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ARCHIVES

THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

The following statement was prepared by the Commission on Social Relations of the American Lutheran Conference and submitted late last fall to its biennial meeting. The Conference referred the statement, believed to be the first on planned parenthood by a Lutheran group in America, to its five member church bodies for study and review during the next biennium. The statement reads:

Believing firmly in the power of the principles of love, of freedom, and of stewardship to guide the actions of Christian men and women in whom dwells the sanctifying Spirit of the Living God, the Commission on Social Relations of the American Lutheran Conference expresses the following guiding principles concerning the planning of parenthood.

1. A Christian husband and wife know that children are the natural and desirable fruit of their marriage in fulfillment of God's command, "Be fruitful and multiply."

2. Every child born into the world should be a wanted child. To be unwanted by its parents is a fate more cruel to the child than is poverty, low social standing, or nearly any other handicap.

3. Married couples have the freedom so to plan and order their sexual relations that each child born to their union will be wanted both for itself and in relation to the time of its birth. How the couple uses this freedom can properly be judged not by man but only by God.

4. The means which a married pair uses to determine the number and spacing of the births of their children are matters for them to decide with their own consciences, on the basis of competent medical advice and in a sense of accountability to God.

5. No moral merit or demerit can be attached to any of the medically approved methods for controlling the number and spacing of children. Whether the means used be those labeled "natural" or "artificial" is of far less importance than the spirit in which these means are used.

6. Continence in the marriage relationship, when its sole purpose is the selfish avoidance of pregnancy, is equally wrong as is the use of contraception toward this same selfish goal. An overabundant production of children without realistic regard to the

responsibilities involved may be as sinful and selfish as is the complete avoidance of parenthood.

7. Undue delay in beginning their families, or too great an interval between births, will be recognized by the Christian married pair as unwise for many reasons. The Christian couple also will realize the falseness of using economic and other materialistic excuses as the sole reason for limiting their acceptance of parental responsibilities.

8. Abortion must be regarded as the destruction of a living being and, except as a medical measure to save the mother's life, will not be used by a Christian to avoid an unwanted birth. A Christian must come to accept the unintended pregnancy as a part of God's superior planning and willingly welcome the new child as a gift from Him.

9. A married couple desirous of children but seemingly unable to have any of their own should seek skilled medical counsel. Often such medical help will assist the couple to be fruitful in their marriage relationship.

10. In those cases where both husband and wife are shown to be fertile but are unable to initiate pregnancy, the artificial insemination of the wife with her husband's semen, performed under the administration of a competent medical practitioner, may be justified.

11. Because of moral, and clouded legal, social, biological and psychological aspects, the conscientious Christian will avoid taking part in any portion of the process of artificial insemination where the semen of a man other than the wife's husband is used.

12. Sex relations outside of marriage, whether before an intended marriage or outside an established marriage bond, are a violation of God's will. The use of contraceptives by the unmarried "can indeed reduce the risk of an illegitimate child, but this changes the character of premarital relationships just as little as the fact that one party to adultery may be sterile changes the nature of adultery" (quotation from recent letter by bishops of the Church of Sweden).

13. The Christian couple who find themselves unable to have children of their own may choose to adopt children through legitimate channels, or they may find constructive outlets for their interests in community services for the welfare of children. Much as they will regret their inability to have children, they

will learn to accept this fact in their lives as God's way of directing them to some other sphere of useful service in His kingdom.

14. When practiced in the spirit of love, of freedom, and of stewardship accountability to God, the conscientious planning for the number and spacing of the births of their children may bring the Christian husband and wife a sense of peace, of joy, and of contentment over their partnership with God in His creation of each new life entrusted to them.

P. M. B.

RIGHTEOUS AND AT THE SAME TIME A SINNER

In 1898 Pastor Friedrich von Bodelschwingh of Bethel invited German pastors to take part in a pastoral conference, a so-called *theologische Woche*. Scientific theology had become so utterly alienated from the Church that it was no longer concerned with the work of Christian ministers, who thereupon turned away from scientific theology as having no longer any worth-while message for them. Pastor von Bodelschwingh tried to bring the two together, and so in the summer of 1898 there was held at Bethel the first *theologische Woche* under the able leadership of Prof. Adolf Schlatter. After that these theological conferences were held every two years.

