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Cork Faithful Pray For Victims

Cork —(RNS)—The Feast of the Assumption was observed throughout the Roman Catholic Diocese of Cork as a day of public prayer for persecuted Catholics in Communist countries.

The observance was held on instructions from Bishop Cornelius Lucey, who said the Cork faithful should pray especially for the Catholics of Communist China, "so many of whom were made converts by our own Irish missionaries."

Bishop Lucey urged also that the family Rosary be offered each day for a week for the same intention.

Teacher Aides

Denver. —(RNS)—Catholic schools in the Denver archdiocese will experiment this fall with the employment of several dozen women as part-time teacher aides.

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Is Castro Communist?

(The author of the following article, associate editor of the Times-Review, weekly paper of the Diocese of La Crosse, Wis., has made a two-week fact-finding tour of Cuba, including Oriente province, where the revolution of Premier Fidel Castro had its stronghold.)

By PATRICK J. WHELAN (N.C.W.C. News Service)

"If this is communism then Christ was a communist!"

Father Angel Maria Rivas, of Santiago de Cuba, celebrated rebel chaplain, was speaking of the new revolution in Cuba.

By "revolution" he meant the government of Premier Fidel Castro, the new laws designed to bring industrialization and agrarian reform—the whole Cuban effort to bring social justice to the forgotten and the disinherited.

FATHER RIVAS is a "rebel" priest only in a very limited sense. He is the trusted archdiocesan director of A.C.U. (Catholic Student Group)—the Cuban equivalent of U. S. Newman Clubs.

He is a doctoral alumnus of Gregorian University in Rome. During the Castro rebellion, he was a constant contact and advisor of rebel chiefs on the Second Front in Oriente Province.

Later, at an urgent request of Fidel Castro's brother, Raul, to Archbishop Enrique Perez Serantes, Father Rivas joined the rebels as chaplain in the Sierra Maestra mountains.

Since January Father Rivas has been busy as student advisor in his spacious office in the Santiago cathedral tower. His residence is the Archbishop's house.

The still-shy young priest, proudly displaying the Chaplain's card signed by Raul Castro, which he received from that rebel leader personally, "Raul a communist? Bah!" said Father Rivas.

"A wild young man, yes. A radical, yes. But not a communist."

Father Rivas said he knows Raul well. For a long time he was in daily contact with the rebel chieftain, he said. The young man pretended to be an atheist, "but at heart he himself knows that he is not," said the priest.

"During Batista's tyranny most students were radicals of one kind or another," said Father Rivas.

"Any university student who saw the brutality and injustice about him could hardly help being a radical and a rebel. That's why it's dangerous to blame the communist epithet about too freely," said Father Rivas.

"A certain part of the U.S. press is courting a terrible danger with its wild charges of communism against leaders of the Cuban revolution and its government."

quage typical of Communist party agitators.

Perhaps the agrarian reform has raised hackles and prompted more wild journalism than any other revolutionary act in Cuba.

What is the basis of U.S. alarm over this reform?

Basically, the objections are three-fold:

• that U.S.-owned land is being confiscated without just and prompt payments.

• that the agrarian reform is open to the danger of becoming like the Red Chinese communes through its cooperatives.

• that the agrarian reform law does not grant ownership in the distribution of land to the peas or farm-laborers.

The first charge is totally irrelevant. Robbed for years of hundreds of millions of dollars by the likes of Batista, Cuba can afford to pay only in 20-year bonds at 4 and one-half per cent. The value placed on the land (most of it acquired at less than three dollars per hundred acres) is that used by the owners themselves in their tax returns.

Concerning the two other objections, since the peasants are nearly 100-per cent illiterate, the law proposes that only after a long period of "apprenticeship" will the cooperatives function autonomously. Meanwhile, directors appointed by INRA will control them.

"Regarding land ownership, a hard-driving Catholic lawyer, who has specialized in the matter, said:

"There is nothing surprising or shocking about this aspect of the law. Limited ownership and right to dispose of farm land for the common good is taken for granted in many countries of Europe. Only in America are shocked by it."

There is, of course, the danger that these laws can be abused, especially if communists get the upper hand in the present revolutionary ferment. But a young businessman summed that question up this way:

"Do you think I fought the revolution just to let the communists take over. There are thousands like me, with a big stake in Cuba, who intend to make this revolution succeed."

OTHER WELL-PLACED persons are not so sure about the extent of Red penetration into the government of Cuba.

Despite his outright denial that he is or ever was a communist, some people still have doubts about Captain Antonio Nunez Jimenez, director of INRA (Agrarian Reform Institute), and the most powerful man in Cuba next to Premier Fidel Castro.

