

Belgian Bishops Flay Labor Conscription; Ignored By Nazis

VATICAN CITY (NC)—Expressing their condemnation of the Nazi practice of sending Belgians to forced labor in Germany, the Hierarchy of Belgium reveals that it made representations to responsible authorities to halt this practice, but that so far they have been ignored.

This revelation is made in a joint pastoral letter, signed by His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Van Rooy, Archbishop of Malines, and the other Bishops of Belgium, a summary of which has become available here. Bearing the date of Dec. 2, the Pastoral was ordered read in all churches in Belgium on Dec. 13.

The Pastoral begins by deploring the enforced departure of men, women and youth for work in Germany and expresses the Bishops' participation in the desolation, anguish and uneasiness caused among those affected by this practice.

Protests Ignored
"We made it our duty to make representations to responsible authorities, to obtain suspension of these measures which are causing so universal and so legitimate consternation in the country, but our intervention, unfortunately, has had no result," the Pastoral states. The Bishops then give the Belgian priests and faithful opportu-

directives dictated by the duty of charity towards those obliged to leave for Germany and towards the families left behind. They urged the pastors and members of the church societies to visit the conscripts, to offer sympathy, to ascertain and fill their needs, to assist them in preparation for the journey, to encourage them to go to confession and to receive Holy Communion before departure, to provide them with indispensable religious articles.

The pastors the Bishops add, should warmly recommend to the conscripts that they guard their moral dignity, and that they remain as faithful as possible to the practices of their religious life, to the attendance at Mass, to the recitation of daily prayers. The pastors, the Bishops continue, should urge the more militant Catholics among the conscripts—the members of Catholic Action—to give example to their companions by leading them in prayer and sustaining their morale. The Hierarchy of Belgium promises to send priests to minister to the conscripts, if this is permitted.

'ROUND THE WORLD WITH THE CHAPLAINS

Mass Enroute to War Zone First Ever Celebrated On Ship.

Local Pastors Urged To Keep in Touch With Men Overseas.

Letter Describes Midnight Mass in Blackout by Moonlight.

Mass of Holy Form Altar for Mass Somewhere in Africa.

(By N.C.W.C. News Service)

NORTH AFRICA
The Rev. George E. Sherry, O.S.B., celebrated the first Mass ever said aboard the ship on which he crossed to the war zone with an outfit of "Yanks." The Army Chaplain wrote:

"The Masses and other devotions aboard ship were especially fruitful. I said the first Mass that ever had been said aboard our ship, celebrated my anniversary of ordination there, as well as the anniversary of my first Solemn High Mass. I instituted a separate public recitation of the Rosary and Litany of the Blessed Virgin at sundown each day on the main deck, with excellent results—spiritually and physically! This practice I have continued here daily, at a little Grotto of Our Lady which was found nearby our post. So the work of the Church continues."

CANAL ZONE

There was a "Pastors Please Note" tone in the report from the Rev. Joseph T. Hennighans, C.S.C.R., on chaplain duty in the Canal Zone. He wrote:

"I would again suggest that the local pastors of our boys keep in touch with their former charges by putting out a mimeographed letter or something to keep them in touch with parochial activities, urging them to regular attendance at Mass and monthly Confession and Communion. This I am sure will encourage the boys and engender a personal love of their parish priests and churches. It would be a good idea if the pastors of the boys would furnish each with a rosary, a missal and a medal."

NORTH AFRICA

A bit belated because of the distance, but none the less soul-affirming was the report on the Christmas celebration experienced by the Rev. Edward T. Conners, of the Diocese of Springfield, on chaplain duty in North Africa.

"It was my happiness to have the privilege of saying Midnight Mass in a vast cathedral fashioned by the hand of God," Father Conners wrote. "My roof was the sky, my only light in the blackout was the moon, my shepherds were soldiers and it was on a hillside that Christ came to us in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Each day I realize anew the tremendous compensations of the Faith and of the priesthood."

From the Rev. Joseph M. Clark, S.J., also on chaplain duty in the North African war theater, came

a report on the Christmas celebration he experienced. Father Clark reported:

"I was thrilled to think that this Christmas I was going to be so much closer to the place where Christ was born, but I never dreamed that I would have the privilege of imitating the first Christmas scene almost to the letter. . . . We arrived at our new location, a strange city, on Christmas Eve. There was no shelter to be had anywhere, so we marched to the edge of town to a big field. . . . Midnight Mass was out of the question because of the blackout, and it was black. . . . I got a few hours sleep in my bed of hay but got up long before daylight. . . . I went around to groups to announce that there would be Mass in the field. . . . When I looked around for something to make an altar out of, all I could find were bales of hay, so I made an altar out of four bales and at Mass when Our Infant Saviour was born He was laid again on the hay of His altar manger. There was plenty of atmosphere to accompany the scene, a dozen or more Arabs squatted near the altar taking in the ceremonies, while others rode by on camels and tiny donkeys."

REPORT FINNISH ENVOY ATTENDED CASABLANCA CONFERENCE UNCONFIRMED
VATICAN CITY—(NC)—The widely-circulated secular press report from Stockholm stating that Finland's Minister to the Holy See, George Achates Gripenberg, was present at the conference between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill at Casablanca is unsupported by any evidence available here.

George Achates Gripenberg is Finland's Great Minister to the Holy See. He presented his credentials to His Holiness Pope Pius XII on July 31, 1942, and spoke at that time in praise of the Holy Father's many efforts to relieve suffering caused by the war.

AUXILIARY BISHOPS NAMED FOR TWO SPANISH DIOCESES

VATICAN CITY.—Auxiliary Bishops are named for two dioceses in Spain in nominations made public on Wednesday.

