

Editorials

Excommunication For Communists To Defy the Church is Apostasy The Humble Return from Paganism By Mgr. William M. Hart

Excommunication

A startling word with a portentous meaning! Catholics know the word, know its meaning, but usually have little experience with its application. Serious sins against the faith, against the sacraments, being excommunication to the sinners attempting marriage before a minister, attempting a second marriage during the lifetime of one's lawful partner, are punished by excommunication ipso facto. The "ipso facto" means the penalty falls on the sinner as soon as the sin is committed; no trial, no judicial action of any Church court is required.

Rome has just pronounced an ipso-facto excommunication against all who profess and particularly those who defend and spread the materialistic and anti-Christian doctrine of the Communists. They are to be regarded as apostates from the Catholic faith; the excommunication is reserved especially to the Holy See. For release from such an excommunication, petition must be made to the Holy Father. It is the most severe penalty imposed by the Church.

Apostate is the proper name for one who turns away from the Church, from Christ and Christ's teaching. Apostate is the proper title for one who substitutes the materialistic and anti-Christian doctrine of the Communists for the spiritual and Christ-given doctrine of the Church. There can be no further leeway left to lenient and wayward persons who would try to be Catholics and pagans at the same time. One must be with Christ or against Him!

Other Penalties

The Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office, a committee of Cardinals headed by the Holy Father to care for all matters pertaining to faith, includes the penalty of refusal of the sacraments to those who enlist in or show favor to the Communist Party knowingly and freely; or who publish, read or disseminate books, newspapers, periodicals or leaflets in support of Communist doctrine and practice, or write any articles in such publications. This punishment is in keeping with the ordinary law of the Church as given in the Code of Canon Law, Canon 1809, and in keeping with the common principles governing refusal of the sacraments to those not having proper dispositions.

Weak-willed Catholics, poorly informed Catholics, will profit by this act of the Holy See to get away entirely from dealings with Communism.

A Fearful Punishment

Excommunication is a dreadful punishment. Yet it is not more dreadful than the sin which calls for it. To turn away from the teachings of Christ is to court eternal damnation. Only through Christ, His Church, His teachings and His sacraments, can any person be saved. Membership in the Church is a gift Christ bestows on those who come to Him through faith and baptism. It is a precious gift, an outstanding one among all gifts of God. No earthly good can be compared with it. Only through membership in the Church can man enjoy the grace and favor of God here on earth, and justification before God in the world to come. In losing our soul, we lose God and everlasting happiness.

"Will you also go away?" So spoke Christ to His Apostles and disciples when many turned from Him refusing to accept His doctrine of the Holy Eucharist. So speaks Christ to those who today would turn from Him. He does not change His teaching, does not recall any part of what He has taught; He accepts the sinful act of all who would turn from Him, as a binding decision of their wicked free will.

Words Of Eternal Life

Followers of Christ know that He alone has the words of eternal life. To no other can they go for these words, to no other can they look for eternal life and the means to attain it. The Church even in imposing the penalty of excommunication, has in mind the ultimate salvation of the excommunicated. The penalty is punitive and remedial at the same time. When it secures its remedial effect in the reclamation of the sinner from contumacy, the sincere giving up of all Communist doctrines and practices, it will be removed with all its effects by act of the Holy See.

A Communist Return

Many a deluded soul will be shocked into action by the realization of the spiritual harm he has brought on himself by embracing Communism. Many a Catholic will be anxious to secure reinstatement as a member of the Church, by sorrow and purpose of amendment. He will go to confession, will be told by the confessor that the matter must be referred to the Holy See, will be absolved in accordance with the rules of the Church. The required preliminary to such absolution, must be absolute and complete severance of all union with the Communist Party and all cooperation with its pagan works.

All Christians will realize the justice of the Church's action in imposing this excommunication. All Christians will pray that the light of faith and of reason may once more shine on souls darkened by the pagan blackness of faith.

The Will Of My Father

God's will must rule the world! Man's will should follow God's will. Behind the will of God is the infinite wisdom of the Almighty, the wisdom of God ordering all things unto good in accordance with their nature. God's will seeks always the good of His creatures. God knows His children's body and soul, knows what will promote the good to which He made them, knows what will bring harm to them. Cooperation with the will of God is virtue; action against the will of God is vice.

"By their works you shall know them." View the works of all the pagans who have a remedy for every evil in life, but a remedy far worse than the evil it seeks to cure. Any remedy that invokes evil even for a good end is forbidden by the will of God.

When birth controllers pretend to be planned parents, when they start off with sinful and unnatural means to frustrate nature, when they urge their wives to abort, when they resort to a remedy for alleged marital evils, when they try to know them and to know them by their works, they are not of God. They are merely the instruments of the many false shepherds in today's world, who are not of God.

Let us hear Him, stay close to Him, let us imitate their works. Our work shall be to do the will of the Father in heaven, and our way through a wicked world shall be the way of heaven.

Red Steeplejack



Temple in the New Orleans Times - Picayune

TOWARD INDUSTRIAL PEACE Left, Right and Center Now Grab Your Partner

By Richard M. McKeon, S. J.