Some also question the ideological moorings of his assistant, Fina Santos.

Other informed observers hold that Armando Hart, Minister of Education, uses lan-



FIDEL CASTRO

"In the first place," he said, "the charges started flying back only when the major reforms became known in detail—particularly the agrarian reform."

"In the second, remember that the majority of Cubans are nearly illiterate. They have little or no education."

"What do you think will be their reaction to irresponsible name-calling by the U.S. press? 'It will be just: if they call this agrarian reform communism, then communism must be a good thing...'"

"In short," Father Rivas said, "the U.S. press—part of it at least—is only seeking to promote communism in Cuba. That's why it is irresponsible."

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Sick Pilgrims Blessed At Brother Andre's

Montreal —(RNS)—Paul-Emile Cardinal Leger, Archbishop of Montreal (holding monstrance), blesses pilgrims at the world-famous St. Joseph's Oratory, atop historic Mount Royal, during observance of the 114th anniversary of the birth of Brother Andre, the shrine's founder.

Land Reform Rules Cited By Prelate

Des Moines —(NC)—Four points which are "essential elements for the success of land reform any place and under any circumstances," have been advanced by Msgr. Luigi G. Ligutti, executive director of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference.

Msgr. Ligutti's observations were prompted by the land reform program of the Castro regime in Cuba, as well as other attempts at land reform in several other Latin American states.

Msgr. Ligutti's four points are:

1. Agrarian reform must be economically sound. Land distribution is but a step, not necessarily the first or even the most important. Proper use of land, availability of capital and marketing facilities are of the essence. What may be sound in one place might prove a failure elsewhere under different material and cultural conditions.

2. Agrarian reform must be morally just. Two wrongs never make a right. However, a situation is not "morally just" because it happens to exist here and now. Neither is it right to eliminate one moral evil by creating another evil.

To stall a needed reform is wrong and to rush into it without moral consideration is equally wrong. A middle course is the safest and, in the long run, the most effective.

3. Agrarian reform must be socially democratic. It cannot be based upon decrees and whims of an on high. Man must first be reconstructed from within. He must develop his God-given personality and become conscious of his social responsibilities.

4. Land reform must be for today. That implies the application of up-to-date physical as well as social sciences. It means the possession of imagination and vision coupled with good "horse sense."

Meanwhile, the Dutch Capuchins already are working in the Swiss Capuchin mission territory of the Dar-es-Salaam archdiocese in Tanganyika. Others are expected to follow under an exchange agreement between Swiss and Dutch provinces of the Roman Catholic order.

Rosary Devotee Visits de Valera

Dublin —(RNS)—President Eamon de Valera had a visit here from the "venerable old gentleman-of-Downing Street."

It is Albert E. Roche, who every day for the past four years has been reciting the Rosary outside the residence of the British Prime Minister for three intentions—peace, the conversion of Russia and England's return to the Catholic faith.

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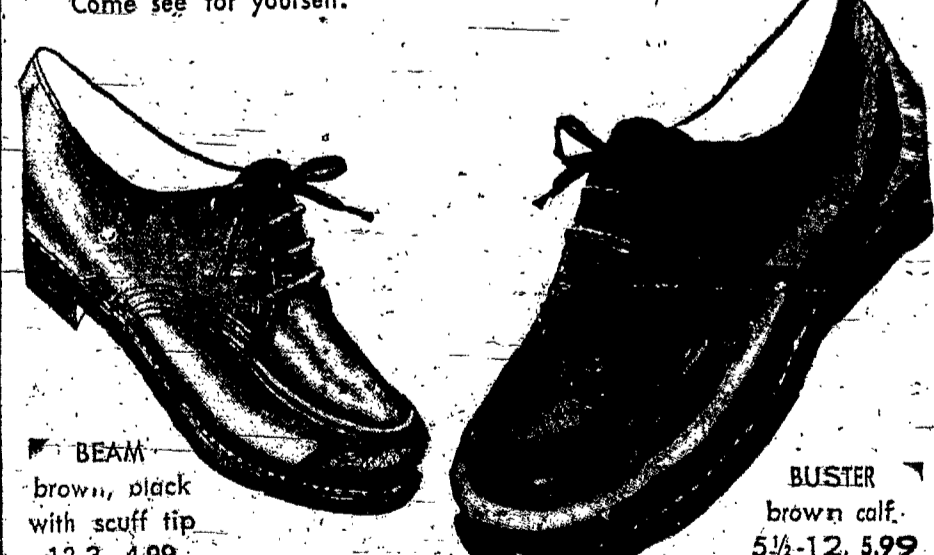
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