

Jailing Czech Priest Leaders Marks Reds' Boldest Attack

Frankfurt — (NC) — The Czechoslovak communist regime took one of its boldest steps toward an all-out war with the Catholic Church by jailing 100 priest leaders in the country. Several of them had suffered in Nazi concentration camps for their resistance to that totalitarian system.

Each of the priests is an authority in his own right. Most of them had studied and been ordained in Rome. All were known to thousands of Czech Catholics as among the most eloquent and learned preachers in the country. Several of them had suffered in Nazi concentration camps for their resistance to that totalitarian system.

deprivations last only three years. Although the Prague radio had announced beforehand that the foreign press would be allowed to witness the "trial," representatives of the western non-communist press failed to gain admittance to any part of it. They were dependent entirely on the official communist press and radio for news of the proceedings.

Vatican Radio Broadcasts Message To Czech Priests

By G. H. BRUNST

Rome — (NC) — Vatican Radio has broadcast a message in the Czech language to the 10 priests, members of several religious orders, who have been given varying prison sentences following a so-called trial in Prague. The broadcast told the priests that it sent "devoted greetings to your cells," where they languish as pure confessors of the Faith.

AT THE SAME time, the Vatican Radio urged the people of Czechoslovakia to pray for the victims of this injustice, and not let themselves be deceived by the propaganda charges that the Church is engaged in espionage.

Observatore Romano, Vatican City daily, says "the devoted homage of the Catholic and civilized world" goes out to the generous sons of the Church who "through their sacrifice have today joined their name and glory to that of the many whom history honors in admiration and gratitude and as an example for all men who are free and believers."

By preferring imprisonment to honors, gifts, freedom such as misguides the timid, the indifferent, the ambitious and the greedy, the paper adds, these religious have written another glorious page of Catholic apologetics.

Termining the Prague sentences "one of the most atrocious injustices of our days," Quotidiano, the Catholic Action daily, comments: "The Prague religious are being punished for having obeyed the duties of the Catholic priesthood as defined since centuries, and for having refused to accept the domination of a materialist state... which imposes unconditional serfdom in return for a salary."

The paper also says "Popular Democracies" follow in the footsteps of absolutist regimes of the past. Reminding its readers many of the sentenced priests had been imprisoned by the Germans for their resistance to Nazism, the article declares that these priests "have resisted against the aggression of communist atheism for the same reason that prompted them to resist pagan Hitlerism."

Calls Czech Trial 'Grotesque'

Rome — (RNS) — Treason charges against ten Roman Catholic priests brought to trial in Czechoslovakia were denounced here as "grotesque" by Observatore Romano, Vatican newspaper. It said the Prague trial represented one of the most characteristic episodes of anti-Catholic persecution behind the Iron Curtain.

Real motive for the priests' arrests, Observatore charged, was that they were outstanding members of their orders who had refused to become tools of the Communist-dominated State. The newspaper asked why, if the government had so much evidence against the priests, some of it dating back to the time of the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia — it did not press charges before the anti-religious campaign began in earnest.

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Quebec Enacts Law On Immoral Reading

Quebec (NC) — A law banning obscene and immoral literature in the Province of Quebec has been enacted. It was one of 93 bills passed at the present session of the Quebec Legislature and given royal assent by Sir Eugene Faes, Quebec's Lieutenant Governor.

The law authorizes the Attorney General to submit illustrations to the Board of Quebec Censors to determine whether the illustrations are obscene or indecent. The law also provides that all publications, except newspapers and religious publications, must register with the Provincial Secretary the name of the publisher and distribution agents.

REPORT ON U. S. CLOTHING DRIVE



There was much joy in the Diocese of Bamberg, Germany, when the big clothing shipment arrived from America, the result of the drive last Fall conducted under auspices of War Relief Services-National Catholic Welfare Conference. In photo, Bishop Landgraf and Caritas Director Dr. Krueger inspect newly arrived shipment. (NC Photos)

American Rome Nazi-Jailed Monks Church Center Honored In Poland For Pilgrims

By REV. JOS. SULLIVAN

Rome — (NC) — Santa Susanna, the "American Church of Rome," is a busy hub of Holy Year activity these days with pilgrims in large groups and small converging on both the Church and the Information Center at all times of the day.

The special staff of Paulist Fathers and their lay helpers are having a hard time to keep up with the demands upon their services for devotions and confessions in the church and for information and guidance of all kinds in the Information Center which has been specially enlarged and equipped to serve American pilgrims during the current year.

REV. EDWARD H. PETERS, C.S.P. who has been rector for the past several years, continues to keep an eye and a hand on things generally and is assisted by the Rev. William Lvnahan and the Rev. Robert Walsh.

