Red Treatment Of Vietminh Refugees Called 'Disgrace'

By FATHER PATRICK O'CONNOR
(Exclu. N.C.W.C. News Service)

Haiphong — The Vietminh (communists) are now violating human rights and their own Geneva promises so gravely that the situation is becoming an international disgrace.

It is a terribly real situation in the men and women being clubbed on North Vietnamese beaches tonight. It is terribly real in the refugees who had to turn back because the Vietminh grabbed their children from rafts already afloat.

It is an international situation because the governments that took part in the Geneva conference and initialed the agreement share responsibility to some degree for what is happening.

It is international because an international commission was set up to supervise and control the fulfillment of the agreement.

This commission, comprising delegations sent by the Indian, Canadian and Polish governments, has never been in Vietnam for three months. It has been slow to investigate. It has been slow, sometimes weak, in decisions.

THE SITUATION is a disgrace because multitudes of thousands of Vietnamese have had to forfeit their property and risk separation of families, injury and imprisonment in order to exercise a right guaranteed in Geneva. Sometimes they have had to risk death.

Hundreds of men, women and children actually lost their lives while exercising that right. Most of these died of drowning when, in desperation, they tried to escape by sea. The Vietminh have been using physical violence ranging from bludgeoning to gunfire.

In Article 14 of the Geneva agreement, the Vietminh pledged themselves before the world to "authorize and aid" all who wished to leave. Instead, they have forbidden and obstructed.

Other Geneva powers that indorsed the agreement stated jointly that the clause guaranteeing freedom to depart from one zone for the other should be applied "in the strictest manner." It is notorious that the Vietminh have not applied it at all.

FINDING THE normal land routes blocked, and disappointed in the International Commission, more than 20,000 persons took to sea from one region alone of North Vietnam within the past three weeks. Their flight was as public and desperate as the flight of 20,000 from a town threatened by an earthquake.

They should never have had to flee by that method. The young woman whose motherless infant I saw in a refugee camp here last week should never have had to walk into a dark tide and be drowned in order to depart from North Vietnam. The ten-year-old boy whose mother was drowned with two younger children can tell himself that if foreign governments had been more conscientious that tragedy might have been averted.

These governments are not powerless in this situation. The moral sanctions they and the International Commission could wield are considerable. The responsibility of protesting to the Geneva powers if the lardy intervention of the International Commission is ineffective seems to rest squarely on the commission itself and on the French government, one of the two signatories. The Vietnamese government has not signed.

ALL REFUGEES testify that many thousands more wish to leave but are prevented by the Vietminh. Vietminh will continue preventing as long as nobody whose approval they seek says "boo" out loud.

Whom have you heard saying "boo" so far?

Spain Honors Civil War Dead

Madrid —(NC)—Religious and civic ceremonies held throughout Spain on the "Day of the Fallen" are overvance devoted to remembrance of those who died in the struggle against Communism during the Civil War.

In Madrid, government officials laid the corner stone of a monument to be erected in the Plaza Moncloa in memory of those who fell in the war.

Meanwhile construction is progressing on a huge monument in the "Valley of the Dead" about 50 miles from the capital, which is intended to become the tomb of the 150,000 men who died fighting for General Francisco Franco.

Vietnamese Catholics Flee Reds

Inset Photo—Pathetic refugees, some of the thousands of Catholic refugees who have fled their homes in the Viet Minh which the northern part of their country was taken over by the Communists under the terms of the Geneva pact. The refugees are crowded in the French ship "Jules Verne." One of the more fortunate refugees carries all her possessions in baskets on her head. Since the Geneva truce some half a million Vietnamese had chosen to leave their homes rather than remain under Communist rule. (RNS Photo)

School For Refugees Given By UN

Beirut, — (NC) — A modern educational plant constructed by the United Nations was turned over to the Pontifical Mission for Palestine in ceremonies attended by over 50 officials of both organizations here.

The 14-classroom school which stands at the St. Joseph refugee camp site will take in the 500 odd refugee students living in the camp.

Restrictions On Priests Relaxed By Shanghai Reds

Hong Kong—(NC)—"The parishioners couldn't believe their eyes."

With these words, a letter received here from Shanghai described the Chinese communists' National Day, October 1, when house arrests and restrictions for priests there were relaxed.

Priests were allowed to go free and church premises, seized by Reds, were returned to them.

Unbelieving parishioners, however, accustomed to communist unpredictability "did not know if their priests could enjoy their freedom or would such a 'generous gesture' mean something else."

The letter continued:

"Whatever it was or whatever pessimists might think of it, the children were the happiest. They had room to chat in and gardens to play in."

THE FRANCISCAN Procure was returned to the Fathers, who were all freed, the letter revealed. "Father Ulman, however, the only foreigner, was not allowed to talk to anyone."

