

Red Challenge Forced Church Into Vote Drive

Washington —(NC)— "When politics becomes the enemy of religion, religion while remaining religion necessarily becomes the enemy of politics," Vatican Radio stated in explaining the Church's determined stand against communists in the recent Italian electoral campaign. The broadcast, which was in Italian and commented on the outcome of the elections, was monitored in this country.

"The development of the electoral campaign revealed the essentially religious nature of the struggle," the broadcast stated. "The adversaries have clamored against interference by the clergy and have talked about violation of the Concordat and the intimidation of people by threats of excommunication."

"THE ANSWER was quick and clear. Did anyone expect that the Italian episcopate and clergy should wait till the priests and faithful were facing the firing squads before crying 'wolf'? Should they wait until the churches were destroyed and every religious and civic liberty suppressed, including the freedom to preach Christ's Gospel? Should they have waited until Italy went the same way as Rumania, Spain and Yugoslavia, Rumania and Hungary?"

"It was necessary to prevent Italy, the cradle of the Catholic religion and Christian civilization, from being engulfed in the wave of barbarism which has already submerged so great a part of the world. It was necessary to prevent people who have suffered more than others from poverty and social injustice from being tricked into bartering eternal salvation for a fallacious promise of earthly happiness and prosperity. It is the duty of Christ's priests to proclaim the truth and denounce error, and duty implies a right."

"WHATEVER MAY be understood by politics—whether a party, an association, or an individual—when its principles, aims and program are contrary to the religion of Christ then the Christian Church must oppose it and prevent the faithful from cooperating with the enemies of Christ and from abandoning the Catholic religion."

Vatican Asks Social Justice Of Italy's Christian Democrats

Rome —(RNS)— Vatican officials expressed the hope that the Christian Democrats will use their election victory to start a program of social justice based upon reforms outlined in the encyclicals of Pope Pius XII and his predecessor, Leo XIII.

"This is a time of victory, but if social and economic conditions are not bettered, next time the victory may be for the Communists," one Vatican official declared.

In his first post-election speech, Premier Alcide de Gasperi, leader of the Christian Democrat Party, stressed that "we are not reactionaries, and every social reform which has been promised will be made as quickly as possible. We don't look backward, but forward."

VATICAN CIRCLES expressed "great satisfaction" over the election results, which gave the Christian Democrat Party an absolute majority in parliament. It was the first time in Italian history that any political party had won such an overwhelming victory.

Meanwhile, in a formal statement to the American press, Pope Pius declared that the elections "will be memorable in the annals of Italian history." "An entire people," he said, "has given proof of its grave sense of civic duty and the skies of Italy are brighter with hope."

At the same time, the Pontiff indicated his regret that despite Church warnings many Catholics voted for the Communists.

"OUR OWN paternal heart," he said, "turns sadly by the sight of those who, in their egotism or blindness, stubbornly hold to the path that can lead only to disaster for body and soul alike. May God in His mercy and love illumine their minds so that they may see the error of their ways."

Catholic leaders here readily conceded that the Christian Democratic victory was due largely to the fact that great numbers of voters who were not sympathetic to the whole Catholic program gave their support to the Catholic party to bring about the defeat of the Communists.

The triumph of the Christian Democrats climaxed vigorous efforts by the Catholic Church to defeat the Communists. Pope Pius himself stressed the vital importance of the election to the



On the occasion of Italy's General Elections, when the foes of Communism piled up a huge majority in the cause of Democracy, Marquise Giuseppe Mengarini, (left photo) 76-year-old invalid sister of Pope Pius XII is wheeled into a Rome voting station to cast her ballot. Italian Premier Alcide de Gasperi, (right photo) to whom the election was to bring victory, kneels in prayer in St. Peter's Basilica, Rome, before voting.

Church and to the welfare of the country. In his Easter Day address the Pope quoted Christ's words: "He who is not with Me is against Me." On another occasion the Pontiff warned Italian Catholics that "one cannot serve two masters."

ITALY'S BISHOPS did not hesitate to use the strongest spiritual weapons during the campaign, including the threat of excommunication against Catholics who supported the Communist cause. Virtually in every house, and on every street the Church fought to outwit its adversaries.

It is generally agreed by observers that another major factor in the Christian Democratic victory were the excesses and mistakes of the Communists themselves.

The propaganda of the Popular Front, made up of Communists and left-wing Socialists, is seen to have become steadily more effective as the campaign drew to a close. It culminated with the publication of falsified documents which were intended to discredit Vatican diplomacy, but only succeeded in pouring ridicule on the Communists when the true nature and origin of the documents was revealed.

