

Vatican Rejects Laymen's Senate

Some say he had to eat crow. Others said he humbly submitted to higher authority. News reports said Jesuit Father Riccardo Lombardi "expressed his complete accord with the criticism of his new book." The Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano and the Vatican radio both took the priest to task for Father Lombardi's book "The Council: A Reform in Charity."

Vatican commentators termed his opinions "rash and unjust."

The 53 year old priest, a close friend of the late Pontiff, Pope Pius XII, is the founder of the Movement for a Better World — a world to be characterized by stronger faith and sincere charity. He visited the United States last summer. He was preaching a series of sermons near Venice when the Vatican voiced its criticism.

WHAT STIRRED the prompt Vatican reaction?

Father Lombardi's book, published early this month in Rome, said the ecumenical council of the world's Catholic bishops scheduled to meet later this year should make sweeping changes in the Church's administration and to establish a world "senate" of laymen.

Other suggestions included — eliminate "pomposity, gala trains, showy colors, ermine" in the dress of prelates; appoint "competent people" to high Church offices "independently of any right acquired by previous rank." He accused religious orders of men for their "collective mediocrity" and said nuns could be used to greater advantage than they are at present.

Probably his most striking proposal was the idea of a "senate" of laymen; his most stinging comments insinuated the Roman Curia, the Vatican's top administrative group, is hobbled with obsolete procedures.

Pope John in a talk last June said proposals about the council should be made "with prudence and simplicity." For nearly two years, the Vatican has been compiling volumes of proposals sent in by bishops and religious experts (clergy) from around the world.

Actually we suspect most lay people are quite content with this arrangement and whatever its advantages would not want the laymen's "senate" proposed by Father Lombardi.

The task of the laity is not to run the Church nor to be clergy without collars. Lay people — well instructed in their faith and spiritually strengthened by the sacraments — have as their task to fulfill with competence the duties of their state in life. Doctors, engineers, factory workers, executives, housewives, teachers — all these and all other lay people fulfill their responsibilities not by escaping into clergy chores but by a more perfect accomplishment of their own job.

Quite obviously clergy and laity can mutually aid one another but for either to takeover the other group's work is not just contrary to the arrangement established by Christ but results in ridiculous and impossible situations — the priest-worker movement in Europe is one example to prove the point.

The "separation of clergy and laity" is, therefore, a divinely wise system. If the Father Lombardi episode is to have value, we think, it should be viewed not as a Vatican knucklerapping of a priest but a commonsense answer to a well intentioned but out of focus suggestion to reform the Church by confusing it all the more.

And as a final footnote—the currently much quoted criticisms by some editors that President Kennedy is leaning over backwards to avoid Catholic companions (particularly clergy when photographers are on hand) are, in our opinion, also out of focus. His virtue as chief executive is rightly determined not by the number of statues on his desk or medals he wears but by the fact of whether or not he's a good president. This is what Pope John said in a New Year's talk on the lay apostolate. The Church and the world need "a well-prepared Catholic laity, fully aware of its responsibilities and ready to carry out its duties with enthusiasm." That stands as a challenge not just to Mr. Kennedy but to all of us — clergy and laity alike.

Prayers for Unity

A Presbyterian congregation will pray for their Catholic neighbors and have requested remembrance in Catholic prayers for the ultimate union of all Christian people.

Rev. Kenneth C. Holmstrup, pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Seneca Falls, made the announcement in his sermon Sunday, January 14.

He also said he and his parishioners will pray for "your beloved Pope John XXIII" and all who attend the Catholic Church's ecumenical council later this year in Rome.

He requested the mutual exchange of prayers for the eight days January 18 to 25 — observed by Catholics as the Chair of Unity Octave and by other Christians as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Pope John will offer Mass for religious unity on the final day of the octave.

The increasing concern over the tragic divisions among Christians is the first step in attaining the goal set by the Saviour "that they may be one."

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Prelate Denies Family Rule

Washington—(RNS)—Archbishop Ngo-Dien-Thuc, brother of Ngo-Dinh-Diem, president of Vietnam, vigorously denied charges that the country is under a "family" rule or a self-serving dictatorship.

The Roman Catholic prelate, who is enroute to Rome to attend a preparatory meeting for the Ecumenical Council, told a press conference here that liberties that have been curtailed in Saigon have been due only to war conditions imposed by forces of Communism — controlled North Vietnam. Restrictions are similar, he said, to those imposed in the United States during World War II.

He said he rarely sees his brother, who has told him

that the archbishop's province is the Church and the President's is politics and that the two "should never be mixed."

Archbishop Ngo is head of the Archdiocese of Hue, an interior city in the area that once was French Indo-China, and is the ranking prelate of Vietnam.