Director, Le Moyne College School of Industrial Relations

There is an urgent need for more correct labeling of many of the goods which we buy. The adjectives superfluous, excellent, de luxe, and special may mean different quality as applied to various commodities. And the same is true in the world of ideas. A political party designated as the right may have many wrong principles.



POPULAR usage puts the communists on the extreme left but what is their wacry? It is the social and economic injustice prevalent in all parts of the world and with this cry unheeded by those who might be able to do away with the cause of insecurity it will serve to rally millions into a solidarity of identity and purpose.

Yet this very injustice has called forth the great encyclical letters begging those who profess Christian faith to translate its principles of justice and love into practical action. And in these letters we find a solemn condemnation of that liberalistic philosophy of life which the wealthy and powerful maintain.

Writing in the London Economist Jeffrey Crowther has emphasized the point at issue. "We are witnessing within our own democracies a great struggle of ideas. Western industrial civilization, as we know it, grew up under the domination of a system of ideas that we now call those of the RIGHT."

IT WAS A system of ideas that exalted material progress and production, and under it more wealth has been created than was ever before imagined. But it was a system that took relatively little notice of the miseries and the injustices that were the price of its progress.

"We have therefore in the last generation in the rise of the opposite doctrine of the LEFT, which exalt the security and social welfare of the individual, even at the cost of economic efficiency and the maximum creation of wealth."

Now common sense should make us realize that there is a center. At this center there must be justice where human relationships are balanced on moral principles. In commutative justice there is the constant and permanent determination to give each individual his due.

IMMEDIATELY we see this violated by the non-payment of the living wage, by invasion of real or personal property rights, unwarranted restrictions of individual or family liberty, by distributive justice we see the constant determination of the state or community to bring about a fair distribution of the common goods for the welfare of all citizens.

In legal justice there is the determination of the citizens to give the state its due and this calls for a proper observance of laws which bear upon the good of the commonwealth.

Can we prevail upon our citizens to avoid the extremes of both right and left and to support the philosophy of the center which reflects truly the traditions of Christianity and the nation? The answer is yes, if we can persuade labor and management to set aside past antagonism and enter into a type of partnership, if we can reform our government by limiting controls to what is necessary, and if we can make Christian principles the guide of all departments of life.

WHAT'S RIGHT WITH THE WORLD?

By Rev. James M. Gillis, C.S.P.

Regular readers of this column, when they see that word Doctrinaires, will detect that I am about to speak again of college professors. They may ask, "What's the matter with Gillis? Has he developed a fixation on professors? Are there not a thousand subjects more important than what goes on in the classrooms of colleges and universities?"



Is it not a recognized fact that to live in the academic atmosphere day in and day out year after year, is enough to unfit a man for the big world of reality?

So why not let the logomachists enjoy themselves, or at least employ themselves in the world of words and ideas while more practical persons grapple with facts, emergencies, conspiracies national and international affairs.

THE PROFESSORS are fond of recalling the anecdote of Alexander the Great and Archimedes. The world conqueror strolling on the beach stumbled upon the mathematician drawing lines on the sand. "Can I do anything for you?" said the soldier to the scholar. "You can stand out of my light," answered Archimedes unconcerned about less majesty.

There are professors at Harvard and Columbia and Chicago and California who seem to say in the present stupendous upheaval "It's nothing," why be disturbed? Let's get on with our studies. Keep cool, let there be no hysteria. Communists on the

campus? Nonsense! And if there were, what of it? We must not go witch hunting. "Ah, we all things, come what may, let us safeguard free speech even for the enemies of our way of life, if they be enemies indeed. And why be concerned about our way of life? There may be a dozen other ways better than ours. Soviet Russia may have hit upon something superior to what the founding fathers of the American Republic worked out for us 170 years ago.

"Change is inevitable. We must give a hearing to Marx and Lenin as our predecessors did to John Locke and Algernon Sidney. Above all, let us beware of enthusiasm and excitement. Let's be cool, calm, collected and complacent."

"IN THIS spirit," the professors and the college presidents continue, "we must admit the exponents and even the advocates of Marxism to the classroom and lecture hall. But we shall expect them—and indeed we may rely upon them—to observe a truly academic nonchalance. It would be vulgar of them to be propagandists.

"They must, and no doubt they will, respect the intellectual independence of their students. They will be content to set before the young men and women—who come to hear them, both sides of the argument, or better still they will refrain from argument. The students may be relied upon to compare one ideology with another, and to select that which is better.

"We use the word 'better' but to make our meaning more precise we must explain that nothing is absolutely better than

Look Who's Rocking The Ship of State!

anything else, just as no one thing is true and another false, or one thing good and another bad. If we refer to one theory or one system of government as 'better' than another, we mean only that it seems better fitted to produce a result which is considered desirable. It may in fact be 'better' or it may be 'worse'. The only way to learn is to try.

