

Catholics Fight Philippine Law Easing Divorce

Manila — (NC) — The Catholic Welfare Organization is leading a fight against a legislative proposal to liberalize divorce laws. The measure is under consideration by a sub-committee of the House headed by Rep. Pacifico Lim, who supports it vehemently and discounts the efforts of religious groups to prevent its passage.

IN BRIEF, these amendments to the present law are proposed:

1. Requirements for marriage to be consent, capacity, celebration and civil authorization of the person performing the ceremony.
2. Removal of the curative provision in the present law to the effect that absence of formalities does not invalidate a marriage contracted by parties in good faith and in the honest belief that everything is legal.
3. Restoration of legal recognition to relative divorce (separation).
4. Broadening of the civil annulment grounds, to provide for nullification of marriage when either party participates in a ceremony, while intoxicated, under the influence of narcotics or in a hypnotic state; concealment of disease which would seriously endanger the health of the innocent spouse.

ALTHOUGH the changes do not increase the grounds for divorce, it is pointed out that liberalization of the annulment grounds achieves the same effect.

The proposed revision does not eliminate criminal conviction for adultery or concubinage as a prerequisite for the filing of a civil petition for absolute divorce. It does eliminate the prerequisite, however, in the case of relative divorce.

At the hearings the Catholic Women's League appeared and opposed any form of absolute divorce.

In a bulletin describing the proposed revisions, the Rev. John F. Hurley, S.J., secretary general of the Catholic Welfare Organization, says: "It is up to us, each and every element, unit and member of the Mystical Body, to show the zeal and the strength which should mark our vigilance over the indissolubility of the marriage bond."

Catholics are urged to write their Congressmen, and where ever possible to see them personally, and voice their protests.

Biblical Institute Moves — Shanghai — (NC) — The Institute of Biblical Studies for China, hitherto in Peiping, will be located after October in the new house of the Franciscan friars in Kowloon, mainland annex to Hongkong. It is announced at the Order's Headquarters here.

SEEING-EYE DOG DOUBLES



A seeing-eye dog, Adel, leads blind Frances de Brown, 26, to the altar with blind Harold Palash, 26, in Most Precious Blood Church at Chicago. White satin decorates Adel's harness. INP.

Irish-Born Nun Honored for Missionary Labor in Africa

Dublin — (RNS) — Nearly half a century ago, a young nun from County Wicklow, Ireland, decided to devote her life to mission work in Africa, and went there as a member of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters.

Woman Doctor Becomes Nun

Dublin — (RNS) — A brilliant young Irish woman doctor, who was graduated from University College here last July at the head of her class, has been received into the order of the Medical Missionaries of Mary at Drogheda, County Louth.

She is Mary Phelan, of Tareeth, County Kerry, who won the coveted Birmingham gold medal in medicine, the O'Farrell gold medal in surgery, and the Edward Smith gold medal in obstetrics.

The order Miss Phelan has joined was founded some years ago by Mother Mary Martin, a distinguished Dublin woman. It is chiefly engaged in medical work abroad.

Medicine to Germany — New York — (NC) — A shipment of 6,000 vials of vitally needed streptomycin was dispatched by War Relief Services, National Catholic Welfare Conference aboard a plane which left La Guardia Airport for Frankfurt, Germany.

Berlin Religious Schools Imperiled

BY MAX JORDAN

Berlin — The communist-controlled school administration of Berlin has threatened to close down forcibly one Catholic and six Protestant private schools on the ground that they were opened "illegally."

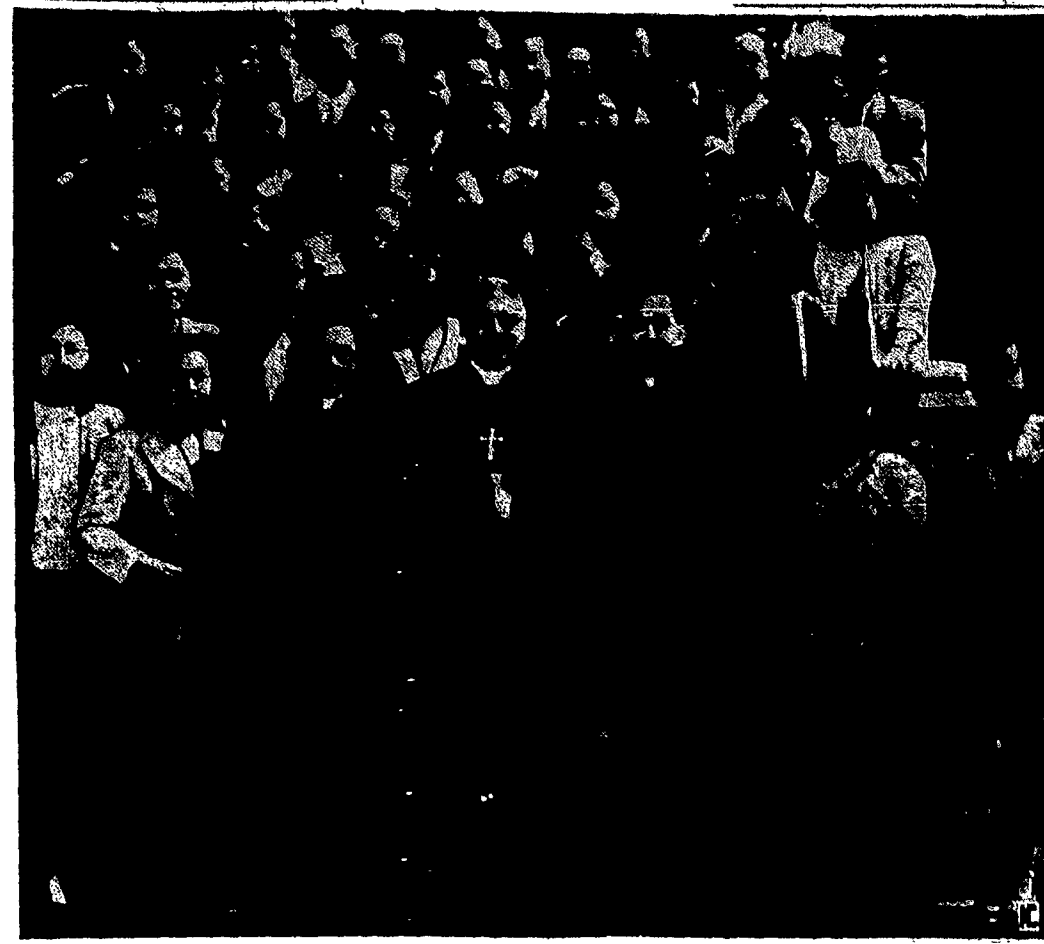
Both Protestant and Catholic authorities have made representations to the Allied Kommandantura in order to restrain the city from adopting measures which run counter to the letter and spirit of the law recently adopted and are obviously meant to destroy all private schools, thus forcing the parents to send their children to public schools which are under the influence of elements hostile to religious education.

