

The Yardstick

By Ray
Gen. HigginsProblem of
Lower Prices

Father Gillis Says:

Laywoman Checks
N.Y. Clergyman

President Truman is to be congratulated for his foresight in calling a special Cabinet meeting on April 23.

The meeting was something of an emergency session, called by the President to deal with the problem of the rising cost of living.

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daily revolutionize our economic system—although, to be sure, there are grounds for maintaining that the seriousness of the crisis, which even the leaders of industry themselves anticipate, calls for some rather bold experimentation. All that is asked, is that we approach the problem with an open mind and that we be prepared, at least, to begin to experiment with whatever remedies the findings of such a conference might suggest.

Once again, incidentally, the leaders of American industry owe it to themselves to be up-to-date on the trend of economic development in other democratic countries. American industry's traditional aversion to labor's being given any voice in the determination of prices is not at all surprising, but perhaps its fears and misgivings ought to be checked occasionally against the experience of other countries.

In this connection, attention is called to a recent report on a new experiment in economic democracy in Austria (New York Times, March 30). On March 28 the Austrian Parliament passed the Works Council Law, under which the elected representatives of workers will be permitted to demand consultation in matters not only of labor relations but also of marketing, financing and other policies of management. In plants where more than 500 are employed, the workers' council may, by a two-thirds vote, present management policy to the National Economic Commission through the National Confederation of Labor. The protest can be on the ground that the economic future of the workers is endangered, or that management's policy is contrary to the interests of the Austrian economy. Provision was made for the punishment of workers' representatives who betray business secrets of the plant to the employees. Management is obligated to make periodic reports on operations to the works council. In companies with several establishments, a separate council is to be set up for each branch.

Whether or not this Austrian experiment has anything to teach us here in the United States is obviously open to debate. But certainly it is the type of development which ought to be getting an honest hearing as a possible alternative to the economic disorganization now prevailing in the American economy and giving the jittery even to the NAM.

The Austrian program is not by any means a Marxist program. On the contrary, the New York Times informs us that the so-called Catholic Liberal wing of the Austrian People's Party supported the measure precisely because it looks upon it as a necessity in warding off what is described as the menace of totalitarianism.

It is good that the laity should know something of theology. It is especially good when a member of the laity is well enough versed in theology to detect error in the argument of a popular and persuasive preacher.



FR. GILLIS best example in America of a Protestant clergyman who achieves enormous popularity without sacrificing dignity and mental sobriety

But in a recent article in *The Nation* Home Journal (reprinted and widely circulated as a leaflet) he fell into a logical and theological mistake which a laywoman promptly pointed out. The title of the article (unusually sensational for Father Gillis) was "Why Religion Helps Men Up the World." The principal reason, says the Doctor, is that religion instills in us a sense of duty and a sense of responsibility. It is this sense of duty and responsibility which enables us to overcome our selfishness and to work for the good of the world.

Over against that evil he would emphasize the "universals" which all sects and indeed all religions, pagan as well as Christian, have in common. He presents the argument with his customary vivid eloquence and indeed with a touch of scorn and vehemence unusual, as far as I know, in his public utterances.

Alas! Miss Molkenhauer, Religious News Editor for the New York World-Telegram, in her column called attention to a false emphasis in Dr. Fodick's argument and to a theological error. The false, or at least excessive emphasis is on what he calls "minor divergences in creedal statement and ritual custom." She answers, quite correctly I think: "The trouble with the religion of most people, both inside and outside the church, is not that we hold it too dearly, stressing 'minor divergences' but that we hardly hold it at all."

Miss Molkenhauer points out a couple of "enemies of religion," which she says are far

more important than Dr. Fodick's "minor divergences." She says: "Two of religion's worst enemies are first, a widespread hedonism, which seems to have some connection with Sigmund Freud. . . . And second, the kind of intellectual nobility that hates to accept an opinion held by anyone else or to join a group that has in its ranks people with a lower intelligence quotient than you or I have."

