

Straightening Out Distorted Reports

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

Hoa Phu —(NC)— This village, about 15 miles from Da-nang, produces rice and inaccurate news stories.

The Catholic Church figures in the news stories and, a not unusual phenomenon, the inaccuracies — are unfavorable to the Church.

The Catholic Church as a whole is not involved of course. One priest and his parish about two miles up the road are, though, enough to make some people, referring to this local situation, speak of "the Catholic Church" — and with evident disapproval.

Hoa Phu is a village of six hamlets and about 2,000 people. The discussion concerns part of it, in which some 200 share-

cropping peasant families dwell. Most, if not all, of them are non-Christians.

According to Nguyen Tang, the village chief, the landlords, who are local Vietnamese, charge the peasants 30% of the rice crop. This is 5% higher than the maximum legal rent set by the late President Ngo Dinh Diem in his land reform law of 1955.

For years these Hoa Phu peasants were short of water, if you're short of water here, you'll be short of rice.

It was the Catholic priest, a Vietnamese, of nearby Phu Thauang and his parishioners who in 1955 made an adequate supply of water available for Hoa Phu. Whether priest and people did it primarily to make friends, to make converts or to

make money for their parish needs is more than I can prove at this date. The priest is now dead.

The present priest, who came to the parish only last September, says that the purpose was to do good and thus bring people closer to the Church.

The parish priest and his flock obtained permission from the government to build a dam for Hoa Phu. They paid the cost. The priest, in the name of the parish, contributed most of it. Fifteen parishioners, whose names are recorded in a document shown to me, contributed the rest.

To put the water into the rice paddies, a pump is necessary. Another group including the priest and at least one non-Christian, invested in a large pump with engine. This apparatus is movable and is hired by different villages, including Hoa Phu.

The total amount paid by the peasants for water and pump service comes to 30% of their crop. This I was told by the village chief, a non-Christian. The 30% is broken down, according to a Catholic spokesman into 10% for water, 20% for pump.

Artificial irrigation in most countries is expensive. Here the

dam has to be kept in repair. The present parish priest estimated that repairs cost 10,000 piastres (about \$84) last year. A pump and engine moving through dangerous countryside in time of war constitute a risky investment.

That's about as much as a non-expert foreigner can say about the charges made for irrigation in Hoa Phu.

The village has drawn attention from journalists because of the admirable CAC (Combined Action Companies) team stationed there since June, 1966.

A CAC team comprises a squad (14) of U.S. Marines operating with a platoon of Vietnamese Popular Forces to protect the people and to keep the Viet Cong from using the village as a supply base. In 1964-65 the Viet Cong virtually ruled the district.

NOW LET'S SEE some of the crop of articles on Hoa Phu and the Catholic Church.

A writer in Look magazine (Dec. 13) spoke of two farmers interviewed through an interpreter in Hoa Phu. Were they grateful that their crops were saved (by the presence of the Marines) from the Viet Cong? They were, but — their lands, they say, really belong to the local Catholic priest, who leased

them from the government. He will get 60 to 80% of the crop.

That is simply not true, according to both the non-Christian village chief and the priest. The lands do not belong to the priest in any way. He does not get 60 to 80% of the crop on any grounds.

In the New Statesman of London a writer, describing a visit to the CAC team in Hoa Phu, said: "As soon as the Viet Cong had been pushed out, the Catholic Church claimed a tax on the dam it owns in the neighborhood. The Church takes 30% of 10 baskets of rice," the sergeant said, "but that dam was built when the French were here and these peasants probably built it."

We run out the bad guys and another lot of bad guys came in."

Then a Marine officer is quoted: "The land round here is owned by the Chinese and rents at about 50%. Then there's government tax. Then the Catholic Church wants to take 30%."

The dam was not built when the French were here. The land is not owned by the Chinese. The rent is 30%. The landlord, not the tenant, pays the government tax.

A New York Times (June 1) article, dated from Ap Da

Hoa Phu farmers get two crops a year, sometimes three.

Value of Films Cited by Pontiff

What happens to the revenue received by the Catholic priest and parish up the road?