Denying that his family has interests in business or commercial corporations, he also pointed out that his younger brother, Ngo-Luyen, was named ambassador to Great Britain before his brother came to power, and that his sister and brother-in-law were elected to Parliament long before President Ngo began the task of

reorganizing the Vietnamese government.

The archbishop spoke proudly of the accomplishments of his younger brother in the political field since the French troops left the country and the northern half was ceded to the Communist government of Ho Chi-Minh.

In 1955, he said, the country was ruined economically after ten years of war, a country practically controlled by three private armies led by insurgent generals, and flooded with more than 1,000,000 refugees from Hanoi and the north who had fled from the Communists.

"The land was so beset with troubles that the entire world gave it only six months to survive," the archbishop declared.

Instead, he said, the conditions of anarchy were put down, the nation was reorganized, trade was restored, and the armed forces increased. Were it not for Communist subversion, these measures would have resulted in "a miraculous degree of prosperity for the entire country," he said.

The prelate conceded that

corruption exists in public offices but said that the blame must be shared by those persons who constantly try to bribe public officials and who do nothing to expose the dishonest ones.

He predicted that corruption will be rooted out by a reform program now in progress.

But he said that the invasion through the "no man's land" of Laos, involving increasing numbers of Communist troops and supplies from the north, is presenting a serious problem and that Vietnam, which has fought long in the interest of liberty may have to look to the other nations of the free world for more help.

Archbishop Ngo said, however, that he had advised his brother recently — on one of the rare occasions when his advice was sought — not to ask for American or other foreign troops to join in fighting the Communist armies except as a desperate last resort.

He told the press here that Vietnam's 2,500,000 Catholics are dead set against communism and willing to make any sacrifice necessary to save their homeland from red rule.



Saints of Unity

Golden-tongued orator . . . St. John Chrysostom, Patriarch of Constantinople was born about 347 in Antioch. Ordained in 386 he soon developed that great gift of eloquence for which he is so well known. Called to be the Archbishop of Constantinople in 398, he preached untiringly, founded hospitals for the sick and needy, adjusted the troubles of the Church in Ephesus and sent missionaries to the Goths. St. John was persecuted and banished because of his denunciation of vice among the Christians and died in exile at Comana in 407. His feastday is January 27.

Daily Mass Calendar

Sunday, Jan. 21—Third Sunday after Epiphany (green). Gloria, Creed, Trinity Preface.
Monday, Jan. 22—St. Vincent and St. Anastasius, martyrs (red). Gloria, 1886 — Rev. Michael Meagher. 1956 — Rev. John Burke.
Tuesday, Jan. 23—St. Raymond (white). Gloria, 2nd prayer of St. Emerentiana, 1932—Rev. Walter Golden. 1953 — Rev. Edmund O'Brien. 1957 — Rev. William Ayers.
Wednesday, Jan. 24—St. Timothy, martyr (red). Gloria, special Epistle.
Thursday, Jan. 25—Conversion of St. Paul (white). 2nd prayer of St. Peter, no Creed. Preface of Apostles. Last day of Unity Octave, 1917 — Rev. Daniel Kavanaugh. 1946 — Rev. Edward Meagher.
Friday, Jan. 26—St. Polycarp, martyr (red). Gloria, 1907 — Rev. Alfred Evans.
Saturday, Jan. 27—St. John Chrysostom (white). Gloria, 1945 — Rev. Thomas Carroll. 1959 — Rev. Ralph Meyer. 1959 — Rev. Edward Dempsey.

Mobile Clinics

An Yang, Korea — The use of mobile clinics in the treatment of leprosy here is helping overcome some of the vicious social taboos still maintained against victims of Hansen's Disease.

"Some Korean towns are so fearful of leprosy that no treatment center is permitted nearby," says Maryknoll Father Joseph A. Sweeney, of New Britain, Conn., called the "Modern Father Damien" for his 28 years of service to leprosy patients in the Orient.

Still considered outcasts by many Koreans, leprosy patients are forced to live in mountain caves, woods, cemeteries, and under bridges. Since they cannot come to the hospital for treatments, the hospital goes to them, in the form of mobile clinics which search out victims of Hansen's Disease in their remote ghettos to offer medical aid, food, and spiritual solace.

Faith Strong in Troubled Vietnam

By FR. PATRICK O'CONNOR
Society of St. Columban

Hue, Vietnam — (NC) — The wide steps leading up to the cathedral here are well worn by the feet of faithful Vietnamese Catholics. It is the last cathedral on the free side of the fortified bamboo curtain that divides Vietnam. Fifty miles north of here, the empire of atheistic communism begins.

Catholic life in the Archdiocese of Hue shows vigor and growth.

"We have about 90,000 Catholics," Archbishop Peter Martin Ngo Dinh Thuc said, "and about 5,000 converts a year. Vocations are plentiful, too."