To Miss Molkenhauer's two "enemies of religion," I would suggest that she add a third, recently spoken over the radio and published in his own paper by the editor of *The Christian Century*: Mr. Charles C. Morrison insists Secularism and places the blame on the multitudinous instruments—radio, fiction, newspapers, and the movies. Did he add the prevailing system of public education? I cannot but think that Miss Molkenhauer and Mr. Morrison have come nearer to the real causes of the failure of religion (as Dr. Fodick would have it) the evil influence of religion. Intellectual snobishness and secularism are far more harmful to the church than ritual and doctrinal differences. When Protestantism, the religion par excellence of differences, was vigorous, it made much more of those differences than it does now that it is weak.

As for my own criticism, I should say that Dr. Fodick introduces a theological question which he makes no attempt to answer. He speaks repeatedly of "universals" in religion as opposed to "local peculiarities." But he has no answer to the question, what are universals, and what are trivial local customs? He speaks of "special modes of baptism" and of "this and that way of serving communion." But he fails to say whether Baptism itself is a "universal," and he entirely declines the problem of what Holy Communion really is. He speaks of Jesus as a Master and Lord who impresses even unbelievers with his universal message and sweep. He quotes H. G. Wells who admits that our Savior is "really the dominant figure in history." But he doesn't so much as indicate whether or not he thinks Jesus to be God or merely man.

I wish I could share the doctor's feeling that the differences that separate churches are insignificant. But I fear that those differences are very deep.

And why didn't this habitually courageous Protestant Minister go on to say that the differentiation of which he complains, differences in creed, in doctrine, in "universals" was created into a primary principle when Protestantism came in to oppose Catholicism, which by the way is the true universalism?

The President is also to be congratulated for his political courage in submitting to the public, through the medium of a press conference, a few days later, that the responsibility for the rising cost of living lies with the management of industry. It is to be hoped that this action will lead to a permanent solution of the problem.

Most pressing problem of the National Association of Manufacturers, stated adversely to the President's challenge, his particular argument being that the President's action would be to shift the responsibility for the rising cost of living from the management of industry to the workers.

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AS WE SEE IT
What Price Prices?
By DAN PATRICK

There seems to be a pretty general agreement that prices must come down. There is general agreement, however, as to the method necessary to bring about the necessary price reduction.

The President's speech this week brought the problem of lowered prices into sharp national focus although the vision is somewhat clouded by an unholy smog of politics, taxes, corporate profits and the demands of labor.

Several weeks ago, Mr. Truman told a price conference that industry must be prepared to reverse the trend of a price spiral by cutting prices or else be prepared to grant wage increases.

Either intentionally or otherwise the President at that time neglected to mention that in prices which have been cut by his own administration constituted the greatest single factor in the increased cost of living.

In his speech this week, Mr. Truman said that food prices have risen 36 percent above the 1945 average. There you have the crux of the high cost of living. There you have the reason that labor asks increased wages. There you have the reason that some industries cannot absorb even a moderate wage increase without raising prices because these industries do not deal directly or indirectly with food.

Now, why are food prices high? Mostly because the world is so hungry that it has beaten a path to the door of the American taxpayer and bid for his food at any price.

to the public that prices would come down in a free market. It wasn't quite as simple as that. What these people said was that the only way to get prices down in the long run was by increasing production and that the way to increase production was by removing ceilings and permitting the price system to perform its traditional function of equalizing supply and demand.

In commenting on this whole matter, the New York Times says: "Mr. Truman cannot have it both ways. He can hardly argue that price incentives are the perfect solution for increasing agricultural output without inflation, and in the next breath denounce the same policy in its application to industrial production."

As the President spoke, the economic sky seemed brighter as a result of the signing of a pact between the United Steel Workers and the United States Steel Corporation on the basis of a 15 cents an hour increase.

