

Churchmen Will Not Allow Buildings To Be Used As Schools

The Norfolk Presbytery, by almost unanimous vote, has voted to support the Supreme Court's schools desegregation decree and has warned churches in the Presbytery against allowing use of church facilities for "private" school classes.

The action was taken July 15 but was not announced until this week.

DR. W. W. GROVER, clerk of the Presbytery, said that the voting on the resolution drawn by 85 ministers and elders was almost unanimous.

There are 20 churches in Norfolk which are in the Presbytery, which has a membership of 57 churches overall.

THE ACTION of the group comes as a blow to the Tidewater Educational Foundation, Inc., which is seeking to obtain church facilities but, to date has received negligible cooperation.

THE RESOLUTION drawn by the Presbytery says in part:

"We believe that racial problems and their solution are moral and spiritual as well as political in nature, and that the crisis facing us concerning the possible closing of our public school doors impels us to speak to our churches.

"WE GO ON record as respecting the convictions of those who differ with us, but we believe that the United States Supreme Court decision ruling segregation in public schools to be unconstitutional, is right in principle. . .

"It is our conviction that there can be no real solution to the problem of the possible closing of our public school doors until we know whether the federal or the state law will prevail. Until this is made clear to us, we counsel members of our churches to remember that:

"1—Our General Assembly in May of 1958 voted that it would not be proper to use church buildings for schools in the event public schools are closed.

"2—If the federal law prevails it is our duty to obey this law and our duty to teach our children to obey it.

"3—If the state law prevails it is our duty to obey this law and our duty to teach our children to obey it.

" . . . WE BELIEVE that as we give serious consideration to the possible closing of our public school doors, we should also give serious consideration to the possible closing of the door of salvation. . . The door of salvation is now wide open to men of all races through faith in Jesus Christ and a life of dedication to him.