

# NCWC - USCCB at 100

A century working for the common good – 1917 to 2017





Jan Henryk de Rosen's painting shows Cardinal Gibbons blessing Rev. John Burke, CSP who holds the National Catholic Welfare Conference charter. Burke was General Secretary until 1936. This part of the mural is located on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor in the reception area of the Office of the General Secretariat.

When in 1917 the United States entered WWI, Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore wrote to President Woodrow Wilson offering the loyalty and resources of the American Catholic Church saying “Our people, as ever, will rise as one man to serve the nation.”



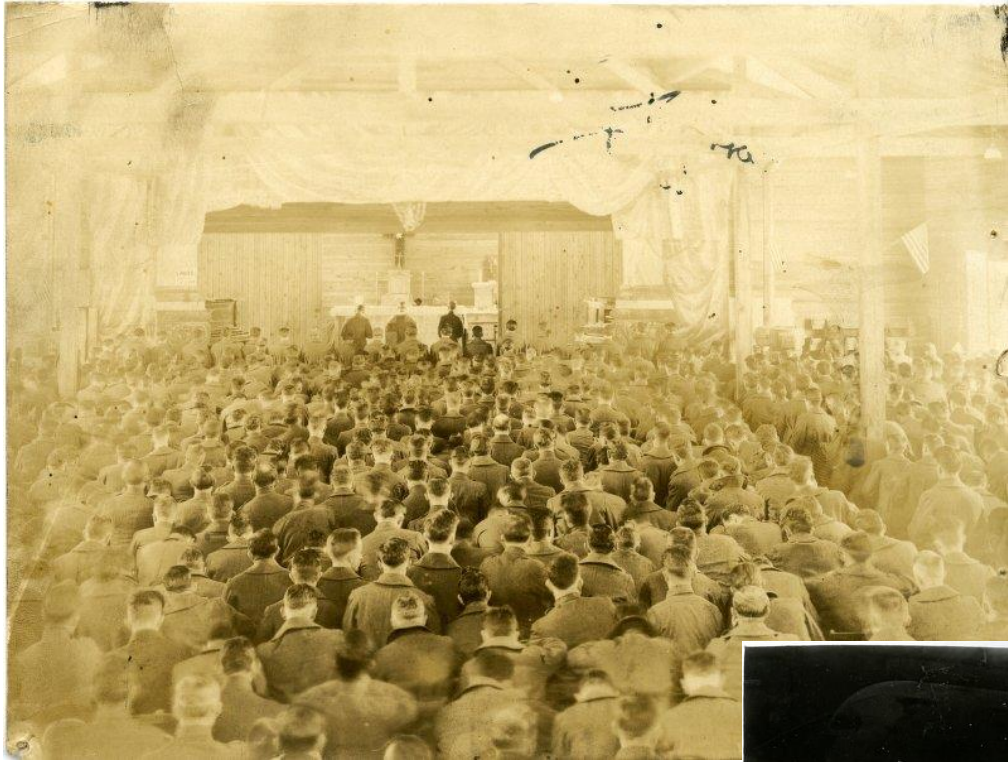


Rev. John J. Burke, CSP was selected as the first general secretary of the NCWC when the bishops gathered at Catholic University in 1917 to initiate the council.



The National Catholic War Council's chaplaincy program resulted in nearly a 1,500 chaplains by war's end. They worked closely with the Knights of Columbus to provide spiritual and recreational activities for all U.S. soldiers heading to war.





With this huge mobilization, chaplains were in great demand.

# N. C. W. C. EDITORIAL SHEET

(Issued by National Catholic Welfare Conference)

## Editorial Sheet

### The Church and Mammon

A special issue of the National Catholic Welfare Conference's "Editorial Sheet" is devoted to the theme of "The Church and Mammon." This issue is the first of a series of special issues which will be published during the year 1935. The first issue deals with the economic situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The second issue deals with the social situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The third issue deals with the moral situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The fourth issue deals with the political situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The fifth issue deals with the religious situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The sixth issue deals with the cultural situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The seventh issue deals with the scientific situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The eighth issue deals with the artistic situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The ninth issue deals with the historical situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The tenth issue deals with the geographical situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The eleventh issue deals with the astronomical situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The twelfth issue deals with the meteorological situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The thirteenth issue deals with the oceanographic situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The fourteenth issue deals with the geobotanical situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The fifteenth issue deals with the gezoological situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The sixteenth issue deals with the geodetic situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The seventeenth issue deals with the geodesic situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The eighteenth issue deals with the geophysical situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The nineteenth issue deals with the geotechnical situation of the world and the role of the Church in it. The twentieth issue deals with the geodetic situation of the world and the role of the Church in it.

## Princeton Professor Tells How Catholic Church Adapts Herself To American Spirit

Princeton Professor Tells How Catholic Church Adapts Herself To American Spirit

## Catholic Customs And Symbols

Catholic Customs And Symbols

## Basilica of the Assumption In Garden of Gethsemane Shelters Our Lady's Tomb

Basilica of the Assumption In Garden of Gethsemane Shelters Our Lady's Tomb

# The CATHOLIC WORLD through the CAMERA

NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE NEWS SERVICE



NO.	NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
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**WESTERN UNION**

COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION

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TELETYPE TO ALL AMERICA

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DUNN PAPA RECEIVED MEMORANDUM ASSOCIATION CAT  
ITALY AND HOW PAPA'S NEW CONDUCT INSTRUCTION  
OTHER CHANGES ASSOCIATED WITH NEW CAT  
ITALIAN COMER STOP PAPA SIGHTED CHANGES ON  
PURE CHANGE THE HISTORICAL JEWEL MEMBERS



In 1919, the special war work of the NCWC included the overseas workers that were sent to war ravaged Europe to assist the local populations and provide community centers for soldiers awaiting transport back to the U.S.