THE SITUATION is particularly complicated because the Kommandantura has been practically non-existent since the Soviet members refused to cooperate with the Western Allies. Nevertheless the latter have given assurances to the church authorities that their needs would be given proper recognition.

The Catholic school affected by the new crisis is located in the American sector and is conducted by the Poor School Sisters of Our Lady, an order expelled from Silesia. Six hundred pupils, both girls and boys, sought admission when it was opened September 1, including children belonging to Protestant denominations. At the same time, six additional Protestant private schools were opened.

UNDER THE PROVISIONS of the new law, private schools which existed prior to its adoption are to continue un molested and new schools are to be admitted within certain limitations. The number of pupils seeking admittance in denominational private schools having been larger than ever, both Catholic and Protestant schools having been larger than ever, both Catholic and Protestant authorities decided to establish additional school facilities and applied for permission accordingly.

Because of the strained relations which at present render functioning of the Kommandantura impossible, no action was taken on these applications. This meant that the church authorities were forced to proceed on their own and this has now led to an open conflict with the city administration.



Archbishop John J. Mitty of San Francisco greeted upon their arrival this group of students, part of the 88 who came from China on the same liner to study in 40 different Catholic universities and colleges of the United States. Scholarships had been arranged for them through the Catholic Welfare Conference in China. At Archbishop Mitty's left is Father Peter Wong, who accompanied the students from China and who is himself becoming a student at St. Louis University. To the Archbishop's right is Father Paul Chan, vice-secretary of the China Overseas Students Service, who traveled to San Francisco from Philadelphia to welcome the incoming students. (NC Photo).

United Nations Assembly Meets on Old Convent Site

Paris — (RNS) — This city's famed Palais de Chaillot, where the members of the United Nations Assembly are now meeting, stands at the crest of a hill which was once the site of a celebrated Roman Catholic convent. The Convent of the Sisters of the Visitation . . . or as it was more popularly known, the Convent of the Visitandines — was founded in the 17th century by Queen Henrietta Marie, widow of Charles I of England daughter of Henry IV of France. The convent soon became a sanctuary for the wives and widows of French and English royalty. When the French government turned over the Palais de Chaillot and its grounds to Trygve Lie for the use of the UN Assembly, Lie received an eight-inch wrought-iron key which was made in the 18th century for the main door of the Visitandine Convent, which was razed during the Revolution. This key will remain on Lie's desk throughout the sessions.

Lourdes Head Hits False Cure Claims

Paris — (NC) — In a warning to the public to be on guard against false stories of cures at Lourdes, the Medical Bureau there has called attention to what it says appears like "an organized campaign to discredit Lourdes."

IN A STATEMENT issued by Dr. Francois Leuret, president of the bureau, attention is called to recent newspaper stories about supposed miracles wrought at Lourdes during an Algerian pilgrimage. Denying the newspaper accounts, Dr. Leuret states that one blind person — and not three — had shown some improvement but not sufficient to warrant an official statement. The supposed cure of a deaf mute was a "cheap swindle which ended in a court of justice," he relates. The situation is the more regrettable, Dr. Leuret states, because "in the face of this false news of cures, the genuine cures are barely spoken of." "At times it gives one the impression of an organized campaign to discredit Lourdes," he adds.

AMONG THE many true cures recently, the Lourdes medical official mentions the case of 8-year old Gerard Baillie of St. Omer, France, who was suddenly cured of a six-year affliction of blindness while making the Stations of the Cross with his mother at Lourdes.

Dr. Leuret relates that last year 538 doctors from all parts of the world took part in the investigations at the Lourdes Medical Bureau and this year the number is expected to reach 1,000. The bureau, he points out, is under the supervision of the Church and has the authority to publish what are considered genuine cures.

Religion Classes Out in Herkimer

Albany — (RNS) — On advice of the New York State Education Department, the school board of Herkimer, N. Y., has announced that public schools in the village no longer may be used for courses in religious instruction. Board spokesmen said all children will be released at their respective churches.

Prayers for UN — New York — (NC) — Special prayers for the United Nations General Assembly in Paris were asked of all Catholics in the Archdiocese of New York in a letter read at Masses Sunday. The pastors also were urged to ring their church bells between 9:55 and 10 a. m., as further manifestation of the "hope for a just and lasting peace."

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