

Most Czech Clergy Refuse State Oath

Munich — Despite severe communist pressure only about five per cent of the Czechoslovak diocesan clergy took an unqualified oath of loyalty to the regime, according to reliable information reaching here.

The other 95 per cent added the clause requested by the Bishops: "in as far as it is not contrary to divine and ecclesiastical law and to the natural rights of man."

SO FAR THE regime has demanded the oath only from the diocesan priests and those priests of religious Orders who are actively engaged in parish work, the information states. However, it is expected that the regular will soon call all the religious clergy before the communist national committee to demand the oath of allegiance. The following phase will be to demand the oath from the Bishops, it is said.

In a further attempt to ingratiate itself with the clergy, the regime is now reportedly organizing "left parties" in various districts to which clergymen of all denominations are invited. The "left parties" have special hostesses called "cultural consultants" whose job it is to create a friendly atmosphere for "chatty discussions" on church matters.

TOGETHER WITH its policy of ingratiating the regime is also using force to persuade "recalcitrant" clergymen, the report states. Government pressure is directed particularly against those priests who in the past have read in church the pastorals of the Bishops and who show themselves outspoken in their sermons. The usual punishment for these "intemperances" is a two-year jail sentence. The regime is also on the look out for priests who try to enforce the Vatican's excommunication of communists. The customary sentence for this "offense" is a seven- or eight-year prison term.

A recent report states that the Rev. Stefan Balaz was sentenced at Bratislava, Slovakia, to 12 years in prison for refusing to give absolution in confession to unrepentant communist sympathizers. The same court reportedly sentenced another priest, the Rev. Frantisek Lopp, to four and one-half years in prison for "publicly inciting the faithful" against the government.

TO HELP PASS judgment on "undemocratic" priests the regime is reported to have readied 36,000 new "people's judges." They are communist-trained workmen, usually with no experience in jurisprudence.

In the new procedure the court is composed of three judges, two "people's judges" and one professional jurist. The jurist's job in the set-up is to set down the charges and punishment in legal terminology, while the "people's judges" fix and pass out the sentence.

ADDRESSING A group of these new judges, Alexej Cepicka, Minister of Justice and head of the new Office for Church Affairs, told them that their main task was to curb "reactionary elements." This "reaction" is to be found, he said, particularly among the "high clergy," who organize "subversive manifestations" which they call pilgrimages, who preach against the "voluntary work programs" on Sundays and who spread rumors about "miracles."

"People's judges," Mr. Cepicka added, "must not and will not be encumbered by formalism and will pass judgment quickly with sole regard to the needs of the people."

Other reports from Czechoslovakia state that the regime, which used to denounce the clergy for "abuses" of the pulpit for "political purposes," is now demanding that clergymen read from the pulpit the government's economic orders and other circulars.

Abbot Tyl, who exercises considerable influence in his area, spent five years in the Buchenwald concentration camp during the war. One of his co-prisoners was Dr. Alexej Cepicka, now Minister of Justice and head of the State Office for Church Affairs.



MARYKNOLL'S 'MR. CHIPS'... An enthusiastic audience listens to an impromptu concert in Kyoto University, Japan. FATHER JOHN C. MURRETT, M.M., of Buffalo, N. Y., went to Japan in 1947 to teach English. He now spends 30 hours a week teaching 2,000 students there. Besides acting as tutor, he is spiritual father, house master and pianist. His musical renditions range from choice classics to current hits. (N.C. Photos)

Nuns Aids Pagan Monk Join Church

Hong Kong — (NC) — A Buddhist monk from the Ching Wen monastery of Shensi province has been baptized at St. Joseph's Church in occupied Shanghai, according to information reaching here.

Attracted to Christianity by reading, the monk, Ko Peh-chung, had applied and was accepted for a two-year course of studies offered by a Protestant group in Hong Kong, but he fell ill and was taken to St. Marie's Hospital in Shanghai for treatment.

The sister in charge of Mr. Ko's ward answered his inquiries about Catholicism, promised to pray for him, and urged him to make further inquiries. For some time he made excursions from the Buddhist temple to assist at Mass. He broke with Buddhism early in 1949, and after an intensive course of instruction was baptized by the Rev. Joseph Chung of St. Joseph's parish.

Priest, Killed By Nazis, Reburied in Native Parish

Paris — (NC) — A Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated in the parish church of Vitry, a workers' suburb of Paris, for Father Roger Derry, who was beheaded by the Nazis on October 15, 1943, in the Cologne prison.

Before the outbreak of World War II, Father Derry was an assistant at the Church of St. Francis Xavier in Paris when France was invaded by the Germans, the young priest served in the Army as an infantry sergeant, and after the armistice returned to his parish in Vitry. He never accepted the defeat of his country and firmly believed in the final victory of the allied cause.