The contribution of the overseas workers following the war was documented in a book written by Marguerite Boylan called "They Shall Live Again."





The Americans taught work skills to young women and widows and fed and housed them in cities in Poland, Belgium, Italy and France.



They also assisted orphans and refugees whose homes and livelihoods had been destroyed by the long war.



This post war work helped allow stricken populations to be restored spiritually and economically. By late 1920 they returned stateside.



They also honored the American dead we left behind.

"It will tell you, from religious and health schools, if you are able to build the offensive and defensive weapons of a loyal Catholic Press"—Page Five X.

# THE CATHOLIC NEWS SHEET

(Issued by National Catholic Welfare Council)

The work of the Catholic press has been most praiseworthy. They have been an effective auxiliary to the pulpit in spreading the Faith.—*Fresh Magazine*, N.Y.

Vol. 1, No. 1, RELEASE FOR WEEK OF APRIL 11, 1938

## Pope Benedict Blesses National Catholic Welfare Council's News Service

**To the National Catholic Welfare Council:**  
"The Holy Father has learned with much pleasure of the establishment of the National Catholic Press Bureau. His Holiness most cordially extends the Apostolic Blessing to the service you have inaugurated to improve the Catholic papers of the United States. The work of the American Catholic papers has been most praiseworthy. They have been an effective auxiliary to the pulpit in spreading the Faith. The credit to which they are entitled is enhanced by the difficulties they have had to meet. Those who are conducting them will be pleased and heartened by your establishment for their benefit



of an efficient press organization in Washington, which also will have representation in the leading capitals of Europe and South America. They are now to have the aid which they so long deserved. As the news standard of Catholic journals is raised, undoubtedly the support given them by the Catholic reading public will be increased. His Holiness invokes goodwill and cooperation from all who will be parties to the worthy work you have undertaken, to the end that it may be fruitful of the good results you seek to achieve for Church and Country."

CARDINAL GASPARRI

### ROME IS READY FOR CEREMONY OF CANONIZATION

#### Program Complete and Pope Issues Decrees

10,000 PILGRIMS

#### Rome's Crowded Condition Prevents Mass Canoning—Appointments Announced

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
Rome, March 30.—In the face of the crowded condition of Rome, the Holy Father has decided that the canonization of saints will be celebrated in the Vatican Museums on the Sunday following the feast of St. Joseph, May 1, so that the three canonizations can be celebrated in the same ceremony.

### Pope Allocates

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
The Vatican of Monday last allocated the necessary resources for the celebration of the canonization of saints in the Vatican Museums on the Sunday following the feast of St. Joseph, May 1, so that the three canonizations can be celebrated in the same ceremony.

### Appointments of Bishops

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
On April 1st it was announced that the Pope had appointed several bishops to vacant positions in the United States. The appointments were: Bishop of New York, Bishop of Newark, Bishop of Philadelphia, Bishop of Baltimore, and Bishop of Washington.

### JERUSALEM NEW BUS

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
Jerusalem, April 10.—The British Mandate authorities have approved the plan to build a new bus service in Jerusalem. The service will be operated by the British Mandate authorities.

### NEW CATHOLIC EMPIRE

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
Movement Afoot In Austria To Unite Catholic States Under Hagareburg  
Vienna, April 10.—The Catholic press in Austria is working for the unification of Catholic states under the leadership of Austria.

### Prelates To Visit Holy See This Year

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
Washington, April 10.—Many Catholic prelates are expected to visit the Holy See this year, including the Archbishop of New York and the Archbishop of Baltimore.

### Ten Thousand Pilgrims

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
St. Michael's Mount, Italy, April 10.—Ten thousand pilgrims are expected to visit the shrine of St. Michael's Mount in Italy this year.

### CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADS IN CENSUS BY GOVERNMENT

#### Has One Third of All Church Members In Country

### PROPERTY VALUABLE

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
Great Catholic Membership—Property Valuable  
Washington, April 10.—The Catholic Church in the United States has one third of all church members in the country.

### Reciter in Bishop's Hand

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
In a recitation of the Gospels, the Bishop of New York recited the Gospel of St. Matthew.

### Church Can Aid Government

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
It is the hope of the Catholic Church that the Church can aid the government in the fight against the enemy.

### Cardinal Gibbons' Greeting

#### National Catholic Welfare Council

Along with the Holy Father, I earnestly hope that the first news sheet of the National Catholic Welfare Council to the Catholic papers of the United States will be an inspiration to them to reflect more vividly the spirit of the Church in her efforts for God and Country.

### Attorney General Palmer Praises Bishop's Pastoral

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
Washington, April 10.—The Attorney General, Clegg, has praised the pastoral letter of the Bishop of New York.

### Women Confessors Wanted by Anglicans

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
London, April 10.—The Anglican Church is seeking women confessors to assist in the work of the confessional.

### French-Vatican Pact

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
Paris, April 10.—The Vatican and France have reached a new understanding on the subject of the Papal States.

### CATHOLIC GIVEN IMPORTANT POST IN ENGLAND

#### J. S. Gilbert Made Chairman of London Council

### ISLANDS AN ISSUE

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
London, April 10.—The issue of the Channel Islands is being discussed in the House of Commons.

### Holy City's Rule Not Yet Certain To Be Christian

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
Jerusalem, April 10.—The future of the Holy City is still uncertain.

### Muslims Claim Control of Jerusalem

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
Jerusalem, April 10.—The Muslims claim control of Jerusalem.

