

Status Of Schools In Germany Seen Threat To Faith

The author of the following article is president of the University of Detroit. He is now touring educational institutions in West Germany at the invitation of the Federal Republic of Germany.

By REV. CELESTIN J. STEINER, S.J.

Munich — (NC) — The status of schools in Germany today is the greatest danger to the Faith in a nation wedged between the battle line of East and West.

No Catholic schools, or for that matter no denominational or private schools, are permitted in Soviet Germany.

All schools there are propaganda centers for Soviet ideology, and not places in which youth receives an education.

EVEN IN FREE Germany, private schools, while excellent in quality, have a relatively negligible enrollment of students.

I visited many elementary as well as more advanced schools in West Germany. Religion is taught in all of the schools, state-controlled as well as independent.

The religion taught, however, is the dominant religion of the area. Catholic students in Protestant areas need not attend these religion classes, but in many cases the alternative is not to have any religious instruction at all. Many parents, therefore, agree to have their children in classes taught by persons of other religions.

THE DIRECTOR of one of the public elementary schools I visited explained to me that it was becoming increasingly difficult to obtain competent teachers of religion because so few are sufficiently instructed themselves. Many teachers are secularists.

Above the elementary school level there are few Catholic schools. There are no independent universities at all.

I talked with many West German administration officers and faculty members of the universities.

Practically all of them agreed that public universities are entirely satisfactory as far as individual and society needs are concerned.

The larger universities have both Protestant and Catholic theological faculties. In smaller universities the character of the theological faculty depends on the dominant religion of the district.

Those satisfied with public universities because they include rights.

a Catholic theological faculty or courses in religion are, I am convinced, under the false impression that the only difference between a Catholic school and a public school is a series of classes in religion.

THERE IS ANOTHER factor a thousand times more important than these religion classes.

Religion is all-pervasive. It enters into all curricular and co-curricular structures. Catholic schools of all sorts educate for life, and religion is an essential element of life. It is life itself.

If we understood all that a Catholic school is, we must see that it is not only important to the Church, but also to the whole of society.

Many Catholic priests here have told me that however desirable a Catholic university might be, it is impossible in Germany.

They assert it is contrary to tradition "and that material means could never be secured for its construction and operation."

But in the student newspaper of the University of Munich, I saw an article entitled "Do we need a Catholic university?" I discovered that the students have more vision and hope than professional educators.

Communists Free Prince Esterhazy

Vienna — (NC) — Prince Paul Esterhazy, who was sentenced to prison at the trial at which His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty, Primate of Hungary, was given a life imprisonment, is reported to have been released, according to word reaching here.

The prince, described as a large landowner, was sentenced in 1949 by the communist government to 15 years imprisonment and the forfeiture of property and civil rights.



Dublin's New Mayor At Mass.

Dublin — (NC) — Robert Brisson, first Jewish Lord Mayor of Dublin, is shown in the front pew, extreme left, as he attended a memorial Mass here for members of the former Four Courts garrison who lost their lives in Ireland's fight for freedom. At extreme right is former Premier Eamon de Valera.

Notre Dame Educator

American Catholics Must Share Blame For Poor Relations With Protestants

Cincinnati — (NC) — Catholics themselves must share some of the blame for the "less harmonious" relations between Protestants and Catholics in post-war United States, a sociologist said here.

Dr. John J. Kane, head of the University of Notre Dame's sociology department, declared that the "very real problem in Catholic-Protestant relations is the lack of communication between the two religious groups."

Many — perhaps most — non-Catholics in the United States, Dr. Kane said, simply do not know the teachings of the Catholic Church. He added, "perhaps Catholics have failed to publicize them or translate them into action."

To bolster his contention that lack of communication between the two religions is the problem, Dr. Kane cited a poll he conducted among 104 ministers in a mid-western county.

OF THE 49 Protestant ministers who answered the questions, the Notre Dame educator revealed two-thirds said Catholic schools tended to "violate democratic traditions," nearly 70 per cent replied that priests "strongly influenced the vote of the laity," 75 per cent said that Catholics are becoming "more prominent and powerful in politics," and more than 90 per cent held the opinion that if Catholics ever became a majority in the United States, the country would become less democratic.

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to remove by every possible means the danger threatening the children of the Church."

He noted that when a decisive Christian victory was won at Belgrade on July 22, 1456, under the leadership of St. John Capistrano, Pope Callixtus in thanksgiving instituted the Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, to be observed universally on August 6 every year.

"Far from us," the Pope told the Iron Curtain Catholics, "is the thought that today the disciples of Christ are leaving the battle broken in spirit, that they are abandoning the profession of their Faith, that they have thrown away their arms as if they were asleep while the enemy is striving to overthrow the kingdom of God."

