

Report Reveals Full Extent Of Damage In Belgium By Nazis

MONTREAL — Historic churches and libraries were among the thousands of buildings destroyed in the German invasion of Belgium, according to the report of the Belgian Administration Reconstruction Commission, made available here.

The Commission, to which with German approval was entrusted the assessment of damage during the invasion, estimated reconstruction would cost at least 13,000,000,000 Belgian francs. The report shows that 2,832 houses were demolished by German bombs or shells, that 26,194 houses were badly damaged but repairable, and that 16,710 houses were slightly damaged. Other damage included the destruction of 362 factories, 6,000 miles of roads, 106 railroad stations and warehouses and 1,455 bridges and tunnels. The cities that suffered worst were Tournai, Louvain, Nivelles and Ostend.

One of the greatest losses was that of the famous rebuilt Louvain Library, one of Europe's finest. It was destroyed in the first World War by the Germans, but had been carefully rebuilt.

The commission's report refers to the heavy toll in churches and cathedrals throughout the country. The beautiful sixteenth century example of the so-called flaming Gothic style, St. Jacques Church, was badly damaged, as was St. Nicholas Church. The carved oak decorations from the latter, which date back to the Regency period, were saved, however.

At Bersing, near Liège, the church was knocked down by shells. At Huy, the Battle House, of the late Renaissance period, suffered damage. At Argenteau a beautiful eighteenth century church was destroyed. The church of Forêt in the Vesdre region, a landmark which dated from the fifteenth century, as well as the seventeenth century church at nearby Beaufays are in ruins.

Near Antwerp and Liège, many churches suffered heavily, as well as along the Dutch frontier from Lookout and Sandvliet to Zwijndrecht and Burcht. Famous sixteenth century windows in the Church of St. Leonard were destroyed, but the church was not seriously damaged.

The baroque interiors of the churches of Grobbendonck and Meerhout have been gutted, and the famous spires at Beersendrecht, Brecht and Bever are in ruins.

Modern churches at St. Job-la-t-Goor, Zandhoven and Burcht were smashed as was the church at Zwijndrecht, and the eighteenth century chapel at Arendonck.

It is stated that the famous painting "Descent from the Cross," by Nicols de Keyser, and the Renaissance furniture in the Sandvliet church have been preserved from German looters.

VICTIM OF JAPANESE BOMBS IN MANILA



In this picture one of the first reaching the United States since the Japanese bombing of the Philippines, is shown the Dominican Church of Santo Domingo, in Manila as it went up in flames following the treacherous assault. The church pictured here was erected in 1887 and is the fourth in succession to the original structure erected in 1588. Priceless books and records were destroyed in the fire. (N.C.W.C.)

Hope In Russia For Polish Catholics; None Under Nazis

By MRS. EYGMUNT KACZYNSKI

(Written for N.C.W.C. News Service) The wounds of the Church in Poland are descriptably terrible. However, if there is any grain of solace amid Polish Catholics' suffering and any ray of hope for better days when the relatively near future, it must be said they are to be found in Russia.

The oppression, hardships and disabilities endured by the Poles at the hands of the Soviets have been too great to permit of any great rejoicing over what may be regarded as a somewhat improved condition of Poles in Russia since the signing of the Polish-Soviet pact. A staggering amount of changes must yet be made before Polish Catholics enjoy real religious liberty under the Russians. Nevertheless, the situation of Polish Catholics under the Nazis is infinitely worse at this writing. Dioceses have been liquidated, priests murdered, arrested and deported by the thousands, and the civilian population has been deprived entirely of the consolations of religion.

Were the prospect for the future to be based on the current status of Polish Catholics in Russia, it could be said that in Russia the Church is rising from the catacombs, while in Germany it is descending into the catacombs.

Extended Wide Faculties On the eve of my departure from England for the United States, I received from the Most Rev. Joseph Gawlina, Field Bishop of the Polish Armed Forces, a cable from Cairo, in which His Excellency notified me that he landed safely there from England and would proceed shortly to Soviet Russia. Bishop Gawlina advised that the Holy Father has extended to him exceedingly wide ecclesiastical and pastoral faculties to aid him in meeting the most important problems connected with his apostolic mission there.

