

# Tito Lies About Abp. Stepinac In Letter To Drew Pearson

By G. R. BRUNST  
(Foreign Editor, N.O.W.C. News Service)

Yugoslavia's communist dictator, Marshal Tito, has made another slick attempt at dressing up falsehoods as proven facts. The falsehoods concern the activity of Archbishop Aloisius Stepinac of Zagreb as spiritual shepherd of the Croatian people during the war.

Though exposed them and scores of times since, Tito now restates these falsehoods in his letter to the American publicist Drew Pearson. His aim is obvious: He hopes that public opinion has either forgotten or is ignorant of the true facts of the case. Then, by a fraudulent act of mercy, he offers to "pardon" the Archbishop.

Thus, through a clever scheme of deception, Tito hopes to remove the obstacles to his political usefulness as an enemy of Moscow-type communism. He hopes to eliminate the "Stepinac problem" which is so embarrassing for him at home as well as abroad.

**TITO SPECULATES** that the West is so anxious to win his cooperation in the struggle against Soviet imperialism that it is ready to swallow his lies about Archbishop Stepinac. And it cannot be denied that there are those in the West who, from motives of blind expediency, are ready to swallow these lies.

But expediency based on lies is doomed to failure. The truth about Archbishop Stepinac cannot and must not be hidden, even if this truth be temporarily inconvenient.

To restate the truth about

## Unconditional Release Of Prelate Demanded

Washington, D. C.—(RNS)—Only the unconditional release from prison of Archbishop Aloisius Stepinac can "redeem the injustice" done the spiritual leader of Yugoslavia's Roman Catholics, Archbishop Francis J. Keough of Baltimore said here. He is chairman of the administrative board of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

Archbishop Keough referred to the recent exchange of letters between Marshal Tito and columnist Drew Pearson in which Tito said the "question" of the churchman would be "solved within one month."

The letter shows clearly, Archbishop Keough said, that the Yugoslav leader "persisted in his campaign of distortions, misrepresentations and plain falsehoods about Archbishop Stepinac."

Archbishop Stepinac is the pur-

pose of this article.

**IN HIS LETTER** to Drew Pearson, Tito asserts that Archbishop Stepinac "caused the forcible conversion of Orthodox people into the Catholic religion."

But the plain fact is this: Archbishop Stepinac was the very person who, instantly and with the utmost energy, fought the attempts of the Nazi-controlled Croatian puppet regime then in power to exploit religion as an instrument of nationalistic ambitions.

When the Croat puppet regime issued an order that all Serbs, members of the Orthodox (schismatic) Church, living in Croatia territory either had to emigrate or embrace the Catholic faith, Archbishop Stepinac publicly declared in his cathedral in Zagreb in July, 1941:

"We call God to witness that we have always been opposed to any compulsory attachment to the Catholic Church. We must declare that the Church has done all in her power to give aid and protection to the Orthodox."

**IN ACCORDANCE** with the strict Catholic teaching barring any conversions arising from a violation of conscience, Archbishop Stepinac organized a system under which each individual case of application for admission to the Catholic Church was subjected to the most careful scrutiny in order to ensure the fullest compliance with canonical rules regarding conversions.

The documents are still available that show how a special Episcopal Commission, headed by the Archbishop, was set up to deal with the problem arising from the pleas of tens of thousands of Orthodox to be received into the Church, because these unfortunate people hoped in this way to save their lives and their property.

It is a documented fact that the Holy See, aware of the gravity of the problem, sent special instructions to Zagreb, condemning any forced conversions and reiterating the requisites for valid reception of the Sacraments.

When the puppet regime, with the assistance of a few priests misguided by an exaggerated nationalism, continued with its at-

tempts to bring about a forced religious homogeneity in Croatia, Archbishop Stepinac sent this solemn warning to the authorities, speaking in the name of the entire hierarchy:

"THE SOLUTION of all questions regarding the conversion of dissidents is in the exclusive competence of the hierarchy. Only those could be received into the Church who, without having been subjected to force of any kind, might be converted of their own free will, after having become convinced in their own mind that the Catholic Church is the only true Church."

"All illegal procedures against the personal liberty and against the property rights of dissidents should be rigorously prohibited. Dissidents should suffer no punishment unless it be like that of any other citizens having had a trial in accordance with all legal requirements."

Far from "causing," as Tito continues to allege, or even from silently sanctioning forced conversions, Archbishop Stepinac made hundreds of appeals and protests to the authorities against their vicious policies.

As the result of these appeals, there are thousands of Orthodox who literally owe their lives to the intervention of the Archbishop. Acting as a true shepherd of souls he was particularly concerned with the lot of those suffering persecution for their conscience's sake. It is an established fact that the very person who served as judge of the Archbishop, owed his life to him as well as that of his brother and sister.

**AND THE SAME** insistence on respect for the rights of conscience was manifested by the Archbishop in his resistance, by word and deed, against the plans of the Croatian regime to apply Nazi racial laws to the Jews residing in Croatia. Hundreds of them are still alive today who readily admit that they owe their life to the Archbishop. He hid hunted Jews under his own roof. Others found shelter, under his instructions, in monasteries and convents.

To this very day there is in existence a home established by the Archbishop to give shelter and protection to old Jewish men and women. He succeeded in securing passports for a great number of Jews enabling them to find refuge overseas.