### Holy City's Rule Not Yet Certain To Be Christian

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### Emir Faisal's Coup Proclaim Himself King of Syria—Must Explain To Allies

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
Damascus, April 10.—Emir Faisal has proclaimed himself King of Syria.

### Archbishop Criticizes the Age

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
The Archbishop of New York has criticized the current generation for its lack of faith.

### Women Made Beneficiaries

(By S. C. W. C. News Service.)  
The National Catholic Welfare Council has made women beneficiaries of its programs.

### HOLY CITY'S RULE NOT YET CERTAIN TO BE CHRISTIAN

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**EXCERPTS FROM HOLY FATHER'S  
LETTER ON THE N. C. W. C.  
TO THE BISHOPS OF THE UNITED STATES**

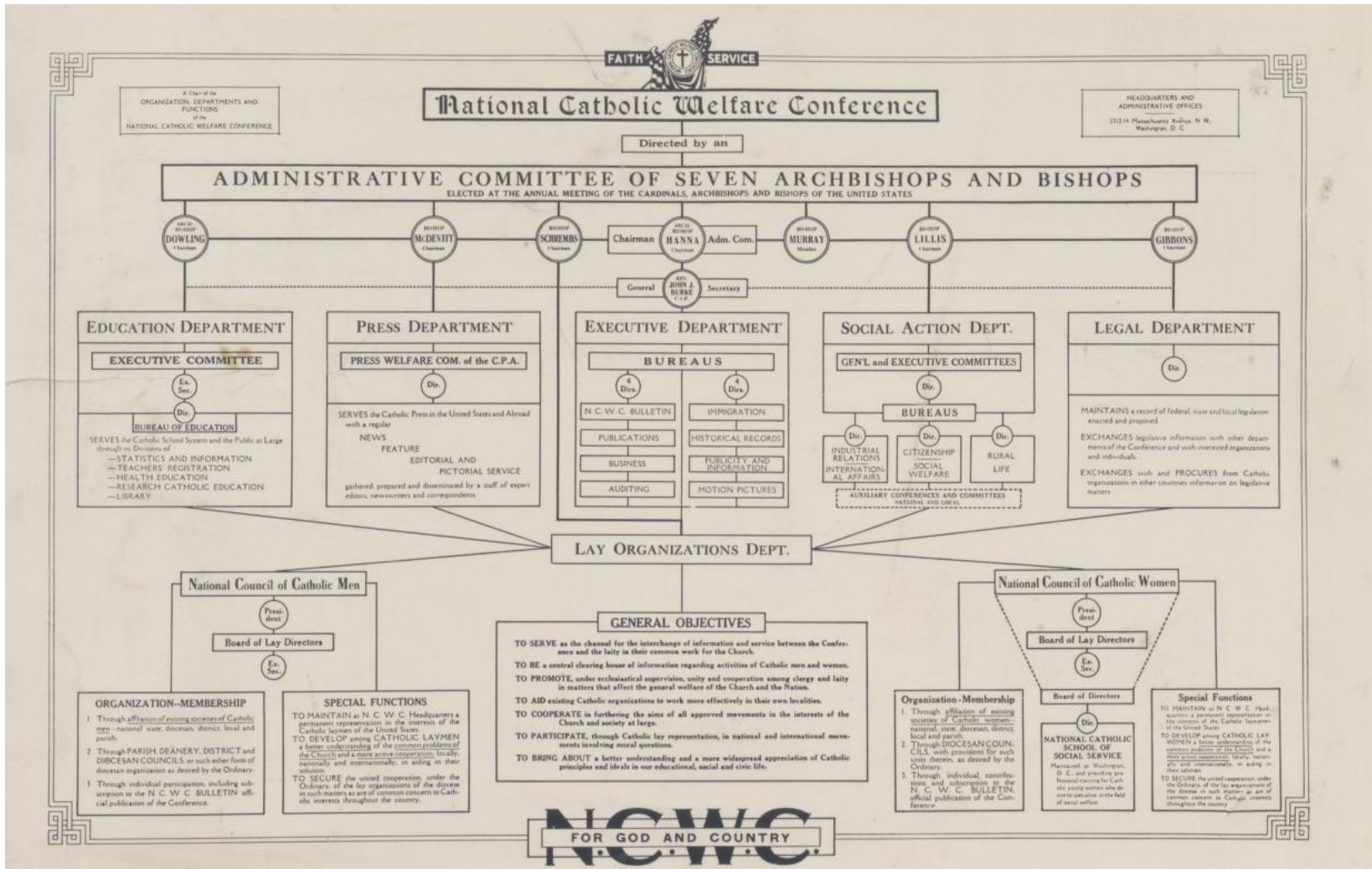
1. "The National Catholic Welfare Conference is not only useful but necessary."
2. "It is imperative that by taking counsel together you all agree on one common aim and with one united will strive for its attainment, by employing as you now do, the means which are adequate and adapted to present-day conditions."
3. "By uniting ever more closely the forces at your command, you will impart to the Christian life in your country a greater and greater vigor in the spirit of justice and charity."
4. "We praise all who in any way cooperate with you in this great work."

NCWC's program of Social Reconstruction influenced by the teachings of Pope Leo XIII.

Pope Benedict XV gave his approval to the Welfare Council in 1920.

