Tito Follows Soviet Persecution Pattern, Says Vatican Paper

Vatican City — (NC) — Yugoslavia may be politically distinct from the Soviet bloc, but in its persecution of the Church Tito's regime differs in no way from any of the satellites.

This is the conclusion of Osservatore Romano in its latest documentary, "The Battle Against Catholicism in the Federated Yugoslav Republic."

Featuring photographs of His Eminence Aloysius Cardinal Stepinac and of imprisoned Bishop Peter Cule of Mostar, as well as a group picture of 19 Yugoslav prelates taken in 1952, the article emphasizes the campaigns of violence launched against the hierarchy last summer.

THE ARTICLE details mob beatings and attacks on Bishops making Confirmation tours. It cites physical attacks on Bishop Cyril Banic, Apostolic Administrator of Sibenik; on Auxiliary Bishop Francis Franic of Split; on 80-year-old Bishop Lajci Budanovic of Subotica; on Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Pavlisic of Senj and others.

This recent terror drive, the paper says, aroused world opinion to such a peak that Yugoslav government officials and Marshall Tito himself had to try to explain it away.

The dictator, Osservatore continues, referred to the incidents as "irresponsible excesses" and and said they were "tactical errors, because religion and the Church must be combatted by other means, notably by education of youth."

If the Communist authorities had issued directives to that effect eight years ago, the religious situation would probably not have been any better than it is today, the paper charges. However, it added the "spontaneous excesses" might not have such a mark of Yugoslav persecution as they are now.

THE PAPER challenges those who say that the Stepinac case is "something personal" between the Cardinal and Tito.

"The drama of Cardinal Stepinac is not a personal affair, as many insist," the paper says. "It is the synthesis of a broader drama which has been assailing more than 6,000,000 Catholics for the past six years.

The paper concludes its article by listing a summary of difficulties and obstacles that have confronted Yugoslav schools, the clergy, seminaries, religious communities, ecclesiastical associations resulting in the severing of Yugoslav relations with the Holy See.

Giant Coffee Bag Given To Pope

San Juan, P. R. — (NC) — A 250-pound bag of coffee will be sent to Pope Pius XII by the coffee growers of Puerto Rico and the Association of Our Lady of Providence of San Juan Cathedral.

The coffee will be blessed by Msgr. Mariano Vassallo in the cathedral during San Juan's coffee festival at ceremonies honoring the centenary of the Association of Our Lady of Providence.

Cardinal Spellman Going To Korea For Christmas

New York — (NC) — His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York and Military Vicar for the U.S. armed forces plans to spend his third Christmas in a row with United Nations troops in Korea.

CARDINAL SPELLMAN

ACCORDING TO a spokesman for His Eminence, the Cardinal will leave New York on a commercial airliner on December 18 flying first to Anchorage, Alaska. After a two-day lay-over there, he will fly on to Tokyo and then to Korea two days before Christmas. It was understood he would make the trip alone.

On Cardinal Spellman's two previous Christmas visits, Korea was still in the throes of deadly conflict. This year, while the guns are silent, the Military Vicar will see a country in ruins.

On his 1952 trip, the Cardinal offered his three Christmas Masses at three different points in the Korean combat zone, with thousands of servicemen participating. And it was prior to his third Mass, with the U.S. Second Division, that His Eminence conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation to Division Commander Maj. Gen. James C. Fry, who had entered the Church a fortnight earlier.

IN THE COURSE of his 1952 visit, the Military Vicar traveled throughout the United Nations-held areas of the penisula, meeting and chatting with thousands of men, and conveying to many personal messages from their families at home.

Austria Bishops Deplore Low Living Standard

Vienna, Austria —(NC)— The need for a greater Christian apostolate directed to the nation's industrial workers and the need for a better living standard were stressed by the Austrian bishops after their annual meeting here.

A joint statement issued at the close of the meeting drew attention to the growing "estrangement" of factory workers from the Church and urged a nationwide effort to bring them back into the fold.

THE STATEMENT, marked by a concern for the material welfare of the nation's Catholics, reviewed the comparatively low economic status of the people and government measures to provide a decent living standard.

It termed "totally insufficient" present income tax rebates for families with children and said parents, in effect, are penalized for bearing children.

As for the government's housing program, it noted that public authorities are exclusive builders in most cities and units being built are too small, in fact, designed for couples with one child.

Again this year the hierarchy reaffirmed Austria's right to political independence

Blessed Virgin Relic Reported Found

Amman, Jordon — (NC) — News has reached here of the claimed discovery in the ancient city of Homs in Syria of a supposed relic of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

According to the story, a piece of cloth which is thought to be a portion of the "cincture of the Blessed Virgin" has been found in a church in Homs belonging to the dissident Syrian Orthodox Church.

THE REPORTS stated that the discovery was made after Syrian Orthodox Patriarch Alexander of Antioch came across a paper in an old book describing how the supposed relic had been hidden in the Church of St. Mary in Homs when the building was renovated a century ago.

