Franco Spain No Yardstick For America

Franco's crackdown on the Masons in Spain is sure to ripple the political waters in America.

We will be told Senator John F. Kennedy will most certainly close down Masonic lodges and muffle Protestant pulpits if he wins this year's presidential election.

Earlier this year, a Vatican hand was seen menacing American freedom when a French priest-mayor failed to greet Nikita Khrushchev when the Soviet leader visited the city of Dijon. The fact that devout Catholic Charles DeGaulle played host to the dictator escaped the critics' notice. All they wanted to see was "Vatican interference" and they looked until they thought they found it.

It will be a happy day for our nation when Americans begin to realize European events are not necessarily bound to be mirrored in our own country.

We have a long tradition of religious freedom in America. According to that tradition, a man has a legal right to practice religion as his conscience guides him without suffering liability for it. Yet there are strong voices across the country saying a man forfeits his right to be president on the day his parents carry their infant to a Catholic baptismal font.

U.S. Catholics cherish both their faith and their freedom and have no desire to import contrary European traditions.

We are of the opinion most Americans of all denominations share this same viewpoint.

Illustrating this is the story of three women who were recently ordained ministers in Sweden's state Lutheran Church.

The church synod—top council of the denomination — voted 62 to 36 against ordaining women. The synod said there were theological reasons which prevented women from being ministers.

The Swedish Parliament, however, disagreed with the synod and passed legislation which authorized ordination of women. The synod, which has the right to veto the Parliament's laws on religion, then switched its earlier stand and voted 69 to 29 in favor of the ordinations.

Why the theological reasons melted so promptly following Parliamentary pressure was not explained. The three women were then ordained and are now serving as Lutheran ministers.

Whether Lutherans in Sweden — or in China or America or Brazil — have women ministers is, of course, no business of Catholics. But we can't help noticing that the strong church-state tie in Sweden is worlds different from the way Lutherans operate their denomination here in this country.

We also recall that a few years back the British Parliament, with Catholics, Methodists, Jews and agnostics all voting on the question, debated a revision of the Anglican (Episcopalian) Book of Common Prayer.

Whether Episcopalians in England — or in India or Canada or east Africa — have a revised prayer book is, of course, no business of Catholics. But again we can't help noticing that the strong church-state tie in England is worlds different from the way Episcopalians operate their denomination here in this country.

The American public seems to recognize this arrangement when a Protestant is a potential candidate for election but a Catholic is immediately stamped as an American of different pedigree.

If there is any conclusion to make it is that all of us too easily forget our heritage of religious freedom. Next time you hear somebody talking about the Vatican threat to American freedom, try to show that person that what a Catholic does in Spain or what a Lutheran does in Sweden or what an Episcopalian does in England is a poor yardstick to predict what will happen in America.

SERMONETTE

HAPPY ARE THE MEEK — MATT. V.4.

by The Rev. Richard Madden, O.C.D.

I could walk down some dark street in any big city at night and have my head laid open with an ax, and I know it. These are violent days. Recently in my own hometown traditionally famous for its "brotherly love", the local yokels ran up a score of seventeen murders in eleven nights. Burglars sneaking into homes at night meet burglars sneaking out. Apparently we live in a jungle. Kill or be killed.

Thank heavens somebody blew the whistle on this kind of savagry. Which is exactly what Christ did. He called for meekness, said it would make us happier; but the world shook its head dubiously, "Really, He can't be serious". But He was. And deadly so.

But by no stretch of the imagination did He expect meekness to take the form of a yellow streak running down the Christian back. Nor did He expect His followers to stick their heads in the sand like cringing cowards while the world stuck knives in their backs. This is not meekness.

What Christ expected of us was a sensible, quiet, penetrating insight into the gross complexity of life; and a realization that although our arms were made to build and lift and protect, they were never intended to become instruments of war. What He wants us to do is to face life without fear, secure, indeed, in the knowledge that the good God watches over us constantly. For this attitude itself could bring great peace of mind.