And ultimately, Pope Pius XI ended the brief suppression of the NCWC in 1922 after an appeal by the American Archbishops that comprised the Executive Committee of the Council. Council became Conference for canonical reasons resulting in the

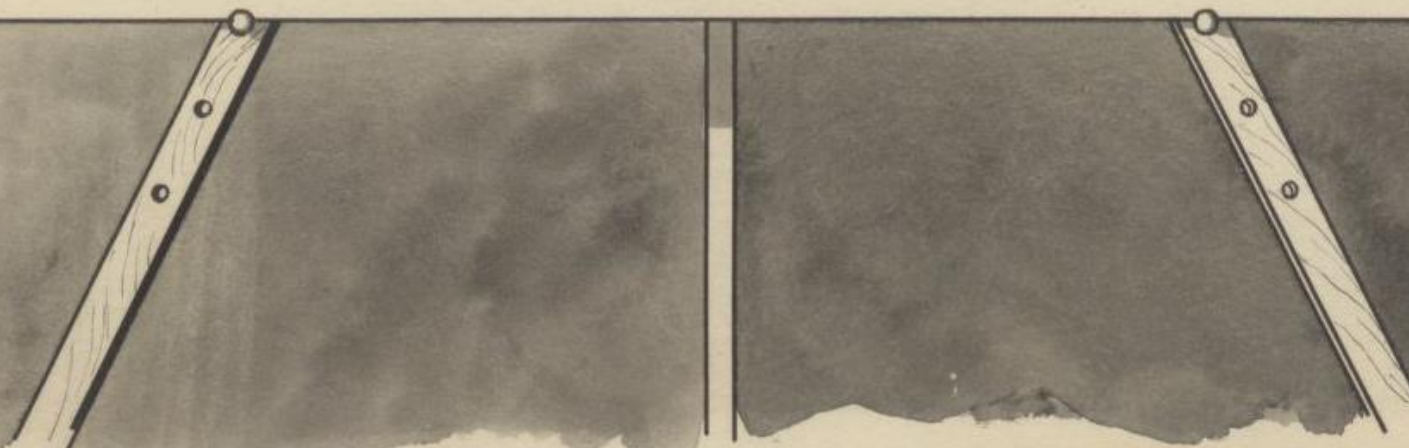
**National Catholic  
Welfare Conference**



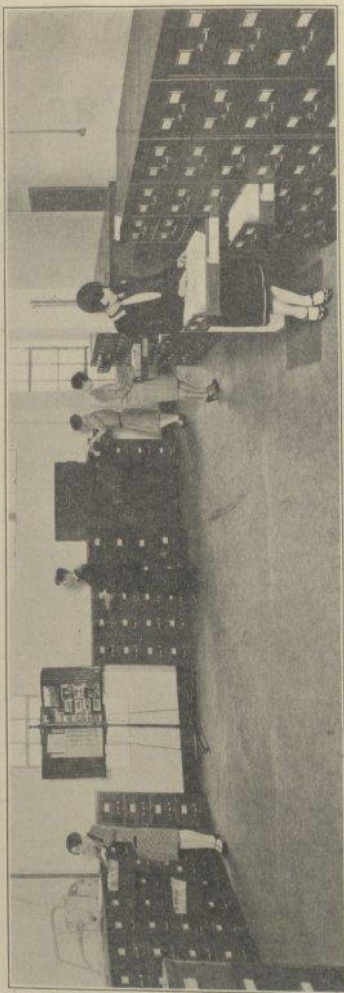
Organizational chart from the mid-1920s



## GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- TO SERVE as the channel for the interchange of information and service between the Conference and the laity in their common work for the Church.
  - TO BE a central clearing house of information regarding activities of Catholic men and women.
  - TO PROMOTE, under ecclesiastical supervision, unity and cooperation among clergy and laity in matters that affect the general welfare of the Church and the Nation.
  - TO AID existing Catholic organizations to work more effectively in their own localities.
  - TO COOPERATE in furthering the aims of all approved movements in the interests of the Church and society at large.
  - TO PARTICIPATE, through Catholic lay representation, in national and international movements involving moral questions.
  - TO BRING ABOUT a better understanding and a more widespread appreciation of Catholic principles and ideals in our educational, social and civic life.
- 





A SECTION OF THE FILES IN THE NEWLY CONSTRUCTED FIRE-PROOF VAULT AT N. C. W. C. HEADQUARTERS. In this central depository are housed the records of Catholic war service men in the World War. The files and service records of some 800,000 Catholic soldiers, sailors and marines are a part of the N. C. W. C. historical collection. This vault, while its construction is being added to daily through the cooperation of local Catholic organizations and individuals with the N. C. W. C. Historical Records Bureau.

## ESSENTIAL CONSIDERATIONS

### In the Collection of Catholic World War Records

**P**ARISH War Records are the main source of the central and permanent collection, maintained by the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

All parishes have not developed Honor Rolls. The N. C. W. C. may have wholly inadequate war records for your community. Ask the N. C. W. C. about your local Catholic war records.

Parish World War service lists can be developed and many supplemented by study and check with Community records. Additional names of Catholics are invariably found when so checked.

Insist that the N. C. W. C. has record of the Catholic war dead from your community. Make certain that Catholic men from your community honored by decorations or citations are properly noted in the N. C. W. C. collection.

Promote the interest of Catholics in your local war memorials and war records commissions.

Advise the N. C. W. C. of publications of town, county or state that mention World War Service.

There are thousands of competent and interested Catholics, who would be especially devoted to this particular work among the Gold Star Mothers, veteran organizations and auxiliaries of veteran groups.

Local committees on war records should be working groups, determined to identify and preserve the war record of their fellow Catholics.

Records submitted by individuals, societies and committees are accepted, if the cases are certified as Catholics.

Frequently the American Catholic has occasion to refer to the citizenship record of his co-religionists.

The Catholic war record is not maintained in governmental data. It depends upon local study and scouting of records by interested Catholic citizens.

That record invites your active interest.

TO: Father Burke August 31, 1929.  
FROM: Mr. D. J. Ryan, Bureau of Historical Records.  
SUBJECT: 1929 Report of the Bureau of Historical Records.

