

Mexican High Court Affirms State Ownership Of Churches

Mexico City (NC)—Recent developments here have provided sharp reminders that both the Catholic Church and religion generally in Mexico are still subject to severe restrictions under the Constitution of 1917.

The 1917 law made civil marriages compulsory, banned private schools, and outlawed religious instruction in state schools. It denied the right of churches to own or administer property, and also forbade public religious manifestations of any kind.

The new developments involved a Supreme Court ruling affirming the denial of property ownership rights to any church, and the government's failure so far to permit the showing of a new Catholic film, presumably on the ground that it would constitute a public religious manifestation.

First decision of its kind in many years, the Supreme Court's ruling was handed down in a Church and the Assembly of God were at issue over the use of a worship center in the capital.

The court ruled that the premises were the property of the State but could be used jointly by the two groups.

The court based its authority on Article 27 of the Constitution which states that "churches intended for public worship are the property of the nation, represented by the Federal government, which shall determine which churches will be continued in use for this purpose." Article 130 of the charter states that the law does not grant legal character to any "religious group known as churches."

THE SAME law applies to bishop's residences, rectories, seminaries, convents and any type of church-conducted institution, as well as to churches proper.

The anti-religious tone of the 1917 Constitution was reflected

sometimes in the obvious reluctance of the Motion Picture Office of the Department of the Interior to approve the showing of the religious film, "El Portico de la Gloria," (The Portico of Glory), in which the leading role is played by Father Jose Guadalupe Mojica, O.F.M., one-time renowned Mexican singing and motion picture star.

The film was made in Spain, and Father Mojica had come to Mexico for its premiere. However, the showing continues to be deferred because of the failure to obtain a state license. The government office has explained the delay as due to certain undefined "difficulties."

On a number of occasions Mexican authorities have ordered movies of religious events to be deleted from newsreels before the films were released for public showing. Furthermore, the Mexican government has forbidden any kind of religious program to be broadcast.

Fanfani Fall 'Sad Day' For Italy

Rome (NC)—The downfall of the 11-day-old government headed by Premier Amintore Fanfani is called by many a "sad day" for Italy.

The real loser, they say, is not the prime minister who had to hand in his resignation when the Chamber of Deputies, by 303 to 260, refused to give him its confidence. The real loser is Italy, now thrown into a new political crisis, the third since the general elections in June, 1953.

THERE IS, at the moment, no apparent fear or worry that the communists are preparing to seize power in Italy. But few political observers are willing to predict the immediate course of events after what is termed the triumph of party interests over those of the country.

Communists, leftist socialists, monarchists, neo-fascists and right-wing social democrats combined to bring about the downfall of the Fanfani government.

Premier Fanfani had offered a program which was widely recognized — though not by his political opponents — as being very progressive. In accordance with the premier's own political inclinations — he has always belonged to the leftist wing of the Christian-Democratic party — he proposed far-reaching measures in the direction of broader social progress.

HOWEVER, PARTY interests defeated the possibility of providing the country with a fairly stable government capable of keeping the ship of state sailing instead of foundering on the rocks of communist chaos.

The Social Democrats in particular are accused of exploiting the situation for restoring their strength and political prestige which suffered greatly in last year's elections. Monarchists and Liberals, too, have been jockeying rather than contributing toward a constructive solution of the many problems besetting the country.

Chinese Reds Seek To Collect For Mission Services

Maryknoll, N. Y. (RNS)—Chinese citizens who were given free medical and educational benefits by foreign missionaries have been ordered to pay the Communist regime for these past services, according to headquarters of the Maryknoll Fathers here.

The Reds went to great lengths to publicly discredit all mission work before expelling foreign clergymen and nuns from the country, the Roman Catholic mission group said. "Now, however, when it suits their purpose they ask payment for the benefits the people received from mission institutions."

A Maryknoll spokesman said the Chinese communist regime reasons that because it confiscated missions it is entitled to payment for any free services supplied by missionaries.

