

Priest Describes 7 Years of Nazi Torture

Milwaukee — (NC) — Arrested by the Nazis soon after the invasion of Austria in June 10, 1938, liberated by the Americans from Dachau concentration camp on April 29, 1945.

These two dates mark the beginning and the end of a seven-year period in the life of an Austrian priest who has just given an here what is considered to be one of the most moving reports on the shocking conditions

and the barbarous treatment meted out to prisoners in general, and priests in particular, in German concentration camps.

The priest does not report hearsay, he only describes, in simple unemotional language, his own experiences during seven years as a Nazi prisoner.

The report is preceded by an 11-point list of what is termed the "ordinary kinds" of punishments practiced in Dachau and

Buchenwald. They include the "25," that is, 25 lashes to a prisoner whose body was bent forward over a rack while his feet were kept immovable in a little box. The prisoner had to count the strokes and if he made a mistake, the count started all over again.

Another punishment was the "pole." The prisoner subjected to it had his hands tied behind his back and was hung by his hands from a pole or a hook. The "wheelbarrow" punishment consisted of forcing the prisoner to push a loaded wheelbarrow, the handles of which were wound with barbed wire.

An example of the sadism of the camp commanders the priest reveals that those doomed to the "25" punishment had to wait a considerable time for the execution of the sentence, to make them "sweat" mentally or drive them to suicide.

At one time, the priest had to spend 49 days in a dark cell. The light was switched on only every fourth day for passing out food. During these few minutes of light "I read and reread two

letters my parents had sent me. I knew them by heart, but I read them again and again. The words were dear to me because they came from another world, where there is love and humanity."

While at Buchenwald every man had to carry heavy stones on Sundays. Men who were caught praying were killed. Possession of rosaries or religious books was strictly forbidden.

Particularly shocking are the priest's descriptions of the "scientific" experiments in which prisoners served as test rabbits. Prisoners were used to test the effects of thin air and icy water on pilots. Most of them died. Other prisoners were used by SS surgeons to practice difficult operations.

In 1941 and 1942 innumerable prisoners, exhausted by work and starvation, were "sent away" to be killed by "cyanide." Among them were five German and 450 Polish priests. Later on, when it became impracticable to send worried prisoners away, Dachau built its own modern gas chamber and crematory.

French Statesman Hits 'Anti-clericalism'

Milwaukee — (NC) — "N Dreamers Weak," by Michael de la Bedoyere, editor of the Catholic Herald, London weekly newspaper, will soon be published in an American edition, the Bruce Company here has announced. This volume Mr. de la Bedoyere develops the thesis that Christianity is the only cure for current social and economic ills. It is a sequel to his other volume "Christianity in the Mark of Peace" and "Christian Crisis."

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Priest Turns 'Medicine Man' In Jap Internment Camp

Hongkong — (NC) — Freed after almost four years of internment, Father Donald Hessler, of Detroit, a slim, young Maryknoll misalover, tells a thrilling story of a fellow priest who became a veritable "medicine man" in a Jap internment camp here.

The priest is Father Bernard Meyer, of Davenport, Ia., former Superior of the Maryknoll Mission at Wuchow.

"Somebody ought to write a book on what Father Meyer did in the camp," Father Hessler said, "he was respected and loved by all the 2,500 internees. Spiritually, he was a father to all.

Physically, he helped many. When doctors were at a loss because of some strange "Stanley complaint," or because they ran out of medicine, which was always happening, Father Meyer found a cure. For example, Stanley diet induced acid stomachs. Father Meyer came up with a remedy, wood ash lye. Again when dysentery was rampant, Father Meyer discovered a white

clay on the hillside from which he could make kaolin."

"There was nothing he couldn't do," Father Hessler related. "Seeing the extreme need, especially among the T.B. patients and expectant mothers, he even was bold enough to use the 'Black Market.' The demand was so great that the 'Black Market

Kings' could charge any price they wanted. Father Meyer was not to be outdone. He would sell a two-pound tin of syrup to the foolish rich for 2,000 yen in order to provide for the sick-poor.

"Agriculturally, the Iowan farmer did his stuff, too. Several rocky hillsides were turned into stone-walled garden terraces. He had the best garden in the camp and fed more than 150 persons out of it. He even became a playwright, writing and producing three religious plays. When the chief actor in one of them fell sick a day before curtain, Father Meyer filled in for him. He revitalized the lives of Catholics in the camp and has built up a zealous band of lay apostles."

Father Hessler said that Father Meyer had made 21 conversions in the camp and the good he accomplished among English Protestants will bear fruit for many years to come.

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Boys' School to Honor Rockne

San Diego, Calif. — (RNS) — The name of Knute Rockne, Notre Dame football coach who was killed in an airplane accident, will be perpetuated in a foundation to support a boys' school at El Cajon, Calif., 20 miles east of this city, the Most Rev. Charles Francis Buddy, Bishop of San Diego, has announced.

The school will be open to any boy regardless of race, color, or creed, and will specialize in industrial arts training, Bishop Buddy said.

A 50-acre tract of land has been acquired and a start has been made upon an endowment for the project. Operation of the school will be along lines found successful by Father Flanagan in his Omaha, Nebr., Boys' Town project.

Brooklyn's Catholic War Dead 5,441

Brooklyn — (NC) — Of the 214,522 men and women of the Diocese of Brooklyn who entered the Armed Forces of the United States in World War II, 5,441 have died in the service, according to a survey made by The Tablet, diocesan weekly.

A comparison given by the Selective Service shows that 33 per cent of those who entered the service from Brooklyn died for the cause of the service.

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