In March, 1929 the Bureau of Historical Records moved its offices and materials to the fire-proof building provided for the safe keeping of the records. All records pertaining to the World War data are now housed in these quarters with the exception of the war time files of Catholic publications which will require special steel racks and facings therefor. A pictorial exhibit of the work of the National Catholic War Council has been started in the entrance hall of the Records Building.

The Bureau prepared a sixteen page pamphlet explaining the purposes of the compilation and the work incident to the collection of facts on the Catholic contribution to the national energies during the World War period. Suggested methods and a catalogue of sources were included for the benefit of committees of the lay organizations that are developing the work locally. Salient facts concerning the N. C. W. C. as a whole were also presented in this work guide.

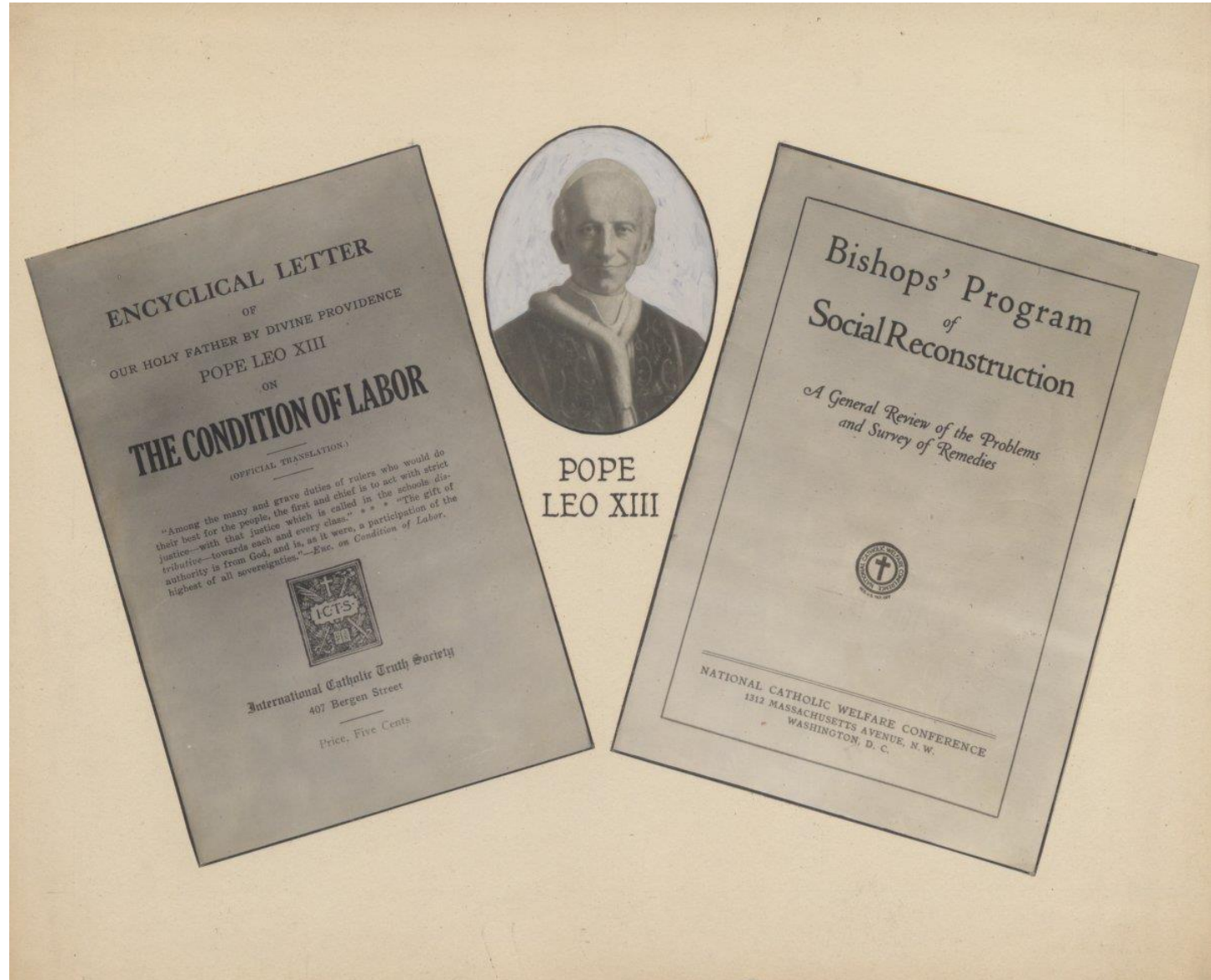
Several thousand copies have been distributed by the N. C. C. M. and N. C. C. W. The Bureau has noted a pleasing comment on this guide from interested committees as well as organizations and commissions engaged with World War records. The editor of The Ecclesiastical Review requested an article on the work of the Bureau after noting the pamphlet on the N. C. W. C. World War Records.

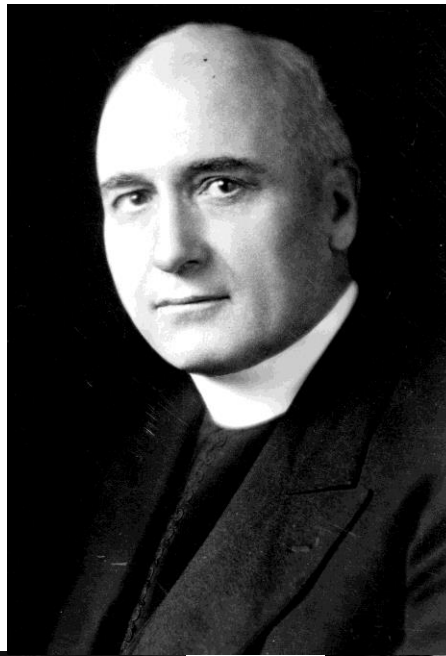
Since December, 1928, the Bureau has supplied to the Feature Service of the N. C. W. C. Press Department a weekly feature on outstanding Catholic heroes of the World War. These have provoked an interest in the collection. Parents, ex-service men, chaplains and others have presented facts of great value to the collection after noting the accuracy of statements released in these feature articles.

