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The Peacemaker

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Report on Summer of Integration At Cincinnati's Coney Island

CINCINNATI—On May 17, 1952 when 15 white and Negro members of the Cincinnati Committee on Human Relations arrived at Coney Island Amusement Park, city, county and private police were mobilized to prevent them from gaining admittance. Two of the group were arrested and then released following their attempt to get in by car.

Thus was set the pattern of intimidation which marked the three seasons during which CCHR waged its anti-discrimination campaign.

On April 30 of this year the Park—with the exception of the swimming pool—opened its gates to Negroes for the first time. About 20 Negroes visited the Park during that first weekend.

Although Negro patronage remained at a low figure, Negroes kept coming to the Park all summer using all facilities (including the dance pavilion)—except the swimming pool, which remained jim-crow. A campaign to end discrimination at the pool is being contemplated for next summer.

One reason why more Negroes didn't visit the Park is that they didn't know of the policy change. The Cincinnati dailies printed not a word about it and the Negro weeklies carried very little. Also the Park's newspaper ads still concluded with: "Admission to the Park subject to requirements of the exclusive outing sponsor." Outings sponsored by companies, civic groups and church bodies are a substantial source of revenue for the Park on weekdays and during the CCHR campaign. Park officials falsely shifted the blame for discrimination to the outings' sponsors.

However, the small Negro patronage disproved the stereotype argument that "when you let one in, before you know it they overflow the place."

The fact that not a single unpleasant

racist incident occurred throughout the summer disproved a second stereotype argument—that "when you let them in, before you know it you have a riot on your hands."

CORE non-violent techniques were used throughout the campaign. Interracial groups would remain standing in front of the ticket windows at the pedestrian entrance while smaller groups in cars would halt at the auto entrance.

On the legal front, the NAACP initiated court cases. Organizations and clubs were urged to cease sponsoring outings at the Park. An honor roll of those who took this position was started by CCHR. Seventy local ministers signed a statement calling for a policy change.

Last winter a number of organizations joined in urging city officials to deny the Park an operating license unless discrimination were ended. Management finally gave in—except for the swimming pool.

Plan Amnesty Poster Walk

The War Resisters League, together with several other organizations, is planning a poster walk and leaflet distribution in front of the White House in Washington, December 10, requesting presidential amnesty for violators of the 1940 draft law. The demonstrators will emphasize the fact that the war ended more than ten years ago and that amnesty is long overdue.

Anyone wishing to participate should write WRL, 5 Beekman Street, New York 38, N. Y.

Peace Pilgrim in South

As winter closes in over the northern states, Peace Pilgrim moves into the South to carry her message to people in a more moderate climate. She will be in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama through the height of the winter then will come north again through Tennessee and Kentucky as spring brings warmer weather.

Her peace message continues to be ever more widely heard and petitions for disarmament are being more and more rapidly filled. By the time she finishes her second pilgrimage about Christmas of 1956, there will be an imposing list of signatures for her to present to officials of the United Nations.

Next Peacemaker January 9

Because of the holiday rush, The Peacemaker will not attempt to publish its next issue until the second week in January. We wish you a truly joyous Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Supreme Court Refuses to Hear Second Prosecution Case

from CCCO News Notes

The United States Supreme Court announced October 24 that it would not review the conviction of T. Vail Palmer, Jr. The decision marked the end of a two-year legal battle which first got into court October 1, 1953, when Palmer stood trial for refusal to report for induction into the army. Harrop Freeman of the Cornell University Law School served as defense counsel throughout the proceedings. The Central Committee of Conscientious Objectors underwrote the cost of the appeals.

The Third Circuit Court of Appeals had affirmed the conviction by a 4-3 vote, (See NEWS NOTES, July-August, 1955) and it is that decision which the Supreme Court refused to review. The 4-3 vote marked the first time any judge had ruled against the repeat prosecutions as a matter of law. A number of judges have convicted conscientious objectors a second time but refused to send them back to prison.

Palmer must now serve three years on probation and pay the \$500 fine levied against him by Judge Alan K. Grim of the United States District Court in Philadelphia. It is expected that members of the Society of Friends will pay the fine for Palmer, a Quaker minister now serving a Friends Meeting in Gonic, N. H.

Palmer's case is a typical illustration of the second prosecution problem. As a matter of conscience based on his religious faith, he refused to register for conscription and was sentenced to prison for that refusal. He was registered by prison authorities and subsequently ordered to report for induction by his local draft board. At the time of the induction order the board had in its file uncontradicted information that Palmer was a fulltime theological student as well as a conscientious objector. In spite of this arbitrary handling of the case the Department of Justice prosecuted, and the courts have now sustained the conviction.

As is usual in denying to review cases, the Supreme Court gave no reasons for turning down the Palmer appeal. The Department of Justice had filed a brief with the Court asking that the case not be reviewed.

Advised of the adverse action by the Court, Harrop Freeman stated, "The supreme Court doesn't seem to be much interested in problems of conscience. I hope that the Society of Friends and concerned persons will get to work carrying more cases and letting the Court know that somebody besides a professor somewhere in the middle of New York State is interested in these problems."