

# Concordia Theological Monthly



F E B R U A R Y • 1 9 5 3



ARCHIVES

# THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

---

## ANTICREEDALISM AND CONFESSIONS

The Baptist periodical the *Watchman-Examiner* (August 14, 1952) editorializes on the value of Creeds, or Confessions, for keeping the doctrine pure and on the dangers of "antireedalism" as allowing liberalism to gain the ascendancy in the Church. It advocates Creeds, or Confessions, against "antireedalism," but again denounces "creedalism," or the trend to make Creeds, or Confessions, binding on those who hold membership in the Baptist denominations. The writer states that in insisting on "antireedalism" and at the same time on Confessions, "there is no need of confusion," but to a non-Baptist his attitude certainly seems to be most confusing. Our Lutheran view of Confessions, or Creeds, is simple and logical. We accept Confessions not as "judges, as are the Holy Scriptures, but only as a symbol and declaration of the faith" (Formula of Concord, Epitome, "Of the Summary Content, Rule, and Standard," *Trigl. Conc.*, p. 777). Since our accepted Confessions, both particular and ecumenical, are, in our opinion, the declaration of the doctrine of Scripture on points in controversy, we ask everyone who wishes to teach or preach in Lutheran congregations or schools to subscribe to them *quia* and not merely *quatenus*, in other words, *because*, and not *in so far as they are* a declaration of God's Word, after the candidate has thoroughly studied and compared them with Scripture. His *quia* subscription should be a sincere profession of his own convictions. From this evangelical, yet frankly confessing, view all denominations differ that are opposed to Confessions, as the article shows. We read:

"Antireedalism can be carried too far. It could arrive where it would mean the death of Christianity if enough people accepted it. Christianity is doctrine. It cannot be understood without doctrine. It cannot be taught without doctrine.

"Creedalism is not properly understood. It is too often classified with doctrinal requirement or teaching, which is something different. Historical creedalism is that ecclesiastical interpretation of Christianity which a church body may agree upon and then make legally binding upon not only its following, but other people, whether they be religious or not. Creedalism is not the same as a confession of faith. For instance, the Baptists have published more confessions of faith than any other religious body, but they have remained consistently

non-creedal. A confession of faith is not a legal document, nor can it be made legal for Baptists. They are tests of man's integrity. Most of our Baptist confessions are didactic in purpose as well as instruments for the promotion of homogeneity among Baptist people. But no Baptist can ever be confined legally to a confession of faith.

"This confusion between anticreedalism and a confession of faith has led to much misunderstanding. In the confusion, the advantage remains with the anticreedalists, particularly so among such a freedom-loving people as Baptists. Actually, there is no need for confusion. Both sides will believe in freedom to add to or to change the wording of any confession of faith. The most that can be attained is a general agreement to stand for certain truths. Anticreedalists, however, are frequently inclined to carry their conviction too far. For instance, last May the Rhode Island Congregational Conference took steps looking toward the elimination of doctrinal requirements by the higher levels of the world and national church council movements. They wish to work for 'the removal of doctrinal requirements.' While this may be a move to protect free churches from a theological basis for co-operation, it is a negative attitude in the field of Christian doctrine. It is in line with the demand that ordaining councils shall not operate on a theological basis, or that churches in associating themselves with other churches shall not be required to assent to a common doctrinal understanding.

"To assume that Christians can be together, work together, and propagate together without some common doctrinal basis is anything but reality. No cult or fraternity could exist three weeks on such a basis. Churches are teaching institutions. The distinctive denominations are separated on the basis of their beliefs. Their doctrine is the reason for their existence. Their ministries are their means of continuity. Ordinations are a means of a denomination's continuance and therefore it cannot ignore or deny those distinctives by which the denomination lives. A norm is absolutely necessary. Creedalism is objectionable, but when it is employed to deny or hinder a good confession of Christian faith it becomes at that point an enemy of Christianity itself." To us the writer's view makes no sense. While we reject such creedalism as we find it in Romanism and Romanizers, which goes beyond Scripture in its teachings and demands, the place given to Creeds or Confessions in Lutheranism seems to be the very point for which the article pleads. Otherwise they are mere "scraps of paper."