Chinese are interrogated by Communist officials, he said, as to how much service they were given by the foreign clergymen and nuns.

New Episcopal Appointments



Vatican City—These three prelates have received new episcopal appointments from Pope Pius XII. Left to right: Auxiliary Bishop Walter F. Kellenberg of New York was named Bishop of Ogdensburg, N. Y., to succeed Bishop Bryan J. McElroy, now rector of Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.; Msgr. Joseph Annabring, pastor of the Cathedral of Christ the King, Superior, Wis., will become Bishop of Superior, succeeding Archbishop Albert G. Meyer of Milwaukee; and Auxiliary Bishop John F. Cory of St. Louis, Mo., was appointed Coadjutor of St. Joseph, Mo., with the right of succession to Bishop Charles H. La Rueda. (RNS Photo).

Reds Revive Class War In Britain, Says Editor

London (NC)—Douglas Hyde, news editor of the Catholic Herald of London, warned readers that for the first time since World War II the active Communists minority in

social strikes in their own ranks, and made the running in almost every wages campaign. In their own and associated industries, using the most extreme policies. In addition, he stated, they have streamlined their organization with ruthless efficiency, opened a "school" in a country mansion to "educate" members, and produced a technically excellent union journal of which "every issue is an organizer, educator and agitator for Marxism."

HE WAS referring to the "guerrilla strikes" used by the Electrical Trades Union throughout the nation to back wage demands. The new-style strikes, products of communist tactics, consist of irritating sudden stoppages, usually of about 24 hours, at key centers up and down the country among electricians engaged on construction work.

Union leaders who are avowed communists pick the sites, but they are kept secret from employers. Union members who refuse to take part are expelled and their names are published in the "specialized" industry.

The strikes have upset relations in many cases between workers and employers, caused bitterness on both sides, and led to lock-outs and dismissals by the bosses and libelous reprisals by the unionists. Electrical engineers so far involved have consisted of small groups working on construction jobs of national importance, atomic research, defense, housing, power and plant development and similar vital projects but the union has 200,000 members and more are being gradually drawn in as the strikes continue.

MR. HYDE declared that the communist leaders wanted class war and they wanted tough industrial policies—and they have got them. He said they had backed un-

Ceylonese King One Of Magi Writer Claims

Colombo, Ceylon (NC)—A writer in "The Catholic Messenger" here has advanced a theory that a native Ceylonese king was one of the Magi who went to Bethlehem on the first Christmas day.

The writer, Father A. J. B. Antoninus, O.M.I., a priest of the Diocese of Jaffna, claims that historical evidence, in addition to a strongly held South Indian legend, supports the belief that King Gasper Peria Perumal of Jaffna was one of the three "wise men of the East" who adored the Infant King on that day.

Father Antoninus quoted a contemporary historian as holding the view that King Gasper joined St. Thomas in India and there won the crown of martyrdom at Mylapore along with the Apostle.

King Gasper, according to the priest's article, received knowledge of the birth of Our Lord through an oracle. The king went in a ship to the coast of Mascate to join two other kings, who were going to adore the Lord at Bethlehem, Father Antoninus writes.

Court Studies Holy Day Store Closing

Montreal (NC)—Five Quebec Court of Appeals judges have taken under deliberation arguments in the appeal of the city of Montreal against a judgment which declares the Montreal Holy-Day store closing by-law illegal.

The appeal followed a decision of Justice Arthur L. Smith on June 17, 1952, who ruled that the provincial statute of 1950, on which the Montreal by-law was set up, was ultra vires of the provincial authority.

THE MONTREAL law, taking its authority from the 1904 act, had established six Holy Days of Obligation as mandatory closing dates for city stores. These days were Christmas, New Year's and the Feast of the Epiphany, Ascension Day, All Saints Day and the Immaculate Conception. Actually four days are in issue, as all stores have always closed on Christmas and New Year's days.

