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THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING THE COMMON CONFESSION

In its recent convention at Mankato, Minn., the Norwegian Synod of the American Lutheran Church adopted the following resolutions concerning the *Common Confession*:

"WHEREAS, The matter of the Common Confession has been placed before our Synod by our sister Synod, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, for our consent to the course of action outlined in the resolutions of the Missouri Synod; *Be it Resolved*, That we cannot give our consent to the Common Confession as a settlement of doctrinal differences between the Synodical Conference and the American Lutheran Church, for the following reasons:

The Common Confession does not reject the errors of the American Lutheran Church. The document does not reject the false doctrine which has been expressed in the American Lutheran Church, that some parts of the Scripture are not divinely inspired. John 10:35; II Tim. 3:16. On the contrary, when describing the origin of Scripture, the Common Confession uses the expression "content and fitting word," which is acceptable to many of those who also accept the false doctrine aforementioned.

Secondly, although the justification of all mankind in Christ (objective justification. Rom. 4:5; Rom. 5:18) has been openly denied within the American Lutheran Church, yet the Common Confession does not definitely state that God has declared all mankind to be righteous in Christ.

Thirdly, the error of the American Lutheran Church, that some people are converted to Christ while others are not, because the converted offer only a natural resistance, while others offer willful resistance—this error is not rejected in the Common Confession. Rom. 3:22-23.

Fourthly, the Common Confession does not reject the error taught in the American Lutheran Church that God elected His people to eternal life in view of their foreseen faith. (Acts 13:48)

Fifthly, the Common Confession does not reject the error in the American Lutheran Church, that the Means of Grace belong to the essence of the Holy Christian Church, Eph. 2:19; Acts 2:38; Matt. 26:38 [?]. (The saints in heaven do not need the remission of sins.)

Sixthly, the Common Confession does not *wholly* reject such errors in the doctrine of the Last Things as the American Lutheran Church is tolerating, as, for example, that the Papacy may not be the Antichrist until the last day (II Thess. 2:8); that an unusually large number of Jews will be converted to Christ in the future (Acts 7:51; Rom. 8:7); and that there will be some kind of millennial reign of Christ (II Tim. 3:1). These are examples sufficient to show that the Common Confession is not a settlement of the differences.

"We therefore earnestly entreat our sister synod, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, to reconsider its adoption of the common Confession and to reject it as a settlement of its doctrinal differences with the American Lutheran Church.

"We further entreat The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to discontinue negotiations with the American Lutheran Church except on the basis of a full acceptance of the 'Brief Statement.' (Titus 3:10)

"Concern for the truth and for the continuation of our fellowship with the Missouri Synod on the doctrinal basis which we have enjoyed in the Synodical Conference through these many years moves us to draw up these resolutions. We desire our fellowship on the basis of right doctrine and practice to continue. God grant that the unity which once prevailed in the Synodical Conference may be restored by a steadfast adherence to the Scriptural principles that have united us." (The *Lutheran Sentinel*, June 27, 1951)

The Joint Synod of Wisconsin and the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church will meet in August to take action on the *Common Confession*, and the Theological Observer will publish these resolutions as soon as possible. In a special convention the members of the Western Wisconsin District of the Wisconsin Synod studied the *Common Confession*. The reporter of this meeting states in the *Northwestern Lutheran*: "Wherever the *Common Confession* clearly sets forth Scriptural truth, this fact was gladly noted. On the other hand, its inadequate treatment of doctrines hitherto in controversy was no less clearly pointed out. Chief among the exceptions taken to the *Common Confession's* wording were: the ambiguity of the statement on inspiration; the lack of a straightforward acceptance and definition of objective justification; the failure to state clearly that God's eternal election is *unto* faith; and the omission of a statement that the means of grace, while constituting the infallible marks of the Church, are not a part of her essence, nor to be spoken of as her 'visible side.'

"Very properly no resolutions were passed by the convention, since the Synod itself is to take official action on the *Common Confession* in August, while the object of this meeting was only to give information, to study, and to discuss."