J. T. MUELLER

## RELIGIOUS RACKETEERING

The *Lutheran Standard* (November 29, 1952) reports a type of religious racketeering that is evidently quite common in our metropolitan cities. We quote: "Pastor Robbin W. Skyles, Negro minister of the United Lutheran Church in Chicago, says that the church business is a racket among people of his race in that city. 'There are more than 1,500 store-front churches in Chicago,' according to Mr. Skyles, 'and many of them are really prostituting the people. . . . A man rents a store, buys a piano, and some folding chairs, finds some weird portion of the Bible on which to base his church beliefs. Then he ordains himself, sometimes a full bishop, and confers upon himself the degree of doctor of divinity, *summa cum laude*.' One such church recently gave its pastor a \$75,000 mansion, with the deed in the pastor's name, as an outright gift. The pastor then spent thousands of dollars of church funds to decorate the home in lavish style. 'As long as we have churches like that,' says Mr. Skyles, 'we'll never be able to replace the eight Negro pastors we have in the United Lutheran Church. Why should a man spend seven or eight years in training when he could go into one of these fly-by-night organizations and become wealthy in one year?'"

V. B.

## THE CONTROVERSY REGARDING THE LORD'S SUPPER

Both within and without Lutheran Christendom the doctrine of the Lord's Supper today receives much consideration in church periodicals, books, conference discussions, and the like. The questions involved concern, on the one hand, the essence and purpose of the Holy Supper and, on the other, its use, in particular, its confessional character and therefore the problem of altar fellowship.

The *Lutheran* (October 29, 1952) in a book review takes issue with A. J. B. Higgins' recent study "The Lord's Supper in the New Testament," which "purports to offer the latest results of Biblical research regarding the Lord's Supper," and condemns the Catholic view that "is" must be taken literally, but has nothing to say of the Lutheran doctrine, while it holds that "the bread and wine of the Eucharist *represent* [italics in the review] the atoning sacrifice of Christ as the true Paschal Lamb without themselves presenting any inherent efficacy." In criticism of this the reviewer says: "It is at this point that there is a parting of the ways between Lutherans and Reformed. Martin Luther was not just being stubborn when he insisted, as over against Zwingli, that 'is' means *is*, rather than represents. He was insisting upon a thoroughly Scriptural truth, which was not only Scriptural, but

which had had a tremendous existential significance for Christians for nearly 1,500 years. The whole dynamic conception of the ever-living, ever-present, ongoing, victorious risen Christ, who said, 'Lo, I am with you alway,' was at stake." While this is true, there was at stake at Marburg for Luther, primarily and above all, the truth and reality of Christ's Communion promise: [Receive] My body and blood, given and shed for you for the remission of sins; in other words, the gracious assurance of forgiveness under the pledge of our Lord's true body and blood. Just that is what the Real Presence meant to Luther.

Dr. Uuras Saarnivaara in the *Lutheran Outlook* (July, 1952) discusses the doctrine of the Lord's Supper also with reference to the question of faith and confession. In the closing paragraph he points out the two reasons why Luther demanded that only professing Christians should be admitted to the Lord's Table: "First, it has been instituted for Christians only, and, secondly, it is a form of the profession of faith." He then writes: "When practically all members of the external Church are admitted, the Supper loses its character of confession of faith, and the boundary between believers and unbelievers is wiped away." Of unbelievers he says that they "should be excluded from the Sacrament of the Altar," because they "should be hindered from eating and drinking judgment unto themselves." "True love requires such severity in order that people would be led to repentance and true faith."

