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Catholic Courier

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE ROCHESTER DIOCESE

PER COPY, 5c • PER YEAR, $2.50 • Published at Rochester, New York • THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1935 • Eight Pages—In One Section • VOLUME VII • NUMBER 46

Mexican Government Denies Bishops' Petition for Repeal Of Laws Persecuting Church

Reply Made Through Cardenas Cabinet Officer Evades Charges Made by Prelate; Resorts To Recalling Alleged Inquisition Cruelties

By CHARLES BETICO

(Mexico City Correspondent, N.C.W.C. NEWS SERVICE)

Mexico City, Nov. 5—The long awaited reply to the Mexican Bishops' appeal to President Lazaro Cardenas for the repeal of the new Law for the Nationalization of Property and the amendment of Articles 3, 24, 27 and 130 of the Federal Constitution, has been made by Minister of Gobernacion Silvano Barba Gonzalez. The reply is regarded here as just as nebulous as the "Historical and Legal Essay" prepared by Emilio Portes Gil, then Attorney General of the Republic, now head of the National Revolutionary Party. The latter document was published in English by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the title "The Conflict between the Civil Power and the Clergy."

As did Portes Gil in his essay, the Minister of Goberancion resorts to the alleged cruelties of the Inquisition in accusing the Catholic clergy of having "always condemned liberty of conscience as opposed to its fundamental dogma that no one can believe anything other than what it teaches and no one ought to think anything that is contrary to its doctrines." The Minister also makes the grandiose statement that "this Clergy cannot be, or at least never has been, within the elemental concepts of culture on which you now rely in your argumentations."

Petition Denied

The most positive statement found in the reply is that which rejects the petition, in the following words: "At the decision of the First Magistrate of the Natioh, there is presented to you, in due reply, the consideration on which are based the Federal Executive Power's Decision not to accede to your petition."

Whereas the secular press in the United States has stated that the Minister gave assurance that "priests' homes would not be confiscated if religious services were held in them," a careful perusal of the text of the reply shows that no such interpretation is warranted. The reply does not say that the place of habitation of a priest is not to be nationalized, but it says nothing on the score of religious services therein, and other laws plainly prescribe that places where religious services are held are to be seized, and this on the basis of mere presumptive evidence.

The reply, signed by the Minister of Gobernacion on November 2, a month and three days after the signing of the petition, is addressed to "Senores Archbishops Jose Othon Nunez, Pascual iaz Dand other signers."

The first six paragraphs refer to the specific requests made by the Hierarchy, and the seventh to the rejection of the petition.

Launching upon the "considerations" on which rejection is based, the reply passes lightly over the Bishops' contention that "the political constitution of every civilized nation that respects the principles of social morality and is an

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HARRISBURG BISHOP DIES, KNOWN HERE

Harrisburg, Pa. (NC).—The Most Rev. Philip R. McDevitt, Bishop of Harrisburg, died at 4:15 o'clock Monday morning of pneumonia.

(Word of the death of Bishop McDevitt received in Rochester recalled the fact that the Bishop of Harrisburg preached the sermon at the funeral of Bishop McQuaid in 1909. At the recent Eucharistic Congress in Cleveland, the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Charles F. Shay, pastor of St. Patrick's Cathedral, had a brief chat with Bishop McDeavitt about friends in the Rochester diocese.

Priest for half a century and Ordinary of a diocese for nearly 20 years, Bishop McDevitt, 77 years of age at the time of his death was among the best-known and best-beloved members of the Hierarchy in the United States.

Gentle, mild in conversation and possessed of great personal humility, he was at the same time firm and energetic in conviction. He was noted for his clarity of vision, liberality of mind and self-control, but behind his unfailing calmness and courtesy there was an extraordinary record of accomplishment in several fields.

He was a beloved parish priest, an outstanding educator, a distinguished administrator, a revered Bishop, an esteemed member of the Administrative Committee of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, and a staunch champion of the Catholic Press.

Bishop McDevitt's ideals of personal religion were evident in all his undertakings. Selfish considerations never entered into his works. He was concerned solely with the cause of religion and the welfare of those whom he served. He was an early advocate of temperance and a leader in the promotion of Catholic education. As Episcopal Chairman of the N.C.W.C. Press Department, he devoted several years of his life, with notable success, to the development of the Catholic Press.

Bishop Ryan Named Rector Emeritus

Washington (NC).—The Most Rev. James H. Ryan, bishop-designate of Omaha, was named rector emeritus of the Catholic University of America at the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the university Tuesday. Bishop Ryan has been rector of the university for the last seven years.

