Reds Seize Hospital, Bar Religion In Schools

Berlin — (NC) — The expropriation of Church-owned property in the communist-ruled sector of Berlin continues. In all cases—and they number almost a dozen—the property concerned is owned by religious congregations. So far, the communists have refrained from seizing diocesan or parish property.

At the same time, there are many reports from the Soviet zone that priests are no longer allowed to use school rooms for religious instruction classes. All in all, these developments tend to confirm the expectation that the war against the Church waged by the East German communist regime will become increasingly more violent.

A FEW DAYS ago, the red rulers decreed that the St. Joseph hospital in the Berlin suburb of Weissensee is to be placed in the hands of the "public administrator." This is the legal form chosen to cover up what in effect amounts to confiscation. This hospital is operated by the Alexian Brothers, whose German headquarters is in Neuss, near Cologne.

The step was taken under the pretext that the owner of the property, that is, the congregation, is located in Western Germany, while the property itself is in Eastern Germany. In communist-ruled Germany this is not permissible.

THE INTERFERENCE with religious instruction classes is in open violation of the East German constitution which specifies that, outside the normal school hours, religious instruction can be given in classrooms up to one hour a week. This measure is particularly serious in those areas where there are but few Catholics and few churches, and consequently, the Catholic communities find it difficult if not impossible to obtain other accommodations for the religious instruction classes.

Maryknoller Killed In Traffic Mishap

Maryknoll, N. Y.— (NC) — Requiem Mass for Father William F. Schulz, 52, Maryknoll Missioner who was killed in a traffic mishap while driving to Camp Polk, La., to address a group of Catholic soldiers, was offered in the Maryknoll Chapel here.

Father Schulz was director of Maryknoll activities in New Orleans. He was driving to Camp Polk, 60 miles from New Orleans, during a severe wind and rain storm. His car was in collision with another auto, spun completely around into the path of an oncoming truck. The truck demolished Father Schulz' car and he was pinned in the wreckage.

Chancellor Figl Honored By Pope

Vienna, Austria — (NC) — Chancellor Leopold Figl headed a long list of Austrian nationals who were awarded papal decorations in recognition of services toward restoration of the war-damaged, famed St. Stephen's Cathedral here.

Chancellor Figl received the Grand Cross of the Order of St. Gregory the Great, while Mrs. Figl was awarded the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice medal, which is given for outstanding service to the Church.

Sr. Marion Cordis

Red China Days

Mission Nuns Diary

Sister Paulita

By SISTER PAULITA of Maryknoll

Behold Your Priest!

It was obvious that if the leaders wanted to get us out alive, they would have to close the trial.

The Home Guard official stepped forward. He denounced the 20 Catholics taken during the day.

"No doubt," he said, "these people are reactionaries. They wish to destory the smooth running of the People's Court. However, they are not so much to blame; for they have been instigated by those foreign women." He paused dramatically. "And that American dog is responsible for their crime!"

Checking to keep bodies plump and healthy . . . when there was enough food to go around. The story is a bit different now.

He pointed directly at me. Instinctively I rose to my feet in defense.

"Sit down and don't talk!" A quick tug at my skirt gave warning. I lowered myself, slowly, to the wooden horses.

IN NO TIME the thing was over and we were led out of the ball field and back to the village lock-up. Here the judges had a good lunch and cursorily examined the 20 Catholics. All but one were dismissed after a "brain-washing" to rid them of reactionary ideas. They were placed on the black list of their respective villages, however, and from then on were watched very closely.

• • •

The one Catholic detained was the courageous woman who had defended Father on the extortion charge. In the procession back to our convent, she was placed right behind Father, bound with ropes as he was.

THE WAY WAS lined with the usual courtesies. We were pelted with dirt, small stones and mud. I remember feeling a soft wet ball hit my cheek — a wad of chewed-up sugar cane, fresh from somebody's mouth.

