

# PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

A Social Document of the  
ULCA



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

## A Statement of the United Lutheran Church in America, 1950

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Citizens of the United States of America enjoy under the provisions of its constitution certain high privileges of democratic life. Among these are the separation of church and state, the freedom to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, and the right to promote churches and schools for religious instruction on a voluntary basis.

Under these rich heritages the churches have developed strong organizations and have built influential schools of learning.

But in the very midst of our democratic society certain influences have been at work to vitiate the principle of separation of church and state in such ways as the determined attempts to secure authorization for the use of public funds for the support of private parochial schools.

Such efforts not only undermine the democratic principles guaranteed in the Constitution of the United States of America, but also confuse the minds of our citizenry as to their respective duties toward God and country.

It is one thing for schools of the church to enjoy privileges under our democratic form of government, but it is an entirely different issue when it is proposed that these private institutions be granted public funds for their private use. Public education is properly supported by taxation but parochial schools should not thus receive their support, since they are the property and interest of particular churches.

Any authorization for the use of public funds for parochial schools constitutes a preferment inimical to the very impartial nature of a democracy. If one group has the right to use public funds for its schools, then all groups should have the same right. This would confuse public and private education and destroy the voluntary system secured by separation of church and state.

In view of these dangers our citizens are urged to consider carefully the issues involved and to act with intelligence in the interest of the preservation of our precious democratic heritages.