"WE HAVE tried the American way, why not try the Russian way? If the Russian system turns out to be disappointing we can drop it and experiment with another. Nothing is of permanent value. There is no absolute." All things are relative. In days gone by, men spoke dogmatically because they believed in an Absolute.

"We have dropped the Absolute. Ours is the age of relativity. Nothing is good; nothing is bad; nothing is true, nothing false, nothing right, nothing wrong. If we are to use those dogmatic words at all, good, bad, right, wrong, true, false, we must do so only after toning down their meaning to relatively good and so forth."

Now what would you say dear reader is the fallacy hidden under all that professional gibberish? I need not tell you. If I were to assume that you needed to be told you might fairly accuse me of thinking you as stupid as a professor or even as a college president. But perhaps I may remark that there is in one sentence a conclusive reply to all that pseudo-philosophical jargon. The reply is that of Justice Jackson of the Federal Supreme Court who said in effect, if these doctrines have their way it will lead to the suicide of the state.

THE TOP OF MY MIND

By Gretta Palmer

The Devil is a cosmopolitan. He knows how to adapt his methods to the local conditions of an land. Thus news reports from eastern Europe hold for every Catholic in the world some of the poignant prophecies of the American enemies of the Church.



swallow up the entire Catholic Action organization here as they are doing in Slovakia, but they will try to capture some other organization which the mass of Americans have learned to trust.

In the summer of 1948 only one year ago, the Father George of "God's Underground" visited China. There he held meetings

with Chinese priests to whom he described the methods used by priests in eastern Europe to evade the secret police and bring the sacraments to the people. Most of the Chinese listened to him with a grave but academic attention. They said, "This is most interesting. But it can never happen here."

Today many of the priests he lectured are themselves members of the Chinese religious underground. Disguised as rickshaw boys and food hawkers they smuggle the Eucharist to the

lally in Communist China, using the very methods Father George described.

No Catholic in the world today is wise to trust too cockily to that confident phrase, "It can't happen here." Not when the Devil is organized on international lines.

NOW, SUCH a flat statement that the Devil coaches the Communists governments may seem a piece of impudent theological free-wheeling. And so it would be if it were not for the 1937 Encyclical Divini Redemptoris. In this pronouncement on "Atheistic Communism" the Holy Father spoke of Communist propaganda as "truly diabolical," he called those who spread it "sons of darkness."

Satan Hides Evil Under Sweet-Sounding Labels

lally in Communist China, using the very methods Father George described.

In America speak often of the "truly democratic system of the USSR." This is an utterly contradictory phrase for dictatorship by a tiny minority of commissars is surely as undemocratic as any government can be. And the Reds know it.

In Slovakia the phrase which commands the loyalty of the masses of men is not "democracy" but "Catholic Action." The Slovakian Communists therefore announce that "Catholic Action" nowadays involves a rejection of the Holy See and a joyous compliance with Communist ideals. This is, of course, a sheer gibberish; a movement cannot be Catholic and anti-Catholic at the same time.

But the Slovakian peasant is not accustomed to appraise political slogans by reference to the dictionary and the principle of contradictions. . . . no more, indeed, than we.

MANY A scoundrel has practiced Innocence-by-Association by frequenting the devout and renting a church pew. . . . often he has been considered an honest man in the teeth of all the evidence.

To call a bad thing by a good name is a tried, reliable way of smuggling it into the hearts of those who would reject it if they saw it as it is.

"Define that word" may not be a remark which will make us shine in repartee, but it is one we are not to growingly necessary in the years ahead. The Devil will be disappointed. He knows, as the Father of Lies, that a lie is most destructive when it sounds most like the truth.

Take the familiar example of "democracy." The Communists

German Catholics Grateful, Card. Von Preysing States

By RICHARD REID, EDITOR, N. Y. CATHOLIC NEWS

Berlin (NC)—American Catholics have by their donations saved many people of his diocese from sickness and death, His Eminence Konrad Cardinal von Preysing, Bishop of Berlin, said here in a message for the Catholic Press of the United States.

His Eminence in receiving me, as Bishop of Berlin, said here in a message for the Catholic Press of the United States. His Eminence in receiving me, as Bishop of Berlin, said here in a message for the Catholic Press of the United States.

THE CARDINAL, who speaks English fluently and whose relations with the U. S. Military Government are and have been cordial, received me in his quarters in a modest house in a residential area of Berlin. His Cathedral and his home were destroyed in the war. The arch-

Ailing Churchill Requested Catholic Prelate's Prayer

Madrid (NC)—"Go to the Archbishop of Westminster and ask him to pray for me, because apparently the prayers of our Archbishop of Canterbury are not making me well," wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill is reported to have remarked to his wife when seriously ill during World War II.

The story was told here by Mrs. Antonette Woodruff, vice-president of the Catholic Women's League of Great Britain who is visiting Spain as the invitation of Catholic Action.

Mrs. Woodruff, wife of the director of The Tablet, London Catholic weekly, was speaking to newspapermen about the status of British Catholicism and related the anecdote to point out the prestige enjoyed among non-Catholics by Arthur Cardinal Hinsley, deceased Archbishop of Westminster.

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