

POLITICS, RELIGION SEPARATED

In the first case in which the highest court of a state has ever considered whether it was constitutional to display a religious symbol on public property, the Supreme Court to Oregon has ruled, 5 to 2, that a 51-foot electrically-lighted concrete cross must be removed from a public park in Eugene.

The decision was hailed by the American Jewish Congress as "historic, precedent-setting and a welcome reaffirmation of the constitutional concept that the state must not become involved in the propagation of religion."

Leo Pfeffer, special counsel of the American Jewish Congress who argued the case before the court, said the decision was a "significant victory for the principle of church-state separation."

"We trust," he added, "that public officials through the country will recognize the persuasive authority of this rule in similar situations."

The decision of the court was filed in Salem, Ore. on Wednesday (Oct. 1). It was a reversal of an earlier 4 to 3 decision by the same court handed down last February 26.

In that ruling, the Oregon Supreme Court had overruled a Circuit Court decision of January 5, 1967, which held that the erection of the cross violated the city charter. In ordering removal of the cross, Circuit Judge William Fort did not rule on the constitutional issue in the case.

The Eugene City Council appealed the ruling to the Oregon Supreme Court, which held that the erection of the cross was not unconstitutional.

A petition for a re-hearing was granted at the request of the 10 plaintiffs -- two Congregationalists, two

Unitarians, an Episcopalian, a Jew, a member of the Bahai denomination and three Humanists.

Mr. Pfeffer re-argued the constitutional issues in the case in behalf of the plaintiffs last June 2.

The latest decision outlawing the cross, after disposing of procedural matters, said only that "the decree of the trial court should be affirmed for the reasons substantially as set forth in the dissenting opinion handed down on February 26, 1969."

In that dissenting opinion, Justice Alfred T. Goodwin wrote that the display of the cross was "a religious activity" and consequently in violation of both the U. S. and Oregon constitutional provisions barring aid to religion.

"Whether so intended by the city council or not, the city's participation in the display has placed the city officially and visibly on record in support of those who sought government sponsorship for their religious display," Justice Goodwin held, adding:

"There is no doubt that the mayor and council were responding to popular demand. It was to prevent this very kind of response to majority pressure, however, that the establishment clause of the First Amendment was written into our Federal constitution."

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LAS VEGAS ISRAELITE

Again, Cleveland

by RABBI SAMUEL SILVER

Cleveland has scored again. That Ohio City is culturally one of the finest in the country.

Jewishly, it is second to none. Whereas other communities may have trouble with their annual United Jewish Appeal efforts, Cleveland does better each year. Few philanthropists rival Leonard Ratner, of Cleveland, in ceaseless zeal and magnanimity.

Strongly devoted to religious Judaism, Cleveland boasted those renowned Rabbis, Abba Hillel Silver and Barnett Brickner (and for a time, the late Rabbi Solomon Goldman).

The present rabbinical corps, including such names as Rudolph Rosenthal, Armand Cohen, Alan Green, Shubert Spero, Israel Portath, Daniel Silver, Philip Horowitz and others, is internationally renowned. The city now mourns the premature death of another fine rabbi, Jack Herman.

The president of the American Jewish Congress, Rabbi Arthur Lelyveld, is a Cleveland. So is Cantor Saul Meisels, who headed this national group. So Vincent, in the top echelon of the Cleveland Jewish Community Federation, has often presided over social work organizations. Both the president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the vice-presidents, Rabbi Roland Gittelsohn of Boston and David Polish, of Evanston, Ill., are from Cleveland. The No. 1 man in the National Jewish Welfare Board, Sanford Solender, also had a Cleveland period.

And now, not surprisingly, a Cleveland, Bernard H. Dorenfeld, has been elevated as national commander of the Jewish War Veterans of America. At a Los Angeles convention, Dorenfeld, a lawyer of note and the bearer of a doctorate, was unanimously chosen to head that doughty fraternity which reminds the U. S. that men of the Jewish faith have glitteringly and gallantly served in the armed forces of our nation.

We salute you, Commander Dorenfeld. We also offer another salute to an amazing city, Cleveland, Ohio.

GOLDA CHAMPIONS WOMEN'S RIGHTS

A by-product of Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir's visit to the United States, a prominent rabbi said today, "will be the contribution she will undoubtedly make to the advancement of the cause of equality of women in human society."

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, director of the Inter-religious Affairs Department of the American Jewish Committee, speaking on radio station WINS, said that "The notion of equality, of women recognized as citizens on an equal footing

with men, is a totally new concept in contemporary political terms, although the seeds of the tradition of the equality of women serving in public life is as old as the Bible."

Mrs. Meir, Rabbi Tanenbaum said, "has quite clearly come to represent the best features of both the old and the new in women's struggle for equality with men." She is, he added, "a remarkable personality in her own right, and a symbol of the emerging role of women as a creative force in the service of humanity."

250 JEWS QUIT POLAND WEEKLY

VIENNA -- Jewish refugee agencies are now struggling with the problems created by the final outpouring of Polish Jewry, Louis D. Horwitz, Director-General of the American Joint Distribution Committee, stated here.

Since early September, Jews from Poland have been pouring through Vienna at the rate of 250 a week, 1,000 a month, he told members of the 1969 United Jewish Appeal Study Mission.

Mr. Horwitz anticipated that at the present rate, nearly 4,000 Jews will leave

Poland in the last three and a half months of 1969. The costs of JDC of caring for this group, plus refugees from other countries in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, are expected to exceed \$1,000,000, he said.

JDC provides food, shelter and medical care for those who elect to join families in the U. S. and other Western countries while they wait in Vienna, Rome or Paris for their visas and other migration papers to be processed by the United HIAS

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