With these thoughts Dr. Gerhard Friedrich in *Die Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzeitung* (November 30, 1952) introduces his discussion of the *theologische Woche*, held at Bethel last year, from October 6 to 10. The large attendance showed that these conferences are still desired, though since 1898 the theological situation in Germany has greatly changed.

The general theme of the conference was "The Reality of Justification in the Life of the Christian" (*Die Wirklichkeit der Rechtfertigung im Leben des Christen*). Guenther Bornkamm of Heidelberg introduced the series of lectures on justification by an essay "The Righteousness of God as the Source of the New Life According to the Message of Paul" (*"Die Gerechtigkeit Gottes als Ursprung des neuen Lebens nach der Botschaft des Paulus"*), in which he presented and clarified the Pauline doctrine of justification. Georg Merz of Neuendettelsau in a third essay, "The Proclamation of Justification in the Church Today" (*"Die Verkuendigung der Rechtfertigung in der heutigen Gemeinde"*) pointed out on the basis of the synoptic Gospels and the Lutheran Confessions that man receives justification without the deeds of the Law, solely by faith in Christ. A revival (*Erweckung*) can come only from the preaching of justification. In a fourth essay Prof. W. Vischer of Montpelier endeavored to supply a Scripturally

oriented answer to the question: "What Is God's Purpose with Regard to the New State of Israel?" (*"Was will Gott mit dem neuen Staat Israel?"*)

Dr. Friedrich's chief interest attaches to the second essay, "*Luther's Thesis: SIMUL IUSTUS ET PECCATOR.*" On this essay he reports in greater detail, and we are happy about this, since we regard this subject as one of the greatest importance for Christian ministers over against both Romanism and enthusiasm as we find it in our own country, especially in the Holiness groups and, in general, in Reformed Fundamentalism, which too fails to distinguish properly between Law and Gospel and so is in opposition to Lutheranism on this point. This essay was presented by Dr. W. Joest. (Cp. Joest, *Gesetz u. Freiheit*, reviewed in this journal, current volume, p. 75 f.) The essayist said, to quote the report in part, that Luther applies the *simul iustus et peccator* in both a total and a partial aspect of man. On the one hand, he says: *Totus homo iustus: totus homo peccator*; that is, the whole person is justified, and again, the whole person is a sinner. This formulation expresses, on the one hand, how the believer is regarded by God and, on the other, how he is in his own estimation, for so it is explained by Luther himself when he describes the Christian as *peccator in re; iustus in spe. Sub specie ipsius peccator; sub specie Christi iustus. In relatione sanctus; in qualitate plenus peccator. Quoad Christum iustus; quoad carnem peccator.* That is to say: The Christian is a sinner in reality; but righteous in hope. He is a sinner from his own point of view, but righteous in view of Christ [in whom he trusts]. In relation [to Christ] he is holy; but as he is constituted now, he is fully a sinner. So far as Christ is concerned, he is righteous, but so far as his flesh is concerned, he is a sinner.

In short, as the believer must regard himself, he is altogether a sinner (*plenus peccator*). But this actual situation (*Tatbestand*) of his life has been totally changed through Christ. According to how the Christian is regarded (*nach der Geltung*), namely, by God, he is perfectly righteous and perfectly holy, just as Christ is perfectly righteous and perfectly holy.

In other passages, however, Luther does not use this *totus*-formulation and speaks of a *partim-partim* relation. The believer is indeed sinful, but he no longer sins willfully; he is already righteous, but not yet in his conduct (*mit der Tat*).

But what, then, is the relation between the forensic justification and the reality of the new life (sanctification)? Here Luther does not sharply distinguish between justification and sanctification. As God

declares the believer righteous, so also He sanctifies him; for God's Word is a creative Word which has power to make real (the believer's sanctification). The Word that justifies also sanctifies.

We can here reproduce only a few leading thoughts as they are given in the report. There are in it expressions and statements which, we believe, can be understood only if the entire essay could be studied. Dr. Joest believes to have found antitheses between Luther and Paul, though these, as he says, are not essential. We wonder, however, whether even accidental antitheses between Luther and Paul exist. The essayist states that Luther and Paul agree in the vital point that justification separates the believer from sin; and, again, that sin remains in the life of the Christian. If that is true, then the difference as to "how Luther and Paul speak of the Christian and sin" may be one merely of emphasis or orientation. But to settle this question also requires the study of the essay as a whole.