At present, only 52 priests, enjoy freedom in Soviet Russia, and they are all army chaplains, although they are permitted, to minister spiritually to the civilian population of Poland deported into the USSR in the course of the occupation of Polish territory in the period September, 1939, to June 22, 1941. The number of Polish citizens thus in the USSR is about 2,000,000, of whom 300,000 are officers and soldiers.

Not all Polish priests have been freed. According to the list presented by the Polish Embassy in Russia to the Soviet Government, some 150 are in the Solowetki Islands in the White Sea. They have not yet been released because there have been no communications with the islands during the winter. These priests all have been subjected to hard manual labor.

Polish chaplains in England and General Wladyslaw Sikorski, Prime Minister of the United Polish Government in Great Britain, have sent assistance to the Polish

Author Is Colonel In Polish Army

Monsignor Kaczynski, a Colonel in the Polish Army and author of article in adjoining column, is Dean of the Polish Army Chaplains, a member of the Polish National Council, and Chaplain to the President of Poland. Before the war, Monsignor Kaczynski was a Canon of the Cathedral in Warsaw and Director of KAP, Polish Catholic news agency, which functioned under the direction of the Polish Hierarchy. Wounded in the course of the Battle of Warsaw, he escaped from Poland in March 1940 to Rome. From there he went to Paris, where he was appointed chaplain to the President of the Republic of Poland and Director of Ecclesiastical Affairs for the Polish Government in Exile. He is visiting the United States with General Wladyslaw Sikorski, Prime Minister of Poland.

priests in Russia. General Sikorski allotted \$10,000 for this purpose and subsequently donations from various parts of the world, largely from the United States, have been received for the benefit of the Polish clergy in Russia. The Holy See has been most solicitous for the welfare of the Polish population and since the signing of the Polish-Soviet agreement has been sending aid to the Polish people, who have been suffering greatly from material privations and are harassed by epidemics, particularly of typhus and dysentery.

Monsignor Cieski, who was deported from Lwow, is the head of the army chaplains in Russia, while Father Kucharski, a Jesuit, who was deported from Wilno, has charge of the spiritual ministry to the civilian Polish population. They have received aid from England in the form of 40 field chapels, prayer books, rosaries, medals, together with a large supply of clothes, food and medicine.

The Rev. Leopold A. A. Braun, American priest in charge of the single Catholic church, allowed open in Moscow — St. Louis de Francois — collaborates with the Polish priests, who are having no

difficulty in fulfilling their pastoral duties. In fact, during his recent visit to Russia, General Sikorski participated in church services and was accompanied frequently on such occasions by the Soviet Vice-Commissioner of Foreign Affairs, Wyszynski, and his suite.

However, it must be emphasized that such freedom of public worship and practice of religion in what is now Russian territory is limited and confined solely to the army and Polish civilian population. Nevertheless, this is a rather notable concession for Russia's atheistic government. At present, it is, of course, almost impossible to foresee if this situation will prevail, let alone improve in the future. If such a condition presages any developments in the future, undoubtedly it would be the first light to fall upon the catacombs into which the Church in Russia has been forced.

The situation of the Church in German-occupied Poland is critical, to say the least. Some Catholic priests wrote a letter from Breslau, which I received through the Most Rev. John Erik Muller, Vicar Apostolic of Sweden. This communication paints a tragic picture of the Church and Catholics in Nazi-occupied Poland. According to these priests, seven Polish dioceses have been liquidated — Poznan, Gniezno, Wloclawek, Plock, Pelplin, Lodz and Katowice. The Bishops of these dioceses were deported and 90 per cent of the clergy imprisoned or exiled. Worse, a large number of them was executed by the Gestapo. Churches are closed and millions of Catholics are entirely without Mass or the Sacraments.

Several Polish Bishops are now in Nazi concentration camps, including: Bishop Marius Fulman, of Lublin, now in custody at Nowy Soncz, and Auxiliary Bishops Leo Wetmanski, of Plock, imprisoned at Owiocim; Michael Kozal, of Wloclawek, in the camp at Lond, and Wladislaw Goral, of Lublin, in the concentration camp at Oranienburg, near Berlin. The Most Rev. Anthony Nowiejaki, Archbishop of Plock, died after mistreatment by the Nazis at Dzialdow in July, 1941.

