

Scotches Pearson's Column On Papal Telephone Call

NEW YORK—At a press conference in his New York residence on Monday morning, Archbishop Francis J. Spellman flatly denied as "erroneous" statements published on last Friday by Drew Pearson in his syndicated column, Washington Merry-Go-Round.

While the Archbishop did not name the columnist, he did make specific references and verbatim quotations from Pearson's Washington column.

Saying that he would like to be able to correct all the "erroneous statements" published during his travels, he singled out one which stated that before he left the United States he had "old friends" of weekly trans-Atlantic telephone conferences with the Pope concerning Russia.

"First of all I never told friends of weekly conversation with the Pope," he said. "Secondly, never have I talked with the Pope over the trans-Atlantic or any other telephone at any time."

In his Friday column, Drew Pearson made the following statements:

"Archbishop Spellman was secretary to the Pope when, as Cardinal Pacelli, the Pope was Vatican secretary of state, and he remains one of Pius XIII's most trusted confidants. All during the war and until the New York archbishop left the United States, the two conferred regularly by trans-Atlantic phone at 1 p. m. on Wednesday.

"These phone calls, never before publicized, are one of the anomalies of the war. Though this meant a telephonic hookup of two enemy countries, conversations were made promptly and the conversations never censored or garbled at least from our side.

"When the history of this war is written, it may show that the trans-Atlantic calls between the Pope and his closest adviser in the United States played an important part in paving the way for a rapprochement between the Vatican and Russia. Pius XII dropped many tell-tale hints in these talks about discord in Italy, which were relayed to the President."

"The click and clatter of a dozen cameras and the grind of a movie camera almost drowned the Archbishop's voice as he began to speak to reporters gathered in the large drawing room which faces Madison Avenue. The conference had been called for 11 o'clock and the Archbishop came downstairs on the dot. He moved about the

room greeting each of the 23 or more reporters personally before beginning to speak. After reading a prepared statement, he said: "I would like to answer all your questions but I know I couldn't do I won't attempt it. I would also like to correct all the erroneous statements that have been published. Most of those who exercise the prerogative of guessing precede those statements by saying they came from authoritative sources."

The Archbishop then read from a newspaper clipping the following which he termed a typical example: "Just before he left the United States Archbishop Francis J. Spellman of New York, the

President's closest link with the Vatican, told friends of weekly conversations he had with Pope Pius XII in which the Holy Father expressed hope for an early understanding between the Vatican and Russia all during the war and until the Archbishop left the U. S. The two conferred regularly by trans-Atlantic phone at 1 p. m. on Wednesdays. (This is a direct quotation from Pearson's column.)

Replying to a question, the Archbishop said he had come almost all his traveling by airplane.

"I traveled at all times as a private American citizen and as the Military Vicar of the Catholics in the Armed Forces of the United States," he stated.



WACS IN NORTH AFRICA meet a member of the hierarchy. In this first official photo of the first overseas contingent of the Women's Army Corps, who work in the Allied headquarters in North Africa, WACS are shown with the Most Rev. Augustin Leynaud, Archbishop of Algiers, who received them at his episcopal residence.

Back From Africa, WAACS Tell Of Happy Billet With French Nuns

By Katharine McKiever

WASHINGTON (N.C.)—American girls and French Nuns in Algiers are setting the world an example in international collaboration and mutual cooperation. Perhaps the fact that they are all in uniform, in a sense, and each group living a community life, separately and according to different rules but under the same roof, may have something to do with it. The Americans are wearing the severely tailored khaki of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps; the French, the voluminous and ground-sweeping white robes of a Religious Congregation. The nuns share their convent with the WACS, and all find that despite language difficulties and their quite different modes of life as well as fashion—they have common interests as women and an identical inspiration in their respective endeavors.

The language barrier has practically ceased to exist. Women must talk, and since only one of the Sisters knew English, and very little at that, but several WACS spoke French fairly well, French won out in the daily verbal battle. The first WACS to return to Washington from North Africa report that now one-third of the company speaks French fluently, and all speak it after a fashion. The remarkable progress made by the WACS as linguists was evident—and came in handy—when they were received at his residence by the Most Rev. Augustin Fernand Leynaud, Archbishop of Algiers.