As said before, Luther's *simul iustus et peccator* touches the very heart of evangelical truth and should receive careful study also in Lutheranism outside Germany. Unless we thoroughly understand it, we can understand neither sin, nor justification, nor sanctification; nor can we in that case rightly distinguish between Law and Gospel.

J. T. MUELLER

REGARDING CHRISTIAN CONFIRMATION

The *Informationsblatt fuer die Gemeinden in den niederdeutschen lutherischen Landeskirchen (Hannover, Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg, Luebeck, Braunschweig, Schaumburg und Eutin)* publishes, in its issue of December 3, 1952, an "Opinion on the Question of Confirmation" which the "Theological Commission" of the VELKD submitted in 1951. It is preceded by an explanatory article by Dr. Heinz Brunotte, "Confirmation According to the Lutheran Conception" ("*Die Konfirmation nach lutherischem Verstaendnis*"). We restate its principal declarations as matters of general interest.

Confirmation, according to the "Opinion," is neither a Sacrament nor a sacramental act. It is rather co-ordinated with Baptism and the Lord's Supper. "It leads from Baptism to the Lord's Supper."

Confirmation presupposes Baptism and is demanded by its administration as Infant Baptism. This does not mean that confirmation is in any sense a complement of Baptism, nor is it a renewal of the baptismal vow. In Baptism God acts, and His saving action is complete in the gift of Baptism. It requires no human supplementation. It awaits only the believing reception of the baptized.

Confirmation therefore is not necessary for salvation. It is an

ecclesiastical institution, which in its peculiar form has an historical development. Objectively it is motivated by the responsible administration of the Sacraments. In confirmation the "Yes" of the godparents, given by way of proxy when the child was baptized, is taken up by the baptized person's own "Yes." Though this "Yes" of the [believing] person to the grace imparted to him in Baptism demands a daily decision during his whole life (cf. Small Catechism, IV, 4), it must, nevertheless, be witnessed clearly and publicly in some period of his life.

Confirmation thus leads the baptized believer to the Holy Supper. The Church demands the public "Yes" of the baptized before he receives Communion for the first time, and this is motivated by the fact that the worthy reception of the Lord's Supper presupposes the grace of Baptism. The Church cannot admit to the Lord's Supper anyone who does not confess himself to be a baptized Christian.

Confirmation, in its special sense, is embraced in the action of the merciful God who once received the baptized into His grace and now strengthens and confirms him in this grace through the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

The relation of confirmation to catechetical instruction results from the fact that confirmation is associated with both Sacraments, Baptism and Communion. Catechetical instruction is demanded by the baptismal command: "Baptize, and teach." It is demanded by Holy Communion because it requires detailed indoctrination concerning this Sacrament as the climax of the whole instruction. Those who are admitted to confirmation instruction in this special sense must first have been instructed in the fundamentals of the Christian doctrine.

The confirmation vow dare not be omitted, for it is the "Yes" of the confirmand as his confirmation confession. This confirmation confession, however, must not be regarded as the heart ("*Mittelpunkt*") of the confirmation. It is not a vow in the sense that it is something which man accomplishes in the presence of God, or something which he promises by his own power ("*von sich aus*"). It is rather the response of faith which apprehends the gracious gift of Baptism.

In formulating this confirmation confession all plerophoric (exaggerated) expressions should be avoided, especially such as place the emphasis in confirmation on a false, subjective aspect. It is sufficient if the response of the confirmand contains the "Yes" to the grace of God imparted in Word and Sacrament.

Dr. Brunotte, in his explanatory article, remarks on this paragraph that it is directed against the overemphasis of the confirmation vow

during the period of Pietism. He suggests the following simple question and answer after the recital (by the whole congregation) of the Apostles' Creed: "Do you desire by the grace of God to continue and grow in this faith which you have confessed? Then witness this by your Yes." The confirmands, together: "Yes, by the grace of God."

Several details are added to the above which, too, may be of general interest.

The examination of the confirmands in the presence of the congregation belongs to the rite of confirmation as an essential part, though because of practical reasons it is commonly separated from it.

Holy Communion, according to the custom of the Church, is preceded by the confession of sins. The confirmands are to make confession first. This precedence should receive serious attention.

The association of confirmation with Holy Communion does not demand that both take place on the same day.

