

Islands Under Shadow Of Red China's Guns

By REV. WILLIAM RICHARDSON, M.M.

This is the second of five articles by Maryknoll Father Richardson who describes his on-the-spot observations at Quemoy and other "off shore" islands near Communist China.

The Quemoy Broadcasting Station, operated by the military, is on the air with music, news and propaganda sixteen hours a day.

The young Chinese major who directs the station told me that their powerful transmitter beams to four Provinces on the mainland with a potential audience of over thirty million people. If these people have access to radios, which I doubt, they can listen.

The effort, however, seems worthwhile.

From the Radio Station, our jeep sped along a fine, two-lane concrete highway, which runs the length of the island. Side roads are macadam; the village roads, well-graded dirt. In general, the highway system is much better than that on Formosa. There was absolutely no sign of shelling and Father Druetto told me that although the highway had been hit many times, it was always repaired within hours.

Young Scotch pine trees line all the roads, but their size is not uniform. For as soon as a tree is destroyed by shell-fire, it is replaced. Several thousand trees have been planted here to beautify, camouflage, and prevent erosion.

The island, which was first settled 1,600 years ago, has served as a refuge for political refugees, a breeding ground for escapes, and now, an outpost of freedom. Essentially it is a large sandbar. The red soil in Alabama and the elevated areas are covered with rocks, some as large as a house.

Swinging onto a dirt road, which led to the bombed-out coastal village of Sa-Me, we passed farmers working their fields. Many were dressed in the loose trousers of Amoy or the shorts worn by farmers in Formosa.

Some, however, wore Army uniforms and I mistook them for soldiers. My escort explained that the men of Quemoy are exempt from normal service.

potatoes, the diet of the very poor in China.

In general, the life of the people is hard. There is much poverty. Shopkeepers were unanimous in saying business was bad, which I took at face value, because Chinese merchants usually say business is ordinary when it is really fairly good. One young storekeeper said that the small population and lack of hard money limit the volume of business.

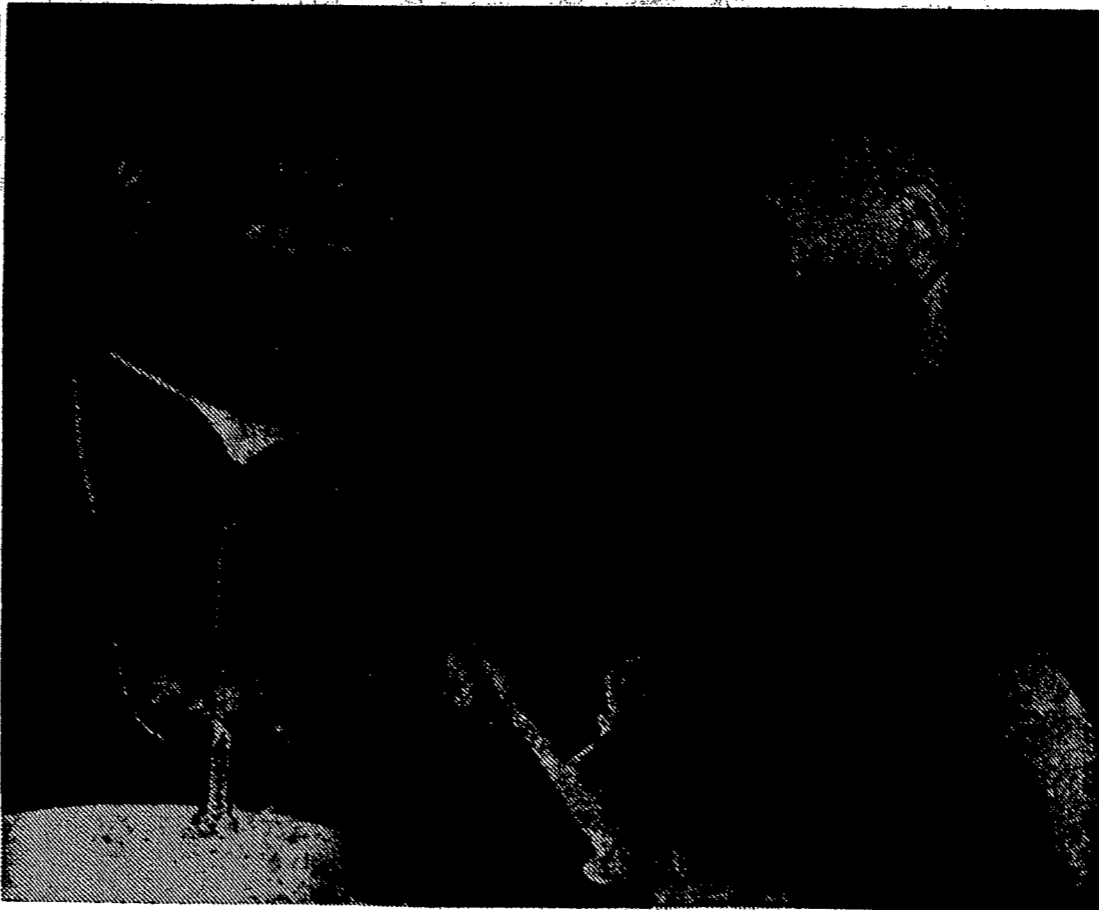
"I've been told that most journalists visiting Quemoy are shown only the good side of things, aside from the ravages of Red attacks. I was given great freedom of movement. Part of the time I was accompanied by liaison officers or local officials, but, knowing that the people wouldn't speak openly in their presence, I slipped away often for private interviews in their homes or shops.

