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Church Emphasis Today On Action, Not Belief

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the second story in a four part series about modern religion and its adaptability to today's world. Senior Staff Writer Tom Victor will explore religion on the University campus and try to determine how it fits in with what many authorities consider a "change" in the church's attitude.

Church emphasis today is on action, rather than belief, according to Dr. Raleigh J. Peterson, dean of the Cotner School of Religion.

Within the last six years, Peterson stated, there have been three general changes in religious thinking on the part of the institutional church.

These changes are from institutional preservation to world service; from absolute to relative morality; and from separate to joint projects.

These three factors of cooperation, relative morality and service are behind all other church changes in Catholic, Jewish and Protestant religions, Peterson said.

"Churches are saying that their task is to serve fellow man, and thus serve God best," Peterson said.

Two Dimensions

He termed religion a two dimensional concept. The first dimension is concerned with something greater than man — a supreme ideal or God. The second dimension of religion, and the side that is being stressed more and more, is the concern for one's fellow man, he said.

Putting it another way, Peterson said, the church as an institution is denying its role as comforter of the afflicted. Instead, the church sees itself as afflicting the comfortable in the congregation, so that individually they will go out and comfort the afflicted. Peterson said that this is not such a popular idea with some laymen.

Dr. Peterson cited the negative reaction of Irving Junior High School students to a speech by Dr. Alan Pickering of United Christian Campus Fellowship. The speech given before Thanksgiving, criticized the well-to-do churchgoer who never thinks about the poor and disenfranchised people of the world. Some 30 students signed a petition protesting the speech, calling Pickering "un-American." But on campus the idea is more popular — social-concern organizations on campus that operate on basically religious principles. Such groups as Friends of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (FNSCC) and Nebraskans for Peace in Viet Nam serve as examples of what churches are working towards, in terms of service, Peterson said.

Other evidence of this change in emphasis can be seen in the role of church houses on campus, Peterson said.

New Role

"Twenty years ago, the campus church was considered a home away from home, apart from the wicked campus — a safe and secure retreat for the members," Peterson declared.

Today, due mainly to ministerial atti-

tudes within the campus churches, each chapel sees itself as a powerhouse for action, motivation and challenge, according to Peterson.

Campus churches are trying to reach outside the fold with coffee houses and panel discussions. They are concerned with a variety of social problems, from abortion to civil rights.

Dr. Peterson said IntersVarsity Christian Fellowship, Navigators and Youth for Christ, are three evangelistic movements that are not in accord with the changing emphasis of the church.

"These organizations specify the good of personal salvation, rather than the challenge of social service," Peterson said.

Relative Morality

The second area of change is concerned with morality in religion. Churches and laymen are seriously evaluating positions on this question, according to Dr. Peterson. The question is being asked: "Should the church maintain an absolute set of values, or should the church help make individual relative decisions?"

"In the past, the church has seen things in black and white. Now they are realizing and accepting the grey and fuzzy problems of life," Dr. Peterson stated.

This idea of situational ethics evolves directly from a re-interpretation of the Bible's role in religion, according to Peterson.

"In back of all change is the acceptance that the Bible is not so much a set of laws, as principles for life and a source of inspiration," Peterson said.

The biggest issue concerning the Bible is whether or not it is literally the Word of God written by God, or is instead a book containing God's Word, Peterson said.

New Ethics

This re-interpretation of the Bible's role has been stressed in churches for some 25 years, but it has taken time to reach the man in the pew, according to Peterson. The non-fundamental view of the Bible paves the way for what is popularly known as the "New Morality" or situational ethics, he said.

The third area of religious change features a crossing of denominational and faith lines in church work.