Archbishop Thuc is a brother of Ngo Dinh Diem, President of the Republic of Vietnam, whose capital, Saigon, is nearly 500 miles south of here. The Ngo family home was in Hue, in a modest house among the trees near the cathedral. Aged 84, the affable, grey-haired Archbishop is four years older than the President.

He studied for the priesthood in Rome under Gregorio Pietro XV Cardinal Agagianian, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith; Pietro Cardinal Ciriaci, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Council; Ernesto Cardinal Ruffini, Archbishop of Palermo, and the late Domenico Cardinal Tardini, Papal Secretary of State, when they were young professors.

He has been a bishop for 23 years and is now dean of the Vietnamese hierarchy. In 1938 he was consecrated as Vicar Apostolic of Vinh-Long, southwest of Saigon. When the hierarchy was established in 1960, he was named first Archbishop of Hue.

Communist guns bar him from entering part of the territory committed to him. The 17th parallel, the dividing line between communist-ruled north Vietnam and the south, cuts across the top of the Archdiocese of Hue.

About 3,000 Catholics, including one priest, are believed to be in the cut-off section, but there can be no

communication with them. Many refugees from that area fled southward.

Archbishop Thuc's projects include a new attempt to make friends with the 15,000 mountain tribesfolk in his archdiocese and the founding of a Vietnamese seminary for foreign missions. He is opening a dispensary-clinic, staffed by two Sisters, for the mountaineers. He hopes to open the mission seminary this year.

"The Bishops of Vietnam have expressed their approval of the project," he said, "but it will begin as a diocesan seminary. It will train members who will form a religious congregation for missions. Their first field will be the internal missions of Vietnam, where they will work on lines specially suited to present conditions. Later, we hope that they will go to foreign missions."

The Archbishop has chosen a site for this seminary, on a hill overlooking the national shrine of Our Lady at La-Vang. This shrine is in open country north of Hue, between the city and the communist border. Last August the church at La-Vang became a basilica on the occasion of a magnificent Marian congress and pilgrimage.

Hue, the former imperial capital, is a quiet, gracious city in a green countryside hallowed by memories of Vietnamese martyrs and heroic missionaries. In spite of recurrent persecution, Hue has had Catholics for nearly 350 years. Jesuit missionaries were the first to come here. Soon after them came the priests of the Paris Foreign Missions, who have been responsible for most of the missionary work in Vietnam during three centuries.

The last of the French Vicars Apostolic of Hue, Archbishop Jean B. Arratia, lives in retirement in the priests' residence at La-Vang on Archbishop Thuc's invitation.

Particularly dear to Archbishop Thuc is a young institution located outside his archdiocese, the University of Dalat. About 10 years ago the Bishops of Vietnam commis-

Washington —(RNS)— Archbishop Ngo-Dien-Thuc, brother of Ngo-Dinh-Diem, president of Vietnam, is shown at a press conference in Washington, D.C., where he vigorously denied charges that his country is under a "family" rule or a self-serving dictatorship. Archbishop Ngo said he rarely sees his brother, who has told him that the prelate's province is the Church, and the President's is politics, and that the two "should never be mixed."

sioned him to explore the possibility of establishing a Catholic university. The University of Dalat, opened three years ago, is the result.

In a country where Catholics are estimated at only 10 per cent of the population, 90 per cent of university students are likely to be non-Christians. The University of Dalat does not exist to provide solely or mainly for Catholics. It does provide for them, while for the non-Christians it offers an education based on the natural law and on sound principles of reasoning. Many non-Christian parents desire that for their sons and daughters.

"We want the university to specialize in philosophy," the Archbishop said.

SERMONETTE

STARVED?

By Rev. Richard Madden, O.C.D.

"Two out of every three people go to bed hungry every night." And we're not including those calorie counters who skip the trip to the ice box because they have already had more meat and potatoes than are good for them.

We who live in the United States and who are taxed to pay for and store surplus grain find this hard to comprehend. And yet even we were reminded not too long ago that the hungry live in our midst. Two small boys, who were found scavenging among the garbage cans of one of our large cities died of starvation.

Ordinarily, when we think of hunger we think in terms of teeming masses living in the underdeveloped parts of the world. We imagine far away places, . . . India, China, Africa and certain areas of Europe.

These people who are hungry breathe the same air, are warmed by the same sun and gaze at the same galaxy of stars in the heavens as do we. But their decision is not like ours. . . . "What shall we have for dinner?" Theirs is "Where shall we get food to keep alive?"

The condition is one that we all desire to change and in our own little way we try by giving of our means when asked for help.

But if the fact of material hunger jars us from time to time we should remember that there is another starvation which is even worse. Would anyone dare estimate the number of people who go to bed each night without even the thought of spiritual food?

