

CUF Praised In Bishop's Meeting

By WILLIAM H. MARSHNER

(Special to the Wanderer)

ARLINGTON, Va. — Catholics United for the Faith received high praise in two committee reports presented to the American Bishops during their Fall general meeting here.

On Wednesday afternoon, November 15th, Archbishop Furey of San Antonio presented the report of the Committee on the Lay Apostolate. In a paragraph entitled "Organizational Strength," the report mentioned that four national organizations are now affiliated with the National Council of Catholic Laity, namely, the National Federation of Catholic Physicians Guilds, the Missionary Cenacle Apostolate, the North American Federation of the Third Order of St. Francis, and Catholics United for the Faith. These four new affiliations bring the total strength of the NCCL to twenty-nine national organizations, twenty State organizations, 120 diocesan groups, and 10,000 local and parish groups.

Evidently stunned by mention of CUF, Bishop Cletus O'Donnell of

Madison, Wis., rose to ask about this group. Archbishop Furey replied that CUF is a "fine, up-standing Catholic organization." Bishop O'Donnell then asked what the criteria are for affiliation with the NCCL. He was told that the Bishops have not set any formal criteria and that the lay leadership of NCCL makes the decisions in this area. Bishop O'Donnell sat down muttering some words of dissatisfaction.

On Thursday afternoon, Archbishop McDonough of Louisville gave the report of the Liaison Committee. A long section of his report (which was entirely oral, no typed copies having been distributed) dealt with a meeting between the committee members and Mr. K.D. Whitehead, a vice president of CUF. The Archbishop gave an accurate and sympathetic summary of CUF's concerns in the areas of catechetics, sex education, and opposition to anti-life activities. He added that CUF is growing and vigorous, with chapters in every State and around 10,000 members nationwide. He

stressed that CUF is a "moderating influence" without specifying whether this influence was a result of counterbalancing dissident "liberals" or a result of counselling people against schism on the Right.

A minor inaccuracy in the report was the assertion that CUF is "affluent." This it certainly is not, if "affluence" means the ability to carry out one's full program by means of resources in hand. But it might be argued that compared to NAL and other disintegrating "liberal" organizations, CUF is comparatively well off. At least CUF is able to maintain a national office.

Among observers at the Bishops' meeting there was a consensus that these favorable mentions by the Bishops constituted a significant breakthrough for the embattled, pro-Papal organization. Many saw it as a triumph for the judicious policy followed by CUF President H. Lyman Stebbins, as well as a reflection of the "salesmanship" ability of Mr. Whitehead.