

## Mexican Regime Frowns On Anti-Church Feeling

Mexico City—(NC)—Mexico's top civil authorities have made it clear that they wish to prevent the civic commemorations of the centenary of the Mexican constitution, which takes place this year, from becoming the pretext for any renewal of anti-Church feeling.

EARLIER, TOP Church officials in Mexico ordered that there should be no religious observance of the centennial. Because of the persecution which was inflicted on the Church as a result of the 1857 constitution, the Mexican hierarchy did not consider that the Church should enter into the celebration.

In the past few years, despite the official attitude of tolerance which the government has shown the Church, some minor and local officials have made speeches which contained insults against the Church.

THIS YEAR, however, government officials have declared there should be no attempts at irreverent activity in the country. The attitude is in line with the policy of President Adolfo Ruiz Cortinez, who is known to be a close friend of some members of the Mexican hierarchy and who is following the policy of his two predecessors with regard to the Church.

## Jews To Honor Bishop Wright

Worcester, Mass. — (RNS)—Catholic Bishop John J. Wright of Worcester will receive the B'nai B'rith Citizenship Citation here on Feb. 27.

The citation, to be given by Worcester Lodge 600 of the Jewish fraternal group, will honor Bishop Wright as "citizen of the year" in recognition of meritorious service rendered to the cause of citizenship responsibility.

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## Sect Members Are Ringing Doorbells

### Who Are The Jehovah Witnesses?

By REV. HENRY ATWELL  
Jehovah Witnesses are stepping up their door bell ringing program.

Priests in widely scattered sections of the Rochester Diocese report that "ministers" of the sect are making more frequent calls at homes of Catholic parishioners.

These door-to-door Witnesses have changed from their former high-pressure antagonistic methods to a new "smooth" approach.

Following a well-established pattern, Witnesses make their house calls on Sunday morning—just about the time Catholics are going to Mass.

If the Witnesses don't get the chance to talk their topic they try to leave their magazines "Watchtower" or "Awake."

MOST STRIKING belief of Jehovah Witnesses is their explanation of the world's current turmoil.

They state that Satan was cast from heaven in 1914 and is spreading his evil influence throughout the world—and we are now actually experiencing the end of the world. They maintain that the famous battle of Armageddon will occur soon, within the lifetime of the present generation. The battle, they say, will destroy the "goats" and bring an everlasting victory to the "sheep" saved by Christ.

Heaven, they say, has room for only 144,000 souls. Those who get crowded out of heaven will have to be content with a happy life on earth after Armageddon, say the Witnesses.

Catholics are naturally amazed at the curious doctrines of the sect, and impressed, even if irked, by the zeal of its members.

Father John A. O'Brien describes Jehovah's Witnesses as "one of the oddest and most fantastic" religions ever organized. In an article published by Our Sunday Visitor Press, Father O'Brien, noted street preacher of the Catholic Church, outlines the origin and teachings of the sect:

THE WITNESSES were founded in 1872 by Charles Taze Russell, a clothing store merchant in a suburb of Pittsburgh.

The sect has had many names: Millennial Dawn, Russellites, Watch Tower Bible people, and more recently Jehovah's Witnesses.

Russell was reared a Presbyterian, later became a Congregationalist. He did not attend college but went to work for his father assisting him in operating a chain of five clothing stores.

A poolroom argument on religion shook his Christian faith and he rejected most of the doctrines taught him as a child. He later met, Second Day Adventists, who told him the world was about to end (they originally gave the date as 1840, although, obviously, the event did not occur as predicted).

In 1872, Russell organized a Bible class, began to preach the "good news" that there was no hell and that Christ was soon to return to establish a heavenly kingdom on earth. Aided by \$1,000 from his father, Russell published his views in a pamphlet which sold 59,000 copies. He issued other articles from time to time and finally in 1879 started publishing "The Watchtower"—the sect's chief organ since then.

Russell adopted the title "pastor" and claimed to be the "seventh messenger" mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel. He denounced all other religions as creations of the devil.

ernments, religions, and Mother's Day are all tools of Satan.

RUSSELL'S WIFE divorced him charging him with immoral relations with his secretary and a servant maid.

He later found himself again in court for selling "miracle wheat" in his Brooklyn church for \$50 a bushel. It was actually worth only about 50c a bushel.

He also sold his followers a "cancer cure" which proved to be a concoction of paste and zinc chloride—a combination which probably hastened the death of his gullible victims. He was likewise involved in the sale of quack medicines for the cure of appendicitis, typhoid, and worms.