Some of it goes into repair work on the dam, he says. Some is spent on a feast for the tenants. Some of the families who contributed to the building of the dam take their share. Others give their's to the parish. What the parish gets is spent on parish expenses. The parishioners, numbering 1,500, are poor.

The parish has a school with 200 children. The church, one of the oldest in the region, dating from around 1880, is not in good condition. The outer walls showed that they had been painted or plastered recently. There are two outlying chapels in the parish.

Again, government taxes are not paid by the share-cropping peasant. According to the village chief, interviewed by me in the presence of Marines, the communists took 25% of the crop when they dominated the area. The peasants, he said, paid the landlord his 30% and paid the 30% for the water and pump. He believed that the communists collected again directly from the landlords and the Catholic parish.

Thus instead of "nor more than 50% the peasants paid out 85% of their harvest, under the communists, while the present charges amount to 60% in all, certainly no small figure.

Value of Films Cited by Pontiff

Berlin — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI, in a message to the International Catholic Film Office, cited the "great moral value" in motion pictures which promote better understanding between peoples and nations.

He said films could serve as guides and interpreters of society by helping men see beyond life's apparent realities.

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TOPICS

Dear 'POP' Friends,

ESP. Mental Telepathy, call it what you will—we here at the POP Office must have it. Last week in preparing this column, we included a call for recipes from POP members, and wondered why we hadn't been receiving any of these lately.

Lo and behold, apparently at that very moment, an "original" was winging its way toward us. It arrived just after we'd gone to press. So you must admit we do have a kind of "second sight!"

Anyway, here's the recipe—and truly luscious it sounds—sent in by Mrs. E. Elman of Pittsford, POP Chairman for the Knickerbocker Hill Garden Club. 200 bonus points will be the "prize" for a prize recipe. It's a delicious accompaniment to poultry, beef or pork, Mrs. Elman says.

Black-Cranberry Mold

- 1 cup ground raw cranberries (or 1 can whole cranberry sauce)
- 1 cup ground unpared apples
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 3oz. pkg. Royal Blackberry Gelatin
- 1 cup hot water
- 1 cup pineapple syrup
- 1/2 cup seeded Tokay grape halves
- 1/2 cup broken walnut meats

Combine cranberries, apples and sugar. Dissolve Royal Gelatin in hot water, add syrup, and chill until partially set. Add cranberry-apple mixture, grape halves and nut meats. Pour into mold. Chill until firm and unmold on lettuce. Serve with mayonnaise.

We're also happy to report that in response to our published appeal last week, we received other recipes. Here's one of them — from Mrs. Louise Kuechman, POP Chairman for St. Augustine's Mothers Club (Rochester). We particularly like this recipe because it uses more than one POP Product and provides an easy "all-in-one" summer meal. Label savers will also benefit if they remember to retrieve those valuable proofs-of-purchase.

A Quick Zesty Supper

- 1 tbsp. Blue Bonnet Margarine
- 1 lb. Russers or Maplecrest red hots or
- 1 lb. Maplecrest Kielbasa (Polish Sausage)
- 1 cup chili sauce
- 1 lb. Prince Noodles, cooked according to directions

Cut sausage in 1-inch pieces. (If using Kielbasa, skin first.) Sauté in Blue Bonnet Margarine until very lightly browned. Add chili sauce. Cook over low heat about 20 minutes to blend flavors. Stir occasionally. Serve over buttered Prince Noodles. For a quick lunch, spoon prepared sausage into hot dog or hamburger rolls and serve with Wise Potato Chips.

Summer meals are synonymous with cookouts — the aroma of sizzling steaks, chicken or hamburgers perks up the lagging appetite. If your budget calls for cheaper cuts of steak, such as chuck, use a tenderizer or marinade on it. A delicious marinade can be made by combining 1/2 cup salad oil, 1/4 cup vinegar, 1/2 tsp. dry mustard. Shake well and pour over steak one hour before cooking. Other seasonings such as garlic salt can be added later.