Back at the convent, from our upper windows we watched Father Ching standing in the courtyard — waiting for his guards to take him to the city jail. He was a sorry figure. Dirty, ink-stained, smeared from head to foot, in ragged pajamas and filthy sneakers, he trembled from hunger and weakness.

Mr. Li had just brought us upstairs. He too was at the window. He turned to us and pointed with scorn at Father, crying, "Behold your priest!"

It was **Ecce Homo** almost to the letter.

• • •

THAT NIGHT there was a victory party over in the church. Everything had been moved out — benches, statues, the altar, holy water fonts, everything! Except one thing. The crucifix, too heavy and too high to get down easily, hung in silent rebuke at the wild orgy. The Communists did not care. To them, it symbolized the death of the Catholic Church. So much the better!

Not all the cotton we could stuff into our ears, nor blankets piled over our heads, kept out the wild shouts and screams. Filthy songs, vile language, the use of Father Ching's name in horrible jokes, seeped through and made the night hideous.

THE PEAK OF the party was Father's "funeral." They wailed a dirge, followed by wild outbursts of laughter.

Our Lord on His cross had listened to the prayers of earnest Catholics in that very church. Here, He had come to the hearts of little children and of stalwart men and women. Here, His Body and Blood had been raised to His Almighty Father. Here, He had heard his priest forgive the sins of hundreds as they came from distant towns to celebrate the great feasts.

As He looked down on that drunken rout, I wonder if He did not think of the rabble on Calvary, enjoying a holiday execution while the soldiers played dice for His clothes. His lips must have formed the words again, "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they are doing."

I KNOW that two Maryknoll Sisters prayed thus as we lay sleepless, reviewing a Day of Sublime Honor.

Next Week: ENTER MISS TNT! "Criminal" Ching is sentenced for only three charges — not leniency, just saving something for the future.

Book On Vigil Now Available

Elsberry, Mo. — (NC) — The publication on March 1 of the first full-length book on the subject of the new Easter Vigil Service as authorized by the Holy See in 1951 has been announced by Father A. F. Wilmes, secretary of the national Liturgical Conference.

The book, entitled "The Easter Vigil," contains the proceedings of the thirteenth National Liturgical Week held in Cleveland, O., last August. It is published by the Liturgical Conference, Elsberry, Mo.

Abp. Vachon Of Ottawa Dies In Texas

Dallas, Tex. —(NC)— The body of the Most Rev. Alexander Vachon, 67, scientist, educator and president of the permanent committee on international Eucharistic congress, left here for the long voyage home to Ottawa, where he had been Archbishop since 1940.

The internationally known Churchman died (March 30) at Love Field, the Dallas municipal airport. A plane which brought the Archbishop here from Miami had put down for a 20-minute stop over. He got out for a walk in the air and collapsed on a sidewalk of the airport.

FATHER Gilles Beliale, the Archbishop's secretary who was accompanying him, administered the Last Rites and called for a doctor. Three physicians responded and the prelate was pronounced dead of a heart attack. His body was removed by ambulance to St. Paul's Hospital, where the death certificate was issued.

Born at St. Raymond de Portneuf in the Province of Quebec, on August 16, 1885, the Archbishop was ordained May 22, 1910. He was named Titular Archbishop of Acrida and Coadjutor of Ottawa with the right of succession on December 11, 1939 and was consecrated February 2, 1940.

'The Case of the Window Inspector'

Philadelphia — (NC) — An "inspector" gained entrance to St. Francis Xavier rectory here under the pretext of examining windows.

He was met by Father J. Francis Haley, assistant pastor. "I'm an inspector," the man announced. "I was sent down here to check on the windows."

The "inspector" went about his "business" hurriedly, then left. Father Haley discovered that $125 in church funds had left with him. Father Haley ran to the front door in time to see the man board a bus. The priest phoned police who stopped several buses but found no trace of the "inspector."