"In Zikawei, too, the doors of the priests residence were reopened and 24 Fathers and Brothers were given the same freedom (?). The residence was given back to the Fathers, but the scholasticate remained occupied."

Sisters under house arrest were told that their residence will not be reopened and they will have to leave.

"None of them has signed a request to go. Let us wait and see . . ." the letter said.

World Appeal Launched For Marian Shrine

Vatican City — (RNS) — His Holiness Pope Pius XII has given his blessing to a world wide appeal to Catholic women for funds to erect a new shrine in Rome dedicated to the Blessed Virgin.

The drive was initiated by a committee of Catholic women who wrote the Pontiff of their plans. Committee leaders who signed the letter said the new shrine is envisaged as a permanent memorial to the Marian Year which is about to close.

Along with the shrine, the committee proposes to erect in Rome a welfare institution for women.

THE PROPOSED shrine, its promoters said, will give evidence of the gratitude of women throughout the world to the Pope for proclaiming the universal feast of the Queenship of Mary to be celebrated on May 31 of each year.

The proclamation was made in a solemn ceremony at St. Peter's Basilica on Nov. 1.

Acknowledging the letter for Pope Pius, Msgr. Giovanni Battista Montini, Vatican Pro-Secretary of State and Archbishop-elect of Milan, said the drive had the "paternal encouragement and apostolic benediction" of the Pontiff.

N. D. Priest Dies

Notre Dame, Ind. — (NC) — Father Joseph H. Cavanaugh, C.S.C., 87, head of the Religion Department at Notre Dame, died (Nov. 11) here after a long illness.

British Prelate Prays For End Of Anglo-Irish Enmity

London —(NC)— It was "Irish Day" at Southwark Pro-Cathedral here when Bishop Cyril Cowderoy voiced a prayer that "by God's grace, the bitter enmity between Ireland and this country be gone forever."

He spoke at a High Mass offered for Terence MacSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork, who died on hunger strike in a London prison 34 years ago in protest against his arrest by the British authorities. This was shortly before the signing of the Anglo-Irish treaty which led to the establishment of the Irish Free State, now the Republic of Ireland.

St. John Fisher Church, England, constructed largely through the generosity of the Catholics of Rochester, N.Y. diocese, lies within the Southwark diocese and was consecrated last spring by Bishop Cowderoy.

"I believe," the British Bishop declared, "that there are abundant signs that in this country, even outside the Catholic body, there is a warm friendship for Ireland and respect for its leaders. Ireland has won a measure of freedom. It continues to press for that freedom and there are those of us who join in the hope that Ireland will one day be its own mistress from sea to sea."

Bishop Cowderoy was apparently endorsing demands of the Dublin government for an end to the partition of Ireland under which a British-subsidized government has been functioning in the six-county area of Northern Ireland.

Former Sailor Returns As Priest

Tokyo —(NC)— An American sailor with the first armed forces to occupy Japan has returned here after an absence of nine years—but this time as a Catholic priest.

He is Columban Father Daniel McGlinn of Council Bluffs, Iowa, forerunner of seven newly-ordained Columban priests assigned to Japan and expected to arrive here before the end of the year.

Los Angeles Seminary

Los Angeles, California —(NC)—His Eminence James Francis Cardinal McIntyre, Archbishop of Los Angeles, dedicated the new minor seminary of Our Lady, Queen of the Angels, here, for archdiocesan candidates for the priesthood.

CARDINAL BRUNO

Cardinal Bruno Papal Official Dies At 79

Vatican City —(NC)— Funeral rites were held in the Church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome for His Eminence Giuseppe Cardinal Bruno, Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura, who died here (November 10) of a liver ailment at the age of 79. The final absolution was pronounced by His Eminence Clemente Cardinal Micara, Vicar General of Rome.

Cardinal Bruno was the fifth Cardinal to die this year, and the 52nd during the pontificate of His Holiness Pope Pius XII. His death reduces the Sacred College to 65 members, or five below the full quota of 70.

Shortly before his death, Cardinal Bruno, who had been ailing for a long time, received a special message of consolation from the Pope. Present at his death-bed were relatives and a number of prelates.

Among the posts he occupied was that of Chamberlain of the Sacred College, an office involving looking after the property and revenue of the College of Cardinals and recording the "acta" or transactions of consistories.

Friars To Found House In Australia

Sydney, Australia —(NC)— A Maltese priest, Father Sebastian Scicluna, O.F.M. Conv. has arrived here to set up the second foundation of the Order of Franciscan Conventuals in Australia.

The new house is being established at Broken Hill, Australia's famous "Silver City," which is located in the Diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes.

Church-State Tension Eases In Hungary

Vienna —(NC)— The Hungarian Communist regime is noticeably eager to maintain a "modus vivendi" with the Catholic Church. The result is an easing of tension between the Church and the state.