Generosity of U. S. Forces In North Ireland Lauded

BELFAST—When one group of American troops recently arrived at a Northern Ireland port, one of the first acts of its Command was to present several hundred loaves of bread and stocks of canned fruits, coffee, meat and poultry to a Catholic charitable institution. It has been revealed by Father McGouran, Administrator of Sacred Heart Church here and cousin of the Most Rev. Daniel Maguire, Bishop of Down and Connor. Father McGouran said the gen-

erosity of the American forces towards the people in Ulster is "rapidly endearing them to the Irish." "This latest gesture is but one of many which they have made since the arrival of the initial batch some weeks ago," he said. "Indeed, it is a common thing for them, when situated near a monastery or other religious community, voluntarily to send food and their own chefs to prepare it and various other supplies invaluable at the present time."

Aim Of Faked Reports On Arms Seizure In Brazil Monasteries Exposed

By Magr. Joaquim Nobre

RIO DE JANEIRO — (N. C.) Deliberate attempts by enemies to embarrass the Catholic Church and the Government of Brazil are seen in the latest circulation of false reports that police raids upon Catholic institutions in this country have resulted in the seizure of war paraphernalia and quantities of Nazi propaganda.

Some newspapers in Bahia and Parahyba, printed reports that arms, munitions and Nazi propaganda had been discovered in Franciscan monasteries in those places.

(Similar reports were widely disseminated in the secular press of the United States.)

The Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Parahyba asked the police to see for themselves that the reports were unfounded, and to investigate particularly the monastery of the Franciscan Fathers connected with Rosarie Church at Joao Passos. This convent was one of those singled out in the false reports of arms seizures. The police accepted the Vicar General's invitation, and were able to find nothing to substantiate the newspaper reports.

The Most Rev. Moyses Coelho, Archbishop of Parahyba, with whom this correspondent conferred, asked me to deny the newspaper reports involving the Catholic institutions as being absolutely false.

Frel Hildebrandt, a German-born Franciscan of Bahia, who founded and directs a social center, and school regularly attended by some 6,000 workmen, also told this correspondent that the report is absolutely false. The priest believes that the false reports are deliberately calculated to discredit the work of his social center.

Not only the Franciscans but other religious congregations in Brazil have numbers of German-born religious in their monasteries. But they are all deeply Brazilian.

Officials of the State Department and of other Government agencies say they have received no information regarding the seizure of arms or Nazi propaganda in religious institutions. Observers here point out that enemies of the Church and the Government of Brazil could serve their purpose by setting the German Religious Institute on fire.

The whole matter has served to prove that the Franciscan harbor no secrets in their monasteries and that they will always be pleased to receive the police of their institutions.

Cardinal Blesses Cross For Highest Peak In New World

BUENOS AIRES — His Eminence Luis Cardinal Copello, Archbishop of Buenos Aires, blessed the cross which is to be placed by the Condors of the Andes Club on the summit of Aconcagua, highest peak in the Western Hemisphere.

The ceremony occurred in the Basilica of Santa Rosa de Lima. The wooden cross weighs 151 pounds and is divided into five sections.

Mt. Aconcagua is on the Argentine side of the Chilean border and towers over the Uspallata Pass made famous by the statue of Christ of the Andes. Its altitude is 23,048 feet and there are only four higher mountains in the world, all of them in the Himalayas.

Sweden Teachers Down Nazi Infiltration Move

SWEDEN—Efforts of the Quisling Government in Norway to make an Axis tool of the Norwegian school system have been condemned at a meeting of Swedish school teachers, according to a speaker on a short-wave radio program sent out of Sweden.

The Central Committee of the Swedish Association of Elementary School Teachers, it was stated, adopted a resolution stating it had "learned with sorrow and dismay of the measures taken against Norwegian teachers" and extending sympathy in the struggle against the attempt to convert the Norwegian school system into an instrument for educating the people in an outlook of life foreign to Northern mentality.

BETTER HOUSING Ottawa — The French-speaking Particular Council of the St. Vincent de Paul Society here has initiated a movement to alleviate overcrowded conditions existing in the homes of needy families.