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**Bishops Urge Social Reforms**

Manila — (NC) — The tide of communism descending on the Far East cannot be stopped by "high flown rhetoric" but only by "the vigorous sustained execution of reforms that will let men see the beauty, and experience the joy, of living in a truly Christian social order."

This is the key point in a joint pastoral by the Bishops of the Philippines in which they bluntly declare that there can be "no effective defense against the communist menace unless we remove that menace: communism feeds and grows: widespread grievous injustice — injustice of the high against the low, of the strong against the weak, of the landlord against his tenants and the employer against his employees."

The Bishops warn that the Philippines are "one of the next points threatened" in the "great crisis" engulfing the Far East, and that the agents of communism are active among the people.

They call on all men and women of good will "to enter the struggle for a truly Catholic social order" and to fight the dangers arising "from gross distortions of charity and justice."

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**Head-On Clash Looms Between Reds And Catholic Church In Czechoslovakia**

This week's religious spotlight is on Czechoslovakia, where a head-on clash between the Roman Catholic Church and the Communist-controlled government appears inevitable.

Playing a stellar role in the Church-State drama is Archbishop Joseph Beran of Prague, who, according to El Quotidiano, Italian Catholic Action newspaper, may become "another Mindszenty" because of his resolute stand against Communist attempts to infringe upon the rights of the Church.

The newspaper hailed Archbishop Beran as "the most popular person" in Czechoslovakia. It said this popularity was due to his leadership in fighting government plans for nationalizing church-conducted schools and for seizing all types of ecclesiastical properties in the name of the "so-called progressive dictatorship."

IN GOVERNMENT circles, however, the 60-year-old prelate has been bitterly assailed for allegedly blocking negotiations initiated last year in the hope of establishing an agreement between the Prague regime and the Catholic Church.

Speaking at closing sessions of the recent Czechoslovak Communist Party's congress in Prague, Minister of Information Vaclav Kopecky clearly warned that unless the Church ceases to "obey directives from Rome" and shows good will toward the government it will find itself in a situation paralleling that of the Catholic Church in Hungary.

IN THE COURSE of his address, Kopecky said the government has no intention of backing down on its claimed right to administer all schools without exception "in the spirit of the Marxist-Leninist ideology."

Archbishop Beran's reaction to the minister's speech was to inform the Catholic clergy that "any further efforts" at negotiation between the Church and the State are "vain and hopeless."

The question of church schools is one of the most vital at issue between the Church and the government, and it is one on which Archbishop Beran is not expected to yield in the slightest. More than two years ago, the prelate denounced proposed legislation to nationalize Catholic schools as a violation of religious rights and a step bound to have serious consequences.

Other demands reported to have been made by the government as a basis for agreement are that the Church agree to surrender its properties in return for "just compensation"; that it relinquish a number of prelates, including Minister of Health Joseph Plojhar, who have been suspended for taking official posts with the government; and that it make a pledge of allegiance to the regime.



**ARCHBISHOP ALOYSIUS STEPINAC**  
Among the first of the 'Iron Curtain' Churches to suffer imprisonment for resistance to Red Fascism, Archbishop Stepinac of Yugoslavia was soon joined as a victim of Communist persecution by Hungary's heroic Cardinal Mindszenty. And now the same fate faces Prague's Archbishop Beran whose vigorous opposition to Red tyranny has aroused Communist dictators of Czechoslovakia.

AS INDUCEMENT to meet these demands, the Church has reportedly been promised better pay and bonuses to priests who "cooperate with the people's government," and also about \$9,000,000 annually for expropriated lands. At present the state grants about \$14,000,000 a year toward the support of the Catholic clergy.

To each of the government's demands the Church has partly shown such adamant opposition that last month Minister of Transportation Alois Fik himself a Catholic publicly acknowledged the final breakdown of negotiations for a church-state pact.

ANOTHER INDICATION that a definite impasse had resulted was a letter subsequently sent to Minister Fik by Archbishop Beran warning that Catholics who collaborate with the government in anti-Church measures may incur the penalty of excommunication.