First Visit to Frelato
The 78-year-old head of the Church in Algeria was born in France, but he became Archbishop of Algiers in 1927, during the other World War. Now, in the winter of his life, he finds himself in the midst of "history in the making"—including the reception of American women in uniform. He had seen few American women, much less American women in uniform, he told his guests, but he was glad to see American women in uniform doing such good work,

he added. The Archbishopal residence was the first home in which the WACS, as a group, were received in North Africa. They had accepted with appreciation the Archbishop's kind invitation to view his typically Moorish house. He welcomed them en masse and, in a most gracious manner, thanked them for their courtesy in calling on him. He lingered to chat with them individually and to inquire about Army life and their individual tasks. He also gave them the run of the house and remained at their disposal to answer questions about it.

The WACS were happy to inform their host that they like their living quarters in the convent and find the nuns good neighbors. They also told him that they operate switchboards and telegraph and teletype machines, serve as typists, stenographers, interpreters and messengers, and perform military tasks of a highly confidential nature; that one WAC drives the General's car, a number are in the motor pool, some drive trucks and jeeps. But one job which the officials have stamped "marvelous"—and the WACS take pride in it because it means so much to the men, especially those in hospitals—is sorting the mail and getting it delivered in record time.

The WACS in North Africa are practically on 24-hour duty, seven days a week, since they are on call when not actually on duty; but each is supposed to have a half-day free once a week. The first place visited by WACS—non-

Catholic as well as Catholic—when on a half-day's leave is the Cathedral, Notre Dame d'Afrique in Algiers.

In describing life in the convent which now has two distinctive communities—referred to among Americans as the "Nunnery" and the "WACery"—the recently returned WACS spoke of the tranquilizing effect the placidity of convent life and the calmness of the nuns has had upon the somewhat keyed-up company of WACS on its first assignment at the fighting front. The nuns, who once conducted a school for the daughters of middle-class families, had seen their school evaporate when their pupils were scattered at the time of the Axis invasion. But the war brought new occupants to their home—first, some 50 refugee orphans for whom they still care, and then the American Army, first men, then women. Prior to the selection of the convent as billets for the WACS, a portion of it was used by the Air Corps. Men soldiers still visit there and the First Division, returning from new conquests in Tunisia, stopped off there for their first "chow" served by the WACS with the Sisters and their little charges interested spectators. Some of these orphans had come from Tunisia, but most of them are the children of French refugees or of French residents of Algeria.

Exchange of Courtesies

The nuns were less prepared than Archbishop Leynaud for encountering the WACS. Not one of them had ever before seen an American woman. "But they are so kind," these WACS now in Washington report. "They help us in so many ways." Because of their long hours on duty, the WACS in North Africa have little opportunity for keeping their uniforms clean or mended; the Sisters do it for them. As Religious, these nuns took the vow of poverty; but the fortunes of war carries poverty to an extreme never contemplated in the rule of their order. The WACS have found ways of alleviating this poverty without violating too seriously their military regulations. The Sisters, in turn, express their appreciation with gifts.

Five Decades of Rosary Among Night Prayers of Pope, Papal Household

LONDON (N.C.)—As their night prayers, His Holiness Pope Pius XII and the members of his household—the Monsignori—mediate attendance upon the Holy Mother and recite five decades of the Rosary, the Litany of Our Lady, the De Profundis and a special prayer from the Mass of the day, a speaker over the Vatican Radio declared in a broadcast heard here.

N. Y. Archbishop Voices Confidence Of Victory, Peace

Text of Archbishop Spellman's statement released on his return home Monday, follows:

"I have been away from the United States nearly six months and naturally I am pleased to be home again. When I left I had no fixed itinerary and no schedule but I expected to be away about three months. The journey has taken twice the time I anticipated and I was unable to visit India and China as I desired and intended to do. I could have done everything within the contemplated time but I preferred, for example, to take days to visit hospitals instead of hours and from these visits I have received many consolations and I trust that

I have also given some, going from bed to bed and having a few words with each patient. I tried to visit every hospital in every area but I did not succeed in doing this. I also endeavored to visit every cemetery to pay a tribute of respect and of prayer to our honored dead.