O. H. Perry Johnson, vice-president of the National Metropolitan Bank here, was elected treasurer of the university to fill a vacancy occasioned by the death of the late John J. Nelligan of Baltimore.

The School of Social Work was erected into an independent school of the university, with Monsignor John O'Grady as dean.

ABBE DIMNET NOTES TRANSITION FOR BETTER IN AMERICAN THOUGHT

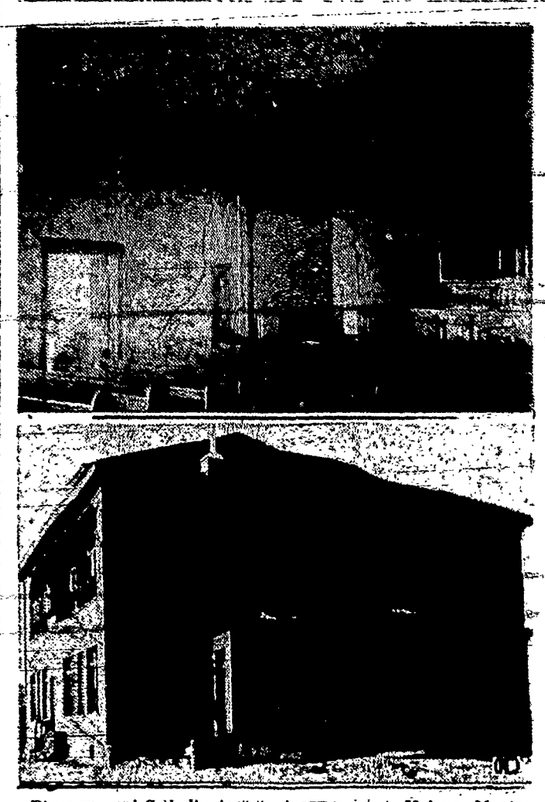
Washington—(NC)—Taking as a symbol of life the Foucault pendulum that moves silently in a circle in the Pantheon in Paris, propelled by the motion of the earth, Abbe Ernest Dimnet charmed an audience of 400 persons at the Willard Hotel here Tuesday evening of last week, when he gave his well-known lecture, "From a French Balcony," a rambling discourse of reminiscences gleaned from 30 years of French life. The Abbe spoke under the auspices of the Washington Catholic Radio Hour and was introduced by the Rev. Dr. John K. Cartwright, pastor of the Church of the Immaculate Conception.

Abbe Dimnet said he was conscious of a profound change for the better in American thought since his last visit. He attributed the change to the crisis from which the nation, he said, was now emerging.

"Prohibition is gone," he observed, "and that is good. The crisis is over and people are satisfied with less. And that is good. After all, a crisis which sends people back to thinking is not a crisis, but a cure."

The Abbe discussed the changes that had come over French life in the last 30 years, mentioning particularly the status of women since the war. The war had a great influence, he said, in breaking down the attitude that excluded the French woman from gainful employment. Co-education had also put in its appearance, he said, and as he crossed the Luxembourg gardens he was sometimes astonished to see the young men and women coming out of school together.

QUAKES WRECK CHURCH PROPERTY



Diocesan and Catholic institutional property in Helena, Montana, suffered $500,000 loss in the series of seismic shocks which disturbed that region recently. Upper photo shows a corner of the chapel of St. Vincent's Academy with its cracked walls and the altar unscathed. Lower photo, effects of the earthquakes of Oct. 18 on the combination church and school building of St. Mary's parish, Helena. A violent temblor on Oct. 31 completely wrecked the building.

Bishop Tells Great Quake Loss Of Helena See in Plea for Aid

Governor of Montana Makes Radio Appeal For Catholic Orphans Made Homeless By Helena Temblors; Ring Champion Proffers Help

Helena, Mont.—(NC)—The Most Rev. Ralph L. Hayes, former Bishop of Helena who was on his way to assume his duties as Rector of the American College in Rome when the recent series of earthquakes struck the diocese he was leaving, has issued a letter to members of the Hierarchy in the United States appealing for aid to the diocese. His Excellency sets the damage done to Catholic institutions by the temblors at $500,000.

The seriousness of the damage suffered by the Catholic Church here is such that Governor Frank H. Cooney, of Montana, has made an appeal over the radio for aid to St. Joseph's Orphan's Home and the House of Good Shepherd, the buildings of both of these institutions having been completely ruined.