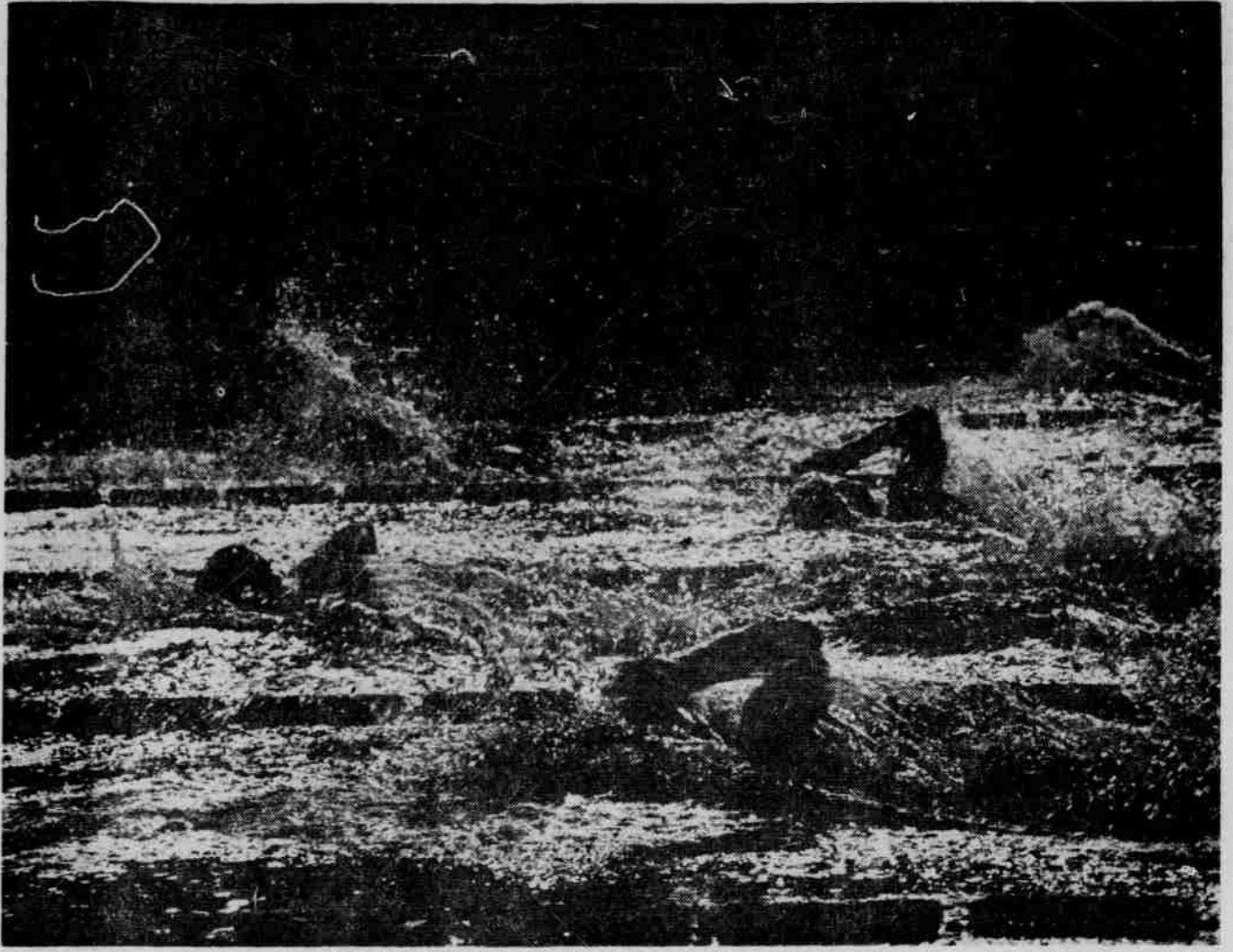
"The problems of the world are so great and frightening that one denomination cannot be effective politically or financially," Peterson said.

In the face of world destruction, things that have divided churches now seem insignificant, Dr. Peterson said.

An increase in inter-church cooperation is present evidence of this change, Peterson said. Many campus study groups on religious and social problems cross faith lines to make the church more efficient, he said.

"Churches are saying that what we are doing, we ought to be doing together," Peterson said.

He stated that it will be a long time before any single church emerges, but that the future holds a definite increase in inter-church cooperation.



WHITE WATER . . . photographed by John Nollendorfs.



LICORICE . . . photographed by Mike Hayman

'White Water' Captures Grand Prize In Contest

"White Water," a black and white photograph of the AAU swimming finals held in Lincoln in August, taken by John Nollendorfs received the grand prize in the Nebraska Union photography contest.