All members of the Synodical Conference — no less the members of the American Lutheran Church — sincerely hope and earnestly pray that every discussion and every resolution concerning the *Common Confession* may serve but one purpose: *The building of Christ's Church.*

F. E. M.

AS LUTHERANISM LEAVES ADOLESCENCE

Dr. W. D. Allbeck, professor of historical theology, Hamma Divinity School, writing under this heading in the *Lutheran Outlook* (June, 1951), stresses three characteristics which mature Lutheranism — a stage into which, as he thinks, Lutheranism is now entering — should possess: stability, freedom from emotionality, and a true sense of values. There are points in the article which we have reason to question. It also should have been stated that mature Lutheranism is marked by a thorough knowledge and a profound appreciation of the doctrinal heritage of the Reformation. But the essay is worthy of careful consideration in some of its fundamental principles. There is, for instance, the maturity of differentiating between adiaphora and dogmas. The writer says:

"A mature Lutheranism . . . should be able to take its liturgy or leave it. It should recognize liturgical practices for the adiaphora they are. It should be able to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments with as much or as little ceremony as local taste desires — and no rising tempers over it! Lutheranism in maturity will not get hot under the collar at the sight of a surplice, nor shudder at the view of a pastor wearing a blue shirt while doing his marketing. To it a clerical collar is not a source of dismay, nor a red necktie a basis for astonishment. It does not believe that rubrics are inspired, nor that they are the work of the devil. When Lutheranism has outgrown its adolescence, it has learned how to use liturgical materials out of history in such a way that they are edifying, not sterile."

Important, we believe, is also the emphasis which the article places on the right attitude toward things that are foreign. Since most Lutherans originally immigrated from various European countries, in particular, from Germany and Scandinavia, their fully Americanized descendants have at times been inclined to feel ashamed of their ancestry or, in some cases, unbecomingly proud of the land from which their fathers came. Very rightly the article says:

"A mature Lutheranism suffers neither from pride nor from inferiority, for it is aware of both its strength and its weakness without being emotional about either. It is able to appreciate inheritance from abroad without nostalgia for things European. The word 'foreign' carries no terror. Facility in a European language is a mark of scholarship, not of recent immigration."

A good paragraph is also the following: "Misunderstandings in the popular mind are being overcome. By its choirs, its radio programs, and its publications Lutheranism has been gradually creating a more favorable public attitude toward itself. More and more it is recognizing its responsibility to the whole unchurched population and launching out into aggressive evangelism toward people of national origins. As it becomes free of linguistic limitations, it is free to evangelize in any language. In all this it achieves stature when it is not worried about stature."

In his discussion of the subject "Sense of Values" the author calls attention to Troeltsch's distinction between church-type and sect-type religious bodies. "The church-type group tends to have a higher esteem for history with its lessons, and a greater appreciation for a well-rounded, comprehensive theology. The sect-type, on the contrary, is excessively concerned with matters of the present moment. It carries to abnormal degrees valid elements of Christian faith, perverting them by exaggeration." Here, we believe, it should have been stated that to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints does not per se lower a church to the level of a sect-type body. To be "excessively concerned with matters of the present moment" does not yet make a religious group a sect-type, for the "matters of the present moment" may be of supreme importance for the Church's existence as a distinctive Lutheran denomination. No one, for example, would accuse Luther of sect-type tendencies when defending the real presence at Marburg. But the sect-type group, while failing in Christian love and at the same time being addicted to spiritual pride, imposes false values and substitutes them for the true values of the divine truth. The sect-type group therefore is always at variance with God's Word while at the same time it regards itself as the only and the authoritative defender of Christian teaching. The sect-type religious group is usually a morbid, and even a neurotic, phenomenon in Christendom.

J. T. MUELLER

"DE LA DIVINITE PAR L'HUMANITE A LA BESTIALITE"

This is, so Emil Brunner, the distinguished Zurich theologian, informs us in *Religion in Life* (summer number) the leitmotiv of his

Gifford Lectures (published under the title *Christianity and Civilization*). Professor Brunner takes issue in his Lectures with August Comte (1798—1857), French philosopher, who optimistically postulated the ascending rise of civilization through the metaphysical and theological stages to the positivistic, scientific, and humanistic stage and held out for a united humanity. Professor Brunner also takes issue with Professor Latourette, distinguished professor at Yale, who contends that the Christian influence is greater in our time than ever before. Professor Brunner believes that the great sin of our age is man's utter disregard of God, the Holy One, and of all transcendent values, and he claims to have discovered this disregard not only in Western, but also in Oriental countries.

Professor Brunner, as some think, is overly pessimistic. Professor Latourette, as some think, is overly optimistic. No one human being is able, because of the finiteness of his mind and life, to express adequately the whole and absolute truth inherent in the historical process. But Professor Brunner can at least marshal in his favor the great saying of St. Paul in 2 Tim. 3:1-5: "This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." What else can Paul's description of man mean but that man will, in the last days, act like a brute interested only in his own existence?

