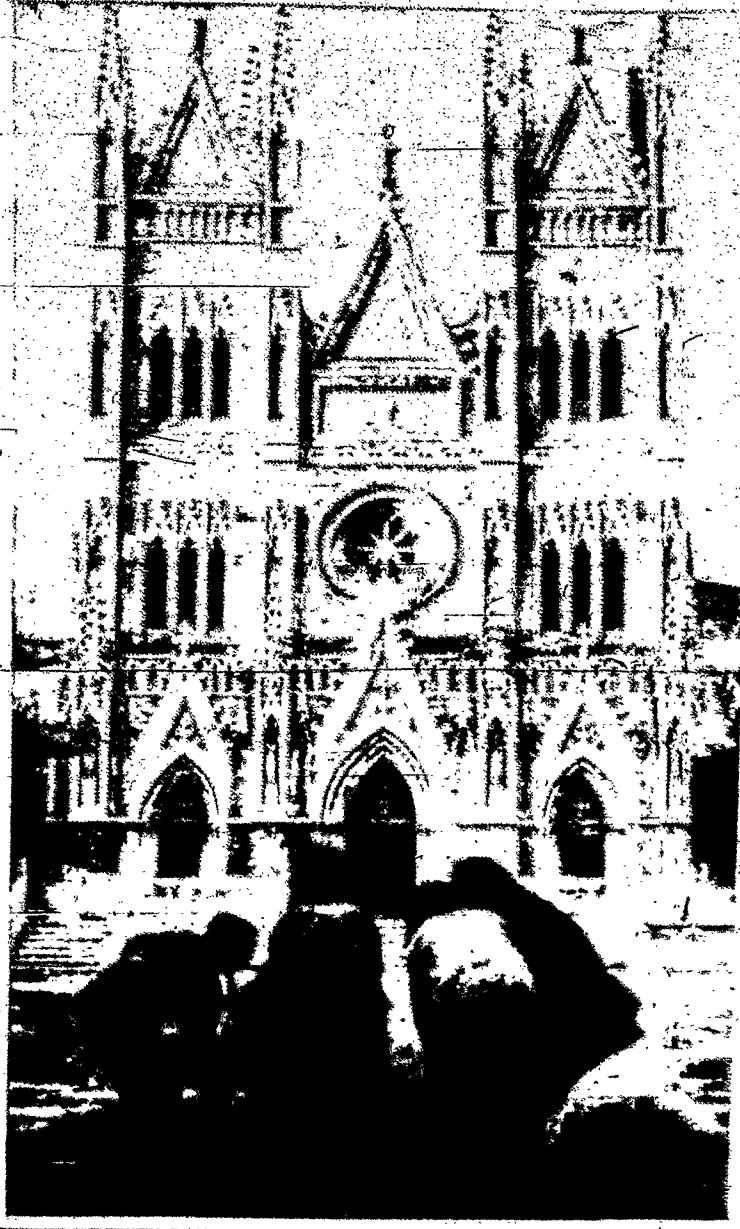


Reds Take Over Churches In China



Hong Kong — (RNS) — Religious freedom in Communist China means changing the Peiping Cathedral into a Red propaganda school and forcing priests, in photo above, to dismantle radiators from churches to aid government's scrap-iron drive. Reds have taken over seventeen Catholic churches in Peiping, left seven for religious services.

Five Million Visit Lourdes

Lourdes — (RNS) — About 5,000,000 pilgrims have already come here by plane, train, bus and automobile for the Centenary Year of Lourdes, commemorating the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin to St. Bernadette Soubirous in 1858.

The actual estimate, as of the beginning of November, is 4,900,000. It was made by the International Lourdes Committee which organized the program of the centenary year launched last February.

A BREAKDOWN showed that 1,800,000 persons came by automobile, 1,500,000 by train, 1,200,000 by bus and 123,833 by plane. Some 300,000 pilgrims from near-by areas came on motor cycle, bicycle or on foot.

The pilgrims included 25 cardinals, 500 archbishops and tens of thousands of priests. Among the cardinals was Cardinal Roncalli, Patriarch of Venice, now Pope John XXIII. He arrived by jet airliner on March 23 to officiate as the Legate of the late Pope Pius XII at the inauguration of the great new underground Basilica of St. Pius X.