In demanding meekness, He automatically condemned the town bully, respected business man though he might be, who rules his tiny domain with violence and who thinks that the only way to get things done is to break a couple backs in the doing. As for this type of man who roars like a thunderhead above the weak and the lowly . . . well, you just won't find his kind in heaven. His kind never makes it.

For there is only peace in heaven. And only the meek fit it. It is their land.

Faith On The Rhine

Two Germans Form A Club

By MANFRED WENZEL

Bonn — (NC) — The vigor of preparations for the International Eucharistic Congress opening in Munich July 31 has drawn the world's attention to German Catholicism.

Perhaps the most striking feature of Catholic life in Germany is its highly organized character. This springs from the German trait epitomized by the old saying that every time two Germans meet they form a club.

These national, diocesan and city clubs and organizations build homes for large families, help support the missions in general and individual missioners in particular, encourage exchange of ideas between Catholics and Non-Catholics, give courses in adult education, and help the poor, handicapped and rejected of this world.

The immediate history of almost all of them begins with the fall of the nazis, who cut down any organization that refused to bow before the nazi creed of statism and racism.

Many of them are revivals of pre-nazi organizations, and have grown with the stubborn vigor of clipped hedges.

They grew despite a postwar aversion to organization that was a reaction against the ruthless organization of every aspect of life by the nazis. But the war-born hunger for genuine values, education and spiritual help was strong enough to overcome this aversion.

Catholics in communist-ruled East Germany were not permitted to found Catholic organizations. That prohibition persists to this day.

West Germany has no single organization known as Catholic Action, as has Italy for instance. The various organizations as a whole constitute Germany's formal Catholic Action, which according to Pius XI's classic definition is the participation and collaboration of the laity with the apostolic hierarchy.

Nationwide activities of Catholic organizations are coordinated on two levels: by a lay committee and by episcopal committees.

The five-member committee, known as the Central Committee of German Catholics, has one representative from the hierarchy, the rest are laymen. It is assisted by experts on sociology, family life, education, law, rural life, international affairs and communications media.

THE CENTRAL Committee aims at coordinating and assisting the activities of Catholic lay organizations throughout Germany without limiting their autonomy. It also provides representation of German Catholics at national and international meetings.

The episcopal committees deal with the apostolates of men, women and youth, and with education, communications and housing.

Some of the hundreds of Catholic organizations are:

- The German Catholic Youth Association, which has a million members and is the largest youth association in Germany.
- The Kolping Society, which has nearly 3,000 affiliated clubs and a membership of about a quarter million. Its purpose is to guide young working men spiritually.
- The German Catholic Family Movement, which has a membership of 900,000 families.
- The Catholic Home and Settlement Society, which is represented in all 21 dioceses of West Germany. It helps build 1,200 homes yearly.
- The German Charity Association, the central agency for Catholic aid to the poor, the sick, the deaf, the blind, the aged, orphans, refugees and criminals.
- The Catholic Workers' Movement, which trains Catholic workers for social action. It has 400,000 members.

Some notion of the role of these organizations can be obtained by a comparison of their membership with the total West German Catholic population of 24 million. The overall population of West Germany is about 55 million.

Sacred Heart Year

Those Who Love

By REV. LOUIS J. HOHMAN

The importance of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus lies in the fact that it should lead us to perfect love of God. In a very real way this is the heart and soul of all religion.

In connection with this thought, we appeal to the authority of Pope Pius XII. "External acts of piety do not play the first and foremost role (in this devotion). The reason for this devotion is not primarily to be sought in the blessings which Christ the Lord promised in private revelations." He refers in this last sentence to the promises of the Sacred Heart made to St. Margaret Mary.

It only stands to reason that if we practice unselfish love of God, and do our best to increase that love daily, the things promised to St. Margaret Mary for those who practice the Sacred Heart devotion will follow naturally.

It stands to reason also that mere recitation of prayers to the Sacred Heart, possession of images, medals, etc., and even the making of the nine First Fridays, are of no avail whatsoever if a deep love of Christ does not underly them as their source. At least, these external acts of piety should lead to a more generous love of Christ.