In any case, it is easy to assemble evidence for man's descent to bestiality. When *Time* magazine can, without evoking a shudder, tell about the "meat grinder" in Korea; when Russian generals can send platoon after platoon onto mine-infested fields to be blown into bits; when lynchings are still carried out in Southern States so horrible as to defy description; when the Kefauver Crime Commission uncovered atrocities so cruel as to appear incredible, then it looks indeed as though man is becoming bestial. More evidence? Here is Harold Zietlow in the June issue of the *Lutheran Outlook*:

"Along with England's treaty with the Chinese, to preach the Gospel to them, was included a clause to dump opium upon them. And England is regarded a Christian nation. On the other hand, Confucian China was able to suppress the use of gunpowder in war for centuries, while we as a professedly Christian nation boast of our ability in the

atomic bomb to pulverize whole cities, inconsiderate of non-combatant women and children. Our missionaries sacrifice to carry the pure Word of God and the Christian way of life to natives on the islands and outposts of civilization. Then in war along come the soldiers from our supposedly Christian nation, blasphemously cursing and using the holy names of God in just the opposite meanings to those which the missionaries had taught, contaminating these new Christian communities with whiskey, immorality, and venereal diseases."

But man is not a beast. He was created by God in His image. That image God wishes His Church to restore in man through the proclamation of God's free love in Christ. And though there is much truth in Professor Latourette's observation referred to above, the Christian Church still has enormous fields to conquer, fields white unto harvest. Asks Professor Brunner—and in this point we surely agree with him—"What can we do for a truly human civilization? We can take the Gospel of Jesus Christ more seriously than ever before and do whatever we can, individually as Christians and collectively as a church, to make this Gospel relevant and understandable to those who do not know or understand it yet. Whatever the forms are in which we do this primary job of the Christian church, whether old-fashioned or up to date, whether direct or indirect, whether by preaching or by teaching . . . or by its practical application to some concrete social problem, this is the one thing needful." P. M. B.

SCHWEITZER'S EPILOGUE

Under this heading Dr. Hugh T. Kerr, Jr., in *Theology Today* (July, 1951), discusses a "small volume of excerpts" from Dr. Albert Schweitzer's works, which introduces especially his "eschatological position." The volume was edited by Colonel E. N. Mozley and has appeared under the title *The Theology of Albert Schweitzer for Christian Inquirers* (Macmillan, 1951). To this volume Dr. Schweitzer has supplied a thirty-page "Epilogue" entitled "The Conception of the Kingdom of God in the Transformation of Eschatology." It is, for the most part, according to Dr. Kerr, a rehearsal of views contained in earlier discussions, notably in his *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. The interesting thing about this "Epilogue" is that it was written after Schweitzer had spent more than a quarter century in medical work in French Equatorial Africa, for which self-sacrificing work he has been called "the greatest living Christian." But, as Dr. Kerr shows, this great "intellectual all-rounder" has not changed his theological views which he championed forty-five years ago. He writes: "The fact re-

mains . . . that Schweitzer deliberately rejects what he takes to be Jesus' own view and the position of the New Testament as a whole. In aligning himself with the modern conception of bringing in the Kingdom, 'the ethical affirmation of the world,' he shows himself to be still — theologically speaking — a transition figure between nineteenth-century liberalism and contemporary Biblical realism." Schweitzer, in view of his great medical mission work, might be called "the greatest living humanitarian," but from the viewpoint of Christian theology he certainly cannot be hailed as "the greatest living Christian," because he rejects the whole Christian faith in the historic sense. J. T. MUELLER

TOWARD THE SOLUTION OF THE SEX EDUCATION PROBLEM

So much is being written on the problem of sex education that one is apt to skip every page in a periodical which deals with this perhaps overstressed topic. Nevertheless the sex education problem still exists, to many indeed as a horrible nightmare, and so far no real solution has been found for it, nor has any book, pamphlet, or other directive been published which in our opinion fully helps parents, teachers, and pastors to do their duty by the greatly tempted youth of today. *America* (July 14), the well-known national Catholic weekly review, in a very frank article, written by Sister Mary Jessine, teacher of Christian Social Science at St. Mary's (Milwaukee), occupies itself especially with the problem of sex education by parents. The essay offers some very helpful statistics, dealing however only with Catholic conditions. It states, for example, that in only 590 cases out of 1,400 were the adolescents able to attribute their knowledge of sex matters to their parents. Of these the mother was the source of information in 506 cases, while the father instructed in only 84. Teen-agers up to 17 and 18, both boys and girls, were still coping with the question of sex which in many cases was to them a most serious problem. According to the article, 68 per cent of the youngsters received their first sex instruction or information between the ages of ten and fourteen years, some already at five and others as late as 17. The article closes with the suggestion: "We are convinced that it is up to our Catholic Parent-Teacher Association groups to work out in practical detail plans and material for parent education on the matter of sex instruction. If parents don't do their jobs, we are left in a decidedly awkward position in our protests against transferring responsibility to the schools." Here, we believe, is a problem for our conferences to study.