The letter of Bishop Hayes is as follows:

"The Diocese of Helena has suffered severe losses in the recent series of earthquakes which ravaged the episcopal city. First reports indicated that the damage would be comparatively slight. Subsequent information presented a different picture, and a personal visit to the devastated area confirmed the fear that the loss to the Diocese will be grave in itself, and, considering our financial resources, almost disastrous. Contractors and engineers have placed the damage to our church properties at a figure approximating $500,000. A more detailed inspection of foundations, walls, and roofs may increase that estimate by several hundred thousand dollars. Recurring earthquakes would add to the present damage.

"Not one of our eight Church institutions in Helena and East Helena escaped without severe damage; several of them are total losses.

"St. Mary's combination church and school is practically stripped of its brick walls. The Rectory is severely damaged.

"St. Vincent's Academy has been condemned as a total loss, and will have to be replaced.

"The children of St. Joseph's Orphanage spent several nights in a barn. While they have now returned to the main building, they are not permitted to occupy their dormitories, and their school building will not be opened for many months.

"At the House of the Good Shepherd, the laundry—the principal source of revenue—is a total loss. The girls have not been permitted to return to the main

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Priest Who Taught School Across Border Barred From Mexico

Mexico City (NC) The Rev Tia Juana, Lower California, has Rosendo Nunez, parish priest of been denied permission to return to his parish, it became known here today

Father Nunez, ordered to leave his parish, went to San Isidro, California, and opened a Catholic school with the aid of exiled Mexican nuns to provide religious instruction for Catholic children who crossed the border from Tia Juana for that purpose.

A new Governor having been inaugurated in Lower California, Father Nunez petitioned President Cardenas and the new governor for permission to return. This has been refused on the ground that in "seducing" Mexican children to cross the border to receive religious instruction which was prohibited by law in Mexico, Father Nunez had been disloyal and unworthy of being permitted to reside in Mexico.

Catholic Leads Scout Fund Drive In Georgia

Augusta, Ga. —(NC)— Richard Reid, prominent Catholic layman of this city and editor of The Bulletin, published by the Catholic Laymen's Association of Georgia, is in charge of the general drive for funds just begun by the Augusta Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

The campaign quota has been set at $8,000.

DOCTOR HAAS NAMED HEAD OF SEMINARY

Succeeds Bishop Muench; Social Justice Work Lauded in Capital

Milwaukee—(NC)—The Rev. Dr. Francis J. Haas, Director of the National Catholic School of Social Service in Washington, D. C., since 1931 and one of the country's most distinguished authorities in the field of industrial and labor problems, has been appointed Rector of the Seminary of St. Francis de Sales here, the Most Rev. Samuel A. Stritch, Archbishop of Milwaukee, announced this week.

Dr. Haas is a priest of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and served as Professor of Sociology at St. Francis Seminary and Marquette University here before going to Washington to accept the Directorship of the National Catholic School of Social Service. As Rector of the Seminary, he succeeds to an office left vacant by the appointment of the Most Rev. Aloysius J. Muench as Bishop of Fargo.

Washington (NC)—Government officials, notable clergymen, educators and representatives of labor and industry joined Thursday night in paying tribute to the Rev. Dr. Francis J. Haas, Director of the National Catholic School of Social Service, at a farewell dinner held in his honor at the Mayflower Hotel.

In addresses at the dinner and by letter these nationally-known figures praised the departing priest-economist for his long years of service in the cause of social justice, particular mention being made of the executive assistance he has given the present Administration in its program of economic readjustment.

The Very Rev. Msgr. Michael J. Ready, Assistant General Secretary of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, served as toastmaster. In general the addresses of the speakers followed a double theme, voicing regret at the departure of Dr. Haas from the Nation's Capital and the scene of his most recent efforts to improve the condition of the laboring classes, and telling of their pleasure at the knowledge that in his new post Dr. Haas would be enabled to impart his views on social justice to younger men studying for the priesthood.

Speakers At Dinner

Speakers at the dinner included the Rt. Rev Msgr. William J. Kerby, professor of Sociology at the Catholic University of America, and the Rt. Rev. Msgr. John A. Ryan, Director of the Department

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ONE MASTERPIECE DOES NOT MAKE A RENAISSANCE

• • •

THUS an editorial in a recent issue of the Rochester Journal:

Not from our Rochester and every other city in the United States was a battleground in a warfare which had one objective—to secure better motion pictures. That fight ended in victory.

Pictures produced in response to the demand for clean and better films, although the measure of public support is sometimes less than the results warrant. Which is inconsistent at least.