In his hasty departure, the "inspector," left his hat and umbrella, which were turned over to police.

GRETTA PALMER ● Tito — Mammon Of The Masses

It is possible to talk of the separation of Church and State in terms that do not offend against all logic. It is not possible, in this 20th century, to talk about the separation of church and politics, of faith and votes.

Religion cannot be judged, by even the most stubborn quietest, to be a private matter in the decade in which we live.

Tito visits England, and he is received with all the graceful gestures appropriate to a distinguished statesman. He lunches with the Quen. He is entertained at Duxfird air base by an "air show" in the course of which two Meteor jet planes collide, costing two pilots' lives.

Opposition and indignation to his visit are voiced, in England, by the Catholics, and them alone. For it is Tito's ruthless persecution of the Church inside Yugoslavia which strikes them as the most significant feature of his regime. No one else appears to notice it.

OTHER PEOPLE do not judge a head of state in terms like these. They ask, "Is Tito on our side when a military alliance becomes advisable?" Or, "Will we have a more favorable trade balance if we do business with him?" Or they inquire whether the geo-politicians consider his area a strategic one.

For these are the questions asked by "practical" men, and politics is expected to be, of all things, practical. Winston Churchill only voiced the attitude of all leaders of state when he said, with refreshing candor, that he had not become Prime Minister to oversee the liquidation of his sovereign's Empire.

Now, matters such as these might once have been considered in a compartment shut off by air-tight devices from the world of religious belief. There was a time when all western heads of state paid at least lip service to the natural moral law. It was deporable then to a Catholic sovereign if his foreign allies were not possessed of the joys of the Faith; but this fact troubled him as a believer, rather than as ruler. Expediency never demanded alliances without promise of reform with rulers who murdered priests and denied, by law, the right of little children to receive instruction in the Faith.

Tito is the enemy of God: he would tell wou so himself. Like his former master, Stalin, he is intent on drawing men's love and loyalty away from the Church and towards the Party. Like every Communist, he believes that no man can serve two masters — and the master for whom he begs subservience is a Mammon of the masses.

Tito and all those whom he is emulating, from Karl Mark to Mao-tse Tung, wish man to worship the material as against the spiritual — but to worship it in a way that will bring no comfort, no individual benefits to them. They ask men to become spiritual suicides, to throw themselves into the collective, to lose their lives now in order to lose them in eternity.

RUSSIA WAS A country in schism for some centuries: was it because of that defection that she became the pilot of the Communist Anti-Christ in the world today?

England has many fine and noble Christians among her leaders; is it a last, sad result of the Reformation there that her Anglical leaders accept a tyrant and a killer of priests as an honored guest in the city where St. Thomas More died for the Best in England? Goodness in men is not infallible — only the Church of Rome possesses that touchstone of infallibility.

Easter Vigil

Elsberry, Mo.—(NC)—In 1953 —the third year of its experimental observance—the restored Easter Vigil will be celebrated in over 90 per cent of the dioceses of the United States, according to a prediction in the Bulletin of the Liturgical Conference.

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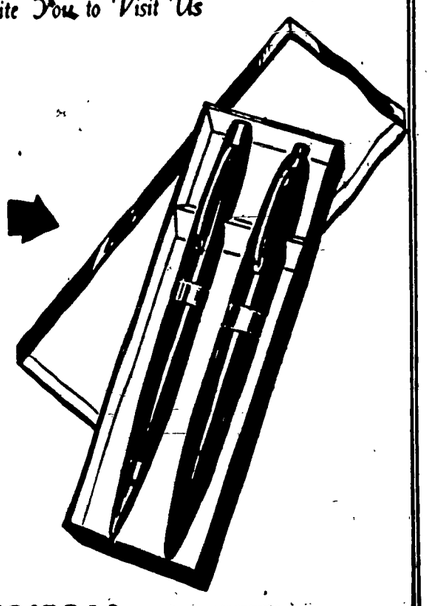

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