

World Council Role in Unity Drive Debated

By James C. O'Neill
(N.C.W.C. News Service)

GENEVA — Debate on the role of the World Council of Churches in the movement to restore Christian unity opened on the second day of its meeting.

It was evident that there was a

Hospital Discussed By Membership of Rocky Mount Court

Court Christ the King of the Catholic Daughters held their monthly meeting Monday night in the church hall. Miss Dorothy Bennett, Grand Regent, presided.

Letters of appreciation were read from Sister Lisbeth, Mrs. Joseph Kopka and Mrs. Charles Albrycht. Letters were also read from Mr. Harvey Gregory, Mrs. Frank Belknap and Mrs. Vela Patterson, thanking the Court for remembering them at Christmas time.

Mrs. Willard Brock, Share the Faith Chairman, gave an interesting and informative report on the Retreat for Women held in Pinehurst. She said that Father McSweeney was a wonderful Retreat Master, and gave them a comprehensive review of the Ecumenical Council.

A letter from Mrs. Cartee, a tourist whose husband died while passing through Rocky Mount, was read by Mrs. James Murphy. Mrs. Cartee remembers that the people of Rocky Mount were most kind to her at that time.

The Court voted to send a donation to the Catholic Relief Services to help the Children of Korea.

It was announced that The Clothes Box will undergo renovations. It will be repainted and stocked with a better assortment. All members of the Parish are called on to help as it will be manned by volunteer help only.

The Saint Patrick's Day dinner for the parish will be held on March 17. This is an annual affair sponsored by the Court.

Mrs. Edward Wiltrakis, Lecturer, introduced Dr. Allen Whitaker who explained the need of a new county hospital for Nash County and Rocky Mount. He said that this would attract more specialists, surgeons and nurses to our city and would have all of the new and modern facilities needed so that Rocky Mount would not have to send special cases to other city hospitals. He also stated that our hospitals are overcrowded and that there is great need of more hospital beds.

At the close of the meeting refreshments consisting of coffee and doughnuts were served.

lack of agreement on what should be the basis of church unity and how that unity would eventually make itself apparent.

A preliminary draft on the "Ecumenical Way" and the specific role of the WCC was read at the new ecumenical center here to the members of that organization's 100-member central committee.

The draft stated that today's ecumenical movement has arisen from the fact that the churches have turned again to the Bible and have come to see more clearly the vision and reality of the people of God, and that many churches are concerned with the basic question of the unity of the church of Christ.

WCC Secretary General Willem A. Visser 't Hooft told the press after the morning's adjournment that the draft was a "functional paper" rather than a theological treatise along the lines of the Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism. "We of the WCC hold the principle that it is essential that the ecumenical movement should be realized within the historic churches" rather than by private groups.

SUCH GROUPS have their own contribution to make, he said. He cited private efforts by Roman Catholics over past years which he said resulted in the ecumenism decree of Vatican II and exploratory ecumenical meetings now being carried on by Catholics and the WCC and other individual churches. Nevertheless, he said, the 20th-century development of the ecumenical movement has been a phenomenon which has developed within the life of the churches themselves, within the WCC, and in Vatican II.

While speakers commenting on the draft affirmed the greatly felt need and desire for restoring church unity, they differed on how

it is to be approached and what is to be its basis.

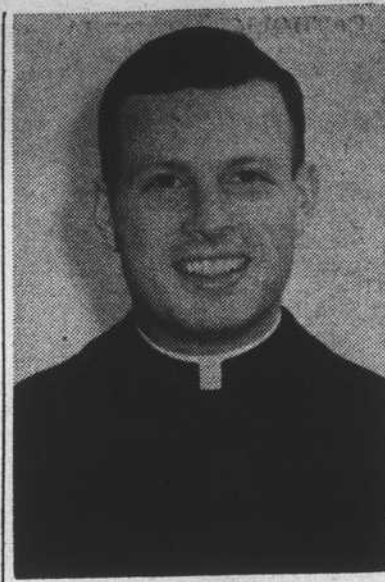
The Rev. John C. Smith, New York, of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., objected that the paper "assumes that the major body of Christians affected by God's work in history and in the Scriptures is that which is represented by the WCC. There is brief mention later in the paper of what has happened to Roman Catholics, and even briefer mention of Christians outside of any such groupings . . .