Since the solemn blessing ("*Einsegnung*") is to be understood as an intercession and not as a communication of the Holy Spirit ("*Geistesmitteilung*"), the respective forms are to be understood as expressions of prayer and not of [Spirit] impartation ("*als deprekativ und nicht exhibitiv*").

Confirmation is to be administered in such a way that positively in a spiritual sense it counteracts all monopolization by secular agencies, misinterpretation, and misrepresentation ("*dass ihrer saekulaeren Ueberfremdung, Missdeutung und Entstellung positiv im geistlichen Sinne entgegengewirkt wird*").

These "rules of church life" should not be imposed legalistically on the member churches of the VELKD, yet they are submitted for serious consideration and ultimate acceptance. An earnest attempt is thus made to present the question of confirmation "*nach lutherischem Verstaendnis.*"

J. T. MUELLER

LETTER ADDRESSED TO CHRISTIAN AMERICANS BY NCCUSA

"A Letter . . . to the Christian People of America" was adopted by the General Assembly of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America which met in Denver in December. Much in this "letter" truly gladdens the heart of every devout Christian reader. By way of example we quote the following paragraphs:

We are, above all, Churches of Christ. The constitutional tie which binds us is our common allegiance to Him as our Divine Lord and Saviour. Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, who is for all of us the one and only Head of the Church, drew us together and

holds us together, in unswerving loyalty to Himself and to one another, and leads us to seek an ever greater unity. . . .

The spiritual life of our Churches must be deepened. We must fathom depths of spiritual experience which we have not yet fully explored. The meaning of a "new man in Christ" is something which millions who profess the name of Christ do not know. Let us betake ourselves to the devotional study of the Bible individually and in our family circles, and let more courses for Bible study be provided in our Churches. Let prayer become a deeper reality. Let us not absent ourselves from the corporate worship of God. Let us take advantage of every help to the understanding of our faith which our Churches make available for us. Let us as good stewards of our abundance regularly devote to the work of God through His Church an ample share of that which He has entrusted to us. Above all, let us commit ourselves to God and to His will with joyous abandon, asking Him to help us to pay the price of being "filled with the Spirit." Unexpected insights and new experiences of release and spiritual power will then come to us. Everything will become new.

But there are also paragraphs in this "letter" which speak of religion in terms so general that it practically adumbrates the vaguest kind of religious belief. One cannot but suspect that the Christian religion is regarded merely the most authoritative, the most relevant, and the "superiorly inspired" form of religion. Secularism is interpreted as a religion which denies the reality and authority of God and enthrones the state as god. Indeed, man may differentiate between "religion" and "secularism" as both terms are employed in the "letter." But in God's eyes both represent a false ideology, since neither is Christian. Apart from this criticism, we are compelled to comment on the paragraphs which speak about education. These read:

The crucial problem concerning religion in education emerges in relation to the public schools. We believe in our public school system. It is unfair to say that where religion is not taught in a public school, that school is secular or godless. The moral and cultural atmosphere in a school and the attitude, the viewpoints, and the character of the teachers, can be religious, and exert a religious influence, without religion being necessarily taught as a subject. On the other hand, a way must be found to make the pupils of American schools aware of the heritage of faith upon which this nation was established, and which has been the most transforming influence in western culture. This we believe can be

done in complete loyalty to the basic principle involved in the separation of Church and state. On no account must an educational system which is permeated by the philosophy of secularism, something quite different from religious neutrality, be allowed to gain control of our public schools. We cannot, moreover, admit the proposition that in a public system of education the state should have the unchallenged right to monopolize all the hours during which a boy or girl receives instruction five days of the week. In some constitutional way provision should be made for the inculcation of the principles of religion, whether within or outside the precincts of the school, but always within the regular schedule of a pupil's working day.

In the meantime, the state should continue to accord freedom to religious bodies to carry on their own schools. But those who promote parochial schools should accept the responsibility to provide full support for those schools, and not expect to receive subsidies or special privileges from public authorities.

The subsidization of education carried on under religious auspices, would both violate the principle of the separation between Church and state, and be a devastating blow to the public school system, which must be maintained. The solution of the problem lies in loyal support of our public schools and in increasing their awareness of God, rather than in state support of parochial schools. The reverent reading of selections from the Bible in public school assemblies or classes would make an important contribution toward deepening this awareness.