J. T. MUELLER

BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

A Roman Catholic parish—the first since the Crusades—has been established at Jericho, in Arab Palestine. . . . The influx of refugees has increased the population of the Jericho plain to 90,000, the largest since Biblical times.

* * *

In England a proposal to set up a committee "to inquire whether the theological implications of Freemasonry are compatible with the Christian faith" was rejected by the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury. . . . The proposal urged by Dr. Geoffrey Francis Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury, to establish the committee so that members of the Church of England might be given authoritative "guidance" in regard to Freemasonry. . . . Another topic at the meeting concerned relations between the Anglican Church and the British Free Churches. . . . Dr. Fisher told the delegates that while the Church of England seeks friendly relations with other Churches, "nothing has been done which conflicts with loyalty to our own traditions," and "no one proposes to betray Anglican principles." [Dr. Paul M. Bretscher, member of Synod's Bureau of Information on Secret Orders, was in London recently and obtained firsthand information from the Rev. Walton Hannah. Cp. the August issue of this journal.]

* * *

Protests against the distribution of Gideon Bibles to Menasha, Wis., high school pupils were made by local Roman Catholic priests. The protests stressed that the Bible version handed out by the Gideons is not approved by the Catholic Church. . . . More than 300 Bibles were passed out at the school, according to Peter Bylow, a member of the Gideons. He said that a large number of pupils had refused to accept them. Permission to distribute the Bibles was granted by the school board.

* * *

A wholesale purge of schoolteachers is under way in Communist Poland to "safeguard" children from religious or anti-Communist indoctrination, a Warsaw Radio broadcast disclosed. . . . It is said that by the end of the year "not one ideologically unfit teacher will be allowed to teach in Polish schools." . . . All teachers, whether in elementary, secondary, or higher schools, the broadcast stated, are being required to undergo a stiff "ideological examination" designed to weed out those who "contaminate the minds of children and youth with reactionary, anti-people's, fascist, or superstitious ideas." . . . At the beginning of the purge, all practicing Roman Catholics were

liable to dismissal, but this might have meant the complete break-down of the school system. . . . Instead, as stressed by the Warsaw Radio, all Catholic teachers must now sign a pledge not to "discuss, talk about, teach or impart religious ideas to the children under their care."

* * *

An Evangelical Lutheran adult education center was dedicated on Hasselberg mount near Munich, Germany, by Lutheran Bishop Hans Meiser of Munich, chairman of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany. . . . Pointing to "the large-scale de-Christianization and demoralization of public life," Bishop Meiser said the new education center was meant "to promote the Christian spirit, and would contribute toward influencing public life by helping to shape Christian personalities." . . . More than 10,000 Lutherans witnessed the dedication ceremonies. Leading civic dignitaries also were present.

* * *

The Alberta Conference of the United Church of Canada has demanded a provincial government investigation into charges that Roman Catholic teachers are forcing Catholic doctrine on Protestant pupils in some rural schools. . . . Dr. G. H. Villett, principal of Alberta College, Edmonton, said recently that this information had come to him from several centers in the province. . . . He said that Roman Catholic nuns employed as teachers in some public schools were devoting the last half-hour of each school day to religious study in defiance of provincial school laws. . . . In some instances, Protestant pupils were punished if they refused to remain for the religious study, he charged.

* * *

The first Roman Catholic school in Nepal, an independent kingdom located between Tibet and India, will be opened in July. . . . Operated by Jesuits, the school will open with the three lowest grades but will add one grade each year until a complete high school course is available, thus preparing students for college entrance. . . . Ninety applications for admittance have already been received by the school's authorities.

* * *

There are now 13,400,000 Roman Catholics in Africa as compared with 2,000,000 in 1940, according to a statistical report by the Fides news agency in Rome.

