who have their early roots in the American heritage, just as we do. Why is it, when "they" expose the brambles of lovelessness via Dick Gregory's honesty about the "white man's problem," the youth of the Church recall the Gospel in ways they never saw it at home? This doesn't mean that their

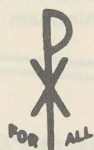
pastor had never told them about the unity in Christ (even backed by Scripture) or that he hadn't issued imperatives to them about loving all men. The distance of the convention from home lent itself to reflective introspection and intensified the view of the radical contrast between the light of Christ and the manmade barriers and the shadows these cast across human lives.

The Walther League, thank God, helped youth to see that their heavenly walk must be, and can only be, where their earthly feet are touching. The organization should be commended for its efficiency and service to youth. Here was an endeavor to bring the problems that have confronted and will continue to confront the youth of the church into sharp focus in a Christian environment where they might be thoroughly scrutinized in the light of the Christian faith and under the guidance of concerned Christian adults.

The convention never intended to give the impression that "race" is our

only problem. The program threw light on other areas of Christian life to expose still other blocks in the Christian's walk, blocks that keep us from realizing that God incarnates His Love in us; blocks that, if not encountered with Christian vision, cause men to stumble and fall into denial of Christ and into active lovelessness.

Many of the 3200 Leaguers went home with questions on their hearts, wondering how one begins to remedy a sickness among us, for it is an unsoundness when the church wishes to remain ignorant of the needs of those about her and when she tolerates the perpetuation of lovelessness. But they had more to think about. They had listened intently as they were confronted afresh by the Christ Who in giving His Life gave Life to men who have sinned, Who enlists them for a cross-bearing discipleship, and enables them to walk in the world as sons of God, bringing to men His love and hope.



ON OTHER LUTHERAN FRONTS

By L. W. Halvorson

STANDING UP TO BE COUNTED

The newly elected head of the Lutheran World Federation, Dr. Fredrik Schoitz, has announced in a Helsinki news conference that the Executive Committee of the National Lutheran Council (of which he is a member) has designated Reverend L. W. Halvorson observer for the National Lutheran Council in the mass demonstration for civil rights scheduled for Washington, D.C., on August 28.

Pastor Halvorson who has been serving as regular author of this column in **The VANGUARD** is the Human Rela-

tions Secretary of the National Lutheran Council.

Dr. Schoitz has also named appointees from the American Lutheran Church (of which he is also president) to represent that church in the Washington demonstration. They include:

Dr. W. A. Poovey, Professor at Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa;

Pastor Robert Graetz, Parish Pastor, St. Phillips Congregation, Columbus, Ohio;

Dr. and Mrs. Richard Solberg, Augustana College, Sioux Falls, South Dakota; and

Dr. R. D. Lechleitner, Associate Director of American Missions, A.L.C., Minneapolis.

Here is a commendable instance of church leadership. Here is an expressed desire to have the church represented in a responsible show of concern in the matter of interracial tension. We salute Dr. Schiotz.

COMMENTS ON A FEW TERMS

Moderation is a word that generally enjoys good reception. "Don't be standoffish — but don't go overboard." So be moderate?

How can one be moderate when one observes a child being attacked by a dog? Or should one be?

Is it going too far to recommend in the midst of interracial tensions that we dare not be moderate in word or action when we deal with such absolutes as truth, love, mercy, and justice?

Lawlessness is a word that causes

one to recoil. It suggests anarchy, disorder, danger. The prospect of lawlessness is repulsive and frightening. But what driver who carries in his backseat an expectant mother in labor or a child who is bleeding profusely will not disregard a 30 m.p.h. sign? He knows he is breaking the law and he risks this because of a compulsion to show mercy and minister to another's need. And we hesitate to call call this lawlessness because this is an action not of irresponsible selfishness

DEMONSTRATIONS

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sion" approach to a vast portion of our population is unrealistic and ineffective. To persist in the attitude of exclusiveness and separation and in the tolerance of injustice and suppression in the face of our country's principles is to be un-American. But even more important, to persist in this in the face of the calling of our Lord to fellowship, mercy, love, forgiveness, and humility is to deny Him. In the Kingdom of our Lord paternalism dare never replace brotherhood, nor "separate-but-equal" the "Unity of the Spirit."