All these acts of the Archbishop, carried out in full conformity with Catholic teaching and his episcopal duties, are a

## Nuncio To Hire



ARCHBISHOP O'HARA

## Ireland To Welcome Apostolic Nuncio

Dublin—(NC)—Great pleasure was expressed here over the appointment of Archbishop Gerald F. O'Hara, Bishop of Savannah-Atlanta, as Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland.

The prelate is assured a big

welcome by the hierarchy, clergy and laity. Archbishop John McQuaid of Dublin has sent Archbishop O'Hara a congratulatory telegram.

## Christophers List High School Contest

New York—(NC)—A contest for high school students involving 27 prizes totalling \$2,000 has been announced by The Christophers.

The contest will run until February 1, 1952 and is open to all boys and girls of any race, color or creed in any high school in the United States, the announcement stated.

There will be one \$500 prize; two for \$200; four for \$100; eight for \$50 and 12 for \$25. Entries should be addressed to Christophers Teen-Age Contest, 18 East 48th St., New York 17, N. Y. Each entry may be written in any form the contestant desires, such as a letter, composition or essay.

## Holy Shroud Authenticity Unproven, Scholar Argues

By MAX JORDAN

Frankfurt—(NC)—The results of last year's congress in Rome dealing with the Holy Shroud of Turin have in no way contributed toward establishing the authenticity of this

published last year, upholds the view that the relic cannot be accepted as authentic.

Father Zaeheringer quotes other authoritative sources, such as the theological encyclopaedia by Archbishop Michael Buchberger, of Regensburg, Bavaria, and the Rev. Ludwig Koesters, S.J., of the Seminary of St. George here, in support of this view.

**HE REFERS** specifically to a critical examination of the linen held in such high esteem today, by Bishop Pierre d'Arcis of Troyes, France, as far back as 1389. The Bishop prohibited the exhibition of the relic which then was kept in the Collegiate Church of Lirey, in the Troyes diocese, because in his opinion it was not authentic.

The artist who was said to have manufactured the relic was reported at that very time to have admitted forgery. The Bishop enjoined his clergy from referring to the alleged relic in any way. Pope Clement VII subsequently permitted exhibition of the linen, but on condition that the faithful be informed of its doubtful origin.

Father Zaeheringer also refers to the fact that the shroud has never been examined with ultraviolet rays, to establish whether it actually shows traces of human blood. He avers that medical studies of the cause of Jesus' death on the Cross do not confirm the views presented by Dr. R. W. Hynek, of Prague, in his widely circulated book on the Holy Shroud.

**AN EXEGETICAL** examination of the claims advanced by the supporters of the authenticity of this relic, cannot, in Father Zaeheringer's view, disregard St. John's reference to several linens, rather than one shroud only. Father Braun of Fribourg University has established this beyond doubt. Also, according to Jewish custom, the Lord's body probably was wrapped in a coat of linens which were soaking the possibility of an imprint such as is shown on the Turin shroud.

## FATHER KENNEDY

How well do our parishes function? Are they the supernaturally living entities which they should be? Is their influence in increasing or declining? Are they reaching and transforming all the people within their boundaries, and what is their impact on the general Catholic community? These are a few general questions which nag at the thoughtful Catholic, be he cleric or layman, and a hundred particular questions stem from them. Are any reliable answers available? Can they be found, for example, in Southern Parish by Father Joseph H. Fichter, S. J. (Univ. of Chicago Press: \$5.00).

This work is the first of four volumes making up a single study which could be of inestimable value. The present book, the author writes, "investigates the religious and supernatural activities of the parishioners of St. Mary's in so far as they could be externally observed and measured."

The various parochial organizations, the family life and school, and the participation of parishioners in extra-religious and community activities are left for future consideration.

**WHY STUDY** a Southern parish? Father Fichter asserts that a parish in a Southern city was chosen because that city "has been relatively long established and yet has not been changing so rapidly as the larger cities of the East, Midwest, and Far West." If this factor has any validity in determining the location of the parish to be scrutinized, it does not justify labeling the first volume of the study Southern Parish.

Such a title might well lead the reader to expect a picture of a parish in the South, or at least one in great measure representative of the South. But Father Fichter has no such intention. He is not a typical Southerner. This intention is made clear in the preface. He is a serious student of the Church and its problems. He is not a Southerner. He is a Catholic.

It would have been better to drop the "Southern" aspect not only in the title but in the body of the work. True, some few practices which came within the survey's scope are peculiar to the South, but they are of absolutely minor moment. What is of great interest, what would make a survey universally significant, is precisely the complex of elements which are common to American parishes in every part of the country.

And surely Father Fichter had something of the sort in mind, else he would not have had his work published by a university press for general circulation. Were it as limited in pertinence as he suggests, then, it published at all, it should have been made available on the strictly local scene—say, in the ungrouped form.

## Seoul Catholics' Paper Resumes

Seoul—(NC)—The Korean daily, Kyung Hyang, which is published by Catholics but is not an official Catholic organ, has resumed publication in Seoul.

The newspaper's office and printing press, badly damaged by fire during the evacuation of Seoul last January, have been repaired and are again in operation. Kyung Hyang continues to publish an edition in Pusan, but has discontinued its wartime Taegu edition.

**CHRISTMAS CAMPAIGN** Toronto—(RNS)—Catholic colleges across Canada are sponsoring a campaign "To Put Christ Back Into Christmas."

The movement was approved by the Canadian Federation of Catholic College Students at a meeting here.

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— From sermon at 1951 Catechetical Congress

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