THE PONTIFF stressed that the example set by the three cardinals in the Communist countries has provided "a spectacle of spectacles to the world, to the angels and to men."

He also praised the bishops, priests and religious and all those "other beloved sons and daughters who, under many and great difficulties, are defending and advancing, as far as they can, the peaceful and peace-bringing Kingdom of Jesus Christ."

Exhorting the priests and laymen to remain united to those called to rule the Church and the Holy See, the Pope said they should strive especially to preserve their Faith intact "so as to be able to bring the Kingdom of God to the world."

Stressing that Christians today face the same challenge, Pope Pius said that his predecessor

had "labored with tireless energy to remove by every possible means the danger threatening the children of the Church."

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Primate Spurns 'Pardon Offers' From Reds

Vienna — (RNS) — Cardinal Mindszenty has refused a "pardon" offered by the Hungarian Communist government on condition that he renounce his office of Archbishop of Esztergom and Primate of Hungary, the Austrian Catholic press agency reported.

It said the offer was made to the Cardinal following his recent transfer to the village of Püspöck near Budapest from Püspöck St. Lazlo in southern Hungary. The Primate has been living under severe restrictions since his release from prison in July, 1955.

The agency said the Cardinal is housed in a castle belonging to Count Almásy which was confiscated by the Budapest regime.

It stated that Cardinal Mindszenty is permitted to move freely around the estate but is barred from receiving any visitors, with the exception of his aged mother.

Cardinal Griffin

Better After Rest

London — (NC) — His Eminence Cardinal Bernard Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster, 57 years old, was reported greatly improved following two weeks of rest ordered by his physicians.

The Cardinal, who has suffered two severe heart attacks within the past five years, has not yet resumed official engagements.

Anglican Prelate's Red China Views Refuted In Press

Hong Kong — (NC) — One of Hong Kong's main secular dailies called "shallow and one-sided" the statement by the Anglican Bishop of Hong Kong that the Christian Church in communist China "is growing, vigorous and there is no impediment to its work."

Commenting editorially on the statement by the Rt. Rev. Ronald O. Hall that there is religious freedom in China, the Hong Kong Standard said:

"IT IS DIFFICULT to conceive that the Christian Church can grow vigorously and without impediments unless one is prepared to accept the thesis that 'Mao's relation' to God is subject to the regulation and supervision of the archbishop, Mr. Chou En-lai, and his godless colleagues."

At a press conference after returning here from a three-week tour of China with his wife, Bishop Hall said that the imprisonment of religious leaders in China was always a political issue, never a religious one.

He called the present situation in Red China "very similar" to that during the Protestant Reformation in England in the 16th century. He said that at that time the English "wanted a church for the English people and over in the Continent the Germans wanted a church for the German people."

In taking note of the Anglican prelate's observations, the Hong Kong Standard said that because of "his known record of good work and his status as one of the most respected church leaders in the Far East," Bishop Hall undoubtedly "bore witness to what he actually saw and what he believed to be true."

THE STANDARD added: "In communist China today, under its new approach to religion, there is, to be sure, no more public desecration of the altar; no more vulgar name-calling; no more stoning of churches. But neither Christianity nor any other religion can be called truly free because of its outward observances alone."

Unless the Church is free not only to praise God, but also "to be the conscience of the state and men," to help those in danger, need or sorrow, and to exert the Christian influence "to correct the abuses of the social order," the paper said, "then it is free only as an 'opiate of the masses' and free only to be used as an instrument of the state."

"To make this point clear, it is necessary to state that Catholics hold no political allegiance to the Pope as ruler of the Vatican State. Their fealty to him is entirely a spiritual one, owed to the Holy Father as Vicar of Christ."

"If a state, however, makes it an offense to profess all the teachings of the Catholic Church, then the state has, by its own authority alone, turned religion into a political crime. . . . One of the teachings of the Catholic Church is that the Pope is the spiritual head of all Catholics. If a state makes it a political crime to admit this, then it makes it impossible for a Catholic to be faithful of his conscience and to avoid what is in fact a state-manufactured political crime."

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Philippines Plan Embassy At Vatican

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Manila — (NC) — The long-awaited Philippine embassy at the Vatican will be set up soon as possible after Congressional approval. It was announced by Raul Manglapus, Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

The present Congress passed a budget of \$33,330 for the establishment of an ambassador's post at the Holy See.

Until now, the Philippine Ambassador to Madrid has been the accredited representative of the Philippine government at the Vatican. The Ambassador has maintained his residence in the Spanish capital.

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