"The Communist election campaign," declared Osservatore Romano, official Vatican newspaper, "was the climax of a four year campaign of slander by Communists and their sympathizers. During this period, the Catholic hierarchy, and Pope Pius himself, have been described as capitalistic vampires and jackals of war."

Vatican Replies To Attack On Papal Letter

Rome — (Radio, NC) — The Holy Father has on many occasions declared it to be just that those who have been proven guilty of crimes, Vatican circles declared in comment on Polish government-inspired propaganda attacks which took as their pretext a letter by the Pope to the German Bishops in which he appealed to the peoples of the world for reason and reminded of the Christian duty to forgive wrongs.

The Holy Father's letter — a reply to the joint Christmas greetings offered by the German Hierarchy — was published in Germany following the departure of the three German Cardinals and several Bishops for their "ad limina" visits in Rome. Their Eminences Michael Cardinal von Faulhaber, Archbishop of Munich; Josef Cardinal Frings, Archbishop of Cologne, and Konrad Cardinal von Preysing, Bishop of Berlin, are at present in the Eternal City and have been received by the Holy Father.

IN HIS LETTER, dated March 1, the Pontiff pointed to the tragic conditions under which the German people are forced to live at the present time. Vatican circles particularly emphasized the Pope's statement that he will "never weary of appealing to the reason and conscience of the world" and its leaders, as well as to the sense of fraternity among all Christians, in order to make it clear to them that it is "the common duty of all nations and peoples that are still in a position to do so," to strive systematically against the misery in Germany and in other needy countries.

The Pope, in his letter to the German Bishops, also deplored the fact that 12,000,000 persons had been driven from their homes and lands by force and without receiving any compensation for their possessions.

Bishop Asks To Print German Catholic Daily

Berlin — (RNS) — Permission to publish a Catholic daily newspaper in Germany is being sought by the Most Rev. Albert Stohr, Bishop of Mainz, in the western occupation zone, it was disclosed here.

According to Bishop Stohr, a Catholic daily is necessary to counteract anti-Catholic items appearing in secular dailies, which "give space to all parties and ideologies."

WIN HONORS FOR SCHOOL



Betty Ann Neely, (left) 15-year-old freshman of St. Mary's High School, Sharpsburg, Pa., is shown with her instructor, Sister Edith, and a classmate, Donna Nobel. 15 after she had been advised that she had won the national candle emblem contest sponsored by The Candlelight Guild of New York. She was on an all-expense tour to Canada where she will visit the shrine of St. Anne de Beaupre and other points of interest.

Collegians Oppose UMT; Back Draft

Philadelphia — (NC) — Catholic student leaders rejected universal military training by a 2 to 1 majority here, but then supported Selective Service legislation, in which many will have more than an academic interest by an even larger majority.

They took these actions at the Fifth National Congress of the National Federation of Catholic College Students, which drew approximately 1,000 delegates from Catholic schools across the nation.

The campus men and women also decided to continue the Student Relief Campaign, through which \$150,000 was raised for needy students overseas during the past year. Primary relief activities for the coming year will be the provision of assistance to refugee students in Western Europe and to the students of the Far East, it was voted.

With an eye cocked at their elders, the Catholic students asked Federal legislation for admission of DPs, especially students, and pledged the federation's active support to efforts to resettle refugee students in this country.

CHARLES HOGAN, 20-year-old Coast Guard veteran and sophomore at Xavier University, Cincinnati, is the new National Federation of Catholic Students president.

The NFCCS delegates held the mirror up to American society and to themselves as they pursued the Congress theme, "The Student's Responsibility in the Community."

In the keynote address, the Rev. John Courtney Murray, S. J., of Woodstock (Md.) College, former editor of America, said that the absence of the Church from the mainstream of American life, and especially from the life of our great universities, has proved disastrous, and was one of the factors leading to the recent victory of secularism in the McCollum related-time case.

Unions Should Have Voice On Prices, Priest Declares

Atlantic City — (NC) — Inflation's wage-price-profit spiral has brought collective bargaining between labor and management to the crossroads, the Rev. George G. Higgins, assistant director of the Social Action Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference, declared to the National Conference of Social Workers at their annual meeting here.

"Organized labor is being advised today, sometimes sincerely but sometimes, I suspect, from ulterior motives," Father Higgins said, "to abstain from further wage demands lest another round of wage increases lead to another disastrous round of price increases."

"The point is well taken — and, incidentally is taken more seriously by labor than the public sometimes imagines," he added. "The crucial fact remains, however, that organized labor has no assurance whatsoever that heroic abstinence on its part would be reciprocated by the other segments of the economy."

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