Federal legislation enacted March 2, 1929 allows the Mothers and widows of the A. E. F. dead now buried overseas to visit the American cemeteries on invitation and at the expense of the Government. The task of reaching the Mothers and widows of these soldiers is admitted to be difficult in the majority of cases. The Society of American War Mothers (World War) have asked the cooperation of the N. C. W. C. through this Bureau in locating Catholic Mothers. The office of the Quarter-Master Corps in charge of cemeteries has stated they will rely on the help our records may give as they have exhausted their possibilities in reaching the Gold Star Mothers through the emergency addresses presented by the soldier at the time of the war.

Active cooperation with the effort of the Government in regard to these pilgrimages will allow another public recognition of the N. C. W. C. war data; and the effectiveness of the local committees of the lay organizations interested in records and incidental matters. It will also develop additional records of Catholics buried in these cemeteries. Cooperation with the American War Mothers, although we have

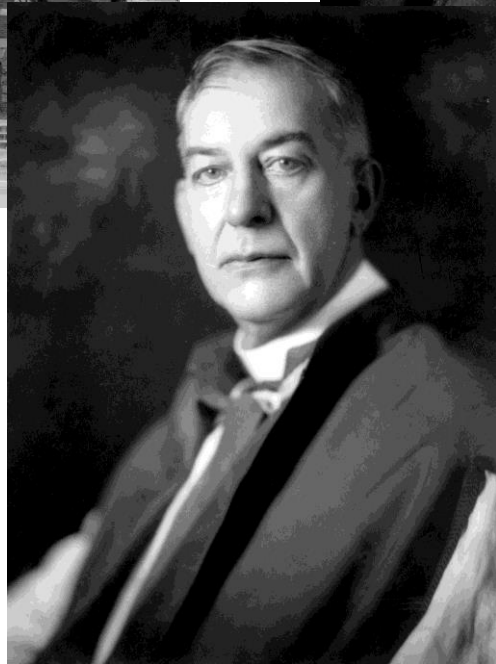
Pope Leo XIII's  
Encyclical Rerum  
Novarum  
influenced the  
NCWC'S Program  
of Social  
Reconstruction 30  
years later.





Following WWI, Rev. John A. Ryan of the Social Action Department published pastoral letters for the post war world. Believing that justice in the world could prevent future wars, they pushed for universal health care, fair wages, the abolition of child labor as well as support for unions. Many of the ideas influenced President Roosevelt's New Deal.

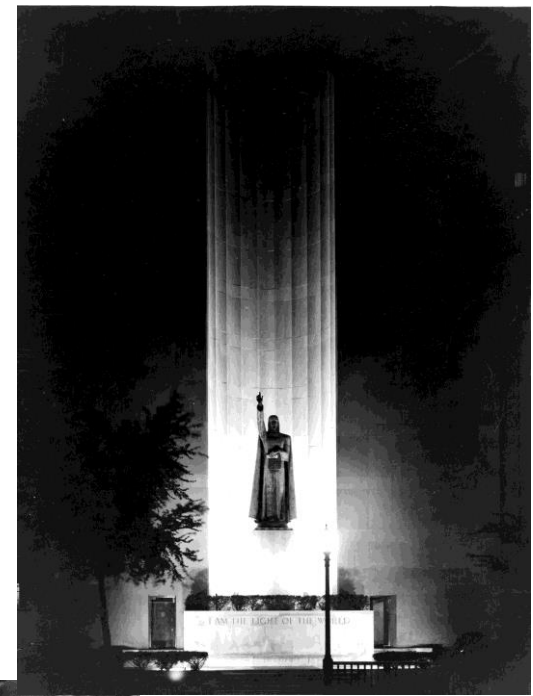
The NCWC had occupied a house at 930 14<sup>th</sup> Street before moving to this building near Thomas Circle, NW in the early 1920s.





Unfortunately this pursuit of justice did not result in the peace they sought and the conference once again picked up it's role of offering spiritual support to those at war.

In World War II, the National Catholic Welfare Conference continued to distribute aid to populations affected by war. Catholic Relief Services grew out of the work of the Bishops' War Relief Services. Emphasis on resettling refugees grew exponentially following WWII. NCWC worked in the U.S. and helped settlement programs in other countries where established programs didn't exist.



The new headquarters building grew up at 1312 Massachusetts Ave. and was dedicated to Christ, Light of the World.



The picture shows His Holiness Pope Pius XII inspecting thousands of loaves of bread made with flour supplied by the agents of the Bishops' Fund for Victims of War. From the mountains of northern Italy to the tip of the Italian boot the vast program of American Catholic assistance reaches into every city, town and village.

Help from the U.S. even made it to Pope Pius XII in Rome. Here his Holiness inspects bread made with flour supplied by the Bishops' Fund for Victims of War.



Below right Polish DPs released from Siberian labor camps arriving in Mexico stand next to a war relief services bus. Eileen Egan, an immigrant herself is center.



Food programs in post WWII Paris and in Vienna



The pastoral care and resettlement of immigrants and refugees continued into the Cold War.







A young Displaced Persons family being greeted by a National Catholic Welfare Conference immigration worker following their arrival in the United States. If the proposed Congressional legislation is passed admitting a large number of Displaced Persons to the United States, services of this sort provided by War Relief Services would be greatly expanded.

