

Checks Press Hints On Oath Taken By Spanish Bishops

WASHINGTON—Influential in some secular news stories that the text of an oath taken by Spanish Bishops revealed an antipathy toward democracy and personal

... could not take the oath of allegiance proposed by the Russian Government, since they could not obey the law on conversions. The Russian Plenipotentiary did not squarely meet the objection. He did reply, however, that the members of other religious bodies felt no scruple on this score and readily took the oath, inasmuch as the law's intent was not to impose an obligation that would conflict with the laws of morality or with their creed.

Formula for Oath

The oath taken by the Spanish Bishops is made according to the following formula:

"Before God and the Holy Gospel, I swear and promise as bishop a Bishop, fidelity to the Spanish State."

"I swear to promise and respect and make my clergy respect the chief of the Spanish State and the Government established according to Spanish laws."

"I swear and promise moreover not to take part in any agreement nor to take part in any meeting which may prejudice the Spanish State and public order, and I will make my clergy observe similar undertakings."

"Occupying myself with the welfare and interest of the Spanish State I will endeavor to avoid all evil which may be a burden to it."

"It should not be overlooked that beneath this oath there lies a solemn and singular bond of affection for an ideology."

"What then does the oath of the Spanish Bishops prove? It is but a solemn expression, to recognize secular authority, of an obligation to God and conscience that no Bishop can ignore. It proves, therefore, that Bishops are patriots. That is its message, distorted as the opportunist journalist may try."

Highlights 10-Day Visit of Archbishop Spellman in England

LONDON.—(NC)—Here is a summary of the activities of the Most Rev. Francis J. Spellman, Archbishop of New York and Military Vicar of the U. S. Armed Forces, during his ten-day visit to England.

He stayed with the Apostolic Delegate at the Detachment at Wimbledon, suburb south of the Thames.

Took part in the reception of the late Cardinal Hinsley's body into Westminster Cathedral. The death of the Cardinal was the cause of Archbishop Spellman's unexpected visit to this country.

Gave Absolution at the Requiem Mass for the Cardinal. Visited Westminster Cathedral to hear a sermon by the Very Rev. Robert I. Cannon, S.J., President of Fordham University, who is preaching a Lenten course there.

Paid a visit, in the company of Bishop Myers, to the bombed churches in the East-end London. Visited the headquarters of the U. S. Air Force.

Talked with every U. S. Army chaplain in this country.

Conferred with the Vicar General for the British Army, Monsignor Ogilby, and the Vicar General for the R. A. F., Monsignor Beauchamp.

Lunched with the Most Rev. William Lee, Bishop of Exeter, during a visit to Bristol.

Lunched with Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

Lunched with the American Charge d'Affaires, who entertained him in the absence of the Ambassador.

Conferred with high ranking officers of the U. S. Army and Navy.

Met General Silverski, John McCormack, Brendan Bracken (Minister of Information), many other notables.

Visited many clubs for American soldiers.

Everywhere the Archbishop was accompanied by his aide, the Rev. John Foley, appointed by Gen. Frank Maxwell Andrews. Father Foley was a regular army chaplain before the war. He comes from the Diocese of Boise, Idaho.

Force Priest To Watch Church Burning

CINCINNATI—(NC)—Reports of incidents reported upon the Rev. Roche Knopke, a Franciscan priest of the Holy Name Province, Ohio, York, when he was captured by Japanese troops who seized him, and he was taken to the Catholic center here of the Catholic Students' Mission Center. Latest word received by the Very Rev. John Dwyer, Provincial of Holy Name Province, is that Father Knopke now is detained by the Japanese at Hong Kong.

Father Knopke was carrying on mission work in a small town near Shanghai last November, when word was received that the Japanese, who had occupied Shanghai since before, were headed toward the mission.

With a small party of townsfolk, the missionary fled into the country but was taken prisoner in a Japanese raid. He was returned to the town where he was accused of being an officer of Chinese guerrillas. The reports stated

he was directed to the water and led through the town and was forced to witness the burning of his church, school and mission.

Word of the incident reached a group of Belgian Franciscans who interested for him with Japanese authorities. A few days later, word was taken by truck to Hong Kong and since then nothing was heard of him until the present reports. A former resident of Belgium, Father Knopke went to China ten years ago.

French Cardinal Clarifies Statement Twisted By Nazis

VATICAN CITY (NC)

Certain remarks he made have been twisted and put to propagandist purposes, and by persons who knew full well that he would be unable to get his denial of the distortion published. His Embassador Achille Cardinal Lienart, Bishop of Lille, France, declared in an address to a (Catholic) youth meeting at Lille on Mar. 21. Cardinal Lienart spoke in reply to a report by the Nazis Agency which alleged that his Embassador had exhorted youth courageously to accept forced labor under the Nazis because it is just that all Frenchmen suffer for their fatherland and commonwealth.

"In your presence," Cardinal Lienart said to the youth of the Diocese of Lille, "I want to protest with all possible force against the use that has been made of my words by the press, because full well that I could not have my denial published."

"My opinion on forced labor was twisted in an attempt to summarize it in the following headlines: 'Accept It, To What Would Be Despicable.' I did not speak to create a hurry, nor to proclaim forced labor service a patriotic duty against the Bolshevik menace." Nor did I cite the example of Jeanne d'Arc to galvanize national sentiment against the English.

Personal Injury

"I deny also to the press the right to interpret my opinions and the intentions of the Holy Father, and I took as a personal injury the instructions directed to my clergy, from whom nothing can separate me."

