

Berlin Cleric Raps Mercy Murder Case

Berlin — (RNS) — Dr. Otto Dibelius, Lutheran Bishop of Berlin, joined in widespread criticism of the jury in Liege, Belgium, which recently acquitted a mother and other defendants charged with the mercy killing of the woman's eight-day old deformed baby.

"Everybody feels the deepest sympathy with the poor mother, and it is therefore understandable that the acquittal was noted with great relief by hundreds of thousands," Dr. Dibelius said.

"Yet, under the principles which govern the Christian conscience, there should have been no acquittal, because the commandment says, 'Thou shalt not kill.' We denounced as a violation of this commandment Hitler's euthanasia measures aimed at removing 'unworthy life.'

"Such barbarism must not recur and therefore the law must remain clearly defined lest arbitrariness puts an end to all moral community life."

Bishop Dibelius, siding with the prosecutor in the Liege case, said a sentence should have been imposed by the court so that justice would be done. This, he said, could have been followed by a request, even at the request of the court itself, for an act of clemency."

Reds Replace Baptism Rite

Vienna — (RNS) — Magyar Nemzet, Communist Party paper published in Budapest, carried an article strongly urging the establishment of various solemn ceremonies to replace baptism and other Christian ceremonies in Hungary, the Budapest Radio reported.

It said the article recommended that some form of child-naming ceremony should replace baptism, and that church weddings should be abolished in favor of civic-sponsored rites, as adopted in other Communist countries.



Clergymen Join Jazz Program

New York — (RNS) — A Catholic priest and a Lutheran minister will be featured on a weekly radio program — "Two Worlds of Jazz" — in New York City. Station WINS announced that the two clergymen would join Nat Hentoff, author-journalist, in a weekly one-hour show devoted to jazz. Here Father Norman J. O'Connor, left, director of Radio-TV-Film for Paulist Communications, and the Rev. John Gensel of the Advent Lutheran church, New York City, center, talk over program plans with Mr. Hentoff. Father O'Connor's jazz activities and knowledge won him recognition from Downbeat Magazine (Man of the Year, 1959). He writes a weekly column on jazz and other music for the Boston Globe and has conducted programs for National Educational Television, CBS radio and WCRB, Boston. Mr. Gensel is known as New York's "jazz pastor." The United Lutheran minister has developed a special ministry in the world of night clubs and jazz spots, where he visits musicians often overlooked by the churches.

U. S. Doctors Staff Vietnam Hospital

Hanoi — (RNS) — American doctors and nurses are being sent to staff a new hospital in Vietnam. The first American eye specialist to arrive was Dr. Elliot Magee, of Buffalo, N.Y., an ophthalmologist who brought his wife, a registered nurse, to assist him. "Hundreds of Vietnamese with eye ailments have found life worth living thanks to the generosity of four American ophthalmologists who, at their own expense, come out for periods of five to ten weeks to operate at the hospital conducted by the Brothers of St. John of God," reports Father Paul J. Duchesne, M.M., director of Catholic Relief Services here where they offer their services to perform delicate eye operations. The first American eye specialist to arrive was Dr. Elliot Magee, of Buffalo, N.Y., an ophthalmologist who brought his wife, a registered nurse, to assist him. "Hundreds of Vietnamese with eye ailments have found life worth living thanks to the generosity of four American ophthalmologists who, at their own expense, come out for periods of five to ten weeks to operate at the hospital conducted by the Brothers of St. John of God," reports Father Paul J. Duchesne, M.M., director of Catholic Relief Services here where they offer their services to perform delicate eye operations. The first American eye specialist to arrive was Dr. Elliot Magee, of Buffalo, N.Y., an ophthalmologist who brought his wife, a registered nurse, to assist him. "Hundreds of Vietnamese with eye ailments have found life worth living thanks to the generosity of four American ophthalmologists who, at their own expense, come out for periods of five to ten weeks to operate at the hospital conducted by the Brothers of St. John of God," reports Father Paul J. Duchesne, M.M., director of Catholic Relief Services here where they offer their services to perform delicate eye operations.

Latin America

Poverty 'Cries Out' for Reform

Washington — (RNS) — Social injustice and economic misery forced upon millions in Latin America cries out for reform, a prominent priest-editor told worshippers attending the 53rd annual Pan American Mass at historic St. Patrick's church here.

But Marxism, far from offering reform, would only intensify the suffering of the people, said Msgr. John S. Kennedy, editor of The Catholic Transcript of Hartford, Conn., and pastor of St. Joseph's Cathedral here. He spoke before a congregation which included ambassadors and diplomatic representatives of the American republics and a distinguished group of federal officials led by Chief Justice Earl Warren.

Msgr. Kennedy opened his sermon by relating in graphic terms the labors of St. Peter Claver and the horrible conditions which faced the African slaves brought to Latin America.

