

Church Told Merger Won't Halt Freedom

Discussion on Matter Highlights Annual Conference

By GEORGE W. CORNELL
OMAHA, Neb., June 20—Congregational Christians were assured today that their traditional "freedom of faith and manner of worship" won't be hampered in a proposed, historic merger with another denomination.

An executive committee, headed by the Rev. Dr. Raymond Walker, of Portland, Ore., declared that the relationship of individual congregations to the new Congregational Christian Council moved into its second day.

The committee sought to answer rumblings of complaint that the union might apply central coercion on the keenly cherished "local autonomy" of Congregational Christian churches.

Brought together in the merger would be two churches of distinctly separate origins and organizational customs—the first such union in America to bridge such a gap in the multiple families of protestantism.

Dr. Albert Buckner Coe, of Boston, moderator of the Congregational Christian churches, told the meeting last night the vitality of the church has always derived from its ability to progress and adapt to new needs.

"We have the ability to change—to change without losing our faith or our freedom," he said. "Earlier, the delegates unanimously elected George B. Hastings, a Grant, Neb., attorney and a former county prosecutor and state senator, as Council moderator, the church's top elective post. He succeeds Dr. Coe at the end of the current meeting."

In taking the office he said: "I would plead for unity of spirit, unity of purpose and unity in organization."

Bristling attacks on the proposed church union marked the opening session, and drew a plea later from the Rev. Dr. Arthur H. Bradford, of Jaffrey, N.H., that the subject be approached under God's guidance.

"If this be our way of procedure we shall at no moment cease to be a council and become a crowd," he said.

He said the merger represents "an attempt to give practical expression to ideals cherished for generations."

Congregational Christians, with their strictly self-ruled congregations, have their roots in English protestantism and the early pilgrims, while the Evangelical and Reformed Church was planted in this country from a German and Swiss background.

It has a more coordinated governing system, with individual churches related to the national general synod on principles similar to those by which states are related to the U.S. government.

But the plan of union promises that all congregations in the new church will retain "the rights now enjoyed."

The executive committee, expanding on this, said "there is no power or authority and none is claimed by which the General Council" could make individual churches a part of the union.

But a subtle question intruded into the discussion: Does a church have to say specifically it wants in the union to be in? Or does it have to take specific negative action in order to keep out?

An opposing group, led by the Rev. Malcolm K. Burton, of Pontiac, Mich., proposes that no congregation be considered a part of the union unless it takes definite affirmative action saying it wants to be in.

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40 Motorcycle Riders Expected At Sunday Race

Some 40 riders from the Willamette Valley are expected for Sunday's motorcycle races off Macleay road near Four Corners. Entries are expected from Salem, Corvallis, Portland, and Lebanon. The feature race will be a 15-lap main event. The first races are at 12 noon. Signs will be posted to show the route to the track.

UAL Progress Told Rotarians

Passengers riding commercial airplanes will be able to leave New York at noon and reach Salem at noon within the next three years, if Oregon remains on standard time. This was the prediction made during Wednesday's luncheon program of the Salem Rotary club by G. H. Macomber, Portland, district sales manager for United Air Lines.

Macomber sketched the progress of his company during the past 30 years. In answering statements that the government is subsidizing the air lines, Macomber said United's receipts for carrying the mail of \$10,000,000 was more or less underwriting a portion of the postal services expenses. He stated that the government made a profit out of the operation.

A dozen men who have joined the Salem Rotary club since the first of the year were presented by Harold Phillips.

Queen Janice and her court of the St. Paul rodeo were present during the luncheon.

Conviction for Contempt Gets Court Approval

WASHINGTON—The U. S. Court of Appeals Thursday upheld the contempt conviction of Abram Flaxer, general secretary of the workers' union, for refusing to produce a list of members of the union, for refusing to produce a list of members of the union, for refusing to produce a list of members of the union.

The Senate Internal Security Subcommittee demanded that Flaxer produce Oct. 5, 1951 membership lists divided between those employed by the federal government and other governmental units. He was charged with contempt when he refused. Flaxer was convicted in March, 1952. He was fined \$1,000 and sentenced to two months in jail. He has been free on bond pending outcome of his appeal.

Flaxer headed has been dissolved and that Flaxer no longer is connected with any union. Speaking for the Appeals Court majority, Judge Wilbur K. Miller said the membership lists demanded of Flaxer were pertinent to the subcommittee's investigation of the "extent, nature and effects of subversive activities, including the infiltration of labor organizations who are or may be under Communist domination."

Lodge Studies Protest to UN

NEW YORK—Henry Cabot Lodge Jr. said Thursday he will protest vigorously to the United Nations if the facts bear out a Russian refugee's charges that a U. N. employee tried to force him into Soviet espionage. Lodge is U. S. ambassador to the United Nations.

He said Aleksei Petukhov, junior official in the U. N. technical assistance administration, and Rostislav Shapovalov, second secretary of the Soviet mission to the U. N., had tried to "pressure me to try to make me a spy."

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