They came from all over the world.





*For HIS sake and theirs -  
Give Generously!*

**The BISHOPS' FUND** *for the Victims of War*  
**1949 CAMPAIGN**

On behalf of the  
BISHOPS' EMERGENCY RELIEF COMMITTEE  
and WAR RELIEF SERVICES - NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE



IN HIS NAME...

*for all HIS children...*

*Give Generously*

**The BISHOPS' FUND**  
*for the Victims of War*

**1951 CHILDREN'S COLLECTION**

On behalf of the  
BISHOPS' EMERGENCY RELIEF COMMITTEE  
and WAR RELIEF SERVICES - NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE

**WANTED -  
Warmth  
for Winter!**

- ✓ CLOTHING
- ✓ BLANKETS
- ✓ SHOES

GIVE TO THE

**CATHOLIC  
BISHOPS'**

**THANKSGIVING CLOTHING COLLECTION**

for KOREA, and refugees in EUROPE, the NEAR and FAR EAST

**THANKSGIVING WEEK**

**Nov. 23-30, 1952 • In All Catholic Parishes**

AUSPICES OF

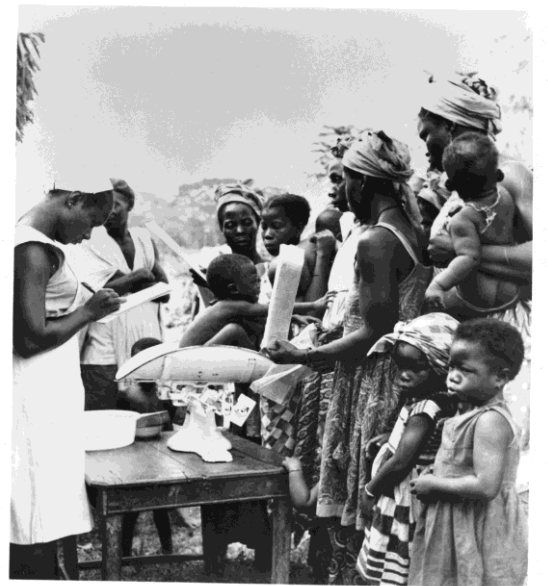
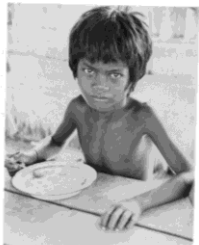
**WAR RELIEF SERVICES - NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE**

Your Parish Collection Center Will Welcome Any Gift of Desperately Needed Clothing!



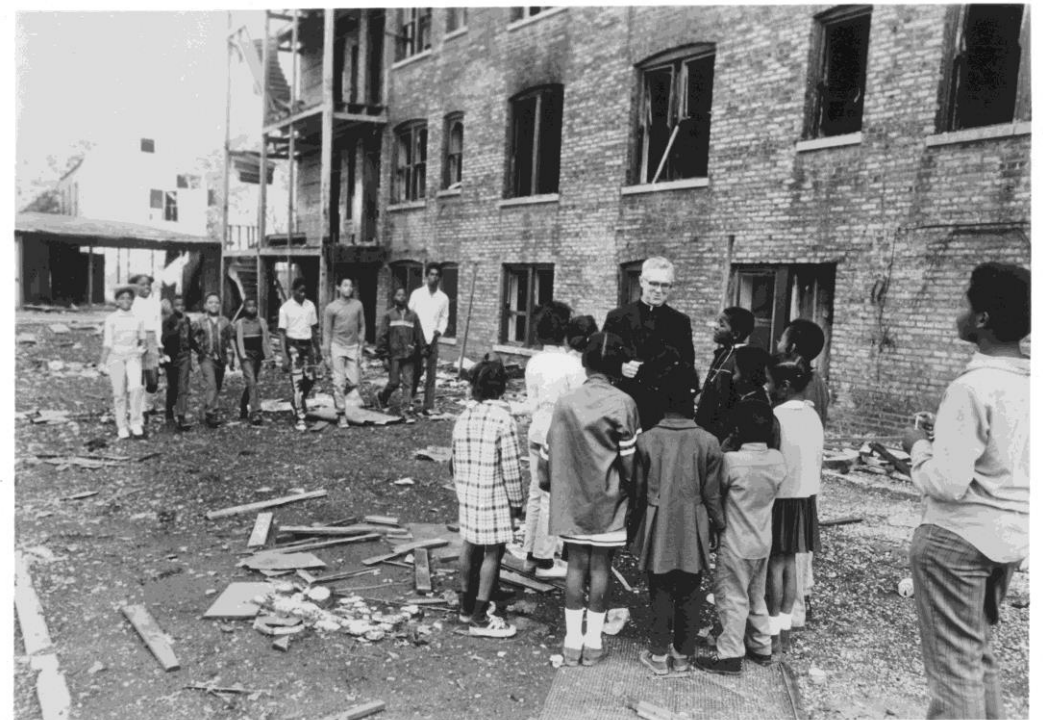


The many ways American Catholics, through the NCWC, helped their fellow man.





In 1958 the Bishops called for an end to segregation. The social upheaval of the 1960s brought consensus among the church leadership that more had to be done. They were also encouraged by the Holy Father. The Campaign for Human Development began in 1969.





The 1960s meant new dialogue within the church with the Second Vatican Council, church involvement in the Civil Rights movement, peace initiatives and the rights of organized labor and migrant workers.



In 1966, in response to a mandate from the Second Vatican Council, the NCWC was reorganized into the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the United States Catholic Conference. The membership of both were the bishops themselves. The NCCB was an ecclesiastical association as distinct from the USCC which was a civil corporation, a non-profit under the statutes of the District of Columbia. The Vatican decree *Christus Dominus* wanted bishops of each country to organize themselves into a national assembly of bishops like the U.S. had done in 1917. In many ways the American Church was the model.