Once, while accompanied by several village councilmen, I overheard an official telling a shopkeeper: "He's a reporter. Tell him business is good." He had just told me that business was bad. I don't hold this against the local leaders, because everyone likes to put their best foot forward, and propaganda is common enough. No one really expects business to be booming in a war zone.

The villagers are much safer now that underground bomb shelters have been constructed for them. I was told that there are nearly enough now so that everyone can go below and sit out an attack comfortably.

Strangely enough, the children are usually the best judges of whether a barrage is coming their way and when to head for the shelters. Most civilian casualties result from the few rounds, which usually catch people in their homes or fields. No alarm system is possible.

The people only go below when the Communists are firing directly into their village; and they laugh when visitors run at the first sound of explosions, which may be landing miles away.



Exiled Haitian Bishop Welcomed

New York — (RNS) — Bishop Remy Augustin, Apostolic Administrator of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, expelled by the Haitian government without an explanation, is welcomed on arriving in New York by Father George Werner, S.M.M., of the Montfort Fathers (right). The bishop is expected to take up residence at the Montfort Fathers Provincial and Mission House in Ozone Park, N.Y. He is a member of that religious order. Meanwhile the Vatican announced that all those involved in the expulsion of Bishop Augustin and Archbishop Francois Poirier of Port-au-Prince have incurred penalties of excommunication. Archbishop Poirier was forced out of the country last November.

34 Years End In 3 Minutes

New York — (RNS) — Four Roman Catholic priests served in Haiti for 34 years, expelled from Haiti by President Francois Duvalier arrived in New York on their way back to their native France. They carried only the prayer books and few articles of clothing they were allowed to take with them.

The priests were 67-year-old San Juan, Puerto Rico, in addition to Father Jean-Baptiste Bettembourg, rector of the Petit Seminaire in Port-au-Prince; Father Paul Bellec, 56, Vicar General who had earlier been ordered out of the country by the Duvalier government. The bishop, 50, a chancery official, and whose expulsion came nearly two months after that of Archbishop Francois Poirier of the suppressed Catholic periodical, La Phalange, and Port-au-Prince, was expected to act as acting secretary general of the Secours Catholique, or Catholic Relief Society, in the Haitian capital.

THEY ARRIVED here from Father Bettembourg had American continent.

Latin America

Poverty, Seedbed Of Communism

Chey Chase — (RNS) — Large areas of Latin America are potentially Red Chinas, a Catholic mission authority warned here.

Religious ignorance and standard living conditions make Latin America a fertile breeding ground for Communism, the Rev. Ronan Hoffman, O.F.M., Conv., professor of missiology at the Catholic University of America, asserted.

Addressing a large forum audience at Blessed Sacrament School, here, Father Hoffman, who did research last year in 16 Latin American nations, said American Catholics must awaken to the serious danger that exists south of the border.

VAST AREAS of Central and South America are in a state of social revolution due to "social injustices, poverty, illiteracy, and sub-human living conditions under which a large percentage of Latin Americans exist," said the priest.

"Pressure from increasing population in Latin America, which has the world's highest rate of population increase, is weakening traditional socio-economic structures," Father Hoffman observed.

Notre Dame Priest Heads Nation's Colleges Group

Denver — (RNS) — The Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., president of Notre Dame University, was elected president of the Association of American Colleges at its annual meeting here.

He succeeds Dr. David A. Lockmiller, president of Ohio Wesleyan University, a Methodist institution in Delaware. OTHER NEW officers include Dr. George M. Modlin, president of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, vice-president; and Dr. Hurst R. Anderson, president of American University (Methodist), Washington, D.C., secretary.

In his proclamation, the president alleged that the priests were arrested and expelled for "reasons of internal and external security" and "to assure the safeguarding of order in the American continent."

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