In his writings he claimed to interpret the Bible on the basis of its original Greek text. Challenged in a court in Hamilton, Canada, in 1913 to read a Greek New Testament he admitted he didn't even know the Greek alphabet—and nothing about Hebrew or Latin either—although he had claimed to be a scholar in all three languages.

When Russell died in 1916, he was succeeded in office by Missouri lawyer "Judge" Joseph E. Rutherford who never attended college or law school. Rutherford was convicted of sedition in 1918, but released from Atlanta penitentiary after serving only a part of his term.

Rutherford denounced all Protestant churches as "tools of Satan" but reserved his most violent abuse for the American Legion and the Catholic Church. He called the Church "the wickedest organization of hypocrites that has ever existed upon the earth."

The Saturday Evening Post in a 1950 article described Rutherford's witnesses. "They hate all religions—and say so from the house-tops. They hate all governments with an enthusiasm that is equally unconcealed. Defiance of what others cherish is their daily meat."

Rutherford used funds collected from his followers to build a palatial mansion at San Diego for Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and other patriarchs who, he said, were to arrive back on earth shortly. While awaiting their arrival, Rutherford lived in the palace where he wrote a good share of his bitter publications attacking all religions.

NATHAN H. KNORR, present head of the sect, took over when Rutherford died in 1942. Like his predecessors, Knorr never went to college though he now claims competence to decide religious questions which have puzzled and baffled scholars for centuries.

Knorr has face-washed and hair-combed the Witnesses—turning them from loud-mouthed foot-in-the-door nuisances to courteous, friendly visitors. But he still holds to the "Christendom must be cut down and thrown into the fire" idea which he stated clearly to 30,000 Witnesses in a 1954 Yankee Stadium rally in New York.

THE WITNESS CREED is a concoction of ancient errors and the inventions of Russell and Rutherford.

They do not believe that there are three Persons in God.

They claim that Jesus was Michael the Archangel.

They do not believe that souls are immortal; they do not believe in hell.

They assert that smoking and blood transfusions are immoral.

They allege that business gov-

## Do You Think Your In-Laws Are Trying To Control Your Marriage?

By FATHER JOHN L. THOMAS, S.J.  
Professor of Sociology at St. Louis University

so-called in-law problem. It may help to consider some of the angles before attempting to figure out a solution for your case.

In the first place, in-laws are not out-laws. Your wife—and you—were cared for, protected, instructed, and loved by parents for many long years before your marriage.

The bonds of affection, respect, and love between parents and children are second in strength and endurance only to the bonds uniting husband and wife. The parent-child relationship is a long time in developing. It does not cease to exist by the fact of marriage. Second, because every child represents the living expression of their own marital love, it is normal for parents to have their child's interests at heart even after marriage. They wish their child to be happy, and because they have some experience of married life, they may find it difficult not to give advice or to offer assistance.

THIRD, FAMILIES differ greatly in the closeness of parents and grown children. Some families are close-knit unions, binding sisters and brothers, parents and children firmly together with bonds of affection, mutual service, and companionship. Other families maintain rather loose family bonds.

When husband and wife come from different family backgrounds, they may find it difficult to appreciate their partner's attitude toward relatives and interpret it as either over-attachment or lack of consideration.

FINALLY, MARRIAGE necessarily involves a weaning process in which one's primary family loyalty is shifted from the parental circle to the new unit under formation. Just as in infancy, this weaning process requires adjustment by both parent and child. Parents must understand

that their child now has a new center of interest around which love and loyalty must be primarily focused. The child must also recognize that marriage requires this shift of love and loyalty from parents to partner.

In a sense, this shift constitutes the final step in growing up, and the first step in building marital unity. Married couples should expect their partners to retain their love and affection for their parents. Indeed, as two-in-one flesh, they should expect to share in this as much as possible.

They must also be tolerant of differences in demonstrating this love and affection in different family circles. On the other hand, they have the right to expect their partner's primary love, affection, interest, and loyalty to be centered on their own marriage.

AS I SEE IT, Bill, your problem stems from a little lack of understanding on the part of both of you, and probably on the part of your in-laws, plus a rather foolish mistake made at the beginning of your marriage.

There is no good reason why you should have dinner with her parents on the first Sunday of every month—or with your own parents, for that matter! This is a confining, senseless arrangement which you will do well to modify.

There are several ways of doing this without needless offense or hurt feelings. You can break the pattern by planning a trip on that Sunday, by getting yourselves invited out by some of your friends, or by having them over for some special reason.

Once the pattern is broken, it should be easy to work out some more agreeable way of visiting your in-laws.

At any rate, you and your wife must recognize that in-laws can be shown the affection and love they deserve without your being chained to them.

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