There are from one to four confessions on duty in the church at all times of the day and there are several Masses each morning with ample opportunity for pilgrims to receive their Jubilee Holy Communion On Friday evenings there are the devotions of the Stations of the Cross and on Good Friday Father Albert Murray preached during the Three Hours service.

SOME PILGRIMAGES of U.S. military personnel from Germany have made Santa Susanna a regular stop in connection with their tour of the basilicas having visited the shrines and recited the prescribed prayers. They had their buses take them to the Church where the Paulists were at full strength to hear their confessions quickly and conveniently.

PILGRIM PRIESTS are coming to Santa Susanna in ever increasing numbers to offer morning Mass. They are readily welcomed and made at home by the Paulist Fathers who have added temporary altars to the three existing ones to accommodate the visitors. High point thus far in the matter of Masses was the Sunday of March 5 when His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman, New York pilgrim age was here. On that day 40 Masses were offered in Santa Susanna.

Kolping Societies Cologne — (NC) — There are now 100,000 members in the Kolping Societies of Germany according to an announcement of the Rev. Bernhard Rieder.

Cracow, Poland — (NC) — A vigorous reply to the leaders of the communist Polish regime has been made by the Polish Franciscan Conventual Fathers. Together with other religious orders, the Franciscans have been persistently attacked by the communist regime. They have been charged with aiding and abetting the Nazis in the crippling of Poland in 1939 and during the occupation that followed.

The Franciscans have answered that charge with the unveiling of a memorial tablet to the 150 members of their Order, who were held in Nazi concentration camps, 50 of whom were murdered. The names of the victims appear on the tablet which is located on a wall in the 600 year old Cracow basilica of the Motherhouse of the Order.

THE UNVEILING was attended by the Provincials of both Franciscan provinces in Poland, numerous priests and a great multitude of the faithful. A mourning procession moved from the basilica to the cloisters where services were held.

The Rev. Anselm Kubit, Superior of the Order from Niepokalanow, in delivering the eulogy, said: "Because the Polish Franciscans lived the life of the nation, it is not surprising that national triumphs and disasters are reflected in the buildings of this monastery."

The priest mentioned the incursions of the Tartars, the concealment by the monks of King Wladyslaw Lokietek in the monastery, his escape and victorious return, the meeting of Queen Hedwig and the Austrian Prince William at the monastery, the baptism of King Wladyslaw Jagello and his subsequent departure to Lithuania with the Franciscan Fathers, in order to bring the Lithuanians into the Catholic Church and many other historical events.

"IN THESE cloisters" he added "we have summarized history of religious art, the oldest frescoes, beautiful portraits of bishops, the works of art of many masters, magnificent epitaphs, works of beautiful craftsmanship. There must, therefore, be a moment here where we spread the word of the Immaculate Mother among the unfortunate prisoners. Seeing the pain and despair of a fellow inmate who had been picked out for death, he asked to be allowed to give his life for him, though he was aware of the terrible sufferings which awaited him, when naked suffering and thirst he would suffer for many days."

It can be said of this tablet: "Here the dead live and the mass speak." So they cry out here and will live in our hearts, memory, ideals and later in our deeds and devotion. If on other memorials in these galleries the words are inscribed: "Wafer! stop! then every one should stop at this one for it glows with the blood shed for the highest ideas."

Red Polish State Pressing Hierarchy On Agreements

London — (RNS) — Charges that the Communist-dominated government of Poland is attempting to persuade Roman Catholic bishops to sign agreements with the State that would bring the Catholic Church under complete State control were made by the Vatican Radio in a Polish language broadcast.

THE VATICAN station declared that the conditions demanded in the proposed agreements "show clearly that the regime is trying to establish a schismatic national church in Poland."

It said the conditions include recognition of and cooperation with the Caritas organization, formerly a Catholic-controlled welfare group which the Polish bishops stated Catholics may no longer support, since it has now been placed under State supervision and operation.

OTHER DEMANDS by the Warsaw government, the Vatican Radio said, are that the Polish bishops issue an official declaration disavowing charges that the Church is being persecuted, and that the Church break off all contacts with the Vatican and dedicate itself completely to the development of Poland in the spirit of modern Socialism.

"It is not necessary to emphasize," the Vatican station commented, "that these conditions are unacceptable to the Polish episcopate and to the people of Poland."

North American Has Student Limit Filled

Rome (NC) — The North American college has already accepted its full quota of students for the scholastic year of 1950-51, it was made known here by college authorities.

Box Of Candy Not, Too Sweet

Wewick, China — (NC) — "America's package increase" is the title of a new book by John G. O'Rourke, reports Patrick J. O'Rourke, Maryknoll Missioner from Wewick, China. "The regional customs office recently notified us of a box of candy addressed to the mission, mailed last May, and waiting to be picked up. No one has picked up the candy and it looks like no one will — the customs charge is \$15."

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