On one day, Aug. 10, some 48,000 automobiles arrived at Lourdes. On another, 633 buses were counted. Six thousand buses came from Spain alone, bearing nearly 300,000 Spanish faithful. Catholics arrived even from three Iron Curtain countries — Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

A total of 2,965 doctors have visited the Lourdes Medical Bureau already this year. The sick pilgrims numbered 49,500, compared with 35,100 in 1957. Thirty-two cases of reported miraculous cures after bathing in the waters of the grotto are now on file for study by the Medical Bureau.

English Monk Peer Of Lords

By John A. Greaves

London — (NC) — For the first time in more than 400 years a Benedictine monk has taken a seat in Britain's House of Lords.

He is Father Peter Gabriel Gilbey, who took his seat under his hereditary title of Baron Vaux of Harrowden.

Wearing a dark grey suit with a clerical collar he stepped forward onto the floor of the upper house of Parliament in the traditional manner to sign the roll and be greeted by Viscount Kilmaur, Lord High Chancellor and speaker of the House of Lords.

FATHER GILBEY is the first monk, but not the first priest, to sit in the House of Lords since the penal days following the Reformation. The first priest to sit since that time was Msgr. Lord Peter who died in 1863.

Father Gilbey was given permission to take his seat in the upper house by his religious superior, Abbott Herbert Byrne of Ampleforth Abbey in Yorkshire, spiritual successor to the old Westminster Abbey in London, which was made the chief state church at the time of the Reformation.

The 42-year-old monk became the 47th Catholic member of the House of Lords, whose 570 members include 26 bishops of the state Church of England. Catholic bishops cannot sit in the House of Lords and Catholic clergymen may not sit in the House of Commons. But a Catholic priest can sit in the upper house if he inherits a peerage, which cannot be renounced.

His religious duties will normally prevent his attendance at sessions of the House, Father Gilbey said. "I shall attend on occasions when I feel I can make a useful contribution to its deliberations and put any specialized knowledge I may have at the disposal of the House," he added.

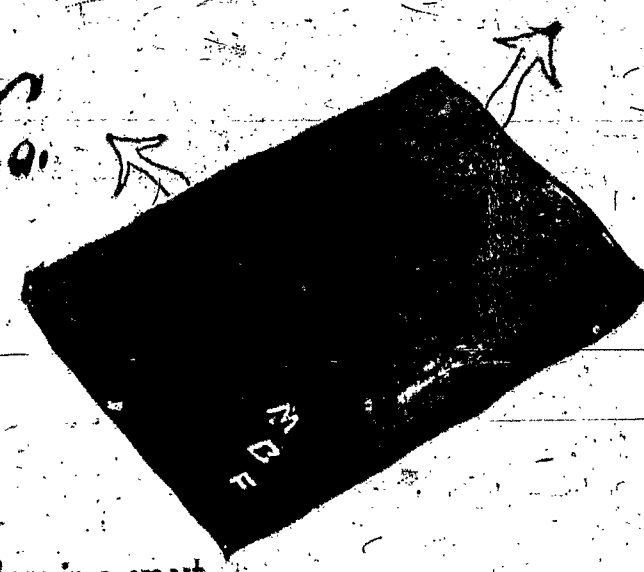
Pan-American Mass At Capital

Washington — (RNS) — High-ranking government leaders and diplomatic representatives from 19 Latin American nations attended the 49th annual Pan-American Mass celebrated here by Cardinal-elect Amleto G. Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the U.S.

The congregation of more than 1,000 dignitaries heard Msgr. Paul F. Tanner, general secretary of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, urge a new era of co-operation among the Americas.

"Let us leave behind ancient quarrels that have manifested themselves in bitterness in our national relationships, and in anti-clericalism and deep cleavages within our nations," Msgr. Tanner declared.