While Dr. Saarnivaara upholds the Biblical practice of altar fellowship, the *Lutheran Quarterly* (August, 1952) suggests "that the Lutheran Church will [as the writer hopes] abandon a certain inflexibility in the consideration of possible agreement among Christians as to the meaning of the Lord's Supper" (p. 291). In a following paragraph the article says: "We ought in all honesty realize that the doctrine of the Sacrament is not a revelation dating from the Wartburg [Marburg?], 1529, but a matter of a living Church which in the twentieth century may no longer be contained in the compartment of the sixteenth. We owe it to the Faith and Order movement that the hard ground of dogmatic controversy packed by the controversies of the past is being broken up and softened, so that out of barren areas of disagreement we may still hope for the cultivation of more attractive Christian statements. If, as we maintained at the outset, our doctrine is shaped, as to its form, by the surrounding forces which oppose it, then we may explore whether the present *form* [italics original] of our statement actually meet the conditions of our day, or if like some deserted building certain of our supports and beams no longer are held up by counter stresses or no longer carry any weight" (p. 293). Does that mean

that we must surrender the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper to please the Reformed and liberal elements in the ecumenical movement?

Later the writer says: "We cannot, if we be one with Him through the Sacrament, be complacent about the divisions which not only separate us from one another, but cause Him continuing grief and give the world cause to question the community of the saints" (*ibid.*). This statement ignores an important fact. It is not outward altar fellowship which makes communicants "one with Him," but the true faith in Christ and His Word that prompts believers to unity of profession. Separating divisions should be removed before altar fellowship takes place, as Dr. Saarnivaara rightly suggests. What displeases the Lord above all is departure from His Word, which results in divisions.

We ignore other recent publications on the controversy of the Lord's Supper. What has been quoted shows that Lutherans have every reason in the world to study anew what is Biblical and Lutheran on this point. Should there ever be a "United States Bad Boll Conference," Article VII of the Formula of Concord deserves a prominent place on the program of studies. And perhaps also Article VIII.

J. T. MUELLER

#### CONCLUDING POSTSCRIPTS

There were important conventions in 1952: the political conventions which nominated the presidential candidates, the conventions in Hannover and Lund, the conventions of the ULCA and ALC and the NCCUSA. But there will be important conventions also in 1953. Among them, the triennial convention of our Synod in Houston can become, under God, a convention of the greatest significance for our own Church, for Lutheranism in general, and for our country. It can become that only, however, if all our people daily commend it to God and ask Him to endow those who are planning and those who will conduct the convention with a large measure of His Spirit.

\* \* \*

Workshops which enable a group of interested experts to explore a problem area and to draft the results of their findings for the benefit of others have almost become a commonplace in our Church. A case in point is the Visitors' workshop which was conducted this past summer at our Teachers College in Seward under the leadership of Dr. Arnold H. Grumm. The printed proceedings of this workshop under the title *Visitors' Workshop* are now available and may be ordered from the College Bookstore in Seward. Price per copy is

75 cents. It is a modest 38-page booklet but is packed with data. It is thoroughly grounded in Scripture, our Confessions, and our own literature. We can best indicate the direction of thought in this booklet by listing the chapter headings. These are: the Visitor; the Visitor's circuit; the Visitor and the District President; the Visitor and the official visit; the Visitor and the pastor; the Visitor and the teacher; the Visitor and the congregation; the Visitor makes his official visit; the Visitor co-ordinates his program; suggestions. We underscore in particular the observation of President Fuerbringer, who writes in the preface: "Concordia Teachers College of Seward is convinced that the investment which Synod has made on the campus will bring even greater returns if the facilities are used for various types of in-service training for pastors and teachers and for the training of the laity for church work."

\* \* \*

Recently we heard Missionary Fred M. Schalow tell about his experiences in Red China, of the loss of our church property in China, of his trial, imprisonment, and release, and of the horrifying conditions in a Red China prison. His story fully corroborates what some of us have heard in Germany as reported to us by Lutheran pastors in the Eastern Zone. The philosophy of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin underlies the political and educational structure of every country controlled by Communism. Certainly there can be and there are Christians in these countries. But it is impossible for Christians in these countries to establish and maintain their own Christian schools and Christian institutions of higher learning and to engage in home and foreign mission programs. Let it be said from the housetops: Where Stalin reigns, Christians must be prepared to suffer and to die for their faith!