In terms of cold logic the above reasoning is valid. Whether some of its basic propositions are true is another matter. The trouble is that after much experimentation no way has as yet been found which enables teachers in public schools actually to teach religion without violating the principle of the separation of Church and state and without crossing denominational lines. Furthermore, to give courses in the public school system which develop the historical growth of the Jewish-Christian tradition, or point up its peculiar emphases in contradistinction to those of other religions, is in no sense indoctrination of divine truth. But as long as Protestants believe that the preservation of the public school system is the *sine qua non* of our democratic form of government, as long as they pay hardly more than lip service to the establishment of parochial schools, and as long as they refuse to admit that there can well be a legitimate and an illegitimate form of state subsidy to parochial schools (Proceedings of Saginaw Convention,

1944, pp. 131—34; Proceedings of Chicago Convention, 1947, pp. 282f.), just so long Protestants have no answer to the problem of how effectively to transmit their denominational heritage to their children and to surround their children for a substantial part of the day with the thought and influence of the Word of God. P. M. B.

PERIPHERAL PIFFLE

Under this heading, the editor of the *Lutheran Outlook* (January, 1953) offers a timely editorial in which he vents his wrath on preaching that is not of the kind which the Christian minister owes to a starving world crying out for the Bread of Life. One wonders how the criticism relates to the preaching of Lutheran pastors at this time when sound Lutheranism encounters so many hungry souls, at home and abroad, that are willing to listen. We quote the editorial in part:

"I got hold of a new book on preaching. It is a symposium of thirteen famous preachers. The title is 'This Is My Method,' and the subtitle 'The Art of Sermon Construction.' Each of the thirteen describes his method of producing a sermon, and then gives also the sermon that was thus produced.

"A famous name attracted me, the name of a man who has published a dozen or more volumes of sermons. So I turned to the proper page and read that chapter first. The text was a surprise. It consisted of seven words from Acts 9:25: 'And let him down in a basket.' To pick a text like that from the inexhaustible riches of God's Word, and make that the basis of a week's work and a half-hour discourse to a large and expectant congregation is an almost unbelievable absurdity. Suppose that is the last sermon you are permitted to preach. Before another Sunday death and judgment overtake you."

The writer then describes an imaginary dialog between the preacher and St. Peter at the pearly gates (the "hoary legend" about whom he, however, does not believe). At the close of the dialog the editorial proceeds:

"Are your ears red! A chance to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to an immortal soul about to be called before the Judge, and you went clear out to the edge of God's Word and presented him with a little peripheral pebble. You might have preached Christ, as Paul always did; but no, you had a different idea. You could have taken some important moment from St. Paul's life when he, speaking by the Spirit of God, gave some ringing revelation of divine truth important to all men for all time; but no, you wanted to go away in a corner and pick up a little pebble that no one else would think of using. So you talk about such things [circumstances connected with the suggested

event in the Apostle's life] for thirty minutes to the hungry souls in your congregation. And let them down in a sermon."

Time (January 19, 1953), not at all a religious periodical, issues a similar "warning to preachers," and that on the basis of a recently published book, *Communion Through Preaching* (Scribner: \$2.50) by Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, 76, "longtime president of Union Theological Seminary and onetime (1943—44) Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.," now retired. According to the report in *Time*, "there are [as Dr. Coffin writes] few congregations which do not suffer from a surplus of 'ministerial chat.'"

We mention a few of the quotations given from Dr. Coffin's book in *Time's* article. "A talk on current events, or on some social evil, or on managing one's feelings, escaping one's worries, or overcoming fears, on 'integrating one's personality' . . . is hardly the vehicle for the personal approach to Almighty God eliciting adoration, trust and love." — "It is no pulpit convention which requires a text from Scripture. It is the effort to recapture for our messages today the supreme quality of revealing God." — "To how many of us, both in the pulpit and pew, might the question be put: 'Received ye the Holy Spirit when ye believed?' Our congregation might reply: 'The Holy Spirit — why, that is what they talk about in the fringe sects, not in proper congregations affiliated with the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.' Yes, and that is perhaps one reason why these fringe sects keep springing up in place after place." To this *Time* adds: "Along with the fringe sects (and the founders of Protestantism), Presbyterian Coffin believes that the Spirit may and must come to those who preach His Word and hear it."

