

'Rampart of Bitterness' Rises Round Germany, Bishops Warn

WASHINGTON (NC)—A rampart of bitterness and enmity is being erected around Germany due to the ruthless interference of Nazi officials with freedom of conscience and the religious life of the population, the German Hierarchy declares in a memorial submitted to their Government, in which they urge more respect for a cessation of the persecution of religion. A copy of the document has reached this country and is translated for by a highly reliable source.

IN A BOMBED CHAPEL IN TRIPOLI



Archbishop Francis J. Spellman, of New York, Military Vicar of the U. S. Armed Forces, and Brigadier General A. C. Strickland, of the Ninth Air Force, chat with a group of priests in the ruined chapel of the Franciscan Missionaries in Tripoli. The church was hit during a night raid by Nazi bombers. OWI Photo. (N.C.W.C.)

White Fathers Garbed Like Arabs Startle U. S. Troops They Will Serve In Africa

By Lieut. DONALD T. SHEEHAN, A.C.

SOMEWHERE IN AFRICA—The "White Fathers," African missionary community whose white habits and red hats resemble the attire of local Arabs, have been appointed to handle ecclesiastical affairs in relation to United States forces in North Africa, in cooperation with the regular Army chaplains.

The Most Rev. Francis J. Spellman, Archbishop of New York and Military Vicar of the Armed Forces of the United States, made the appointment during his recent visit to this theater of war. The striking similarity between their apparel and that of the Arab population has caused more than one American soldier to look twice, and then give up in utter confusion, when the second glance revealed a rosary of white and black beads about the neck of the wearer.

It all started back in 1912 when the late Cardinal Lavigerie, then a Bishop, opened the first house for the training of the Missionaries of Africa, later popularly called the "White Fathers" because of their white garments—robe "gandourah" and hisoric cloak "burnous." Topping off their stoutheaded appearance is the soft red round hat, the "Sheisha" of the Arabs. This headpiece is often erroneously called a "fez"—a hard cone-shaped red hat of Turkish origin.

Like the Macabrets or Moslem priests, who often carry a kind of "rosary" made of 20 brown beads, each representing a perfection of Allah, the "White Fathers" wear a rosary of large black and white beads around the neck.

Many are the proud possessors of beards luxuriant as any grown by the Arabs. When the Society was founded, beards were the rule among the North African clergy. Their apostolate covers an expanse of territory inhabited by more than 20 million people. With either a Bishop or Prefect at the head of each, they operate 24 missions.

British Bishops Vote To Defend Schools

LONDON.—A declaration that they will defend the Catholic school system by all lawful means against any proposal that threatens its existence and a warning to the faithful to be prepared for whatever lies ahead were contained in a statement issued by the Members of the Hierarchy of England and Wales at their Low Week meeting.

"We shall not give up our schools," the Bishops' statement declared. "This is our firm determination."

The meeting of the Hierarchy was held at St. Joseph's Missionary College, Mill Hill, and for the first time all of the Bishops were accommodated under one roof.

Form World of Grace

Death has its characteristic graces and joys. The presence and assistance of Mary and Joseph, the angels and our patron saints form a very world of grace, which infuses its consoling balm into the dying soul.

The German prelates point out that strict anti-religious measures have been adopted not only within Germany proper but also in invaded lands, citing specifically persecutory activities in Alsace-Lorraine, Luxembourg, Poland and Yugoslavia.

Dated at Fulda, where the German Hierarchy assembled in Annual Conference, on Dec. 15, last, the memorial is signed for all the Bishops by His Eminence Adolf Cardinal Bertram, Archbishop of Breslau. It is directed to the Minister of the Reich for Church Affairs, the Minister for the Interior and the Chief of the Reich Chancellery.

VIGOROUS ADMONITION

The Bishops close their memorial with this admonition: "One can not undertake to build a new and false Europe and to destroy Christianity at the same time. The West is inseparably associated with Christianity. If Christianity is destroyed, a real substitute for it can never be created."

At its outset, the Bishops note in their memorial that the Nazi Government failed to make reply to a similar memorial of complaint dated by the prelates one year previously on Dec. 10, 1941. "Evils Have Grown Worse."

"We have asked for the Bishops state, 'not only because of religious interests, but also from love of the Fatherland.' The evils complained of continue to exist; some, in fact, have grown worse.

"This plea of ours extends—and that is the ground for this new petition—with the same urgency to the vital interests of the Catholic Church and the free practice of the religion of Catholic Christians in the territories that recently have come to Germany."

"We cannot shut our eyes," the Bishops tell the Nazi authorities, "to the great misery of these German people, and we must also lift our voices for the sake of the respect for the name German. It is incomprehensible that now, in the midst of this hard war, German people who have come to the Reich with great confidence and with expectation raised to a high pitch are forced back by Germany, embittered to the depths of their souls. Around Germany, in all the occupied territories, a rampart of bitterness and enmity is being erected, which has arisen in large part because of the ruthless interference of the officers of the party and the civil administration with freedom of conscience and the religious life of the population."