Take as an example just one of the promises of the Sacred Heart. "Lukewarm souls shall become fervent." What warms the heart but love? What makes it on fire with zeal? What makes one impatient to be in the presence of someone, sad to leave it? Therefore he who learns of Christ, imbibes of his loveableness, seeks him with an open unselfish heart, will warm his soul by the very fire of His love and make it fervent.

With this firmly in mind, we quote below the twelve promises made by the Sacred Heart through St. Margaret Mary, to all who will cultivate within themselves and others a devotion to God's love.

1. I will give them all the graces necessary in their state in life.
2. I will establish peace in their homes.
3. I will comfort them in all their afflictions.
4. I will be their secure refuge during life, and above all in death.
5. I will bestow abundant blessings upon all their undertakings.
6. Sinners shall find in my Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.
7. Lukewarm souls shall become fervent.
8. Fervent souls shall quickly mount to high perfection.
9. I will bless every place in which an image of my Heart is exposed and honored.
10. I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.
11. Those who promote this devotion shall have their name written in my Heart, never to be blotted out.
12. I promise you in the excessive mercy of my Heart that my all-powerful love will grant to all those who receive Holy Communion on the First Fridays in nine consecutive months the grace of final perseverance; they shall not die in my disgrace, nor without receiving their sacraments.

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Africa's New Cardinal

The Prince Who Lives In Poverty

By MSGR. JAMES TUCEK

Rome — (NC) — One day the red hat of one of the Church's 85 cardinals will hang from the ceiling of a tin-roofed church set in the middle of an African banana plantation.

It will be hung there following the death of the first African Negro Prince of the Church, Laurian Cardinal Rugambwa. He is Bishop of Rutabo, Tanganyika, and the son of a poor farmer who still lives under a thatched roof.

The red hat will hang in the cathedral of a diocese which is only seven years old and which, until a few years ago, had only one other permanent church in its territory.

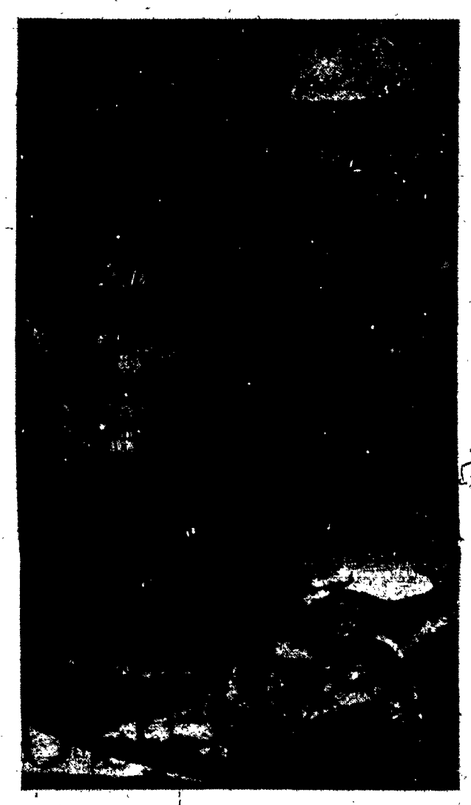
One way of reaching Rutabo is by steamer across Lake Victoria. You dock at the western shore of the lake in the little port city of Bukoba. Then you make your way due west for about 90 miles.

After you leave Bukoba, you see the last of paved roads, the last telephone or electricity and the last movie theater. You travel a twisting, bumping, sandy road, often through heavy green underbrush, sometimes through a gently undulating plain.

At one point you pass a large cultivated area of banana plants with their large, flat, dark-green leaves. You come into a clearing. This is the Cardinal's See city. It is not really a city, but a village of only a few hundred inhabitants—a cluster of mud huts and thatched roofs in the center of a banana plantation.

There is no phone, no post office, no electricity, no paved road, no stores. The local butcher shop is a side of beef hung from a limb in the shade of a tree. Medicines are bought from Indian merchants traveling through.

The nearest phone is 30 miles away. The nearest mail box is in the next village, Kamachumu, about a half mile further down the road. Box number 33 there is the one listed for Cardinal Rugambwa in the Vatican's official directory.