The following quotation from Dr. Coffin's book deserves yet greater attention: "The curse of our pulpit is its bald moralism. The ambassador of Christ forgets his embassy, says next to nothing of the Master he is representing, and spends his time telling those before him what they ought to be and to do. . . . Movements, crusades, campaigns, missions have filled the horizon. One sometimes wonders what there has been in public worship for the very large number of persons who were in no position to participate in these strenuous efforts. . . . Our Lord's gracious invitation to 'the weary and heavy laden' has not been prominent in American preaching. . . ." J. T. MUELLER

PRESENT-DAY ROMAN CATHOLIC INTERESTS

In its issue of January 17, 1953, *America* stresses a number of present-day interests of Roman Catholicism. It first mentions the latest encyclical, *Orientalis Ecclesias*, which went out from the Vatican

on December 30, 1952, to the Eastern Churches. It "was meant to demonstrate the continued compassion and solicitude of the Holy Father for them in their martyrdom." The pope singled out for special mention the Ukrainians, the largest single rite, with five million communicants, whose bishops were "among the first in the defense of their religion to endure hardship, affliction and outrage." In April, 1945, the Soviets seized most of the Catholic bishops and sentenced them to forced labor. Two of the bishops died in prison. The pope also praised the Romanian Catholics, who number a million and a half, for their tenacity in holding to the faith in spite of the pressures put upon them.

No less important was the reassurance given by Pope Pius XII on December 31, 1952, to the Catholics in India, especially to the Indian peoples and their government, that the "Church does not constitute a foreign element nor seeks to impose alien cultural patterns in India." The occasion for the statement was the Eucharistic Congress held at Ernakulam, on the Malabar coast, to celebrate the 1900th anniversary of the arrival of the Apostle Thomas and the fourth centenary of the death of St. Francis Xavier. St. Thomas is believed to have landed near Ernakulam A.D. 52. He was martyred at Mylapore, near Madras, sixteen years later. His converts are the "Thomas Christians," who, however, belong to the Roman Catholic Church only in part. The pope urged them to "remain united among themselves in spite of the many differences in race, rite and customs." He reminded them: "You all profess the same faith, you are all brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, all children of the same Mother, His Church."

An article on "The Church in the New India" by Bonny Correa, a young Indian Catholic journalist, in the same issue of *America*, begins with the words: "The advent of independence has meant both new dignity and new difficulties for the Church in India. Definitely there has been a growth in Catholic prestige." As an indication of this fact he writes that "there were more consecrations of bishops in the five and a half years since August, 1947, than in any decade of Indian Church History." He adds: "Due to the wisdom of the Vatican in keeping pace with national sentiment in the new India, most of these bishops have been natives."

The same issue of *America* reports favorably on the progress made by the Catholic Book Club since 1948, when the America Press took over its operation. Since that time the Club distributed 97,590 books, which reached a reading public of about 500,000. Among the books singled out are: Stern's *Pillar of Fire*, Gerard's *Autobiography of a*

Hunted Priest, Graham's *Catholicism and the World Today*, Brodrick's *St. Francis Xavier*. The C. B. C. is now laying its schemes for a considerable membership increase in its twenty-fifth year.

Considerable anxiety is expressed in the same issue about the "population outlook for the U. S. in 1960." The closing paragraph says: "All signs point in the direction of continuously aging population, a declining birth rate and a declining rate of increase. If this trend continues, the United States may again find itself on the demographic toboggan of the 1930's, with a decreasing population, headed toward stabilization and eventual decline."

J. T. MUELLER

SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE

In the publication of the *Martin Luther-Bund*, *Der Martin Luther-Bund* (October, 1952), Superintendent Heinzemann of *Die Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche Altpreussens*, better known to us as *Die Breslauer-Synode*, shows why this Free Church was forced for conscience' sake to separate its relation with the Prussian State Church. The article is objectively historical, winningly irenic, but nevertheless frank and firm in its confessional character.

In clarifying the historical background of the situation, Pastor Heinzemann points out how Elector Sigismund of Brandenburg, seventy-four years after the establishment of the Lutheran Reformation in his country in 1539, adopted for himself and his family the Calvinistic faith. Since that time the Hohenzollern tried to unite the Ev.-Lutheran Church and the Ev.-Reformed Church in Brandenburg and Prussia into the "Evangelical Church." Friedrich Wilhelm III, on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 1830, succeeded in enforcing this union in his land, after he had inaugurated union transactions by his church law of September 27, 1817. His aim was a "Revived Christian Church"; his means, the new "Union Agenda" (order of service); his immediate objective, altar fellowship between Lutherans and Calvinists.