In their reference to Alsace-Lorraine, the German Bishops tell how the arriving Reich troops were received there with great enthusiasm. The memorial then reviews the bitter persecution of their religion that has been the reward for Alsace-Lorraine.

"Even worse," the prelates state, "is the hostile rejection of all Germans which has grown up in Luxembourg, Poland and Yugoslavia."

In telling of the intensity of the persecution in Poland, the Bishops open with these words: "Even more cheerless than in the West is the religious situation in the newly-attached eastern territories." Particularly bitter, they state, are those of German blood who remained loyal to their German traditions throughout the years of Polish rule and who now find themselves "treated as public enemies and placed under surveillance" by the Nazi invaders.

Of those "regions which have returned to the Reich after belonging to Yugoslavia for 20 years," the German Bishops say: "There, too, almost all the priests and members of Orders have been forced out, entirely without means into lower Ukraine, occupied by the Italians, or Croatia, or have been placed in concentration camps."

"This treatment of the Slovaks," the German Bishops continue, "deeply believing and zealous in religion, has caused the enthusiasm for Germany that existed in 30 per cent of the population, according to the judgment of persons acquainted with the country, to turn into hatred of the Germans."

VATICAN TO RADIO TALKS TO RUSSIA

LONDON.—(NC)—Vatican Radio's weekly talks to Russia will feature Catholic life in the world over and will help to facilitate the return of Russia to the 'one true fold,' the station's announcement said in its broadcast in English on the night of the opening transmission to the U. S. S. R.

"The broadcasts, prepared and spoken by Russians," said the announcer, "will show what few in Russia realize that besides the Russian Orthodox Church there is a Russian Catholic Church."

"The message for Russia will be a message of peace and unity preparing Russia to rejoin the Church of Rome the one center and ground of Truth, so that the Russian people, re-entering into the one true fold, may find again all the fulness of Christian life."

Names of Americans Held In Japan To Be Given Out At Vatican

VATICAN CITY (NC-Radio)—While keeping up its regular cabled communications with the Apostolic Delegation in Washington, D. C., which provides information regarding American soldiers held prisoners of war in Italy, the Vatican Office of Information is now providing to the Charge d'Affaires of the United States at the Vatican lists of American soldiers held prisoners of war in Japan. These latter lists have been made available to the Vatican office through the new service established with the Apostolic Delegate in Tokyo.

The Vatican Office of Information, it is now announced, hopes to establish direct radio-telephone contact between the Apostolic Delegate in Tokyo and the Vatican, thus accelerating the transmission of news regarding prisoners of war and interests in Japan. A Thousand Names.

The first list of Americans held prisoners in Japan communicated to the United States Government by the Vatican Office of Information contained about a thousand names. The Vatican office also reports handling approximately 70,000 Easter messages from English-speaking prisoners of war in Italy. A Jesuit, Father Hannon, who has been visiting English-speaking prisoners of war in Italy for the Vatican, has reported that his visitation is half completed and that some 2,000 men have approached the Sacraments so far. He also says Catholic life is well organized among the prisoners and that they are well treated. The priest said that he himself has been shown the utmost courtesy by the Italian military authorities. Another priest acquainted with the Slav languages is engaged on a similar mission for the Vatican.

Education In Philippines Must Conform To Military Policy, Japan Radio States

NEW YORK (NC)—In conformance with a pattern dictated by Japan's Premier Hideki Tojo, the present education system in the Philippine Island will be scrapped in favor of schooling according to the Japanese Imperial policy, it has been announced by the Japanese-controlled radio in Manila in a broadcast reported to the Office of War Information.

Ousts Uniformed Nazis From Church

NEW YORK.—(NC)—A Nazi newspaper asserted the priest made himself "ridiculous," but he succeeded in having a uniformed Nazi labor serviceman and an auxiliary policeman ejected from the Pijnacker Street Church in Amsterdam, the Netherlands Information Bureau here learned from London. The priest merely was carrying out the orders of the Netherlands Bishops, who have ordered that Nazis and Nazi supporters were to be denied the Sacraments. When the incident became known, the Nazi newspaper commented: "Can the brutality of chasing uniformed racial-courages into the street be excused. . . In the interests of the Church it is high time that these gentlemen (the Catholic priests) started to understand how ridiculous they make themselves."

BISHOP BLESSES CHURCH BUILT BY PARISHIONERS

LONGUEUIL, Que.—A new Catholic church in Longueuil, Quebec, largely made possible through generous donations of property and voluntary labor of parishioners, was blessed by the Most Rev. A. Forget, Bishop of St. John's, in the parish of St. Charles Borromeo. Two families donated the land, another a barn which formed the body of the new church, while other members of the parish gave their services to help the carpenters in their work of remodeling the barn.

"O Lord, let me not walk any way without thinking of Thee," Cardinal Newman prayed frequently.

Carmelite Prior Hits Those Who Cry Out For Bombing of Rome

LONDON.—(NC)—"Twenty out of 30 people who cry out for the bombing of Rome are not really concerned with the military aspect of the move," said the Rev. Martin E. Lynch, Carmelite Prior at Faversham, Kent. "They would like to see Rome bombed because of what Rome has stood for through successive generations of Christian life."