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PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS AND PARENT-TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS*

DEAN MAX SCHOETZ, JR.

NO SOONER did we start our parent-teachers' association at St. Michael's when we were asked, "Do you belong to the State Organization?" Our reply was that we did not, but that was not sufficient. We were again asked why we did not. The decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States in the Nebraska German Language case and in the Oregon school law case ought to have been a sufficient answer but they still wanted to know why.

We have problems peculiar to our schools that need discussion and when we did belong to the state organization, we asked for a round-table discussion of matters peculiar to our schools. We were politely informed that there was nothing in the constitution of the parent-teachers' organization which would permit us to have these separate round-table discussions. We therefore organized a Parent-Teachers' Association of the Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. However, we are closely affiliated with the state organization but we must discuss problems peculiar to our own schools and hence these separate organizations.

But this is not the first time that St. Michael's congregation has been maligned. During the World War we were especially singled out and while we had oversubscribed every Liberty Loan quota, gave more volunteers to our country, never resisted the draft and gave to our country one of Milwaukee's first dead, Orville Casper, we were called the 100 per cent "Huns." Vliet Street was known as the Von Hindenberg Line and government inspectors searched our very church for arms and ammunition.

These same 100 per cent Americans today are endeavoring to propagate a movement in this country to settle the loans to our allies at a considerable discount and at small rates of interest. During the war, we not only gave to our allies our Navy, our Army, but our young men and our money as well, in order to bring victory out of certain defeat for them; yet now they come back to us and want "terms" for the money we loaned them. I can still remember when these various loan commissions of our allies came over to America. They came with wreaths

* Address delivered by Dean Schoetz on the occasion of the organization of the St. Michael's Parent-Teachers' Association, Twenty-fourth and Cherry Streets, Milwaukee.

and flowers for our heroes and placed them on their graves, then went to Washington with their coin bags and took our money by the billions. But today they come to us asking for terms and charge us with being Shylocks.

Contrast this situation with that of Chancellor Wirth of Germany. On his recent visit to Milwaukee, he expressed on behalf of the German Republic, gratitude to America for its Christian charity in helping them to save their starving babes and to get their country back on its feet,—and this from our former enemies. He further added that America would get back many times in money by way of trade what they had given.

So, therefore, we are used to slander and unfounded charges and we feel that this Parent-Teachers' Association of St. Michael's can be made very successful and be of great service not only to St. Michael's Congregation but to the whole city as well.