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Catholic Ruralists Plead For Economic Group Cooperation

Des Moines, Ia. — (RNS) — Order can be restored to America's economic life by cooperation between economic groups that are "joined together according to their occupation," in the opinion of the executive committee of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference.

In a statement on industrialism and agrarianism, prepared during its mid-winter meeting in Chicago and released here, the committee:

(1) URGED THE decentralization of economic and industrial activity.

(2) Made a plea for "the disciplined use" of technology in agriculture.

(3) Held the concentration of land-ownership, to the "exclusion or detriment of the family-type farm," to be socially unjust.

(4) Favored the development of "garden homes and rural living" so that families might have the "advantages of light, space and air, and the opportunity to own property."

THE CATHOLIC group declared that the government must play a role in "supervising and regulating" the planning done by economic groups.

"Moreover," it said, "inter-governmental activity on an international basis is today called for. If trade and exchange of products is to be carried on without conflict and economic wastage."

"The Conference clearly cannot accept the idea that the state has no part to play in economic life."

INDICATING THAT it favored a "reasonable" decentralization of economic and industrial activity, "as against an excessive concentration of wealth and power," the committee said that the Rural Life Conference preferred "the family-type farm to the large corporate enterprise wherever possible."

"But it does not hold," the statement continued, "that corporate enterprise, or the division of labor, or the factory system are wrong in themselves and responsible for all the ills of contemporary economic life."

Similarly, the Conference "does not approve the thinking of those who would label the mass-production technique as a secular way of making things."

"NOR DOES IT subscribe to the view," the statement went on, "that individual craftsmanship is the only desirable method of economic production. While holding the arts and crafts in high esteem, the Conference disagrees with the idea that they alone are suitable for Christianization in a reconstructed social order."

The committee said it was "neither economically nor philosophically correct to regard industrial method and mass production as intrinsically wrong or incapable of reformation."

In areas where industrialization has been channeled humanely, it added, the result has been fewer hours of labor, improved hygienic conditions and higher standards of living.

"THESE BENEFITS," the Catholic group said, "should not be overlooked in criticizing the inadequacies of present industrial organization."

According to the committee, industrialism's abuses are not inseparably connected with technological advance nor with the industrial technique.

"They can be avoided, or corrected," it was said, "by progressive humanizing of the industrial process, by suitable governmental action, and by sincere cooperation between the various segments of society."

In calling for "disciplined use" of technology in agriculture, the committee held up as "undiscoverable" consequences of technological advance such conditions as destructive exploitation of natural resources, concentration of land ownership, and displacement of family-type farmers.

Chinese Mandarin, Family Embrace Catholic Church

Nancheng, Kiangsi, China — (NC) — The most important individual conversion of late years in this area took place when Yang Tachung, a mandarin, with his wife and two children, received Baptism in the cathedral here.

Mr. Yang, 34-year-old graduate of the Political Institute of Nanking, belongs to a family from which six mandarins — high Chinese officials — have come in four generations. Mrs. Yang's brother is also a mandarin.

Soon after his arrival here to take office in 1946, Mr. Yang's interest in the Church was quickened by the charitable activities of the St. Columban priests and Sisters, especially of the Rev. Edward MacElroy, S.S.C., who headed welfare activities in the district.

For more than a year the mandarin took instructions from the Rev. James K. L. Yang, young Chinese priest of the Nancheng diocese. The Sisters of St. Columban instructed Mrs. Yang and their growing daughter. The second child is an infant.

The Baptism ceremony was attended by a large congregation. Dr. Thomas Tseng-mien, graduate of the University of Louvain, now professor in the University of Nancheng, and Mrs. Tseng were sponsors. Bishop Patrick Cleary, S.S.C., of Nancheng, celebrated Mass for the new converts and gave them their first Holy Communion.

Catholics Urged To 'Adopt' Holy Land Towns and Needy

New York — (NC) — An appeal to American Catholics to "adopt holy towns like Nazareth" in the sense of sending food and material necessities to refugees and other inhabitants has been received from Msgr. Thomas J. McMahon, national secretary of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association.

Monsignor McMahon left here about a month ago to survey civilian conditions in the war-torn Holy Land and to inquire particularly into the state of Catholic and Catholic shrines and historic religious monuments.

IN THE MIND of "homelessness, misery and suffering" of thousands of many faiths, Monsignor McMahon said he found Catholic priests, Brothers and nuns outstanding in organizing and distributing relief.