Now this is not too hard to believe — especially if for the moment one can forget the tension and excitement — when we reflect on our Father's love for men as expressed in the life, the suffering, and the life-giving death, of Jesus Christ. It's a matter of getting our bearings. Maybe it should be put this way: It's a matter of getting His forgiveness and love, and going out into the world to pass them on.

Love for the Christ never was to be simply a matter of attitude and words. We are to "show it forth." There's that word again — "demonstrate." It's really not a bad word. It's all right to demonstrate concern for victims of injustice. It's all right to demonstrate your love for people. It's all right to demonstrate your willingness to weep with others who weep. It's all right to demonstrate as Jesus did against injustice. It's all right to demonstrate your concern for Negro children to see that their young lives may flower into fullness for our Lord. It's all right to demonstrate that you belong to the Body of Christ who welcomes all men into that body.

But while demonstrating, it is important that we help people to interpret what we are demonstrating. Marching around a drug store that will not serve Negroes might be interpreted: "that person hates the proprietor." Or standing in front of city hall — or the capitol — may be interpreted by some

as "impeach the elected official!"

Perhaps it is not always possible to interpret our demonstrating the love of Christ in our actions with men. But often in fear that our actions will be misinterpreted and we will be misunderstood we are tempted to withdraw into inactivity. Perhaps this is why the Scriptures persist in reminding the Christian, "He that knoweth to do good and doeth it not to him it is sin"; and again, "Marvel not if the world hate you"; or again, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and shall speak all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; Rejoice and be exceeding glad for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." And not only prophets. Recall how Jesus Himself was decried because He was misunderstood and His demonstrations of love were misinterpreted.

Let it be said here that how a man chooses to demonstrate his love for God and man is a matter for individual conscience. But while one reserves for himself the right to choose how to demonstrate this without fear of criticism from others he owes others the right to choose their way to demonstrate without his siting in judgment on them, their motives, or their mode of expression.

And one more thing. There is hardly such a thing as not demonstrating. We may by inactivity or by harsh criticism of others actually be demonstrating our lack of love or lack of trust of fellow Christians. We may be demonstrating apathy, prejudice, little faith, fears. Or whatever we are demonstrating in our inactivity may be misinterpreted. Perhaps this is the time for stepping into one's closet for introspection — for reflection on the relationship which God has given us with Himself in the Christ of the Manger — and of the Cross.

And then to hear once more that Savior's words:

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven . . .

but one of conspicuously selfless regard for others. Perhaps we ought not sit in judgment of those whose conduct in civil rights matters may first appear lawless when in fact these people may be facing possible arrest, physical brutality, and jail, in order to rescue others from injustice and oppression and fear.

"**The streets**" is a term often used to connote danger, irresponsibility, and instability.

To speak of a woman of "the streets" is to mark her as unsavory. The aim of many concerned with youth is to keep them off "the streets." And it has often become descriptive of a fallen or broken man to say he is walking "the streets."

So at the recent conference of religious leaders held at the White House the Kennedy brothers discussed the importance of taking the race issue off the streets where violence and disorder might erupt and to anticipate the demonstrations at the conference table, working out the solutions to problems before it becomes necessary to petition for change with sit-ins, boycotting, and other demonstrative practices.

TV performer Dick Gregory when talking with Lutheran youth leaders at a luncheon in Washington, July 30, said the issue "is in the streets now — and it's up to someone to pick it up and run with it — it may be the church, the unions, possibly even some irresponsible leadership. But it's out there, and someone's going to run with it."

Here is a challenge hurled at the church by a man outside. It appears that if his diagnosis and prognosis are correct, the church has to move quickly. Through its members, of course; and if it is in "the streets," it seems likely we may have to go into the streets to pick it up. Into the streets? "Into the highways and byways," said Jesus of Nazareth.