Slavery was ultimately overcome by reform and abolished as an institution, Msgr. Kennedy declared, but if slavery has vanished "equivalent injustice has not."

"There are millions who do not have even a frugal sufficiency of the goods with which our world has been lavishly blessed," the priest warned. "Millions toil and sweat for

crumbs that are inadequate to human existence, and after a life of bitter hardship fall exhausted into the grave."

"There are millions of others, who if not subjected to economic deprivation, are brutally denied their due place in society, and, although granted their rights in theory, find them denied in fact," he declared.

It is to remedy these evil conditions in society that Marxism directs its appeal, Msgr. Kennedy pointed out, but, in actual fact, it offers only worse evils in their place.

"Promising liberation, it imposes absolute slavery," he asserted. "Promising to vindicate

the rights of the dispossessed, it destroys all rights. Promising to end the intolerable condition wherein one man is but the chattel creature of another, it transforms all persons into creatures of the collective state."

"Communism has nothing to offer our hemisphere but the subversion of its ideals and the snuffing out of its spirit," he said.

The failure of communism as a force for social reform is complete, Msgr. Kennedy said, because it falsifies the nature of man.

God must be given His proper place in every endeavor if it is to succeed, Msgr. Kennedy concluded, and if the hemisphere seeks a lasting solution to its social problems, it can find it only by building "the city of man on foundations which will not crumble" and by plans that are "in accord with the Divine design."

Prelates Ouster Brings Penalty

Vatican City — (RNS) — All Catholics responsible for the exile by Haiti of French-born Bishop Paul Robert of Les Gonaives have been excommunicated, the semi-official Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano disclosed here.

The expulsion of Bishop Robert and three other French-born priests of his diocese was "a deplorable and preoccupying act" which had wounded the feelings of Catholics throughout the world, the newspaper stated.

So far as could be determined from the Haitian government's stated reasons, no grounds exist for the expulsions. L'Osservatore Romano said. The bishop had been charged with organizing or tolerating the pillaging of "archeological and folklore treasures" of his diocese in a drive against voodoo rites and conducting a campaign of "defamation" against dictator-President Francois Duvalier.

President Duvalier and other officials of this regime were excommunicated following the expulsion in November, 1960, of French-born Archbishop Francois Poirier of Port-au-Prince.

Widespread Persecution Charge Against Castro

Geneva — (RNS) — Widespread religious persecution in Cuba was condemned here in a report compiled by the International Commission of Jurists.

It charged that in some instances Cubans have been subjected to persecution for no other reason than that they were leaders of the Roman Catholic community.

The International Commission of Jurists, a non-governmental, non-political organization holding consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, said that the "rule of law" had disappeared in Cuba under the Castro regime.

Sodalists Give To Council Fund

Bombay — (RNS) — Pope John XXIII has expressed his gratitude for a \$1,400 contribution from the Marian Sodality of India to the Second Vatican Council Fund, it was reported here.

Father F. A. Bennet, S.J., national director of the Sodality, made public a letter from Amable Cardinal Cicognani, Vatican Secretary of State, expressing the pontiff's thanks and imparting his Apostolic Blessing.

A considerable portion of the 270-page report detailing loss of liberties under the Communist-dominated government referred to an unceasing anti-religious policy.

Religious persecution under Castro, the report said, has taken a number of forms, varying from expulsion of priests and religious to campaigns waged against Catholic lay leaders. The number of priests in Cuba, it added, has been reduced from more than 700 to 125.

The commission said evidence had established that the regime had obstructed the worship of Cuban Catholics through threats outside churches and through active provocations during services.

It pointed to the large-scale expulsions of priests, monks and nuns from the hierarchy, the confiscation of church-related colleges, and the "arbitrary" arrest of priests.

Eighty-nine charges concerned the Castro government's actions, ranging from judicial abuses to physical and moral torture in prisons. A general suppression of freedom is now the policy of the government, the report said.

'Black Christ' Irks Racists

Capetown — (RNS) — A Negro artist was again interrogated by police here about his controversial painting, "Black Christ," which has generally been regarded as aimed against South Africa's apartheid (racial segregation) policies.

This time, detectives wanted to know why the artist, 22-year-old Ronald Harrison, had permitted the picture to be sent abroad last October for exhibition.

The picture, which depicts the Crucifixion, is now in the hands of Canon Lewis J. Collins, of St. Paul's Cathedral (Anglican) in London, England, where it will be exhibited soon. The painting shows Christ represented by a 1960 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Zulu Chief Albert Lutuli. Two "centurions" at the foot of the Cross bear the faces of Prime Minister Hendrik F. Verwoerd and Minister of Justice Balthazar Verster. The former is shown piercing Christ's side with a lance, and the latter holding a vinegar-soaked sponge to the lips of the Crucified.



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