Meanwhile it was disclosed that the archbishop had sent a second letter to Minister of Education Jozef Novejko protesting against the issuance of a government-sponsored Gazette of the Catholic Clergy intended to inform priests of new government directives "so they would not be misled by uninformed persons in the Catholic hierarchy."

ARCHBISHOP BERAN charged that the government's action in publishing the gazette, especially under the title given it, was an infringement of the Church's sole right to give information and instruction to its clergy.

He made the point that where as routine acts cause a form of pastoral letter to clergymen, have had to be suspended because of an alleged paper short

**Doctors Admit Lourdes Cures**

Paris — (RNS) — France's National Medical Commission has reported it can find "no natural or scientific explanation" for three reported cures at the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes passed on to them for study by the Lourdes Medical Bureau.

The case reports and histories have been transmitted to the Canon of the mission of the National Catholic Agency, which may desire the cures miraculously.

FIRST CASE is that of eight-year-old Gerard Baitte who was blind as the result of atrophy of the optic nerves and whose pupils were completely colorless. He was reported cured suddenly in 1947 while following his mother through the Stations of the Cross. Subsequent examinations have shown that the child has retained his sight and that the pupils of his eyes have regained their color.

Second case is that of Marie Therese (sister), suffering from tubercular peritonitis and a tumor of the vagina, who was said to have been instantaneously cured while taking a bath in the water from the Lourdes spring. During the past year, she has been submitted to frequent examination, but there has been no return of the disease.

The prelate's accusations were underscored in subsequent Vatican Radio broadcasts which stated that many monks and nuns have been imprisoned in Slovakia and most religious periodicals in both Slovakia and Moravia are being forced to suspend, while prayer books are being censored. Other informed sources have reported that 150 priests are at present under arrest on charges of engaging in "anti-state activities."

One of the most serious features of the government's anti-Church campaign, according to Archbishop Beran are the plans being made to establish a new government-controlled national church in Czechoslovakia independent of the Vatican.

Another major tactic, the archbishop asserted, has been an attempt to set up a "Catholic Action" group under the auspices of the Popular (Catholic) Party—now under left wing control—and outside the hierarchy's jurisdiction.

There are reports that Archbishop Beran's residence is being kept under constant observation, and many observers fear it will be only a matter of time before the nation's leading churchman is forced to travel the same road as Cardinal Mindszenty in Hungary and Archbishop Stepinac in Yugoslavia.

Meanwhile, Archbishop Beran has made his attitude clear, declaring that "the Church and Catholics will always try to fulfill its duties toward the State, but demand that the duties of the Church and Catholics toward God be respected."

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**Boy Leadership Summer Training Set At Niagara U.**

Sixth in a series of twelve Summer Schools of Boy Leadership conducted annually by the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council Boy Life Bureau will be held at Niagara University on the weekend of August 3-6.

This practical training session open to all Catholic men, priests and laymen alike, is designed to provide a comprehensive indoctrination in the principles and methods of youth leadership for the volunteer workers in such programs as the parish C.Y.O. Scouts, Columbian Squares, etc.

During the past twenty-five years more than 12,000 Catholic men, including 565 priests, have received this training.

Conducted by the professionally trained staff of the Boy Life Bureau, the course at Niagara University will feature a number of formal lectures, some actual workshop in group leadership and a series of panel discussions led by representatives of diocesan and approved national youth serving organizations.

Lecture topics will include: The Nature and Characteristics of the Younger and Older Boy; The Program Planning; The Elements of a Program; Principles and Methods of Committee Work; The Spiritual Program; The Cultural Program; The Civic Program; The Social Program; Drama.

**Irish Constitution Sent To Film Stars**

Dublin (NC) — Copies of the Irish Constitution have been sent to the United States to be distributed to American recipients of the annual awards of the Catholic Film and Radio Guild for the past nine years. Each copy has been autographed by President Sean T. O'Kelly of Ireland.

The awards, statutes of St. Patrick and St. Brigit have been given annually to the American actor and actress of Irish lineage, and eminent in films and radio, who have consistently maintained a devotion to the Christian ideals of the Irish people as set forth in the Irish Constitution.

The first to receive awards of the statutes in 1940 were Spencer Tracy and Irene Dunne. This year the awards went to Sarah Allgood and Dennis Day.

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