* * *

Beginning this fall, Roman Catholics of the Santa Fe, N. Mex., see no longer will have the privilege of eating meat on Fridays, it was announced by the Very Rev. Msgr. Carlos Blanchard, archdiocesan

chancellor. . . . Speaking on behalf of Archbishop Edwin V. Byrne, Msgr. Blanchard explained that the privilege is being rescinded in line with a decree by Pope Pius XII aimed at making abstinence from meat on Fridays uniform through the Catholic world. . . . New Mexico is one of the former Spanish-controlled territories where Catholics have retained the privilege of eating meat on Friday, originally granted to Spain and all her dominions under papal bulls dating back to the reign of Pope Urban II (1088—99). The dispensation was granted because of Spain's role in preventing the Moors from over-running Europe. . . . Archbishop Byrne's order will apply only to the Santa Fe archdiocese, but it is expected that the suffragan sees of El Paso and Gallup will follow suit, thus making the change effective throughout New Mexico. . . . The only days of abstinence from meat which Catholics in New Mexico are now required to observe are Ash Wednesday, the Fridays of Lent, the vigils of Christmas, Pentecost, the Assumption, and All Saints' Day. Elsewhere in the world the Catholic practice generally has been to have fish on all Fridays, or, at least, not to partake of meat.

* * *

A town or city may bar a religious group from holding a meeting in a public park, the New Hampshire Supreme Court ruled at Concord, N.H. . . . The issue was raised by Robert W. Derrickson and William Poulos, members of the Jehovah's Witnesses, who last summer were prohibited from conducting a meeting at Godwin Park in Portsmouth. . . . Written by Justice Frank R. Kenison, the high State court's decision declared that the constitution "does not guarantee to every individual or to every group of individuals absolute liberty." Such liberty, the court said, is partially surrendered when men are banded together to form a society or a community. . . . While the constitution says that religious gatherings cannot be prohibited, Justice Kenison wrote, they may be "subject to reasonable and non-discriminatory regulations." It was noted that the Portsmouth park had never been used for religious purposes by any group. . . . "There is nothing in the record in this case to raise an inference that Portsmouth is guilty of palpable evasion of the defendants' rights under any guise whatsoever," the decision stated. . . . "On the contrary," it said, "the city has enforced with respect to one small park, an honest, reasonable and non-discriminatory licensing system which operates fairly on all." . . . A Portsmouth ordinance requires that a license be obtained from the City Council for public meetings. After a hearing, the Council

denied the Jehovah's Witnesses' petition to use Goodwin Park on two Sunday afternoons. When Derrickson and Poulos started anyway, they were halted by Portsmouth city authorities.

* * *

Twenty-five members of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity of Johns Hopkins University painted and generally fixed up the Webster Congregational Church in near-by Bel Air. . . . A fraternity spokesman said the group had voted to adopt this constructive church project in place of the hazing and other hectic activities of the traditional "fraternity pledge week." . . . When the church renovation work was completed, the fraternity members were guests of the pastor, the Rev. Leonard Detweiler, at a chicken dinner prepared by the congregation.

* * *

More than 100,000 children celebrated the 122d anniversary of the founding of the Brooklyn Sunday School Union with a series of parades through the streets of the borough. They represented more than 300 Protestant churches. . . . General of the Army Douglas MacArthur and his family were the guests of honor among the estimated 250,000 persons who watched the processions. . . . Typical of the many banners manned by the children was one reading: "God's Remedy for Juvenile Delinquency." . . . Before the procession got under way, an inscribed leatherbound Bible was presented to Gen. MacArthur by two children. It was the gift of Dr. David J. Fant, general secretary of the New York Bible Society. . . . Earlier, the general was the guest of honor at a Sunday School Union luncheon attended by civic officials and religious leaders. As he left to take his place on the parade reviewing stand, Gen. MacArthur told reporters: "One of the greatest influences in the Far East is the Christian religion. The greatest efforts are being made along these lines and are yielding success."

* * *

Secretary of State Dean Acheson said here that the State Department is working closely with religious organizations to obtain release of a number of American missionaries who are being held in Communist China. . . . The Secretary made this statement at hearings of the Senate foreign relations and armed services committees which are investigating President Truman's removal of Gen. Douglas MacArthur and the Far Eastern policy of the administration. . . . The disclosure came when Mr. Acheson implored Sen. Styles Bridges (R.—N.H.) to keep secret the names of some American businessmen in China who had criticized the Communist government, on the ground that one of them is still in Red China and would be placed in the "gravest

danger" were his name made public. . . . "I would like to add further," the Secretary said, "that at the present time we have 30 Americans who are being held in China, and we are working closely with their companies or with the religious organizations which they represent to try and get them out. We are getting them out in twos and threes, but the situation is very dangerous and very delicate." . . . Mr. Acheson said the position of all Americans remaining in China is in jeopardy because of a "very vicious 'Hate America' campaign" being waged by the Chinese Communists.

* * *

Six Jehovah's Witnesses have died in Communist prisons during the last two months as a result of brutal treatment by prison guards, the West German Radio reported. . . . It is said that about 800 members of the sect are now imprisoned in the Soviet Zone of Germany.