This was followed by an agreement between General Motors and the United Auto Workers for a settlement of their differences on the same basis. Both the corporation and the union made notable and commendable departures from their original stances to reach the agreements.

Now some of our labor-brother brethren will shout "here we go again on another round of price increases as the result of this new raise." To which we reply that the increase was dictated by the needs of the times, particularly the inflationary food spiral which even the President conceded can't be stopped because of the huge demand for farm products.

Little Stories

"Oh, Peace!" Missionary Mahon Firmhous was called to a dying man. The old man said: "I want to go to peace when the Lord calls me. Pray with me. I want to make my peace now. I have no family, my friends, and the world, and all those I have known, but I want to see God. I want to be content with God."

STRANGE BUT TRUE
A Little-Known Fact for Catholics
By M. J. MURRAYJust Between Us
A Bit of High Doctrine
By Father Ginder

One of the high mysteries of Catholicism is its persistent belief in itself as the Mystical Body of Christ. Our Church teaches that it is Christ who is really present in the Eucharist.

It becomes more clear how we can be in Christ and He in us simultaneously, now when we are told that He is the Church and that it is in a sense, His Body—a sense Catholics define by calling it His Mystical Body.

Washington Letter
Moscow Belittles U. S.
By J. J. Gilbert

Washington — It is a wonder we have as many friends abroad as we do, after all the things various peoples are told about us in this age of "propaganda" or "mass persuasion."

In a single recent day the Foreign Broadcast Information Branch of the Central Intelligence Group in this city monitored radio broadcasts by stations in Soviet Russia which did the following things:

Criticized certain American foreign policies in Russian for the Russian people; told Austria in a German-language broadcast about the "anti-U. S. tendencies in British public opinion"; deplored American "hunger-strategy" in a broadcast in the Danish language beamed for Europe; declared in a broadcast in the Persian language to the Near and Middle East that the Truman policy hides a policy of force; said in another Persian language program to the same areas that the United States capitalizes on the war's aftermath; asserted in an English-language broadcast beamed to the United Kingdom that the United States is displacing Great Britain in the Near East; claimed in a Greek-language broadcast to Greece that United States aid to that country "smells of gunpowder"; scored American proposals in the Far Eastern Commission in a broadcast beamed in Japanese to Japan; declared in an English-language broadcast intended for North America that the United States sends an anti-Soviet newspaper into Austria; discussed for the Japanese in another program in Japanese "What's behind the master plan of the Truman plan; demanded 'victory' in Japan farm economy in still another Japanese broadcast.

Just how effective this flood of "propaganda" is, one can only conjecture. It would seem to be a veritable flood, though, because there is nothing to indicate that this particular day's recordings of Soviet broadcasts was anything unusual. Since it has been going on for some time, one may guess that it has had some effect else the Russian communists would have switched to some other device. Moreover, in many of the areas reached, there is reason to believe that this "propaganda" via the etherways is supplemented by political and other pressure from the outside and by fellow-traveler sympathy and agitation within the various countries.

It doesn't do just to say: "Surely those people don't fall for that stuff." The fact is that "truth" is pretty well presented, and in most cases the persons to whom it is directed are hungry, cold and in the grip of despair. Then, too, almost

Buffalo Diocese
100 Years Old

One hundredth anniversary of the actual date of the founding of the Diocese of Buffalo was observed at a Solemn Pontifical Mass celebrated yesterday in St. Joseph's Cathedral by the Most Rev. Joseph A. Burke, D.D., Auxiliary Bishop of Buffalo.

Eight counties were separated from the Diocese of Buffalo on Jan. 24, 1848 to form the Diocese of Rochester and these were Monroe, Livingston, Wayne, Ontario, Seneca, Cayuga, Yates and Tompkins. On Dec. 18, 1886 the following counties were separated from the Diocese of Rochester: Steuben, Chemung, Tioga and Schuyler.