Peter Cardinal Doi, Archbishop of Tokyo (left), and Laurian Cardinal Rugambwa, Bishop of Rutabo, Tanganyika, British East Africa, shake hands at Vatican City on becoming the first Japanese and first Negro in history to be named to the Sacred College.

There are only two permanent structures in Rutabo: the cathedral and the Cardinal's residence. The cathedral is a starkly simple edifice built in 1910 — four brick walls, a floor paved also with brick, a corrugated tin roof, an altar and a few benches.

The Cardinal's residence is a six-room bungalow which houses himself and his priest-secretary. It is the village's only house, as the villagers commonly understand the term.

Since every few hundred years there is a separate cluster of huts which has its own neighborhood name, it is difficult to know where Rutabo ends, so it is difficult to say exactly what its population is. A missionary who knows the area well estimates, however, that within a mile radius of the center of the village there are about 2,000 inhabitants.

There are two principal crops grown in the Rutabo area, coffee and bananas. The coffee is for export and the bananas are for home consumption. The bananas, which are the staple food of the people, are a very large green variety which are used as a vegetable, generally steamed with beans. The small yellow sweet ones are given to children in the way that candy is used elsewhere.

Once all the territory between the west shore of lake Victoria and Ruanda-Urundi was the Vicariate Apostolic of Bukoba. The Holy See, seeing that it had progressed sufficiently, decided to divide it into two parts. This officially took effect on December 13, 1951.

On the same day, Father Rugambwa, just a few months after his return from Rome where he had earned a doctorate in canon law, received word that he had been appointed Vicar Apostolic of the vicariate which had been cut off from the Bukoba See. The new Vicariate was called Lower Kagera, taking its name from the Kagera River, which flows through the region and empties into Lake Victoria.

The nomination and consecration of Bishop Rugambwa marked a new step in the progress of the Church in the section of Tanganyika west and south of Lake Victoria. Earlier, the whole territory had been pioneered by the White Fathers. Now a native bishop with a native priesthood was established.

Less than two years later, on March 25, 1953, the Vicariate Apostolic of Lower Kagera was elevated to the rank of diocese and named the Diocese of Rutabo. Bishop Rugambwa became its Ordinary.

Figures reported by the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith on June 30, 1957, give an idea of the diocese after it had functioned for four years. In an area of about 4,000 square miles there were 53,343 Catholics, 3,077 catechumens, 25 priests, 27 Brothers and nuns, 10 seminarians and 92 catechists.

Today the Rutabo diocese has a Catholic population of about 61,000 out of a total population of 132,000. The majority of the Non-Catholics are Moslems, who constitute a major problem for the missionaries, for economic as well as religious reasons. The economic problem is explained by the fact that commercial success is identified with being a Moslem.

The Catholics of the Rutabo diocese are poor and, as a natural consequence, so are the See's priests and churches. Until 1951 the church at Kanhigo was the only permanent church edifice in the entire area apart from the cathedral at Rutabo.

The Kanhigo church was little more than a tin roof with open sides and was infested with bats. The bats created such a stench that cats were installed in the rafters to discourage them. The effect was just the reverse: the cats were discouraged.

The missionary in charge of the church, then tried to get rid of the bats with a treatment of sulphur smoke. It succeeded only in turning everything in the church yellow.

A more fundamental problem than bats, cats, or even Moslems in the Cardinal's diocese is that of the religious mentality of the Africans.

All of them, Christian or pagan, believe in one God who is good and will do no harm to men. They believe in an afterlife as well as in good and bad spirits who attach themselves to such objects as trees and houses. This explains some of the practices still followed even by Christians.

Cardinal Rugambwa, being a product of this society, knows it thoroughly and knows that the strength of family influence and the force of family values constitute the Church's avenue of approach in Christianizing his territory. He estimates that it will take about three generations for this approach to be fully successful.

Reapings At Random

Medical Aid For Aged No Political Football

In the April 15 issue of the Courier Journal, Doctor Charles R. Matthews, a member of the Rochester Catholic Physicians Guild and vice president of the Monroe County Medical Society, attacked your Reaper for what he termed "inaccuracies and misleading conclusions." His letter referred to my comment on medical aid to the aged.