\* \* \*

The 119th meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, which was held in St. Louis from December 26 to 31, attracted hundreds of scientists from all parts of the country. Some 1,500 scientific papers were read embracing virtually all branches of modern science. It was reported that since 1940 the number of scientists both in our country and in Russia had doubled. It was not without significance that the first general symposium was devoted to the general subject "Disaster Recovery." There could be no doubt that the American people are being prepared also by the scientists for atomic war, which will result in disasters worse than our country has known. The meetings were further evidence of the phenomenal progress of science since the days of Descartes and Galileo. Yet, though modern science

has done much to make life more comfortable, it has also accelerated man's living pace. It has helped to save the lives of infants and young children and to lengthen the lives of those who have safely crossed the threshold of seventy. But it has been unable to arrest the steadily rising mortality rate especially among men between forty and sixty. "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36.)

\* \* \*

In this writer's opinion the *Lutheran Quarterly* hit the jack-pot in its November issue, in which it featured Bishop Berggrav's address delivered at Hannover on "State and Church—the Lutheran View," an article by Edwin T. Greninger on "Is *Munificentissimus Deus* [the encyclical in which Pope Pius XII defined it to be a divinely revealed dogma that the Virgin Mary was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory] a Purely Theological Document?" and another penetrating article by Martin J. Heinicken on "Luther and the 'Orders of Creation' in Relation to a Doctrine of Work and Vocation." All three articles are of such significance that every Lutheran theologian ought to read and think on these things.

\* \* \*

*Religion in Life* (Winter) contains a challenging, though over-enthusiastic, article on television" ("The Church Must Use Television" by Charles Brackbill, Jr.). In a concluding paragraph the author says: "Television offers us the opportunity to interpret the Christian Gospel, through many different forms, to millions of Americans who never enter a church. There are people whose own doors are closed to a direct or formal approach from the church. But television goes through closed doors. 'For the church of the twentieth century not to make extensive use of both television and radio would be as unthinkable as if Paul had refused to travel in ships or Luther and Calvin had regarded the printing press as unworthy of use,' cautions Dr. Clayton Griswold."

\* \* \*

Our final postscript in the second issue of 1953 is a quote from Blaise Pascal, eminent French philosopher and mathematician (d. 1662): "Not only do we know God by Jesus Christ alone, but we know ourselves only by Jesus Christ. We know life and death only by Jesus Christ. Apart from Jesus Christ we do not know what is our life, nor our death, nor God, nor ourselves. Thus without the Scripture, which has Christ alone for its object, we know nothing and see only darkness and confusion in the nature of God and in our own nature."

P. M. B.



## BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

At the annual Reformation festival sponsored by the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches the Canon of the Washington Episcopal Cathedral, Dr. Theodore Wedel, stated some truths that must strike many Protestants with a disagreeably hard impact. "As the churches of the Reformation," he said, "once spoke words of judgment upon the great Church of Rome, so that Church may today be the servant of God in voicing judgment upon us. Catholic America is still found at church on Sunday morning. It still honors the Ten Commandments and still fears God. Can the same be said of Protestant America, or at least that large section of it which has turned half pagan? The Pope is clearly still a better guide to morals than is Hollywood. Catholic America still believes in Christian education. Protestant America, so it seems, has abandoned her schools. Protestantism revolted against a totalitarian Church. Well and good. But if totalitarian Christianity is wrong, churchless Christianity can be worse. Protestantism has come close, at times, to churchless individualism, every man for himself — church attendance taken lightly and the very concept of a visible church, with sacraments and a corporate worship, belittled. The great definition of the Church in the historic creeds as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic should not be a monopoly of Rome." — Without fully subscribing to every statement — there is food for thought!

\* \* \*

Two American missionaries were murdered in western New Guinea sometime in October. The victims were identified as the Rev. Walter J. Erikson and the Rev. Edward R. Trist, both commissioned by the Evangelical Alliance Mission of Chicago, Ill., an interdenominational agency supported by a number of fundamentalist churches. The missionaries were on an exploratory trip into one of the world's least-known areas when they were killed. The Netherlands Embassy has stated that a full investigation of the circumstances will be made; it was said that hostile natives were suspected of the crime, but that the missionaries had evidently been deserted by their carriers under circumstances "not yet explained." . . . The fiancées of the two men, who were to have joined them in New Guinea next spring, will still go out to work in the field there.