Following directions given in the manuscript — the reports continued — the table of the stone altar in the church was cut into a depth of about one foot. In the place where an altar-stone or relics would be placed in a Catholic altar, a hollowed-out stone receptacle, covered by a slab with a Syriac inscription, was located. According to the inscription, the church was originally built in the year 59, and rebuilt and renovated in several succeeding periods.

Continuing the search, the excavators found beneath the inscribed slab a corroded copper lid covering an earthen jar which fell to pieces when removed from its place of concealment.

WITHIN THE old jar — the reports concluded — was a faded parchment scroll bearing an inscription, and with it a piece of cloth — reputedly a portion of Our Lady's cincture—in a good state of preservation. The scroll could not be unrolled for deciphering owing to its decayed condition. However, it was sent to experts of the Syrian Department of Antiquities for further investigaion.

A tradition states that Our Lady's cincture was taken to India by St. Thomas the Apostle, who received it after the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin.

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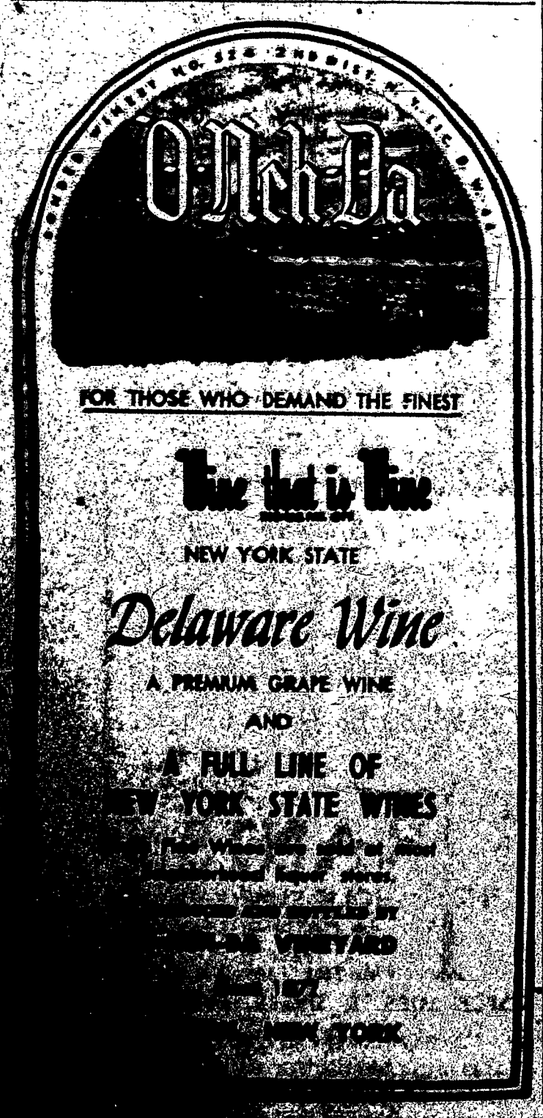

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Pontiff Opens Marian Year In Rome

(Continued from Page 1)

than St. Luke himself.

Some scholars date the picture in the fifth century, others in the eleventh. At any rate, the painting for centuries has been the object of special veneration in times of disaster in Rome. It has often been borne in procession through the streets, and it is reported that Pope Gregory the Great himself carried it in 590 in petitioning for the end of a pestilence then raging. The last time it was publicly paraded was in a four-mile, three-hour procession from the Basilica of St. Mary Major to St. Peter's in December, 1949, as part of Rome's preparation for the Holy Year of 1950.

The celebrated Madonna painting has had a special significance for the Pope. It was under this picture that he offered his first Mass when he was ordained in 1899. It was recalled, too, that the Holy Father returned to the Basilica 40 years later to celebrate the anniversary of his first Mass, and that he also visited it during the Holy Year when it was designated as one of the four major basilicas which had to be visited to gain the Jubilee Indulgence.

THE "SALVE REGINA" was sung during the Pope's visit to the Borghese Chapel. Afterwards they ascended to the balcony above the entrance to the Basilica to give the blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city and to the world) to the crowds filling not only the area in front of the shrine but all the adjacent streets and even windows and rooftops.

A police motorcycle escort accompanied the papal cortege on its way to and from the Basilica. In stopping briefly at the Immaculate Conception statue in the Piazza di Spagna, the Pope was repeating an act of devotion he has performed many times as boy, man, priest and prelate on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. The statue was erected in 1854 to commemorate the definition of the dogma proclaimed on the Feast Day that year by Pope Pius IX.

On his arrival at the Piazza di Spagna, from which rise the famous Spanish Steps, Pope Pius was greeted not only by Cardinal Micara, but by the Mayor of Rome and a large delegation of men of Catholic Action.

Once back at the Vatican Palace, the Holy Father had only a minimum of time to rest before broadcasting a message over the Vatican Radio to all members of Italian Catholic Action exhorting them to be fervent in intercessing with the Blessed Virgin so that the Marian Year might be one of great spiritual blessing to members and the world.

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