The new order of things meant that since both Lutheran and Reformed Confessions were acknowledged as possessing equality of rights, church members could choose between the Lutheran and the Reformed doctrines of the Lord's Supper. For the Lutherans this meant that at the Lutheran Communion Table the Reformed symbolism was recognized as Scriptural, and this again meant practically the abrogation of the Lutheran Confessions. There was no unity of faith, but a mingling of truth and error. Lutherans who resisted the church law of 1817 were severely punished, because they were branded by the state as political rebels.

Nevertheless confessing Lutherans fought for what they believed to be the divine truth, and after much deliberation they left the State Church to witness to the truth as a "church among churches." In 1845 the Free Church was recognized and tolerated as a Lutheran denomination, which now adopted the official name Ev.-Luth Church in Prussia (*Ev.-Luth. Kirche in Preussen*). In 1908 it was given by Prussian state authorities the epithet "Old Lutheran" (*altlutherisch*). Among the founders of the "Ev.-Luth. Church in Prussia" the writer mentions especially two academic leaders, Professor Scheibel and Professor Huschke. The connection between the new church and the State Church, or at least with Lutheran groups or societies in the State Church, was not entirely interrupted. It was only in 1947, when Lutheran, Reformed, and "United" churches formed the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*, that complete separation was inaugurated with great reluctance (*in tiefem Schmerz*) as a reaction against the denial and an assertion of the Lutheran faith.

Pastor Heinzelmann admits that the Lutheran State Churches now earnestly contend for the Lutheran Church and its renovation (*Erneuerung*). He acknowledges, on the other hand, also the danger that lies in the destructive influence of the Union upon the Lutheran Church and faith. Toward the close of his article he writes: "We know that whether the Ev.-Luth. Church of Old Prussia agrees with the Lutheran State Churches or not, whether it is appreciated or not, nevertheless it is bound to them by its history and the common [Lutheran] Confessions. No church may be completely isolated in the world. Churches constantly influence one another and in some way they live from and for each other. God grant that this may be done for the building of the communion of saints according to the Third Article."

With the *Martin Luther-Bund* the *Ev.-Luth. Kirche Altpreußens* is still somewhat connected, inasmuch as it supports its *Gotteskasten* or eleemosynary work.

J. T. MUELLER

BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

In December, 1952, direct formal communication between the Yugoslav hierarchy and the Vatican was cut off when the government of Yugoslavia severed diplomatic relations with the Vatican and forced the departure from Belgrade of its charge d'affaires, Msgr. Silvio Oddi. In January of this year seven of Yugoslavia's highest-ranking Roman Catholic prelates, at the Communist leader's request, conferred for two hours with Premier Marshal Tito and agreed to explore ways of settling

the Church-State dispute. The Belgrade radio reported the surprise meeting to the Yugoslav people and said that the bishops agreed to help form a joint commission with the government to study all Church and religious questions; their report then would be used as the basis for an attempt at settlement of the highly charged controversy between the Church and the Communist regime. . . . Marshal Tito told the prelates that the government wanted amicable relations with the Catholic Church; that the regime desired merely to separate Church and State as they are separated in other countries; that it was ready to consider church requirements "within the framework of the Yugoslav constitution." He repeated the assertion that the Vatican had interfered in the domestic affairs of Yugoslavia; now the bishops could settle differences with the government without participation of the Holy See. — No one, of course, who has followed the Church news of late years can avoid suspicion of such Communist assurances; but whoever believes that the Vatican is averse to meddling with government affairs has not studied, or has forgotten, his church history of the past thousand years.

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Protestant chaplains in the Armed Forces and Veterans Administration hospitals have been invited to participate in a sermon-writing contest. The contest, offering \$300 in prizes, is sponsored by the interdenominational General Commission on Chaplains. The best sermon will be published by *The Chaplain*, monthly magazine distributed by the General Commission.