\* \* \*

A World Methodist Convocation on Evangelism will be held June 26 to 28, 1953, in Philadelphia to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the birth of John Wesley. More than 3,500 delegates from Methodist groups in the United States and overseas are expected.

Again: Pedro Cardinal Segura y Saenz, Archbishop of Seville. This time he censured two American Roman Catholic publications for taking exception to the pastoral letter he issued last spring warning against the "Protestant danger" in Spain and objecting to the government's "tolerance" toward Protestants. The criticized publications are *America*, the national Jesuit weekly magazine, and the *Indiana Catholic and Record* of the Indianapolis archdiocese. *America* had asserted that there was an "ethical duty" for religious freedom in Spain. The Indiana paper declared that in refusing to allow complete religious freedom, Spain "gives the impression of living four centuries behind in questions of religious peace and concord." The Cardinal said he was not surprised that his letter had brought Protestant protests, but that it was "indeed strange that an attempt to challenge our pastoral letter, which laid down the doctrine of the Church, should appear in a review published by the Society of Jesus in New York." He called it incomprehensible, and considered it "necessary to denounce this grave circumstance, that the review in question should on its own account judge and criticize a pastoral document published in an official church bulletin by an archbishop and cardinal of the Holy Roman Church. By law, bishops have doctrinal authority in their dioceses, and over this doctrinal authority there is no other supreme judge than the Holy See. Mere members and priests and religious cannot legitimately set themselves up as judges of doctrine over prelates. . . . The *America* article constitutes a real overstepping of authority which has caused spiritual harm to Catholics." — Cracking the whip? Where does the Vatican stand on this issue?

\* \* \*

A storm cloud in the East? — A reddish-brown wooden gate that has not been opened in more than a hundred years is the center of a politico-religious dispute between Greeks and Turkish Moslems. The gate is one of three entrances to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul, Turkey; it was sealed as a memorial after Ecumenical Patriarch Gregorius was hanged above it in 1821 by order of the tyrant Sultan Mahmud. The average Moslem, who works and lives peacefully with the Greek Orthodox minority, did not even know there was a sealed gate at the Patriarchate. Now a Moslem newspaper, *Her Gum*, has published a series of vitriolic editorials against the Patriarchate, demanding that the gate be opened as an expression of Patriarch Athenagoras' friendship for Turkey (the Ecumenical Patriarch is the spiritual head of Greek Orthodoxy). *Her Gum* threatens "sensational revelations" against the Patriarchate if the gate is not opened within a month. . . . *Her Gum* is the mouthpiece of reactionary Moslem groups who resent

the government's easing of former religious restrictions on former "infidel" minorities. For instance, last year the government permitted the Patriarch to reopen the Orthodox Church Theological School in Turkey. Students from many parts of the world, including the United States, now study there. . . . Again, a small Athens newspaper, *Akropolis*, suggested that Istanbul's famed cathedral Saint Sophia, now a museum, be returned to the Orthodox Church for use as a cathedral. Saint Sophia was converted into a mosque after the Ottoman conquest of the city (then named Constantinople) in 1453. After World War I it was turned into a museum to improve relations between the new Turkish republic and Greece. The suggestion of the *Akropolis* writer was taken as an insult by some Turkish papers. One editor saw a "pan-Slav plot" behind it. Extremist Moslem papers seized the opportunity to demand that Saint Sophia be made a mosque again.

\* \* \*

The Seattle convention of the United Lutheran Church in America raised the minimum pensions for disabled and retired pastors to \$900 a year and for pastors' widows to \$450.

\* \* \*

Anent the widespread complaint about juvenile delinquency a timely note was sounded by Dr. Marcus C. Rieke, youth director of the American Lutheran Church at the ALC convention in Waverly, Iowa. "No one should sell youth short," he said. "There lies deep in the consciousness of our young people a seriousness of purpose that belies what is often apparent in youth behavior. Many young people are today choosing their life's work carefully, prayerfully, and with determination that in their decision they will honor Christ and serve Him and fellow men in and through that decision. That is why there are so many youths preparing for the Gospel service. Youths are coming in ever larger numbers to serve as pastors, parish workers, social workers, Christian day school teachers, Christian nurses, musicians, secretaries, religious educational directors, and in numerous other church activities."