Wrap washed potatoes in foil and bake them in the coals too—at least an hour depending on size. When cooked, make a 4-cut opening in the top of each potato and insert 1 tbsp. sour cream and 1 tbsp. Blue Bonnet Margarine. Mixed bean salads, cole slaw or a Royal Gelatin salad are ideal accompaniments to this meal.

And of course no cookout is complete without some beverage. For hot or iced coffee drinkers, serve Chase & Sanborn Coffee. Teenagers vote for Pepsi, the taste "that beats the others cold."

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Message to Boy Scouts

Pope Links Faith, Friendship

Farragut, Idaho — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI, in a message to the 12th World Jamboree of Boy Scouts, lauded the assembly of some 13,000 youths from nearly 100 countries as a "marvelous manifestation of brotherhood, inspired by love for all men."

Noting that the jamboree's theme was, "For Friendship," the Pope called on Boy Scouts around the world to find "ways and means of fostering friendship among all peoples, and of helping all to the full development of their human dignity and personality."

The papal message was addressed to Bishop Sylvester W. Treinen of Boise, Idaho, who diocese encompasses Farragut State Park, site of the nine-day jamboree.

The Jamboree, first ever held in the U. S., marked the 50th anniversary of the first experimental Boy Scout camp held on Brownsea Island off the England coast by Lord Robert S.S. Baden-Powell, founder of the Scouts.

In his message, Pope Paul observed that brotherhood "is a motive for service to all those whom a Scout meets... in serving others, a Scout takes no account of race, color, religion or language, because as the Scout Law asserts, a Scout is the friend of all and a brother to every other Scout."

Speaking of the jamboree's theme of friendship, the Pope said that "true friendship is born of respect, esteem, the recognition of the virtues and good qualities of others. It is made strong by a spiritual vision of life, rejecting materialistic aims and purposes, seeing in persons and happenings the admirable ways of Divine Providence and the working out of God's will."

Scouts at the jamboree, the pontiff said, were sending forth a "solemn, youthful and brotherly appeal for true friendship among all men, a friendship which takes no notice of frontiers, divisions and walls."

"They call upon all other Scouts and upon the boys and men of all nations to be united in love, from which alone can true peace on earth arise."

In a specific reference to Catholic Boy Scouts, the Pope observed that they "will remember, during the Year of Faith, celebrating the 19th hundred anniversary of the martyrdom of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, to bear witness to their belief, with joy, with generous sacrifice and with devotion, for a true Scout smiles and sings in all his difficulties."

During the assembly, a large staff of chaplains from the U. S. and abroad ministered to the spiritual needs of the Scouts, who came from a wide variety of nationalistic, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds.

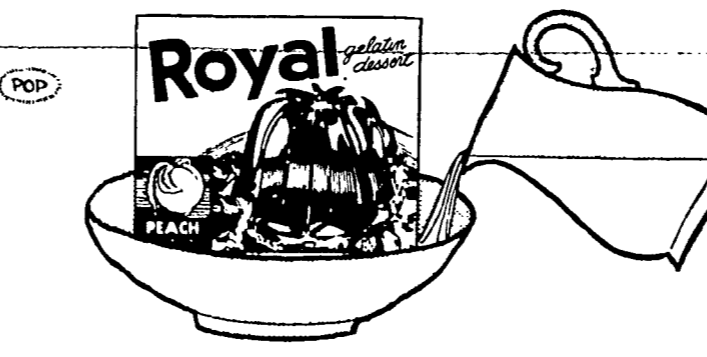
Religious observances and activities were international in scope, with members of the

Chief Chaplain Veteran Priest

Washington —(NC)— President Johnson has sent to the Senate the nomination of Msgr. (Brig. Gen.) Francis L. Sampson as Chief of Army Chaplains with promotion to the rank of Major General.

Msgr. Sampson, a chaplain for 25 years, was wounded during World War II and captured by the Germans. He holds the Distinguished Service Cross, the second highest American military award.

He has been Deputy Chief of Army Chaplains since Feb. 10, 1966. There are more than 1,800 U.S. Army chaplains on active duty.



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