But even so, notable there is such a notable production to film a masterpiece in pictures that all should see it. That is what happened in "Mutiny on the Bounty," classic saga of the sea, which Manager Lester Pollock has brought to Loew's Rochester and is now being shown.

You have asked for better pictures. Here is ONE impressive answer.

Perhaps the saving touch in this morsel of uncertain grammar and shakier logic is the capitalization of "one," in the last sentence. That is emphasis but a single step removed from an adroitly-defensive gesture.

AND, SURELY a defensive gesture is a fitting period to so flaccid an array of presumptuous assumptions, and non sequiturs compounded with misnomers. The "warfare . . . to insure better motion pictures" was not a "fight" but an attack! It was not "ended in victory" because there may be no end to the vigilance which alone can insure the establishment and maintenance of decent moral standards in public entertainment. Moreover, to talk of "victory" is to ignore the persistently obvious fact that Class C pictures (indecent and immoral and unfit for public entertainment) comprise a sizable proportion of current movie listings.

PERHAPS the whole story is revealingly hidden in the third paragraph. After all, are not "the picture producers" essentially noble fellows who, in "responding to the demand for clean and better films," in reality conceded "victory" in a "fight" which hurt their finer sensibilities as much as it did their pocketbooks? Should we not weep in sympathy with these Galahads of the Galloping Tintypes because "the measure of public support is sometimes less than the results warrant"?

YES, INDEED! But the movie people, and the writers of editorials in their behalf, should not forget that the producers made the indecent and immoral pictures—not their public. And that the public will not fill their theaters if their pictures are clean—and nothing more. And that one masterpiece does not make a renaissance.—H.W.K.

* * * *

The public in general, and the Catholic public in particular, finds in the CATHOLIC COURIER a consistently vigilant protagonist. Another reason why it is "Rochester's most influential newspaper."

PASTORS, PARENTS CALLED TO WAR AGAINST EVIL OF OBSCENE LITERATURE

Magazine Initiates Crusade Of Youth for Decent Reading

St. Paul, Minn. (NC).—The "junior crusade for decent reading," a nation wide organization initiated by The Catholic Boy, national publication for Catholic youth published here, in an effort to abolish immoral magazines and newspapers, will swing into action immediately. An attempt will be made to enroll every Catholic boy and girl between the ages of 10 and 18 in the crusade.

The attack will be directed chiefly against indecent literature, although immoral radio broadcasts will also fall within its scope.

The "junior crusade for clean reading" condemns the reading of any magazine, book or periodical that contains stories or articles of an immoral nature, or any magazine, newspaper, book or periodical that contains stories or articles glorifying gangsters, murders, suicides, robberies, hold-ups, underworld tales and the like. This includes advertisements and comic strips contrary to the laws of decency.

Crusaders will promise to subscribe to, support and read Catholic magazines, newspapers, books and periodicals.

The Crusaders will first lodge protests with publishers and with newsrack proprietors responsible for dissemination of immoral papers and periodicals. If the protest fails to correct, or at least better the situation, the crusaders will cancel, or ask their parents to cancel subscriptions to those papers and refuse to buy periodicals or any commodities sold by the owners of newsracks until a noticeable effort is made to eradicate the corruptive material. The same treatment will be accorded radio stations and sponsors of programs and also motion picture houses where indecent programs are permitted.

Every Catholic boy and girl will be urged to sign the Crusade pledge.

MSGR. HART SENDS LETTER TO PASTORS

Three Faiths Unite in Drive To Purge Stores, Libraries of Smutty Books

Determined to protect the youth of Rochester from the flood of immoral books and smutty magazines which are being purveyed in drug stores, confectionaries, newsstands and drug stores, the Inter-faith Good Will Committee of Rochester, composed of representatives of the Catholic, Jewish and Protestant faiths, this week issued an interesting and [illegible] such publications.

With the approval of Bishop Mooney, the Rt. Rev. Monsignor William M. Hart, Vicar General of the Diocese, the Committee [illegible] early in the [illegible] their campaign [illegible] operation of [illegible] daily newspapers [illegible] opinion and [illegible] action is [illegible] which follows:

Dear Reverend [illegible]

Action has been taken by the Inter-faith Good Will Committee to combat the [illegible] being placed [illegible] people through [illegible] libraries in [illegible] drug stores, [illegible] newsstands [illegible] most [illegible] [illegible] action against [illegible] people. The [illegible] to secure for [illegible] ons to [illegible] moral [illegible] in many of [illegible]. The [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]