* * *

Three hundred thousand Protestants from East and West Germany are expected to attend the third Evangelical Church Day Conference to be held in Berlin from July 11 to 15. . . . Participating in the giant rally, which is intended to stress the active co-operation of Protestant laymen in both church and public life, will be leaders of all the German Evangelical Churches as well as scores of foreign churchmen. . . . Four working groups will explore the general theme of the conference—"For All That We Are Brothers"—from church, family, community, and vocational angles. Prominent clergymen and laymen will lecture on such topics as "Does Power Make Men Wicked?" and "To Whom Do Our Children Belong?" . . . Site of the rally will be the Berlin Olympic Stadium and the adjacent May Field, where Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin, head of the Evangelical Church in Germany, will preside at the opening ceremonies. . . . A series of all-German Protestant meetings and religious services will be held simultaneously with the rally. Among the groups sponsoring the events will be the German Evangelical Students' League, the German Evangelical Missionary Council, the Moravian Brethren Church, and the German Free Churches. [According to the press the program was carried out according to schedule.]

* * *

The regents and the president of the University of Minnesota were commended by the Minnesota district of the American Lutheran Church "for the fact that the Christian spirit is still prevalent on the campus." . . . Evidence of this fact, it is said, is the continued activity of the Lutheran Student Association and similar groups. . . .

The Lutherans asked the university to "refrain from engaging fac-

ulty members who would undermine Christianity in their classrooms." They said that "the Church and the State must co-operate in character-building as shown in world history for the welfare of Church and State." . . . A Minneapolis lawyer, William L. Sholes, has obtained a court order directing the regents of the university to halt the use of its facilities for religious activities or to show cause why they will not do so. . . . In petitioning for the order, Mr. Sholes charged that the school has "officially sponsored and aided a program of denominational sectarianism on the campus."

* * *

Bibles and Testaments may be shipped anywhere in the world, except the Soviet Union and its satellites, without a specific export license for each shipment, the Office of International Trade of the U.S. Department of Commerce announced. . . . Exporters of Bibles and Testaments can secure a general export license which permits them to make shipments without the need to obtain a separate validated license for each shipment, the office said.

* * *

The first issue of a Roman Catholic periodical in the Russian language appeared in Paris. It is called the *Russian Catholic Messenger* and will be issued every two months.

* * *

"Reducing exercises" were prescribed for the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in a blunt message delivered in Waukesha, Wis., by the Church's new moderator, Dr. Harrison Ray Anderson of Chicago. . . . He told the Wisconsin synod's centennial meeting that the denomination must "get the fat off its waist." The "heresy" of the Church today, he said, is "sloppy administration and wasted funds." . . . The movement for efficiency, he said, should include committees of 5 instead of 15, one conference instead of three, and \$3 a day hotel rooms instead of \$8 a day rooms for persons on Church missions. . . . "How many men should be graduated from our seminaries?" he asked. "That question has been asked at more than 160 General Assemblies of the Church, and no one has come up with a definite answer. It wouldn't take General Motors 160 years. . . . What should be the overhead operating cost of the Church? Any business in Wisconsin can figure this out, but we haven't."

* * *

Voluntary relief to foreign nations by the U.S. is a powerful factor in the cause of world peace, Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, president of the United Lutheran Church in America, told the American Baptist Con-

vention in session in Buffalo. . . . "It promotes peace effectively by giving practical help to people of many nations," he noted. "Like happiness, peace is not a thing that is to be readily obtained as an end in itself. . . . It comes, as so many good things do, as a by-product of decent and honorable human relationships and must be patiently and diligently cultivated." * * *

A "gigantic new all-out effort for peace" based on "righteousness and morality and not on political expediency," was urged by the Augustana Lutheran Church at its 92d annual meeting at Galesburg, Ill. . . . The delegates reaffirmed a resolution adopted last year which declared that war "is in direct conflict with Christian ideals and standards" and is "a crime against God and humanity." . . . "The governments of the world," the delegates said, "have an inescapable responsibility in this hour when the world is divided into hostile camps in a cold war full of suspicion and distrust, fear and hatred" to bring "the present tragic deadlock to an end." . . . The delegates pledged themselves "to use every means at our disposal to foster the spirit of goodwill among the peoples of the earth, and to pursue a course of action in thought, word and deed that will show our protest against war." * * *