\* \* \*

According to the Vatican Radio, the Communists in Poland are using Hitler's tactics to wean the youth away from their Church. The Communist-controlled Society of Friends of Children organizes special meetings and outings to clash with the time of church services in order to keep the children away from Mass and other religious services. In Warsaw alone, it is said, the Society directs 37 schools of all types in which a completely atheistic education is given. . . . Some 80,000

Polish children have been given special indoctrination courses in the schools run by the Society, 5,000 more than last year, the increase due solely to the pressure the Polish Communist Party is exerting on parents because the children continue to attend church services with their parents.

\* \* \*

Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin, head of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID), told a meeting of the Berlin-Brandenburg Synod of the Church in West Berlin how the Church's operations had been hamstrung by the closing of the border between West Berlin and the surrounding Soviet Zone. The border was blocked last June by the East German Communist government. Two thirds of the Synod's six million members are in the Soviet Zone; but of the entire Berlin-Brandenburg church administration, which has been in West Berlin for many years, only he and Dean Heinrich Grueber were allowed to visit the Soviet Zone parishes. The Church tried to set up central administration offices in the Soviet sector of Berlin, but so far the East German Communist government has refused to issue necessary licenses. It has also refused to give residence permits for West Berlin church officials who were ready to move into the new administration offices. One home mission building after another in the Soviet Zone has been taken away from the Church on the pretext that it is Western property. Church relief work in the Soviet sector has been paralyzed by the sealing of the border.

\* \* \*

A group of Korean Christian printers, editors, and scholars are working by candlelight in Pusan, Korea, to speed the publication of the first Bible in Hankul, modern colloquial Korean. Dr. Young-Bin Im, general secretary of the Korean Bible Society, said that the printing of the New Testament had been completed and the Old Testament should be off the presses around January 1. . . . Both the Korean tongue and the symbols devised in recent years to transliterate its sounds phonetically into script are called Hankul. It was adopted as the official language when the Republic of Korea was established. Prior to the Japanese occupation of 1905—45 the Korean spoken language was rendered in print by using Chinese characters. The Japanese forbade the printed use of this language and during the later occupation years even prohibited its spoken use. . . . Because the Hankul Bible is the first major work to be printed in the new national script, its publication has great significance for Koreans. Scholars generally expect it to set standards for the new language,

much as other Bibles have done in various lands since the days of Gutenberg. . . . Korean Christian scholars who made the translation worked basically from an old diglot King James version, but also used original Greek and Hebrew texts, including many newly discovered manuscripts made available to them by the American Bible Society. Officials of the American group said in New York that nearly \$140,000 had been allocated this year for completion of the Hankul Bible and the distribution of Scriptures in Korea. . . . Work on the Hankul Bible was begun shortly after the end of World War II, and the translation was virtually completed when South Korea was invaded in 1950. It was the only item saved from Bible House when Seoul fell, and it was smuggled out of the Korean capital by Dr. Im and buried in earthen jars. Recovered when U.N. forces regained the Seoul area, the manuscripts were taken to Tokyo, where the translation was completed and whence it was brought to Pusan to be printed.

\* \* \*

Six railroads in Mississippi are transporting, without charge, shipments of gift food, clothing, and other commodities to various charitable institutions in the State. Mississippi's churches sponsored collections of potatoes, canned fruits, vegetables, cane syrup, and good used clothing during the Thanksgiving and Christmas season. One orphanage, under this arrangement, received about 100 tons of supplies.

\* \* \*

Four hundred Protestant ministers and laymen have asked the President to withhold financial aid from Spain, also that "no consideration be given to an alliance" between Spain and the United States "until the Spanish government establishes full civil rights and freedom of faith and worship in Spain." A pastoral letter (previously cited in these columns) of Pedro Cardinal Segura y Saenz, Archbishop of Seville, was quoted by the group, in which Spaniards were cautioned against "tolerance and benevolence toward Protestants." . . . Five hundred additional signatures were received since the letter was sent to the President, and the group is seeking additional names.