"The paper might better have begun by stating that there is now evidence that every community of believers is being affected by what God is doing."

While not advocating desertion of areas of theological study leading to unity, Dr. Smith stated he was "convinced that theological reflection and common action must mutually stimulate one another in a church which witnesses to the world in our time."

HE CITED conversations between his church and subcommittees of the American Catholic Bishops' commission on ecumenical relations. "After various discussions," he said, "it was agreed to work in terms of a theme—'reform and renewal of the Church as a continuing process under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.' Under this banner, theologians and activists can meet in a rhythm of reflection and action which can lead to service and witness and renewal," he said.

Bishop Hanns Lilje of Hanover Germany, insisted that obstacles should be seen in a theological context and that the major obstacle to unity is the "evident fact that the churches have not yet made much progress on the way toward fuller agreement as to the substance of the gospel and as to its proclamation."



REV. CARL BUFALINI, C.S.C., a graduate of Rome's Gregorian University, will preach the annual mission at St. Thomas More Church in Chapel Hill, beginning this Sunday, February 20.

He questioned the wisdom of strengthening the WCC to facilitate ecumenism.

"Would it ever be conceivable or desirable that the council ought to do what the churches evidently seem to be incapable of achieving?" he asked. "Ought the real solution of the problem not rather be located within the churches themselves?"

Orthodox Archbishop Vitaly Borovoy, who was an official observer of the Patriarchate of Moscow at Vatican II, challenged the view that common belief in the Bible is sufficient to bring about the re-composition of Christian unity:

Plan Daily Masses At Shopping Center

ATLANTA, Ga. — (NC) — Mass will be offered daily at 12:30 p.m. during Lent in a popular shopping center here.

The project, known as "Mass on the Mall," will be carried out alternately on the weekdays by Archbishop Paul J. Hallinan of Atlanta and Father Noel Burtenshaw.

Carrying a Mass kit, packing and unpacking altar supplies, will be nothing new to Archbishop Hallinan, who served as an Army chaplain from 1943 to 1945, or Father Burtenshaw, who formerly served in the Georgia missions. The Mass will be offered daily in the auditorium of the Lenox Square Shopping center.

Archbishop Hallinan said the project is designed to bring the Mass to the people, not wait for them.

"Biblical theology cannot be a basis for our unity because of this very simple fact, that we have no common consensus in our understanding and our interpretation of the Holy Scripture . . . Disunity in the interpretation of Holy Scripture can hardly be the foundation of our calling to unity. The true unity of Christians can be based only on a true consensus, true unity in understanding of the Word of God in this divine revelation to us.

"But this true consensus in fundamental doctrinal issues can be reached only by common agreement to have common criteria which are rooted in our common treasure and heritage from the time of the undivided Church."

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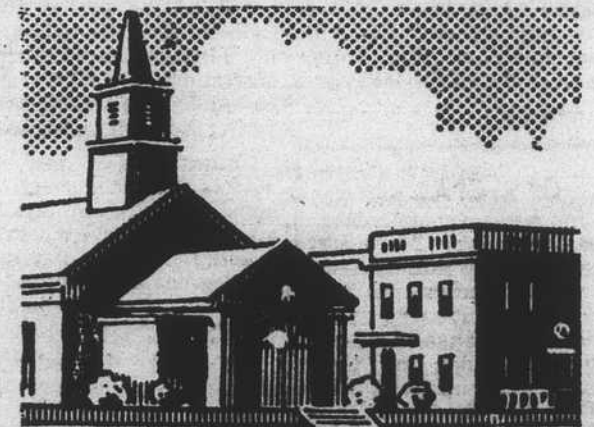
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