The soul needs nourishment as well as the body. Man does not live by bread alone but by those things which proceed from the mouth of God.

American children may be well fed and clothed. We as a people may live in warm houses and drive comfortable cars. As a nation we have the highest material standard of living in the world. But how do we measure up spiritually?

How many in our neighborhood or in our house are going to bed spiritually starving every night?

Reapings at Random

By GERARD E. SHERRY

Editor, Central California Register

President Kennedy's State of the Union message brought out the fact that the Government is going to introduce legislation which will, in effect, strengthen the present Civil Rights laws. Buried in the message was also the President's confirmed opinion that he is going to move on the question of Negro rights in relation to voting. As he said, "The right to vote should no longer be arbitrarily denied through such iniquitous local devices and literacy tests and poll taxes."

A couple days before the President's State of the Union message was delivered, Anthony Lewis, writing in the New York Times, suggested that there was no better way of eliminating discrimination in the South than by increasing the number of Negro voters. It appears to me that this is a most pertinent observation.

Most legislators in the South have neither been elected by all the people in their respective areas nor do they represent the Negro citizens. Even the few Negroes who have been allowed to vote, have not had their interests adequately represented by their White legislators.

History shows that when areas permit the Negro to vote in greater numbers, he too there is a lessening of tension and a greater respect for Negro rights in schools, housing, and employment.

Mr. Lewis points out that thirty years ago fewer than 100,000 of the roughly 5 million

Negroes of voting age in the South were registered. Even here, the few allowed to vote were denied a voice in primary elections because they were for Whites only. And in the South, the primary is usually the real election.

Fifteen years ago 645,000 out of approximately twice the same potential number of Negro voters were registered. During this period it must be remembered that the Supreme Court had declared the "White only" primary unconstitutional.

Today, more than 1,360,000 Negroes are registered to vote in the South. This is still only about 25 per cent of Negroes in the area of voting age. In comparison, some 60 per cent of eligible Whites are registered.

What are some of the steps in Southern states to make it more difficult for the Negro to vote? In Louisiana and Mississippi would-be voters have to prove to the satisfaction of local registrars that they can explain any provision of the State or Federal constitution. The local officials have complete discretion to pass on the correctness of any interpretation. Yet, it is observed that even Supreme Court Justices have been known to disagree on such interpretations.

Furthermore, if such tests were carried out on the majority of Whites, and not merely in the South, I doubt whether there would be many eligible voters anywhere.

The Justice Department has asked the Courts to strike down such tests as unconstitutional on the grounds that they are aimed primarily at Negroes. It is also taking action

in relation to other local Southern practices which are devoted solely to denying Negroes their elementary voting rights.

It is obvious that despite the increasing Negro emigration from the South they still remain a potential political force in that area. There is also no doubt that if all the Negroes of voting age were permitted to exercise their right in the South, many new faces would be seen in the House and Senate.

There is one final reason why there is a small percentage of registered Negro voters in the South; and this is the fault of Negroes themselves. Even the few places in which they are not impeded, many fail to register. Past history of the Negro exclusion from politics has created a certain amount of apathy, fear and despair. This, in turn, has led to a lack of faith in our political processes. Many Negroes throw up their hands in despair, saying, "The Whites will always get it."

A two-pronged drive by the Justice Department and Negro leaders could bring about a measure of immediate relief of voting rights in the South. Many Negro leaders are not convinced of the Government's sincerity in the matter. Hence, they prefer to devote their energies to ending discrimination in such areas as transportation, restaurants, and vacation areas. However, in recent days Negro leaders have been joining forces to hammer out a common policy which could lead to startling results.

The presently entrenched political re-

gimes of the South realize that their days are numbered but they will go on with coercion and patronage in order to perpetuate local oppression against the Negro.

It is a startling thing to have to admit that such conditions exist in this democracy. It is even more startling to find the number of people who are prepared to excuse it on social grounds. They tell us that the moral law can be applied in good time in relation to the problem; here and now, however, we must let nature take its course.

Fortunately, the educated Negroes are coming more and more to realize the contribution they can make to the political as well as the social destiny of this country. And, they are encouraging more and more of their race to alert themselves to the real dignity of citizenship. Once this has been accomplished, the Negro in the South will gain his rightful place as a fellow member of society.

In the meantime, the moderates in the South have the wonderful opportunity to encourage the political freedom of their fellow citizens. An example of what can be done is shown in the city of Atlanta, Georgia, where Negro political rights have been supported by all interested citizenry. In Atlanta, the local legislators sincerely represent Negroes as well as Whites. This is as it should be.

And the example of the Atlanta local government should be heeded by others in the South. Only when all of our citizens have all of their rights can we truthfully call this a democracy.