\* \* \*

Officials of the Berlin-Brandenburg Synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID) have been informed by Mayor Friedrich Ebert of East Berlin that his Soviet sector administration will discontinue collecting church taxes. . . . Traditionally, church taxes have been collected in Germany by municipal authorities, who compute them as a surcharge on individual income taxes and turn over the totals

obtained to the respective churches. The amounts so collected are the most important and largest single item in the budgets of the various churches. . . . An EKID request that the Soviet sector authorities rescind the order, which was issued without consulting church officials, was rejected by Mayor Ebert. Church authorities in Berlin denounced the action as "another Communist attempt to hamper church life." Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin, EKID head, said the order would have "very serious consequences" because it confronted the Church with the necessity of setting up its own tax administration. This, he said, would not only be a heavy financial burden upon the Church, but presented a very serious organizational problem.

\*            \*            \*

One of the 24 new cardinals lately appointed by Pope Pius XII is an American, Archbishop J. Francis A. McIntyre of Los Angeles. He is the fourth cardinal in the United States. . . . The College of Cardinals by these appointments, was brought back to full strength, 70 members; 27 of them are Italians, 43 non-Italians.

\*            \*            \*

According to reports in London, the abbreviation "A. D." (Anno Domini) has been abolished in Iron Curtain countries because of its Christian connotation. When the Communist press publishes an article containing a reference to, say, the fifth century A. D., it uses the phrase, "the fifth century of our era."

\*            \*            \*

It has been estimated that a new cardinal of the Roman Church must spend at least \$3,000 for a minimum wardrobe of traditional vestments and might spend a great deal more. Now Pope Pius XII has issued a "*motu proprio*" decree to change the vestments to make them more modern and less expensive. It said that "in consideration of the present times, which have been rendered grave and difficult," the world situation enjoins "a sober tenor of life upon all and a measured and austere one particularly upon the clergy." So a simplification of the cardinal's costume is expected to cut the cost by about \$1,000. The long trains of the cardinals' red capes—traditionally 23 feet long and carried by bearers—are said to be reduced to half this length and worn folded at the back so as to dispense with the need for train bearers. Vestments henceforth are to be of wool rather than silk. . . . The cardinal's ring is a gift of the Pope; it wedds him to the Church.—May a Protestant say that time and money and official consideration might more profitably be devoted to other matters!

The German Evangelical Church in the Polish-occupied part of Silesia has virtually become "a church without clergy." There are about 40,000 Protestants in some 100 scattered parishes in the area; but they are served by only two pastors, both of them ailing and overworked. Services and religious classes are being held by laymen and women, who are thus keeping up a "primitive religious life." . . . Before World War II, the Evangelical Church in Silesia was one of the most prosperous in Germany; it had 2,300,000 members and 734 parishes, served by over 900 pastors. After the war the bulk of the former province of Silesia located east of the Oder-Neisse River line was annexed by Poland and officially yielded early in 1951 by the Communist government of the (East) German Democratic Republic. . . . The Evangelical Church in Polish Silesia is now a laymen's Church, without clerical leadership or a proper church management. The Church receives no financial support from the state, and there are no organizational facilities for collecting church taxes. Expenses are covered entirely by contributions from the faithful.

\* \* \*

After an eight-year effort to join Lutheran bodies in Canada in a co-operative organization a Canadian Lutheran Council was established in Winnipeg, Man. Member groups are the Canadian branches of the United Lutheran Church in America; the American Lutheran Church; the Evangelical Lutheran Church (of Norwegian origin); the Augustana Synod (of Swedish origin); the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Lutheran Free Church. . . . The Council will co-ordinate the efforts of the six groups in such activities as world relief, home missions, ministerial training, social and welfare work, and recruitment for the military chaplaincy. Administration of these activities will be directed by the Rev. W. A. Mehlenbacker of Hamilton, Ont., as full-time executive secretary, from an office in Winnipeg. The Rev. Mars A. Dale of Saskatoon, Sask., was elected first president of the Council.

