

# Concordia Theological Monthly



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He believes that "it is basic to the American creed 'that a society can only be religious if religion and the state are radically separated, and that the state can only be free if society is basically a religious society.' The state can favor no one religious group, but at the same time it must 'sponsor, protect, and favor religious life in general.'" <sup>62</sup> This is the cultural climate in which this distinction of functions must be observed.

St. Louis, Mo.

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#### WOMEN PASTORS IN NORWAY

The *Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzeitung* (July 15, 1956) reports that although Norway has granted the privilege of ordination and the pastoral ministry to women who have finished their theological studies and passed their examination, yet until that time no woman had made use of this right. While two Norwegian bishops did not oppose the new law of the Parliament, seven very frankly and sharply spoke against it. What incensed many, in particular, was the action of the Parliament which declared unconstitutional a law that gave the congregations the right to decline women pastors. The Parliament went counter to the advice of the two theological faculties of Norway and against that of seven of the nine bishops. Bishop Skard declared that the new law will promote the movement of separation of church and state. Director Carl Fredrik Wisloeff of the free faculty called the decision of the Parliament an encroachment of the state upon the rights of the church. The leader of the Christian People's Party, Erling Wikborg, said that the majority of Norwegian Christians are opposed to the ordination of women for the pastoral office and that their opposition is based both on Scripture and on the tradition of the church. He, moreover, declared that the Parliament's attempt to force women pastors on congregations constitutes a violation of the freedom of conscience which they enjoy. Under these circumstances no woman so far has had the courage to ask to be appointed as pastor of a congregation.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

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<sup>62</sup> As quoted in *Time*, July 16, 1956, p. 56.