

Ruthenians Under Red Pressure for Rome Break

Amsterdam—(NC)—Reports from authentic sources strikingly illustrate the realities that caused Pope Pius XII to deplore and denounce the persecution suffered by Catholics of the Ruthenian Rite in those eastern European territories now under the domination of Soviet Russia.

AWARD TO FIRST CHAPLAIN



At ceremonies in the White House, President Harry S. Truman bestows the nation's highest valor award, the Congressional Medal of Honor, upon Commander Joseph Timothy O'Callahan, S. I., of the Chaplain Corps, U. S. N. R., for his heroism aboard the USS Franklin when that vessel was attacked by Japanese aircraft near Kobe, March 11, 1945. Father O'Callahan is the first chaplain of our Armed Forces awarded the Medal of Honor in the nation's history. Reut-NC Photo.

These reports, dealing specifically with the religious situation in the territory of Sub-Carpathia, depict the methods employed by the Soviets to bludgeon Ruthenian Catholics into forswearing their loyalty to the Church of Rome and to force them into the schismatic Greek-Orthodox Church, which is generally recognized as a tool of the Kremlin.

These reports also describe how, despite the constant threat of deportation to the wilds of Asiatic Russia and the arrests of priests and lay leaders, the faithful, "with admirable constancy are clinging to the true faith and to their pastors for whose sustenance they provide out of their own meagre supplies."

Sub-Carpathia was a part of the Austro-Hungarian empire until 1918, when it was incorporated into the newly formed Czechoslovak Republic. In 1939 the area came under Hungarian rule. With the advance of the Red Army in 1944 and early 1945, Sub-Carpathia fell under Russian military domination.

The Soviets, making use of an incipient movement for local autonomy, instigated a "popular" desire for incorporation of the area into the Soviet Union, and the reconstituted Prague Government of Czechoslovakia, yielding to Russian pressure, ceded Sub-Carpathia in the fall of 1945.

One of the first moves of the Soviet authorities, the reports state, was to seize Catholic churches, of the Latin as well as of the Ruthenian Rite, and to hand them over to the schismatics. In the vicinity of Huszt, eight of twelve Ruthenian churches, and one Latin church, together with the rectories, were confiscated by order of the Soviet commissar.

Early last November a bishop of the schismatic Orthodox Church arrived from Moscow and soon after his arrival 22 Catholic pastors of both Rites were arrested.

The Archpriest of the diocesan chapter of Mukacevo (Mukacheve), one of the two Ruthenian Rite dioceses in the area, was seized and deported to Kiev. The Bishop of Mukacevo, canon and priests have ever since been under closest surveillance by the political police.

(According to a report in the London Tablet, the Bishop of Mukacevo has also been arrested, together with all other Bishops of the Ruthenian Church, and is held in captivity at Kiev. The same issue of the Tablet also reports the death of the Ruthenian Bishop of Leopold (Lwow), Joseph Slight, in the Soviet prison at Kiev.)

Thousands of Ruthenians are being deported to an unknown destination. The same fate has befallen many Ukrainians, charged with collaborating with the Germans.

'I Die a Victim of Hate'— Priest Pens Last Thought As He Faces Firing Squad

Vatican City — (NC) — Headlined in Osservatore Romano in a letter which has come to light here, the last words of a priest

and, having therefore performed my duties as a Priest. I die praying for those who kill."

from a small southern Italian village who was shot to death during the German occupation for having aided the Partisans.

"Secretly, between each round of the sentinels, I am adding other words to those which I could barely crowd on other pieces of paper," the priest, the Rev. Aldo Meli, of Fiano, wrote.

"I am certain that I have committed no crimes. I have loved mankind as much as possible; I am condemned to death; (1) for having protected and hidden a young man whose soul I wanted to save; (2) for having imparted the Sacraments to the Partis-

ans, having therefore performed my duties as a Priest. I die praying for those who kill."

of this envelope," the priest continued, "and the light is also about extinguished. Tomorrow is the Feast of the Madonna; will I behold her motherly gaze? I am not deserving of such fortune."

Stating that he was offering his life first for those "farthest away from practice of religion," the condemned priest continued: "I recommend charity, queen of all virtues, to everyone. Love God in Christ Jesus; love one another as brothers. I die a victim of the hate which tyrannizes and ruins the world. I die so that Christian charity may triumph."

Reds Fortify Curzon Line; Poles Dying

Amsterdam—(NC)—The "curtain of silence" that blocks out any news from the eastern provinces of Poland, ceded to the Soviets under the Yalta agreements, is no mere figure of speech, but actually a long line of fortifications, according to news received here.

The so-called Curzon Line, now the boundary between Poland and the Soviet Union, has been heavily fortified, these reports state. A 55 yardwide strip of land, running along the border, has been plowed and carefully raked so that every footprint is easily noticeable. Watchtowers, equipped with searchlights, have been erected at strategic points.

The frontier is patrolled day and night by Red Army guards with bloodhounds. Bridges across the Bug River, which were destroyed during the war, are not being reconstructed; only a few pontoon bridges serve to maintain communications needed for strictly military purposes.

All civilian passage from west to east is strictly forbidden and no passes are being issued. The Soviets are obviously determined to prevent any outside observer from entering the territory, which is being rapidly sovietized. The oppression of the Ruthenian Church, recently denounced in the latest encyclical of Pope Pius XII, is part of this sovietization process.

The only civilian traffic moves from east to west. Tens of thousands of Poles, inhabitants of the area for many generations, are being "persuaded" to give up their farms, their homes and businesses and to move westward into the districts of eastern Germany which under the Yalta pact have been given to Poland in compensation for the territories she has lost to the Rus-

Banish World Distrust, Red Mass Audience Told

Washington — (NC) — Two steps which will do much to banish the cloud of distrust blanketing the world and bring about a new world order were outlined by Bishop Bryan J. McEntegart of Ogdensburg in his sermon at the eighth annual Red Mass in the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Catholic University of America campus.

"The first step toward world order," the Bishop said, "is to acknowledge in reverence and obedience the kingship, the dominion of God over human affairs, national and international. The second step is to see that

the instruments for the ordering of men's actions are in accord with His justice; that is with the law written in man's nature and later given to us mainly in the Ten Commandments."

Among those who attended the Mass were Chief Justice Harold F. Stone, and Associate Justices Frank Murphy, William O. Douglas and Harold H. Burton, of the U. S. Supreme Court; Attorney General Tom Clark; Magr. Patrick J. McCormick, rector of the Catholic University; Dr. Brendan Brown, vice dean of the university law school; U. S. Attorney Edward M. Curran; diplomats from more than 20 nations and many others.

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