Dr. Paul C. Empie, New York, executive director of the National Lutheran Council, told the convention that many nations of the world are fearful not only of America's military might but also of its economic domination. . . . "When Hitler was arming Germany," he said, "we said that he could not forge his implements of war without the ultimate purpose of using them. That is exactly what many people are now saying about us, and that is why they distrust America." . . . Dr. Empie challenged Christians "to reveal America at its best in a spiritual program of love, justice and goodwill toward other peoples, and thus to conquer the sinister forces that are trying to undermine our way of life." . . . He pleaded for continued support of Lutheran World Action, declaring that contributions by the Lutherans of the United States had made it possible to bring 27,000 displaced persons of Baltic lands to this country and that eventually the number will probably reach 35,000. He also reported that efforts are now being made to find homes in America for some 2,000 German refugee families. . . . Contributions by the Lutherans of the United States to Lutheran World Action during 1950 totalled \$3,113,502, and the goal for 1951 has been set at \$3,300,000. In addition to this, 18,727,828 pounds of clothing, food, and other relief supplies were shipped abroad for distribution among refugees last year, Dr. Empie stated.

Resumption of activities by German missionaries was approved by the Commission on World Missions of the Lutheran World Federation at a meeting held in Breklum, Schleswig-Holstein. . . . The meeting was presided over by Dr. Frederick A. Schlotz, of New York, executive secretary of the Commission on Younger Churches and Orphaned Missions of the National Lutheran Council. . . . It was agreed that German missionaries should resume work in their former missionary areas, and that German missionaries should be sent to Tanganyika, East Africa, as soon as the British government grants entry permits. . . . Following the presentation of reports on LWF missionary fields, the meeting urged Lutheran missions to promote the formation of independent young churches in missionary areas. . . . The Commission recommended also that missionary activities in Japan and New Guinea be increased to meet the "great demand" for missionaries and teachers in those areas.

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A group of archaeologists belonging to the Roman Catholic Dominican Order were reported to have discovered a large grotto, with a rock-hewn staircase, on the Mount of Olives in Bethany. . . . The walls of the grotto were said to be covered with innumerable inscriptions made by early Christian pilgrims. They date from the middle of the fourth to the seventh century. . . . Meanwhile, Franciscan archaeologists excavating near Rachel's Tomb outside Bethlehem discovered a big compound which is believed to be identified with early Christian times.

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American church membership has passed the 84 million mark, according to the 1951 *Southern Baptist Handbook*, released at Nashville, Tenn. . . . Porter Routh, editor of the *Handbook*, reported that the nation's churches gained in membership last year from 81,497,698 to 84,000,775. This represents a 3.1 per cent increase for the second successive year, and brings the church membership to 58 per cent of the total United States population. . . . Fifty Protestant groups with a membership of more than 50,000 each reported a total of 48,554,954 members, compared with 47,199,675 in 1949. The Roman Catholic Church reported 27,766,141, compared with 26,718,343 the previous year. The balance includes Jewish congregations, Polish National Catholic and Orthodox Churches, Buddhist and Spiritualist groups, and smaller religious bodies. . . . Top membership figures among Protestant denominations were again those of the Methodist Church, with 8,935,647, and the Southern Baptist Convention, with 7,079,889.

... According to the Southern Baptist tabulation there were 285,247 congregations in 1950 as compared with 283,150 in 1949. Sunday school enrollment rose from 27,944,454 to 28,869,976 last year.

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A total of 850 Roman Catholic priests are now in Polish prisons and an unknown number have been sent to Siberia, according to the Vatican radio.

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In Washington, D.C., construction work has begun on the first Mohammedan mosque ever erected in the nation's capital. . . . The mosque will provide a place of worship for employees of the embassies of Moslem nations, and for students and visitors from those countries who now number a substantial colony here. . . . Contractors working on the job said they have no idea what the building will look like when completed as, due to religious scruples against pictures on the part of conservative Moslems, the customary architect's sketch has not been made. The contractors said they are following the blueprints supplied. . . . The mosque will be situated on Massachusetts Avenue not far from the British Embassy and near the embassies of several other nations. It will enjoy a commanding view of the city. Representatives of the Egyptian Embassy are supervising the construction work.

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The Church is tolerated in Russia today because it has no young people and therefore is not dangerous, a professor of religion and philosophy at Earlham College, Richmond, Ind., told the American Baptist Convention in Buffalo. . . . The Rev. Elton Trueblood, addressing some 3,000 delegates, declared: "There are two ways of losing the vigor of Christianity which stand out above all others in the modern world. One way is that of Russia in which the State can now be tolerant of the Church because the Church no longer has any of the young people. A movement without youth may well be tolerated as undangerous, but it will soon die." . . . "On our side of the Iron Curtain is that of seeming to support the Church, but actually doing so apologetically and without evangelical enthusiasm. In the long run our way may be as destructive as the other."