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In an address before several hundred educational and religious leaders gathered for the 39th annual meeting of the Association of American Colleges in Los Angeles, Calif., Dr. M. E. Sadler, president of Texas Christian University, said: "As applied to our education, we have interpreted the great principle of religious freedom to mean freedom from religion and have permitted the development of an educational system which has produced a secularized, materialized society. Nothing could have been farther from the desires and purposes of our forefathers than the stupid interpretation which we have given to their great principle of religious freedom. They wanted freedom of religion, but they wanted religion. Schools have proceeded on the entirely false assumption that if they did not teach religion, they would be neutral. Any school in America which does not teach theism is actually teaching atheism. Children and young people are encouraged in the belief that they will find in their school education a preparation for the important

things in life. When they do not find religion in such a school, a powerful negative impression is made on their minds. Our schools cannot prepare the kind of citizens we need unless and until they do return pure religion to its rightful place in education."

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The United Church Men, the laymen's branch of the National Council of Churches, proposed enactment of laws in all States requiring Bible reading in public schools. The proposal was presented by Rep. Walter H. Judd (R., Minn.). His report noted that according to a recent survey Bible reading in public schools is required by law in twelve States and prohibited by law in nine other States. Seventeen States are silent, and the other ten will "permit" the decision of any local school unit to read the Bible.

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Plans for a Bible translation acceptable to Fundamentalists were revealed to the Rocky Mountain Regional Conference of Independent Fundamental Churches of America. The delegates went on record as rejecting the Revised Standard Version as "not acceptable to Bible believers in general because of evidence of liberal theological bias, both in the text and footnotes, on the part of the translators." The new translation is to be "acceptable to those who adhere to the faith once delivered; it will be accurate and true to the faith, and at the moment the possibilities are that it can be done."

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The Norwegian government has urged parliament to repeal an article in the Constitution which bans the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) from operating in Norway. Article Two of the Constitution adopted in 1814 (when, after their suppression in 1773, the Jesuit order was re-established) declares that "Jesuits and other monkish orders shall not be tolerated here; moreover, Jews are strictly prohibited from entering the country." The ban of Jews was lifted in 1851, and the clause against "other monkish orders" rescinded in 1897; but the ban on Jesuits is still in force. . . . There are only 4,000 Roman Catholics in Norway, with a total population of 3,156,950.

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The Indiana department of the American Legion plans to put a card containing five prayers for mealtime on every hotel, restaurant, and lunchroom table in the State. The plan is part of the department's "Back to God" movement.

Distribution of the first Bible translated into modern Korean (Hankul, see C. T. M., p. 150) has begun in Seoul, Korea. The edition of 100,000 copies will be sold in bookstores and given to orphanages, hospitals, and prisoner-of-war camps.

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The Seventh-Day Adventist Church received a multimillion-dollar furniture and lumber manufacturing business at Pendleton, Oreg., from two of its members, Mr. and Mrs. Clyde H. Harris, who believed that "God expects His share of a man's income." The gift is estimated at from eight to ten million dollars—the largest ever received by the Church. Profits from the business will help to support the denomination's hospitals, schools, and churches in 179 countries.

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Before a meeting of an Ohio Pastors' Convention in Columbus, Ohio, attended by 1,300 clergymen, the dean of the (Protestant) Oberlin Divinity School, Dr. Leonard Stidley, praised the Roman Catholic Church for its parochial school system, which, he said, had achieved "complete integration" of religion and education. He prefaced his remarks with the comment that the subject had to be handled with "asbestos gloves" because "it might generate more heat than light." He added: "I could also praise the Jews for doing the same thing," that, however, he had restricted his comments to the Catholic Church because "its parochial schools illustrate what can be done in the way of instilling religion in education."—It seems that we need a little more publicity for our schools.

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Berlin reports that the "progressive" Christian weekly *Verantwortung* (Responsibility), founded last year in Dresden, Soviet Zone, under the sponsorship of the Communist-controlled East German Christian Democratic Union, has discontinued publication. Church spokesmen said the suspension is evidence of the East German regime's failure to make any headway among Christians in the Soviet Zone.

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A new quarterly magazine aiming to encourage the use of Latin as a living language has made its debut in Rome. It is entitled *Latinitas*, is produced in the print shop of the Vatican Library, and edited by a Vatican official, Msgr. Antonio Bacci, one of the world's leading Latin scholars. Everything in the magazine is written in Latin, even to the translation of such terms as rugby football (*ablongi follis ludus*) and labor movement (*operariis consociandis ratio*). THEO. HOYER