The Rev. Eusebio Hurtado Garcia, a pastor in Granada, has been named Titular Bishop of Bitta and Auxiliary Bishop of Granada.

Monsignor Casimir Morcillo, Vicar General of the Diocese of Madrid, has been named Titular Bishop of Agatopoli and Auxiliary Bishop of Madrid.

Nuns Evading Japs In Jungle, Rescued By U. S. Submarine



ESCAPE JAPS VIA SUBMARINE—Archbishop John J. Mitty, San Francisco, greets four Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, Cal., upon arrival home following their thrilling escape from the invading Japanese army in the Solomons. The nuns are: (from left, standing) Sister M. Irene Alton, Santa Ana, Cal.; Sister M. Hedda Jaeger, Los Angeles; Sister M. Celestine Belonger, North Bay, Ont.; Seated, Sister M. Isabelle Aubin, Superior, St. Petersburg, Fla. (N.C.W.C. Photo).

SAN FRANCISCO (NC)—Flight through the jungles of the Solomon Islands, with the invading Japanese army ever just behind, travel from island to island in canoes, and final escape aboard an American submarine, which they reached in a rubber life-boat, has been

the experience of four Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, California, who have just arrived here and given an account of their thrilling adventure to the Most Rev. John J. Mitty, Archbishop of San Francisco.

The four nuns are Sister Mary Isabelle, Superior, Sister Mary Irene, Sister Mary Hedda and Sister Mary Celestine. They had been laboring since Sept. 20, 1940, at Hanahan, a little known village on the island of Buka, north of Guadalcanal. They left their mission in March, 1942, just a few hours before the Japanese arrived on the island.

Traveling by canoe and by schooner, when available, they arrived on the island of Bougainville, where they were met by the Most Rev. Thomas Wade, S.M., Vicar Apostolic of the North Solomons, who communicated with Admiral William F. Halsey, U.S.N., and made arrangements for their rescue.

The nuns then were obliged to flee from mission to mission. At the approach of the Japanese, they took refuge in the jungles. Finally, on Dec. 4, evacuation arrangements were completed. Two aged Marist priests, ten Marist Sisters and 13 lay persons from the island plantations joined the California nuns.

On Dec. 30, they received instructions to assemble at a place on the coast. To reach the spot they had to struggle eight miles through the jungle to the beach. The nuns arrived exhausted, their habits soiled and torn.

At 1 A. M. on New Year's Day a launch from a submarine with a rubber lifeboat in tow arrived at the appointed place. Three of the nuns rode in the rubber boat out to the submarine, which was about four miles off shore. It was a perilous journey and it proved exceedingly difficult to locate the partly-submerged submarine. Followed by Japs

The refugees had gotten away none too soon, as they afterward learned that the Japanese reached the spot two and a half hours after they had departed.

The bearded submarine at 4 a. m. and lived aboard it the next three days and nights. The kindness and courtesy of the American naval officers, they told Archbishop Mitty, were beyond description. The Sisters were given the best of the submarine's food supply and the best sleeping quarters.

On Jan. 4 the party was transferred to a patrol boat at 2:30

A. M. in driving rain and choppy seas. They were then taken to a transport lying off Guadalcanal. While on the transport they were instructed to be ready to abandon ship as a Japanese submarine was reported to be in the vicinity. An American sub-chaser arrived and dropped depth charges. The enemy craft did not appear.

The next day the party sailed in convoy for Auckland, New Zealand. The four California nuns remained in Auckland for a week with the Religious of the Sacred

Heart. The American Consul arranged for their passage to San Francisco.

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Gen. Giraud Lists Birth Control, Atheism As Prime Causes Of France's Fall

NEW YORK (NC)—Encouragement of atheism and the practice of birth control, so widespread that it put the nation of "the slopes of suicide," were listed among the principal causes of the collapse of France as analyzed in a 17,000-word memorandum written by Gen. Henri Honoré Giraud, now High Commissioner of French North Africa, upon his escape to Switzerland from the German prison fortress of Konigsstein.

La Sallette Fathers Return To Motherhouse In France After 41 Years' Exile

LISBON (NC)—After 41 years of exile, the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Sallette have returned to their original Motherhouse in France at the invitation of the Most Rev. Alexandre Caillot, Bishop of Grenoble. Since the banishment of Religious Congregations from France in 1901, the Sanctuary of La Sallette has been served by priests of the Grenoble Diocese. Members of the Institute of La Sallette are found all over Europe and in both North and South America, and have missions entrusted to them by the Sacred Congregation of the Faith in Africa and Burma.

Two hundred and thirteen religious sects are officially recognized in the United States, according to the latest count of the Bureau of Religious Statistics,

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The memorandum was addressed to Marshal Philippe Petain, France's chief of state, and a condensed version of it appeared in the February 1 issue of L'Esprit magazine. The memorandum pictures the French peasants and laborers as hard workers before World War I began in 1914. From 1914 until 1918, France made the "superhuman effort," the magazine article states, and emerged from "the test physically and morally exhausted. Our ideal wasn't to profit by the victory to make a better world; it was to enjoy ourselves." The memorandum stated this wave for self-amusement swept every rank of French society.

"What did the school teach these youngsters and these men?" the article continues. "First, egoism, personal interest and the cult of envy. After that, negation of everything spiritual, of everything divine, of everything ideal. Atheism, if not proclaimed, was at least encouraged."

The General's memorandum, according to the magazine, lists the birth-control practice first among the collapse causes. It stated:

"First, the primordial question, that of birthrate. France even without the war, was on the slope of suicide. The family was disappearing to give place to couples without children."