Nollendorfs shot the picture at night at the Wood Pool, which was lighted with TV lights. He used Tri-X film and an acufine developer.

There were approximately 50 contest entries from about 30 contestants, according to Ruth Saunders, chairman of the contest.

Other winners included: Pictorial: Thom Doran, "Pont Neuf Paris 1964", first; John

Nollendorfs, "Scenic", second. Portrait: Robert C. Franklin, first, John Nollendorfs, second.

Human interest: Mike Hayman, "Licorice", first; Jim Swartz, second. Color: Carolyn Bedient, "Lake Zurich", first; Thom Doran, "Pavane for a Dead Princess", second.

Schreiber Rehearing Is Denied

Mark Schreiber's request for a rehearing of the case, which resulted in the loss of his seat on the students senate, was denied by the Student Court Tuesday.

In a decision, written by Chief Justice Keith McIntyre, the basis for denying the petitioner's request was "that the defendant has given no reasons in his petition which were not considered by the court in reaching its prior decision in this case" and the court has declined to change its prior decision.

Also, in the petition, Schreiber asked that he be allowed to retain his seat on the senate until the petition for rehearing is disposed of. The court decided, however, that since there was no compelling fact that would change the situation, they could not issue a temporary injunction holding back the effect of their judgments until deciding on the rehearing of the case.

Schulze: Policy-Bill Conflict May Result In Compromise

The conflicts between administration policy and the proposed Student Bill of Rights are not dead-end alleys, but areas for change, according to Dick Schulze.

Schulze said the conflicts pointed out by administrators in a student-administration meeting Friday represent the opinion of the Board of Regents and not merely the opinions of the administration.

Schulze is chairman of the ASUN Student Conduct Committee that drafted the pro-administration spokesman in the meeting was Russell Brown, administrative assistant to G. Robert Ross, dean of Student Affairs.

Schulze said, "It is hard to say right now how the conflicts will be solved. We presented our bill of rights to Student Affairs and they, in turn, showed us where we conflicted with their policies."

"I believe that when solutions to these conflicts are finally determined, they will lie somewhere between the two opinions," he said.

The conduct committee, according to Schulze, does not see the statement of conflicts as absolutes, but rather points of change that should be considered.

"The committee plans to talk to the Board of Regents

about the bill of rights, for it is this body which will be making the ultimate decision on any changes in University policies," Schulze said.

He added, that the conduct committee will be meeting with individuals from student affairs again this Friday at 1:30 p.m. in the Nebraska Union.

The Committee is beginning a series of meetings with campus living units concerning the proposed bill of rights. Schulze said it is hard to tell the effects of the meetings at the moment, but that one committee member had expressed some disappointment in them.

Christmas Spirit Glows In Selleck's Window Displays



"Deck the Windows" is the cry in the final week of the Christmas window display contest sponsored by Abel Hall and Selleck Quadrangle. Gayle Weeks, RAM activities chairman, said that the

Selleck contest is open to all Selleck residents. Displays are in three divisions: religious, traditional and contemporary. "The religious displays center around the theme of the Nativity, while the traditional decoration use the tra-



ditional symbols of Christmas such as trees, wreaths, candies and Santa Claus," said Miss Weeks. Contemporary displays are comic window displays or anything very modern. Ted Suhr, RAM Council President, said that cash

prizes of \$5 will be awarded to the two best entries in each division. Judging will take place Thursday afternoon and evening and the winners will be announced Friday. Reggie Wyatt, President of Abel IV, said that Abel IV

is sponsoring a window contest for the residents of Sandoz Hall.

Displays will be categorized to method of construction, he said. Categories consist of removable paint, construction paper, greens and



lights and miscellaneous material. Judging of Sandoz entries will be Thursday afternoon, and the winners will be announced Thursday night at the Abel-Sandoz Christmas dance, Wyatt said. Individual trophies will be

awarded to the winners of each category and also to the first three places. Second and third place winners in each category will receive prizes. A traveling trophy will be presented to the floor having the most points.