"We have been witnessing for some time a strong campaign attempting through ancient and modern citations to elicit the solid support of the Church in a war against Bolshevism. I say war, though it is evident that the Church is obtaining with dignity from existing in this bloody conflict. I don't intend in any way to lend support to such maneuvering. I have said and I repeat tonight that we find in none of the alleged opinions a French and Christian solution of the sad problem under debate. I subscribe neither to the anti-German propaganda being done, it is wrong for Frenchmen to go to work for the Germans; nor to the anti-Bolshevik propaganda affirming it is best to go because it is necessary to destroy Russian Bolshevism. Both are propaganda of hate and we are apostles of charity. I don't consider sufficiently French or Christian that patriotism, which places its basis of honor on hatred, even against those using violence against us."

"Despite the certain danger which Bolshevism presents and

the threat of ruin it causes to hang over what we hold dearest, our Christian civilization, we have a spirit sufficiently noble not to hate any men, even those subject to Bolshevism, and to appeal fairly to a people, even a dangerous people, in defending the will of its fatherland.

"We don't believe, on the other hand, that ideas can be destroyed by arms."

"At the same time, despite the yoke of labor imposed on us by the occupying authorities in depriving our liberties and human personality, the rights of the family, and the just demands of our sacred patriotism, we have enough greatness of soul not to demean ourselves by hatred and the copying of the seeds of revolt that some would thus arouse..."

Divorce Rise Causes Concern In Mexico

MEXICO CITY.—Divorces are on the increase in Mexico. Of all the decisions made in the civil courts of the Federal District, 23 Universal reports, 30 per cent represent legal separations. The alarming and constant increase in divorces since 1933, the Capital daily adds, for a long time has been a matter of concern among jurists, sociologists, priests and others interested in the social welfare of the country.

Judge Ignacio Villalobos, in whose court 700 divorces were granted in 1941, said that this rate of approximately two divorces a day, shows that the divorce law is being abused and that men and women are willing to exceed the fact that divorce is authorized by law. The effect upon society of this situation, which Judge Villalobos calls "scandalous," is aggravated by a decrease in marriages: from 18225 in the Federal District in 1940, to 12585 last year. These facts coupled with the further facts of childless marriages produce problems of an economic as well as social order, 13 Universal notes.

23 Years As Reich Envoy To Vatican, Reported Retiring

VATICAN CITY.—Insistent reports are heard in usually very well informed quarters that the German Ambassador, Dr. James von Bergen, is retiring after a diplomatic mission of 23 years to the Holy See.

To succeed him in this important post, according to reports, the German Government is naming Eber von Weizsacker, former Secretary of State in the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

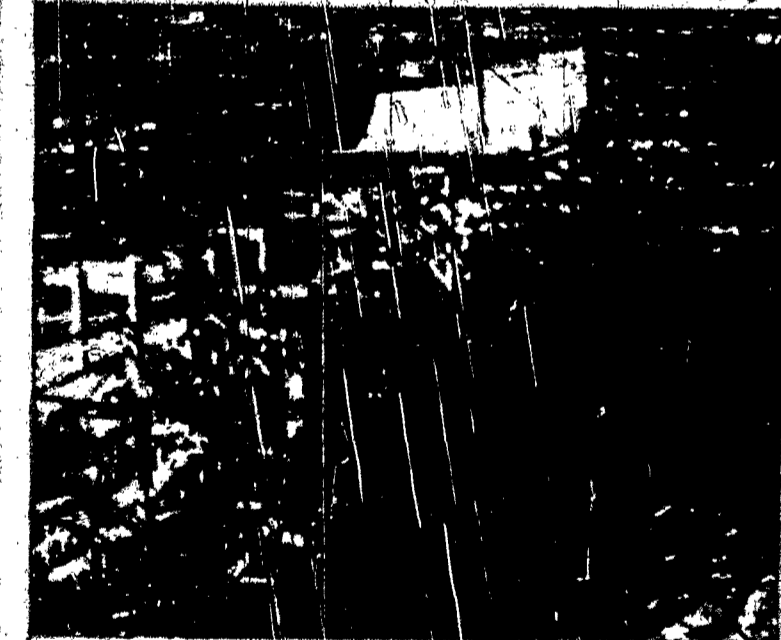
Dr. von Bergen presented his credentials at the Holy See on Apr. 30, 1922.

India Archdiocese Holds Third Synod

MADRAS, India.—The Most Rev. Ludwig Mathias, Archbishop of Madras, presided at the third Synod of the Archdiocese, here—the first such council held since 1891. The three-day meeting, at which numerous statutes of the Archdiocese were considered, concluded with the reading of a cablegram from His Holiness Pope Pius XII, in which the Pontiff imparted his blessing to the Synod.

Thou hast lost thy soul; thou walkest on the earth, carrying thine own corpse. And thou dost not weep bitterly, or groan continually.—St. Cyprian.

WILL LAUNCH "QUINT FLEET"



When the famous Dierre Quinturjets arrive, May 9, at the yards of the Walter Butler Shipbuilders, Inc., at Superior, Wis., to christen the "Quint Victory Fleet," the line of dismantling copper photo will have disappeared and in their place will be five trim cargo ships, like the one below, constructed under the lend-lease program, for duty with the English merchant fleet. Bishop William F. O'Connor, of Superior, is a member of the committee in charge of the launching ceremonies. Walter Butler, head of the firm which built the ships, is a Catholic. (N.C.V.C.)

Cross-Tattooed Elephant Leads Blessed Sacrament Procession In India

CALCUTTA, India.—A huge elephant, with a Cross tattooed on his broad forehead and his belly richly decorated with religious emblems led a procession in honor of the Kingship of Christ through the streets of Ranchi, key city of the Diocese of Ranchi. Three men in costumes to represent the Magi rode the elephant.

Another feature of the procession was a large chariot adorned at one end by a statue of the Sacred Heart and at the other end by a huge Crucifix. As the procession passed through the streets, cries of "Christ Is India, India for Christ" were heard from the throngs who watched the spectacle.