\* \* \*

At the second General Assembly of the National Council of Churches in Denver, Colo., a 34-member appraisal committee headed by Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam of Washington, D. C., submitted a report praising most Council programs and activities and containing, among others, these items: The constituent Churches of the Council have some 34,000,000 members. The Council operates as a Council and has shown "no apparent disposition to assume the functions of a Church." The creation of the Council has brought about

gains in expanding technical services, such as recruitment, research, and audio-visual aids; in relating the functional interests (missions, education, etc.) to one another and to the life of the Churches; in effecting reasonable uniformity of procedure among units that formerly were autonomous; in facilitating consultation and co-operation between units. The committee urged greater lay and non-professional representation in the Assembly, the General Board, and on Council commissions and committees, pointing out that clergymen made up 85 per cent of the 125-member General Board, and that 64 per cent of the 3,500 members of the Assembly, the General Board, and the various commissions and committees were full-time employees of religious organizations. They deplored this "tendency" to expect "religious professionals" to carry too heavy a share of Council responsibilities. The burden should be "jointly carried by professionals and laity."

\* \* \*

Bishop Otto Dibelius, head of the EKID in Germany, addressed the Assembly of the National Council of Churches in Denver, Colo. He said that God has made Germany a battlefield in the big fight between Christian civilization and the materialistic religion of Communism. "We realize," he said, "that it is a fatal question for all the world whether we Christians in Germany withstand and finally win, or whether we succumb to the materialistic philosophy of the East. Nobody can relieve us of this responsibility. Nobody can help us in this decisive question. A religion can be conquered only through another religion which proves to be stronger. Communism will be conquered only through the Christian faith." Church services in East Germany are better attended than ever before, although Communist tactics frequently force the people to work on Sundays. The number of church workers constantly increases. There are fewer convinced Communists in East Germany than there are in West Germany; "in the West people know only the Communist program; in the East they know the Communist regime; to them it is a harsh reality." But, he warned, in ten years the situation may change, because "Communist propaganda is not entirely without effect, especially among youth. The youth is the target group for their propaganda. Young people are put in responsible positions. It is not extraordinary that a 22-year-old becomes mayor of a town of 100,000 people. There are railway stations designated as railway stations of Free German Youth. There the station-master may be 18 years of age, and all who work with him are younger. Such things impress youth. Therefore the whole ire of the Communists is poured out on youth work of the church. They have not yet dared



to prohibit our youth work completely, as has been done in Russia, for example. But youth work is restricted to small meetings in parish rooms. Until now, however, the members of the religious youth groups have succeeded in meeting in large numbers. There is a trait of joy and valor among these church youths. This is a test for them. Each day means a new confession of faith. And they do it, too."

\* \* \*

Last year an organization of West German Roman Catholics was formed to boycott theaters showing offensive motion pictures, similar to the League of Decency in our country. Its members pledge not to attend movies which are contrary to Christian faith and morals, and further, to stay away from movie theaters which show such films. They have marked their first victory. A movie theater owner brought action in the district court in Muenchen-Gladbach, a British Zone city, to restrain the league from inducing its members to boycott his theater. The court upheld the league. "Although such a boycott constitutes damage to the business of the theater," the court said, "the protection of Christian belief and morals weighs more heavily than economic considerations." Catholic sources attach widespread importance to the ruling which they interpret as "official recognition of the citizens' right to ward off assaults on public morals."

\* \* \*

The greater mission field today for American Churches lies in the Armed Forces, Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Charles J. Carpenter, Air Force Chief of Chaplains, told delegates to the Assembly of the National Council of Churches in Denver. "A great many of the young men and women who are coming into the Armed Forces are religiously illiterate. If we send them into areas of the world and into situations that will test their best moral understanding, and if we fail to do something about their moral and spiritual protection and development, then we can have as a result a national religious tragedy as well as a personal spiritual tragedy. It is a necessity that the Christian Church today recognize that it must make a definite contribution to these young men while they are in military service not only for the purpose of producing worth-while Christian youth in the military, but that we might hold them close to the Church so that when they return, at the rate of a million a year, they will come back to the Church as active members; men and women who are leaders of the laity of the Christian Church of tomorrow. The time has come when the Church as a national institution must have a planned program administered to the youth in the military service."

THEO. HOYER