This picture is drawn in a number of confidential reports reaching here from Hungarian priests about whose loyalty to the Holy See there can be no doubt.

The impression is that in going along to some extent with the government Archbishop Julius Czapik of Eger has not given up any Catholic essentials, but has secured some tangible advantages for the Church.

The advantages—though very limited—that the Church in Hungary now enjoys stand out more boldly if her situation is compared with that of the Church in Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia.

IN HUNGARY, Catholic parents may register their children for religious instructions in schools, although after school hours. The children are taught by priests selected by the Bishops and paid as teachers by the government. At the present time neither the parents nor the priests need fear reprisals for using this legimate right.

The eight Catholic schools returned to the Church in the Church-state agreement some years ago are flourishing. Pastors continue to receive their subsidies or "congrua" from the government. These subsidies or "congrua" are an ancient practice, initiated under the Austro-Hungarian empire. They were instituted to return something to the Church for the large properties seized from it.

Another favorable item mentioned in the reports is that the Hungarian Bishops appear to have no difficulty in maintaining contact with the Holy See.

Grandparents Of 200 Honored At Mass

Jasper, Ind. — (NC) — A memorial Mass was said in St. Joseph's church here on the 100th wedding anniversary of a pioneer couple whose living descendants include more than 200 great-great-grandchildren.

The couple, Martin and Adelaide Boehart Fritch, were married a century ago by Father Joseph Kundek, who ministered to the spiritual needs of early southern Indiana settlers in the days when this new industrialized area was little more than a wilderness.

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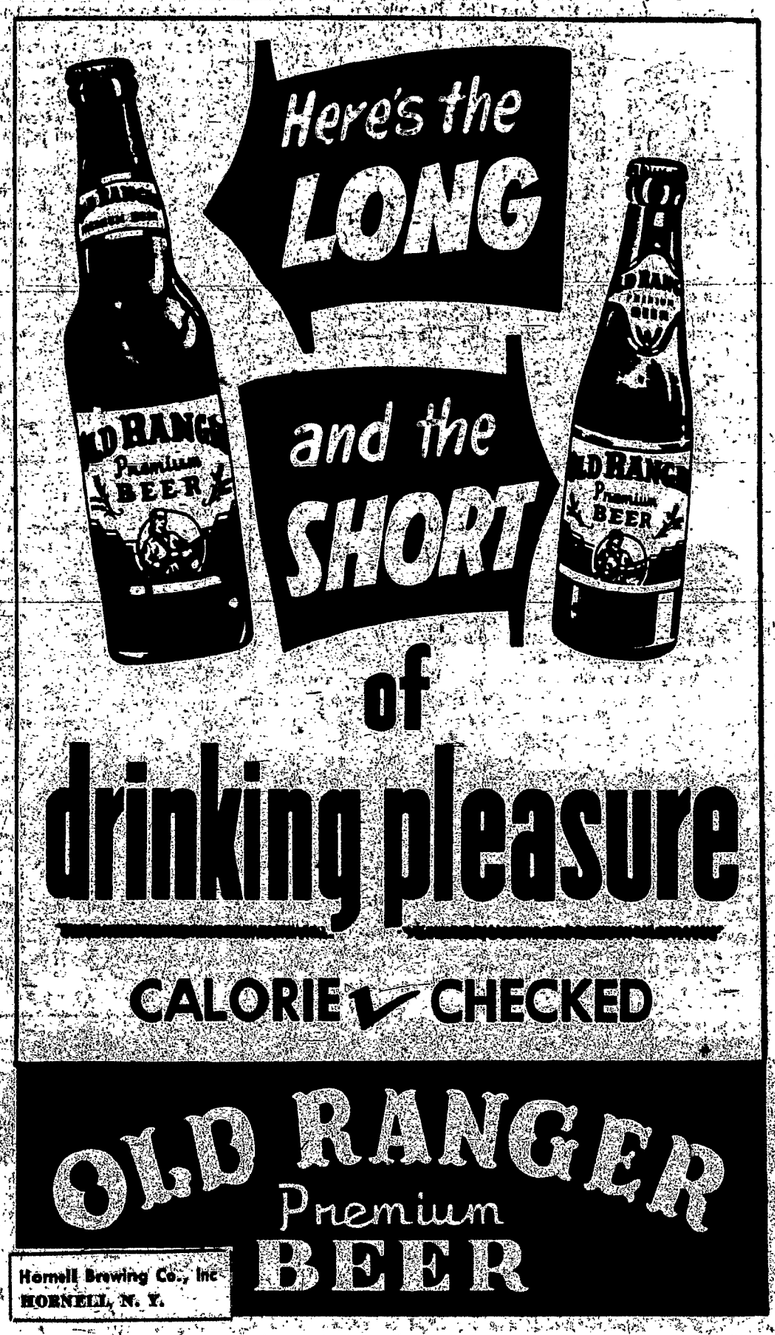
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