Trouble makers from the outside are often blamed these days for "stirring up trouble." — In this category are included any who have not lived in that immediate vicinity for a hundred years or more. In instances of interracial tension, the trouble has really been there for a long time and for the most part it has been covered up and ignored. Now people are "going to the trouble" of exposing the problems. And some are "taking the trouble" to identify themselves with the people in trouble, and in the process suffering as they try to relieve them of their trouble. The Stranger Jesus was not a little resented, outsider that He was,

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A LOOK AROUND

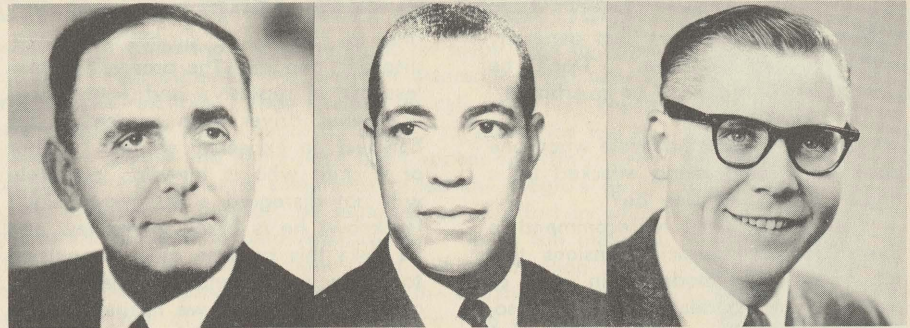
By Martin H. Scharlemann

1. REVOLUTION

America has been in the business of revolution since 1776. We have got through most of our upheavals without excessive bloodshed. While the Soviet Union looked on as thousands, and even millions, of her subjects perished, our country passed through the ordeal of the social revolution associated with the New Deal without violence. We came through the adjustment after World War II and after Korea without upsetting our national life and defacing our national character.

Just now there are sit-ins, picket lines, mass demonstrations for civil rights. Let us remember there are no such programs under Fascist or Communist dictatorships. There is an unruly streak in us; there is in all free peoples. America has hitherto always solved her problems by revolutions to the left: the extension rather than the limitation of rights. We have the present turmoil because many of our people are exasperated, and because the right of assembly and petition is our last-resort way of airing such exasperations.

The revolution in which we are caught up is the consolidation of a long-standing struggle. It is a time of responsibility; for the break-through on civil rights has come. We do not want it to be a breakdown. There is no cause for panic over what we are going through. The demonstrators we read about do not want out of the order they are attacking; they want in. They know what freedom means; and they want to have its blessings, including the responsibilities that go with broadened opportunity. The world-wide revolution of rising expectations is coming to flood stage here in America, where so much of it began.



DR. THOMAS COATES

RICHARD K. FOX

H. DIXON HEMMA

CHANGES IN LHRAA'S BOARD

Dr. Thomas Coates, past vice-president of the Association will leave shortly to serve his church as planning counselor for theological education in Tokyo. He served as visiting professor at the Lutheran Seminary there in 1956. His experience as parish minister, staff member of the International Walther League, President of Concordia College in Portland, Oregon, and his present position as Chairman of the Religion Department of Concordia Senior College in Fort Wayne combine to qualify him well for the post. The Fort Wayne school has granted Dr. Coates a two year leave of absence to make it possible for him to carry out the assignment.

In meetings this summer both LHRAA and its Board of Directors adopted resolutions acknowledging Dr. Coates' "outstanding and faithful service" to the Lord in the field of human relations. He had also served as President of LHRAA's Fort Wayne Chapter.

Richard K. Fox, formerly board member-at-large, was elected to succeed Dr. Coates as LHRAA Vice-President. A native of St. Louis, he has served as Urban League staff member before he began working with the State of Minnesota's Fair Employment Practices Commission. Stationed in Washington, he now is Special Assistant to the Deputy Under Secretary for Administration, United States Department of State.

H. Dixon Hemma, new board member-at-large, fills the position Mr. Fox had held. Mr. Hemma, formerly International Walther League's Business Manager, now is Executive Assistant for the Wheatridge Foundation. In the past he has generously served LHRAA as consultant in promotion and organization.

TERMS . . .

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for stirring up trouble(He didn't really stir it up in the sense of "concoct" it — He merely exposed what was already there). The Church has long taken the role of an outsider coming in to communities that are in trouble with God because they have ignored Him, but the Church goes to the trouble to do good. And some people have even wanted to make the term "do-gooder" become an evil thing. True, some wishing to do good may be inept, and may blunder terribly where good ought be done. But "doing good" is still in order. As outsiders we come into flood, tornado, and other areas of disaster. When human lives are suppressed so that they cannot develop to maximum potential for God, we have a time that calls for rescue operations, and if no one else, at least every Christian ought go to the trouble and do something about it.

LUTHERAN HUMAN RELATIONS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana

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