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A survey of major religious publications has disclosed not a single article dealing with the responsibility of churches toward civil defense, according to the Rev. Oswald C. J. Hoffman, director of public relations for The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod. . . . Mr. Hoffman led a panel discussion on the religious press and civil defense at the national meeting of religious leaders called by the Civil Defense Ad-

ministration in Washington, D.C. . . . The omission has probably occurred because of confusion and uncertainty as to the place of churches in the civil defense program, he suggested, rather than because of apathy toward the subject. Mr. Hoffman said the religious press can do an important job in alerting church members to participation in community preparedness efforts. He urged discussion in the religious press of the role churches, religious organizations, and personnel can play in the event of a civil disaster in wartime. . . . During the discussion it was brought out that since the survey was made the *Brooklyn Tablet* and a number of other Roman Catholic papers have published articles on civil defense and are planning more such efforts. . . . It was disclosed that the Civil Defense Administration is planning to issue release to the religious press from time to time stressing the role church periodicals can play in building preparedness. Federal officials said they would like to have the comments of religious editors as to the sort of material and information they want from Washington.

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Plans for the construction of a new Protestant leprosy colony in Paraguay were revealed in a report on Protestant Christian leprosy work in Latin American countries. . . . Published by American Leprosy Missions, the report will be used as supplementary study material for the 1951—52 Christian Missions theme by 61 boards and 27 denominations co-operating with the Joint Commission on Missionary Education of the National Council of Churches. . . . The projected colony in Paraguay will be erected by the Mennonite Central Committee as a gesture of gratitude to the Paraguayan government for opening its doors to thousands of Mennonite refugees from Europe. . . . Present plans call for an initial outlay of \$25,000, of which American Leprosy Missions will provide \$18,000. . . . Land has already been purchased at Barrio Grande, 50 miles west of Asuncion. The U.S. Public Health Commission of Paraguay has offered the services of architects and other technicians.

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Hospitals are expected to be next on the list in Communist China's program of expropriating American missionary properties, according to reports in Chinese newspapers. . . . The newspapers disclosed a widespread Communist campaign against "more than 200 hospitals in China that have received United States subsidies." . . . One Shanghai newspaper charged that "United States imperialism has brought harm to Chinese life and thinking through these hospitals in the past 100 years." . . . Another assailed the general hospital at Wuhu, on the lower Yangste River, because the building was on top of a hill and

"its huge neon cross, which can be seen for ten miles, has been used as a guide for American naval craft on the Yangste." . . . These and other accusations are regarded here as a prelude to official action against the mission hospitals. It is anticipated that if the hospitals have not already been confiscated they soon will be.

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Reports that Roman Catholic schismatics in Communist Czechoslovakia are planning to develop a National Church free from Vatican control were confirmed in Vienna by Father Joseph Plojhar, excommunicated priest who is Minister of Health in the Prague government. . . . Invited to Vienna by the Austro-Czechoslovak Friendship Society, a Communist-dominated organization, Father Plojhar spoke at a meeting in the Konzerthaus attended by 5,000 Communist supporters. The theme of his three-hour talk was, "The True Conditions of Church Life in Czechoslovakia." . . . Father Plojhar told his wildly applauding, apparently hand-picked audience, that "we are not afraid of the Pope's excommunication and plan to go full speed ahead building a Church purged of clergy and faithful opposed to Communism." . . . "We are for the Vatican and the Pope," the suspended priest declared, "but we claim that the Pope is infallible only in matters of faith and morals, whereas we are ready to oppose him in church and political questions."

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Dr. Franklin Clark Fry of New York, president of the United Lutheran Church in America, in an address in Philadelphia scored clergymen who "are suffering from professionalism." . . . "Ministers go out today and speak for everything under the sun except religion," he told the annual meeting of the United Lutheran Synod of Central Pennsylvania. . . . Asserting that he had no faith in pastors who give speeches "endorsing anything, no matter how good, except the Gospel," he admonished clergymen to "purvey religion and Christianity and know the fundamentals of their religion." . . . Earlier, Dr. Fry told the delegates that nearly 200 congregations of the United Lutheran Church in America are without churches in which to worship. . . . This lack of churches, he said, confronts the denomination with a major policy decision. It will have to decide definitely, he said, whether to continue its present policy of forming congregations even though there is no possibility of erecting churches for them for several years, or if such action should be delayed. . . . "It has been found that congregations wither away if they are left in rented, temporary quarters without a church of their own for more than five years," he said.

THEO. HOYER