HE WAS ARRESTED by the Gestapo in October, 1941 and was placed in a Dusseldorf prison. From there he wrote encouraging letters to those who suffered a similar fate reminding them of the necessity of prayer of penance, of brotherly love, and assuring them of an early peace. On the 14th of July, the French national holiday, he loudly intoned the Marseillaise, a song which was taken up by all the prisoners. For this he was punished by solitary confinement.

In 1943 he was condemned to death. On October 15 he was ad-

Nuns Flee Manchuria Through Red Korea To Liberated Area

Seoul, Korea — (NC) — Fourteen Korean Sisters have made a courageous trek from Manchuria through Russian-held North Korea and have arrived safely here in this South Korean area. They made their flight in lay clothing.

They are members of the Olivetan Congregation of the Holy Cross of the Order of St. Benedict, and are about to begin a foundation here.

In 1934 four Sisters of the congregation arrived at Yenki, Manchuria, from Switzerland to work among the Korean colonists in Manchuria. Their foundation staff grew to 18 missionary Sisters and 16 Korean Sisters, who conducted a hospital, an orphanage and old people's home and schools.

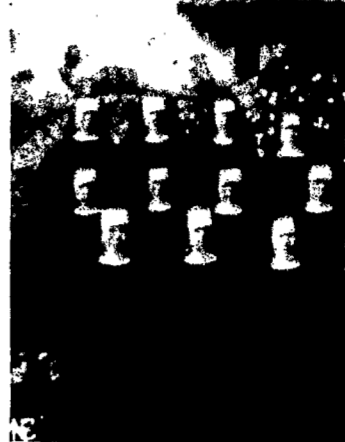
When the communists took Yenki the 18 missionary Sisters were confined in a native house and two Korean Sisters were jailed. The other 14 Korean Sisters were simply told to "go away." These put on Korean lay clothing and two by two started walking the hundreds of miles to South Korea. Each Sister carried on her head a bundle of food and clothing and, well-hidden, a prayer book and the constitution of the congregation.

As they made their way from parish to parish from Yenki in Manchuria through Russian-held North Korea above the 38th parallel, they found many of the parish priests already had been jailed.

But the Christians on their path of flight helped them along, and they now have found asylum in four little temporary convents in South Korea. With some money that

has come to them they have bought a few acres and a building. The Sisters will cultivate the land themselves and hope

gradually to obtain the means to furnish their convent, accept candidates and send out Sisters on various missionary works.



These 14 Korean Sisters members of the Olivetan Congregation of the Holy Cross of the Order of St. Benedict, have arrived safely in Seoul, following a courageous trek from Yenki in Manchuria through Russian-held North Korea. They made their flight in lay clothing (right photo). They found that many of the parish priests already had been jailed. Christians on their path of flight helped them along. Each Sister carried on her head a bundle of food and clothing, a well-hidden prayer book and the constitution of the congregation.

British Law Bars Priest Candidacy, Vote Of Nuns

London — (NC) — To check on an anomaly in Britain's electoral law (Canon John Moran, parish priest of Llanelli, South Wales, was told by the registrar that there is no clause in the 1948 Representation of the People Act entitling such persons to vote.

The official added in his letter: "You have voluntarily disenfranchised yourself."

At the request of the Church authorities he said, he made his attempt to expose the inequality of English electoral law which permits dissenting ministers to stand but not Church of England clergy or Catholic priests.

CANON MORAN went to the Town Hall and asked the deputy returning officer to accept his nomination. The official consulted a copy of the Act of Parliament then told the Canon that he could not be nominated as he was in Holy Orders.


Canon Moran later stated that his move was made because the Rev. D. Eirwen Morgan a Baptist minister had been nominated as a Welsh nationalist candidate.

A though convicts in jail are entitled to vote in the General Election if they have the necessary residential qualifications nuns in enclosed orders are not permitted to vote.

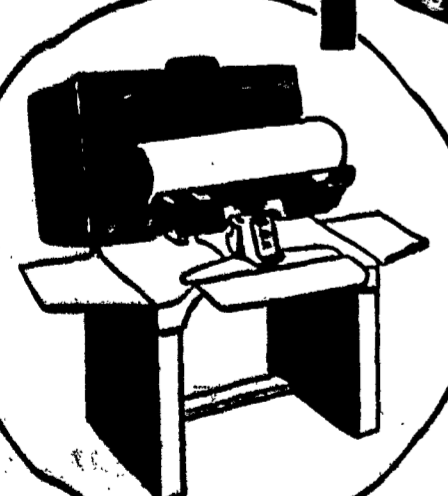
THIS IS disclosed in the ruling of an electoral registration officer for Penn Fields near Walsingham.

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