

# Allies Must Reckon with Catholicism In Rebuilding a Shattered Germany

(Claus Dohrn was active in German Catholic journalism until 1933 when he went to Austria after Hitler had seized power. For several years he served on the editorial staff of the Austrian Catholic magazine "Der Christliche Standpunkt" (The Christian Corporate State) and left Vienna for France after the occupation of Austria by the Nazis in 1938. He came to this country by way of Spain and Portugal after the fall of France in 1940).

By CLAUD DOHRN  
(Written for N.C.W.C. News Service)

The importance of Catholicism in analyzing the growth of Hitlerism and, even more in considering post-war plans for Germany has always been, at least theoretically, acknowledged.

News about Nazi persecution of the Church and her resistance against the Nazi doctrine has contributed a great deal to opening the eyes of the world to the Nazi menace, a menace not only for minorities like the Jews and for leftist enemies of the Hitler regime, but for all who believe in

well-organized Catholic labor movement.

Photo: Kenneth Newman

True, there have been stories about opposition to Hitler arising from circles of conservative Catholics and from students. There have also been reports about the courageous sermons of Cardinal Faulhaber, Archbishop of Munich, of Count von Galen, Bishop of Munster, and of other members of the German hierarchy. Still, the picture remains rather nebulous.

Apparently it does not fit into the popular notion of the Nazi State, and even less into the general idea of a future Germany after the defeat of Hitler.

This fact is astonishing as well as deplorable, the more so since the German provinces to be liberated first by the Allied armies from the West are predominantly, if not exclusively, Catholic: the Rhineland in the West and partially Bavaria in the South.

Any number of books, many of them written by refugees from the Reich, seek to enlighten the public in the Allied nations about the role of German labor. Others tell about Nazi misdeeds in the fields of literature, arts and sciences. A full picture is given of the systematic persecution of the Jews, one of the greatest crimes in history. But many films and books cause the world to look at the Nazi State through the eyes of a German worker, even more so than through the eyes of a German intellectual or a German Jew.

On the other hand, very few seem to know or to care about what a German Catholic is likely to think, to plan and to wish, what he suffered and how he acted. Very few realize what went on in the hearts and minds of those heroic priests and Bishops whose deeds have become known to the world, and in the hearts and minds of so many unknown Catholic martyrs who have suffered and died in Nazi concentration camps. Why? They are "also there?"

Yet these men were "also there" and their heroism is shining proof that the struggle against Hitlerism is not merely a private affair of Jews and Catholics but



Symbol of the triumph struggle of German Catholics is the magnificent Cologne Cathedral pictured after the Americans captured the Rhine city.

something that concerns everybody in all lands. The question remains whether these men will be "also there" when plans are drafted for a defeated Germany. One of the main reasons why this question arises may be found in the influence exerted by refugee circles in the moulding of American public opinion through the press, books and films. The emigra-

tion from Germany since 1933 has been largely composed of Jews, intellectuals, and those politically inclined to the left. Catholics and Protestants are not adequately represented among the refugees from Germany. That is, of course, nobody's fault.

The Catholic and Protestant opponents to Hitler—taken as a group—were not faced with the dreadful alternatives that faced the Jews in a country where anti-Semitism had become a principal tenet of government. In addition, it should be remembered that the non-Jewish opposition to Hitler draws its main strength from population groups that do not easily leave their country and, because they lack international connections, have great difficulty in finding refuge abroad.

Recognition of these facts should lead to the conclusion that those who were forced into exile by Hitler cannot be taken as an absolutely reliable representation of the forces of opposition inside Germany today, or of the forces of reconstruction available tomorrow. This should always be borne in mind in shaping Allied propaganda and plans for post-war Germany.

## Fr. Welch, Liberated in Manila, Lauds American Paratroops

A letter from the Rev. Leo Welch, R.I., whose liberation from Japanese confinement at Ilo-Ilo Island was announced last week, had been received by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Patrick F. Welch, Webster.

Writing two days after his rescue by American forces, Father Welch praised the paratroops for "their breath-taking maneuvers in coming behind the Jap lines and bringing 200 of us out in unbroken triumphal train."

During the Japanese capture, the priest revealed that "many bullets whizzed over my head and all around us but I was not touched. I am well and happy and have a ravenous appetite."

Referring to the long months of suffering under Japanese confinement, Father Welch stated that "the Holy Scriptures of the Mass was my greatest comfort and help."

Since his rescue he has tasted bananas, potatoes and cabbage. "How good all these things taste now!" he comments, and adds, "I hear we will get our first glass of cold brandy today or soon. Imagine the first glass of brandy in about three years!"

While some of his fellow prisoners are already on the way home to Europe, Father Welch believes that he is staying in the Philippines. He writes: "My health is good and I can talk in broken Tagalog now, so I am anxious to bring the hope of our faith to the poor and sin people of Manila."

Cardinal von Faulhaber, Archbishop of Munich.



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the sacred rights of the human person.

But, somehow, the recognition of this menace has always remained more or less theoretical. It failed to influence to any large extent Allied propaganda directed to Germany and Allied post-war planning for the Reich. It did not lead to practical conclusions, such, for instance, as were drawn regarding the resistance of German labor to Hitlerism and the importance of labor as its organization in the reconstruction of Germany after Hitler's defeat.

In too many minds, the forces the Allies may draw upon in the Germany of tomorrow are identified almost exclusively with the remnants of the pre-Hitler labor movement. And even the recognition of these forces centers on the old socialist and communist parties, overlooking the fact that there has always been a large and

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