It is not unusual for writers to be accused of inaccuracies and misrepresentations by dissidents. However, a Catholic writer must be acutely sensitive to such charges, for the very basis of his apostolate is truth, honesty and sincerity.

Looking over the doctor's letter I find that while it contained many charges, there was no supporting evidence. Indeed, the whole tenor of the doctor's reply belied his opening remarks that he was taking a non-political stand.

His views are the political views of the American Medical Association propounded constantly by their spokesmen in Congress. Furthermore, the Weiss-Keating Bill of which he spoke is an election year pressure bill. Among other things, it lacks bipartisan sponsorship and the support of the Administration. This is not to say that the bill is necessarily wrong. But it is meaningless political.

Doctor Matthews should remember that while the Church is deeply interested in politics, it is above them.

The Church is not wedded to any political system; nor has it put its stamp of approval on the policies of the American Medical Association, or its Catholic members. I expressed what I believe to be a Catholic view on the subject of medical aid for the aged. Nowhere did I suggest that it was the only Catholic view.

Doctor Matthews might also remember the words of the late lamented Pope Pius XII to Catholic editors at St. Louis in May, 1957:

"In regard to questions in which the divinely appointed teachers have not pronounced judgment — and the field is vast and varied, saving that of faith and morals — free discussion will be altogether legitimate, and each may hold and defend his own opinion. But let such an opinion be presented with due restraint. No one will condemn another simply because he does not agree with his opinions; much less will he challenge his loyalty."

I agree with Doctor Matthews' point on the undesirability of federal control in the area of medicine. However, he seems to be suggesting that the only function of the Federal Government in the matter of medical aid is to be sympathetic and, maybe, to advise the states and local communities on how to cope with it.

Opposition to the Forand Bill was based on the fact that the Federal Government would assume control and payment of a compulsory medical program through the Social Security system.

However, the Weiss-Keating version of aid to the aged benefits only the insurance companies. The Federal Government would assume payment of premiums of private medical policies when they cannot be met by the individual. This appears to me to be nothing more than a Government grant to insurance companies. Based on current performance, premiums will be high because few companies would take the risk of insuring a person over 65 unless it was worth their while.

Medical care seems the most imminent need of the aged, since a lot of them have become medically indigent through the staggering costs of lingering illnesses. Many savings accounts, accounts and real estate holdings have been wiped out, leaving the individual poverty stricken.

Since hospitalization is a relatively new concept, many persons were not able to qualify for it because of age or past medical history. And, it is just within the past 20 years that we have achieved our ersatz financial millenium. Before this, in the pre World War II days, hospitalization was out of the reach of the average person.

I don't think we are primarily concerned here with the really poor. They have always had financial aid from government and private medical groups. We are concerned, however, about those middle class families who are forcibly reduced to poverty by the high cost of lingering medical needs.

Passing the responsibility to state and local authorities will debilitate intentions through patronage and channeling the funds to cliques.

If private groups cannot come up with low cost medical insurance for the aged — indeed for all of us — then Federal administration and standardization appears to be the only alternative. The American Medical Association and the Catholic Physicians Guild of Rochester have an interest at stake to be sure. But so do 170 million other Americans.

History shows that the medical profession, through its organization, opposed the Social Security system when it was enacted. Now they defend it and try to keep it pure of side clauses and expenditures. This same system was once criticized as "Socialistic" and is now accepted as part of our total national welfare program.

It is certainly a test of maturity to accept an innovation without immediately pinning an ignoble label on it, and that is precisely what has been done with medical legislation.

Great stress has been laid by Doctor Matthews on the involuntary nature of the Forand Bill. There are many facets of our government which are compulsory. In the interest of individual freedom we don't like them. But in the interest of the common good we accept them.

I emphasize again that I emphasized in the article criticized by Doctor Matthews — we should be against federal control of medicine. But we must also oppose private exploitation of the sick and the aged. If private groups won't do the job, then there is nothing unCatholic about suggesting that the government step in. — GERARD BERRY.