A number of stores have been jailed before the courts for breaking the by-law and many have paid fines. Shortly after enactment of the by-law in 1951 seven of the major Montreal stores contested the validity of the by-law. A municipal court decision upheld the by-law and the stores then took their case to the Superior Court where Justice Smith decided in favor of the stores. The City of Montreal on July 3, 1952, entered its appeal.

Cardinal Names N.Y. Chancellor

New York (NC)—Mgr. Gustav J. Schultze, secretary to His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, has been named by the Cardinal to be Chancellor, secretary of the Board of Consultants and chairman of the archdiocesan building commission. These posts have been held by Bishop Walter P. Kellenberg, Auxiliary of New York, who has been named Bishop of Ogdensburg, N. Y.

Paterson, N. J.—(NC)—Mgr. John J. Sheerin, pastor of St. Margaret's Church, Morristown, has been named Vicar General of the Diocese of Paterson by Bishop James A. McNulty. He fills a post held by the late Msgr. John J. Dauenhauser.

Monignor Sheerin was born in Kingston, Pa., and attended St. Thomas College in Scranton and Seton Hall College, South Orange. He was ordained in 1916.

Import Duty Halts Parcels To Poland

London (NC)—The Polish communist regime has virtually snipped off a life line of charity which brought some 100,000 gift packages every month to impoverished people in Poland.

The gift packages of food and clothing were sent to people in Poland by relatives and friends abroad, mainly in the United States.

The ruling is putting a virtual stop to this flow of charity by announcing that the packages—until now duty-free—will be taxed up to 100 per cent of value. The decree will become effective on February 9, according to the information received here.

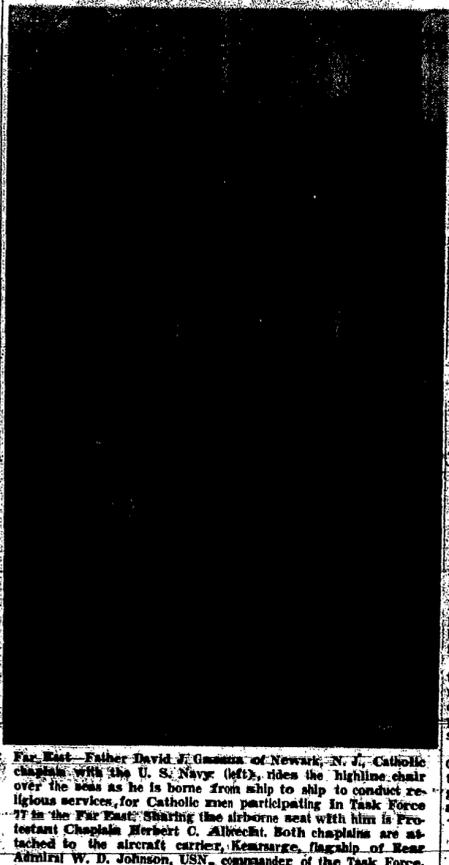
THE ONLY exceptions from this heavy duty, according to the decree, will be periodicals, books and postcards. Gifts in kind, such as unrefined linen, may be exempted on presentation of a doctor's certificate.

The strategy behind the move appears to be two-fold, according to informed sources here. It will tend to break the ties of charity with the West, and perhaps provide the regime with scarce dollars by entering a new project of its own.

The Red government has set up its own "charity agency" through which relatives and friends in the West can provide gifts to people in Poland. The agency is called "Pekao" and has U. S. headquarters in New York.

With payment of dollars to the agency, "Pekao" promises to deliver certain goods to people in Poland from state-operated warehouses. The dollars are used to finance the government's operations in the U.S.

RIDE HIGHLINE CHAIR



Far East—Father David J. Gansera of Newark, N. J., Catholic chaplain with the U. S. Navy (left), rides the highline chair over the sea as he is borne from ship to ship to conduct religious services for Catholic men participating in Task Force 77 in the Far East. Sharing the airborne seat with him is Protestant Chaplain Herbert C. Albrecht. Both chaplains are attached to the aircraft carrier, Keansarge, flagship of Rear Admiral W. D. Johnson, USN, commander of the Task Force.

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