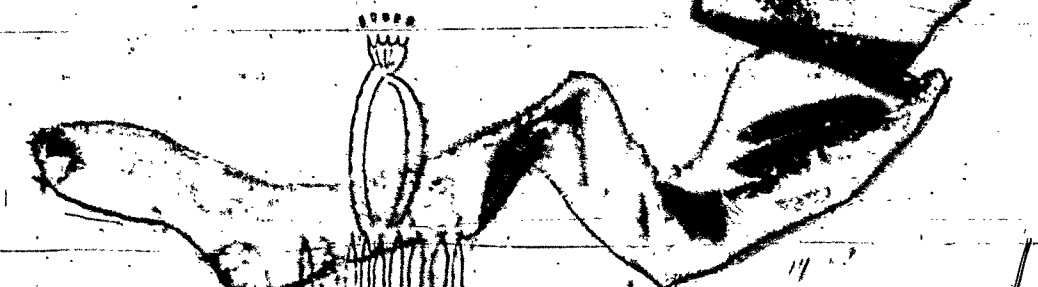
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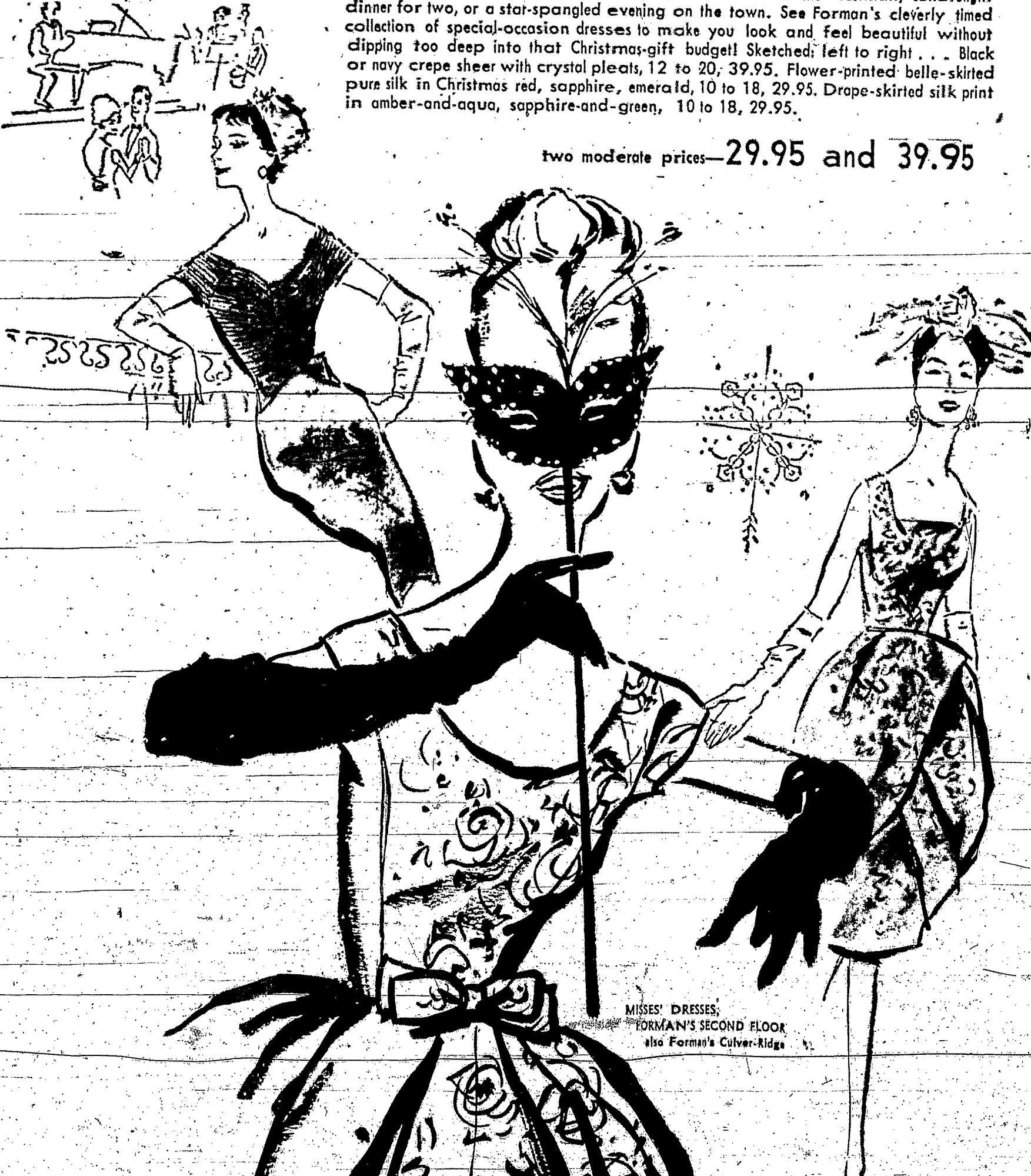


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