"Some of these heroes of God" he reported, "are natives of the Holy Land. The rest are from Europe and America, devoting their lives now more than ever to the people they came to serve with utter selflessness. And the people they serve and feed and shower with consolations are not

Plans Theater For Children

Albany, N. Y. — (RNS) — An Albany corporation has announced plans to construct a small children's theater in the city to show juvenile films having the combined approval of Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish religious organizations.

The new firm, known as The Juvenile Theater of America, Inc., is composed of men who have had local experience in showing children's movies at church functions.

Dale Smith, a veteran Albany theater man, said he hopes to build a small theater, then sound out church leaders for recommendations as to the type of movies best suited for youngsters.

Cause Advanced



Venerable Marguerite Bourgeois, foundress of the Congregation of Notre Dame in Canada, whose cause for beatification is well advanced. Her cause is one of several "founders of the Church in Canada," now being considered at Rome. Mother Bourgeois lived from 1620 to 1700. (NO Photos.)

Talks on Church Set In Brooklyn

Brooklyn — (NC) — The Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn has invited all interested Catholics to attend the twelfth annual course of instructions on "The Catholic Church, Its Teaching and Practice," which will begin next week at 50 separate instruction centers, conducted by the Brooklyn Diocesan Apostolate under the direction of Very Rev. Msgr. James J. McGowan.

THE REOPENING of the Apostolate's information centers for non-Catholics, attended during the past eleven years by 7,500 persons, was announced officially by Bishop Thomas E. Molloy of Brooklyn.

Bishop Molloy described the Apostolate's instruction courses, which will be given weekly for approximately five months, as "an opportunity of receiving sound Catholic religious doctrine and of correcting, perhaps, erroneous opinions concerning Catholic faith and practice."

HE ALSO OBSERVED: "So many men and women are presently experiencing such disturbing apprehensions, anxiety and bewilderment in the face of world instability and uncertainty we may expect to find a most opportune moment to turn their minds and hearts to God for divine enlightenment, strength and solace."

"The purpose of these instructions this year as in the past," Monsignor McGowan stated, "will be to make available to all sincerely interested non-Catholics a complete and systematic explanation of the Catholic Church." He also emphasized that non-Catholics will incur absolutely no obligation by attending the instructions.

MRP Pledges Drive to Aid Church Schools

Paris — (RNS) — A drive to enforce a government decree authorizing municipal authorities to give financial grants to parents who wish to send their children to church schools has been pledged by the Popular Republican Movement.

The decree was issued last summer, over the protest of leftist groups, by Minister of Public Health and Population Madame Germaine Poinso-Chapuis.

CRITICS HAVE charged that the MRP campaign is likely to revive political quarrels between anti-clericals and supporters of "Christian education," but Minister of Foreign Affairs Robert Schuman, one of the leaders of the MRP, has replied that the matter is "one of life or death for our party."

"The MRP may be beaten on this question," he said, "but at least we will have fought to carry out our pre-election promises and will be able to return to power eventually in a stronger position."

CHURCH SCHOOLS in France receive no State aid. The cost of educating children in these schools is met jointly by parents and by collections taken up in churches.

Madame Poinso-Chapuis' decree has up till now been merely a paper one, but the MRP, in view of its losses in recent local elections and the growing pressure from its supporters, is urging that it be put into effective application at once.

ACCORDING TO some political observers, the MRP drive may lead to another political crisis, especially since the government is launching a national loan for money to cover the deficit in the present year's budget.

State support for church schools was recently pledged by General Charles de Gaulle, leader of the RFP, now the leading group in the Council of the Republic. He told an RFP gathering in December that "the issue of church school support threatens to divide the French people," and that "there is no reason why private establishments should not be given help."

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Army Changes GI 'Dog-Tag'

Washington — (NO) — A change in the identification "dog tags" worn by U. S. soldiers, to permit designation of religious faiths outside the three principal classifications, has been recommended by the Army Chief of Chaplains.

Besides the present "C" for Catholic, "H" for Hebrew, and "P" for Protestant, an "X" would be stamped on the identification tags of soldiers with other affiliations. Those wearing "X" tags would be permitted to carry an additional metal disc or tag provided by their church to designate their particular faith.

Dutch Aid Germans — (CIP) — Dutch Catholics contributed 664 tons of food and clothing, and money contributions worth over \$38,000 to "A Barge For Cologne" for relief in Germany and Austria. In addition, Netherlands Catholics gave up 1,200,000 rations coupons for the purchase of relief supplies.

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