

August 29-September 3
Louisville, Kentucky

Human Relations Activities 1959-1960

With the advent of the sit-ins it became readily apparent that the Federation was in need of a deeper, more intense program in the area of Human Relations. Thus, the entire effort of the Social Action Affairs Division has been directed towards building a stronger and more effective program of Social action for all member schools of the Federation. Since the National Congress provides the best means for reaching and influencing the greatest number of students, the Social Action Seminar has been geared to provide this means. We will be addressed by speakers who are both knowledgeable and prominent in the field of Interracial Justice. This seminar shall examine in detail those areas which are considered to be the most crucial in themselves and the most interesting and pertinent to the attending students. BOOKLETS, WHICH HAVE BEEN PREPARED BY A GROUP OF STUDENTS FROM MANHATTANVILLE COLLEGE UNDER THE DIRECTION OF LANI PHELAN, dealing with nearly all phases of Race Relations --past and present--and many other informative pieces of literature shall be disseminated to the students attending the Seminar.

It is hoped that this seminar will give the participating students a better "Understanding of Our Times" in this most vital area. More than this, however, it is hoped that each student will view this problem as his own, with a determination to do his part in rectifying the wrong which is often done to his fellow Americans..

Proposed Program of Social Action: 1960-1961

Basically, the one ultimate objective of the NFCCS is to assist in the formation of a vocal, apostolic, Catholic laity: vocal in that by what a Catholic says or does not say, does or does not do, he is furthering the cause of society and the peoples within it; and apostolic in that each Catholic must do all in his power, each day of his life, to accomplish the next to impossible--that is: To "Restore all things in Christ."

In the area of Human Relations a plan of action is definitely needed. It would appear that two basic items must be instilled in the hearts and minds of men--one, that prejudice is widespread and two, that only by education and mutual understanding will prejudice be replaced by love of, and respect and appreciation for our fellowman.

In casual conversation with many students concerning the problems of Social Justice on his or her campus one will repeatedly hear the comment "But WE have no problems!" This, it would appear, is the heart of the matter--the recognition of problems..... Students the nation over must be informed of just what the status of the Negro is in employment, education, housing, voting privileges, recreation and the many other facets of life in our modern society; students must be made aware of the philosophical, psychological and moral conditions and their many, far-reaching ramifications which are imposed upon Negroes, and other minority groups; and finally, students must be trained to understand that this is not a problem for you, but a problem for me.

Thus I am convinced that one of the primary purposes and areas of concentration of the Social Action Division of the NFCCS for the school year of 1960-61 must be the following: to inform, as completely as possible, all Catholic college students of the many problems of Interracial Justice; to impress upon them the fact that they have a definite obligation, to their God and to their country and to themselves to work in the area of Social Justice, either in a professional or non-professional capacity; and finally to help them realize that this work has more than its share of rewards- both mental and spiritual.

I BELIEVE THAT THE ENTIRE FEDERATION OWES LANI PHELAN AND HER ENTIRE COMMITTEE A VOTE OF THANKS FOR THE VERY CAPABLE AND EFFECTIVE WORK WHICH THEY HAVE DONE IN WRITING THE ABOVE MENTIONED BOOKLETS AND IN PERSONALLY REPRESENTING THE FEDERATION TO THE MANY AGENCIES IN THE NEW YORK CITY AREA.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert S. Valder
Social Action Affairs Vice-President.