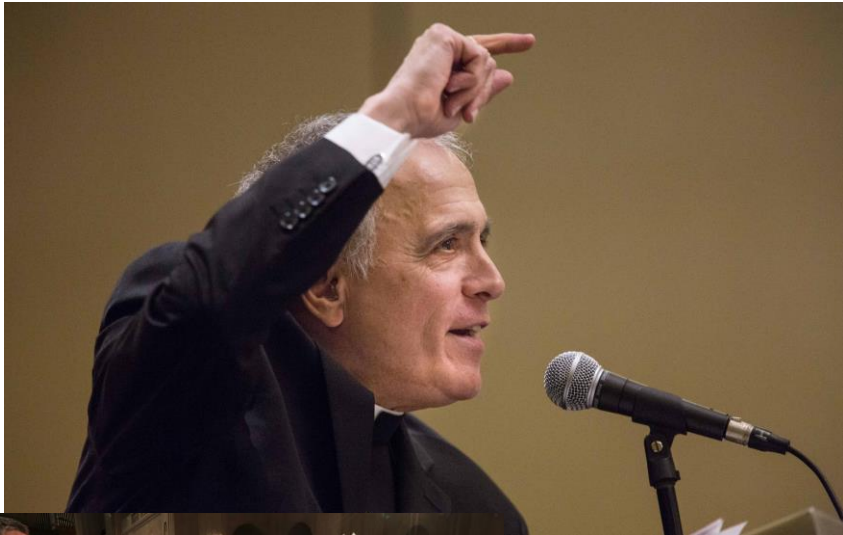
In late 1991 an ad hoc Committee on Mission and Structure began the process of examining the theological status of the NCCB/ USCC and to review the conferences' missions and goals. The primary focus was to encourage greater participation by the bishops and give a sense of greater unity.

With that push for unity came proposed consolidation of the NCCB and USCC into a single conference but there was no consensus on how the final reorganization should look. This process took nearly a decade before the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops was ultimately realized in 2001.

There is a very detailed account of this process written by our former Secretary for Communications for the New Catholic Encyclopedia and I encourage you to come to the library on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor to inform yourselves because I'm only give you a cursory telling of the story today.









Timeline Photos

100

# YEARS OF THE USCCB

In 1917, the bishops of the U.S. formed the National Catholic War Council (NCWC).



161

Active diocesan bishops.



196

Archdioceses dioceses in the country.



6

Cardinals currently leading archdioceses.



466

Active and retired bishops in the U.S.



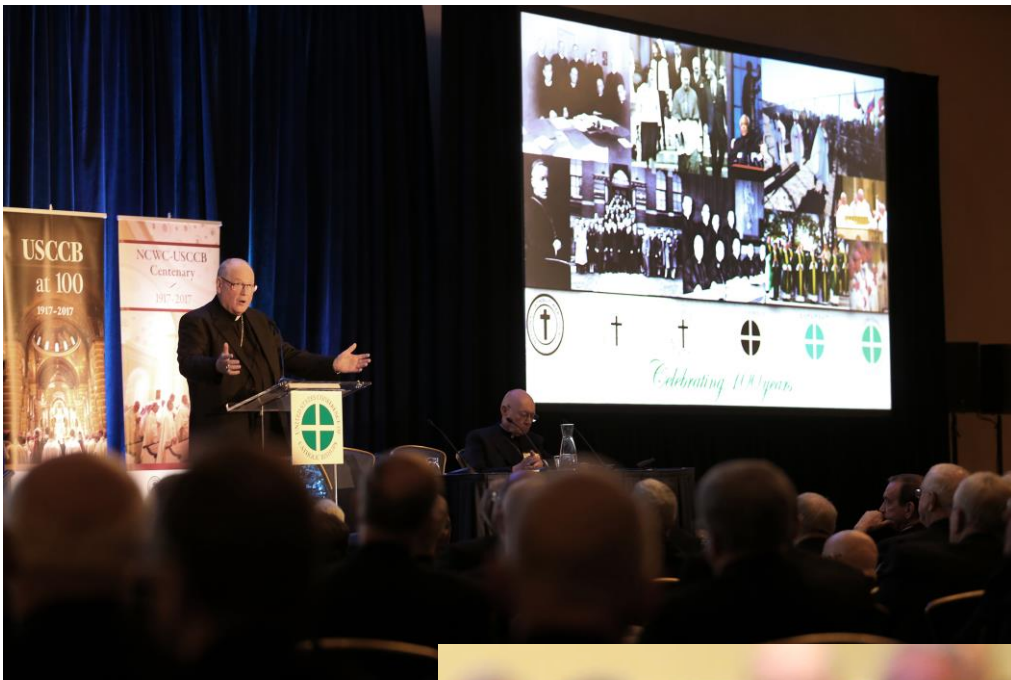
26

Active archbishops.

Like Comment Share

Options





On November 12, 2017 the USCCB celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> year as “one and indivisible.”



## QUESTIONS?

Interested in more information?

Please go to our website click 'about USCCB' and see the Centenary Timeline. (Additions welcome)

Furthermore, <https://thecatholicnewsarchive.org> has the NCWC News Service(CNS) news feeds 1920-1957 and the Catholic World in Pictures digitized and fully searchable.

The Catholic Communication Campaign has generously provided grant money to complete the digitization and all of the content will be freely available by the end of 2018.

There are war records and the NCWC Bulletin digitized at the American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives at CUA.



Photos courtesy of Catholic News Service Archives,  
USCCB Archives, Center for Migration Studies  
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University Archives

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