Visited Four Continents
"In these 24 weeks I have traveled 45,553 miles, not always as the crow flies because on one occasion, for example, the British flying boat in which I was a passenger cruised for hours in search for survivors of a torpedoed ship.

"I visited countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and South America.

"While I have been away from home, nevertheless I have always felt at home wherever I have been; for at all times I have been with my countrymen or with those who are closely associated with my countrymen in adherence, in defense and in representation of the principles for which our country is engaged in war. Likewise I have felt at home in association with religious men and women of my own and of other nationalities. I have witnessed with admiration and with emotion the missionaries' meager means of living and their self-sacrificing labors for God and neighbor. I have realized that their dedication was not alone for war's duration but for life's duration.

"I have also felt at home everywhere because everywhere by everyone I was received with the greatest kindness and cordiality.

"I was honored to be received by the heads of many governments, by civic, military and religious leaders and by the ambassadors, ministers and consular officers of my own country and, through their presentation, the representatives of other countries. I deeply appreciated their many courtesies.

"Naturally my visit to the Holy Father was for me the happiest and saddest experience of my journey.

Saddened By Pope's Burden
"I was happy to receive the blessing of the Holy Father and have the inspiration of witnessing again his sanctity of life and his high purposes and efforts for humanity's salvation.

"I was saddened in the vision of the weight of the cross he carries. For His Holiness painfully and poignantly bears and feels the sorrows for all the world, human sorrows and national sorrows. Unceasingly does he labor and pray for peace with justice to all mankind, to all nations, to all the people.

"I had opportunities to know of the tremendous entity of America's war effort, the loyal and determined spirit and contribution of all men and women in our armed services, the quality and the quantity of supplies produced and delivered by our men and women in industry, and in agriculture. I saw abundant evidences of the close collaboration of Americans with the forces and the efforts of their country's allies. This cooperation is something that is reassuring not alone for victory but also for peace.

Victory For Peace

"The solemn commitments of the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Great Britain promise that our countries will use victory for peace. They give assurance that the fruits of victory will be the well-being of our own countries and the well-being of the world.

"I have read the joint message of President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill to the people of Italy offering them an honorable peace. I have also read General Eisenhower's proposals. Naturally I hope that Italy will find it possible to accept the offers made to her. For Italy's surrender would bring nearer the peace for which the world yearns. It would spare the lives of American, British and Canadian soldiers, as well as Italian lives and Italian cities. It would spare the lives of many soldiers and civilians of all nations. It would also be a demonstration to the world that the United Nations intend to keep faith with the world, with their words and with themselves."

Voices Concern Over Shortage Of Priests

SAN SALVADOR—The present lack of priests in El Salvador will become alarming in the future if something is not done to remedy the situation, the Rev. Valentin Arrieta Gallegos, S.J., National Ecclesiastical Counselor of the Union of Catholic Men, says in an article published in *Criterio*.

He cites the present number of priests—only 182, diocesan and religious, in the whole country—as allowing an average of one priest for each 8,500 inhabitants, and says a worse situation is "the inexorable drop in diocesan clergy because the number of deaths among the clergy exceeds the number of ordination.

In the period 1919-1940, Father Arrieta says, 63 priests died and 56 were ordained, a drop of 39 priests in 30 years. The scarcity of priests is further aggravated by the fact that Salvadorean regulations hamper the importation of foreign priests.

New Bishop In Mexico Gets Papal Greeting

Mexico City—The Most Rev. Francisco Espino Peres, the new Auxiliary Bishop of Chihuahua, received a message of congratulations from His Holiness Pope Pius XII as an Apostolic Benediction on the occasion of his consecration.

The new prelate was consecrated Titular Bishop of Pharaonthis by the Most Rev. Antonio Guizar y Valencia, Bishop of Chihuahua. The co-consecrators were the Bishop of Cuernavaca and the Coadjutor Bishop of Saltillo.

Nuns Note Jubilees

Dubuque—Jubilees of 25 Sisters of the Order of St. Francis were celebrated by the offering of a Solemn Mass in Mt. St. Francis Convent chapel. One was a diamond jubilee, eight golden and 13 silver jubilees.