

Welsh Bishop Clarifies Authority

Courier News Summary

The Archbishop of Cardiff, Wales, has asked his priests and people to help "restore the fair name of authority."

In a pastoral letter Archbishop John Murphy counseled those who exercise authority to use it so it would not be "a humiliation to sensitive minds that have all the touchiness of emerging nations."

"Make no mistake about it, the archbishop added, 'authority and obedience are of the essence of the Catholic religion, and when they go Catholicism can cheerfully bow itself out.'"

Authority is in dispute, he noted, and "be you parent, priest or policeman your lot is not a very happy one."

Authority, he continued, must not be used as a "cold instrument of power," or in a "careless take-it-or-leave-it" manner.

Relating conscience to authority, the archbishop declared that "no one has a right 'to follow a conscience that has been on a hunger strike.' Such a conscience, he said, is no more reliable than a computer which is under-programmed." To get the right answers from the conscience, "feed into it all the information given to us by an infallible church."

The truths of religion, the archbishop pointed out, "do not derive their authority from the assent of the faithful."

"The pope and the bishops are the chosen agents to proclaim, to recognize, to interpret, to teach and to define the truths which have been given to the whole People of God," he continued, and "to dispense with the teaching of the Church so as to peddle one's own conscience is just about the easiest way of becoming a Protestant that I know of."

"Authority is nothing else but truth, and as truth it must be assimilated in a human way," the archbishop said.

"Only as truth is it compelling, coercive, not in a slavish, inhuman way, but in the beautiful, free way in which we all love and embrace and follow the truth."

"Both of us (superiors and subjects) have a duty to restore the fair name of authority. Any abuse on either side breeds tyranny or anarchy."

Plan Lourdes Pilgrimage
London — (RNS) — Roman Catholic Auxiliary Bishop Patrick J. Casey of Westminster and Anglican Bishop Graham D. Leonard of Willesden, north-west London, will lead a joint Roman Catholic-Anglican pilgrimage to Lourdes in August. It was announced here.

Hungarian Bishop Dies at 89
Budapest — (RNS) — Bishop Lajos Shvny, 89 of Szekefehervar died on Jan. 22. He had been the oldest of the Hungarian Roman Catholic hierarchy.

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REV. MSGR. JOHN S. RANDALL Managing Editor

REV. ROBERT KA NKA Associate Editor

ANTHONY J. COSTELLO Advertising Director

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A Vanishing Breed in Moscow

Moscow — (RNS) — This 17th Century Russian Orthodox Church of Simeon Stolpni in Moscow is surrounded by scaffolding to protect it while an urban renewal project goes up in the background. Nearly all of Russia's churches have been converted by the Communists as "museums" or other national buildings.

Annulment Cases to Move Faster

Vatican City — (RNS) — Teams of experts are presently hard at work trying to find ways of speeding the legal machinery which handles Roman Catholic marriage annulment cases, unofficial sources here reported.

The effort is reportedly a result of Pope Paul's action following recommendations made at the international Synod of Bishops in October.

At present, the Sacred Roman Rota, the chief Vatican tribunal for an annulment is Italian dealing with marriage cases, approximately 300 cases per year. It has, however, an enormous backlog ("nearly 1,000 thick files," according to unofficial estimates) and many of these usually pass before a case is settled.

One of the most recent applicants for an annulment is Italian film star Gina Lollobrigida who separated from her Yugoslav husband in 1966 after 16 years of marriage.

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63 New Nations Born Since 1943

By J. J. GILBERT

Washington — (NC) — How much of the world is free, in the sense of being independent?

At the end of January, the United States will have recognized 133 nations as being independent, and these will occupy 95% of the world's land area, if you don't count Antarctica.

Counting Nauru, which gained recognition as independent on Jan. 31, a total of 63 nations, or 47.3% of all, have become independent since 1943.

These facts compiled by our State Department serve as one index to the enormous ferment and change that were set in motion by World War II. Sixteen, a little over one-fourth of

these new nations, came into being as a direct result of political developments in that war. The other new nations reflect the "strong upsurge of nationalism" that followed the breakdown of the colonial system.

A listing of these newly independent nations according to the dates of their recognitions as being independent puts Lebanon (Nov. 22, 1943) first.

Nauru (Jan. 31, 1968), is 63rd, the smallest of the newly independent nations, and after the State of Vatican City and Monaco, probably the smallest independent nation in the world. It is an island of some 16 miles in area, with a population of two or three thousand, located northwest of Samoa in the

Pacific Ocean. It has been mandated territory for some decades.

There are some mild surprises as one scans the list: the independence of some now familiar states is less longstanding than one might think. Syria, for example, is the second on the list, having achieved independence on Jan. 1, 1944, while Iceland June 17, 1944 is third.

Jordan (March 22, 1946) is fourth; the Philippines (July 4, 1946), fifth; Pakistan (Aug. 14, 1947), sixth; Burma (Jan. 4, 1948), seventh; Ceylon (Feb. 4, 1948, ninth); and Israel (May 15, 1948), tenth.

Embracing, as they do, so large a part of the world's population, these newly independent states have brought about enormous changes in geography and in the "sovereignty pattern" of the world. They also have given prominence to such new names as Botswana, Burundi, Chad, Dahomey, Gabon, Kuwait, Laos, Malawi, Mali, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Upper Volta and Zambia.

These and many other facts about the nations of the world

are compiled by the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research and its Office of the Geographer.

The almost explosive emergence of so many new independent countries in such a short time raises speculation as to whether independence means the same for all of them.

Nauru, the latest, is a tiny Pacific Ocean island which is not expected to join the United Nations or to play any large role in world affairs. The U.S. will not have diplomatic relations with Nauru in the direct sense; our ambassador to Australia is expected to represent us also to Nauru, some 1,300 miles to the northeast.

On the other side of this picture of ferment and change, observers are saying freely that "Great Britain's present grave difficulties herald its withdrawal from the world stage after two centuries of outstanding prominence. The economy of Great Britain, which was on the winning side in World War II, is in very great difficulty. The economies of Germany, Italy and Japan, losers in World War II, are much more buoyant."

Czech Reds Impose Limit On Seminary Candidates

Zurich, Switzerland — (NC) — The communist rulers of Czechoslovakia have set 26 as the limit of candidates for the priesthood who can be accepted in the seminary at Litomerice, one of the two seminaries in the country.

According to a report in Schweizerische Kirchenzeitung, the organ of the bishops of the German-speaking section of Switzerland, there are only 65 seminarians at Litomerice and 84 in the seminary at Bratislava.

There are but 20 ordained priests among the students of the two seminaries. Only 19 priests became available last

year for assignment in parishes where the dearth of clergy continues to be acute.

There are some 10 million Catholics in Czechoslovakia, who in 1939 could rely on 13 major seminaries with between 1,500 and 1,700 students. Between 300 and 400 newly ordained priests were then annually available.

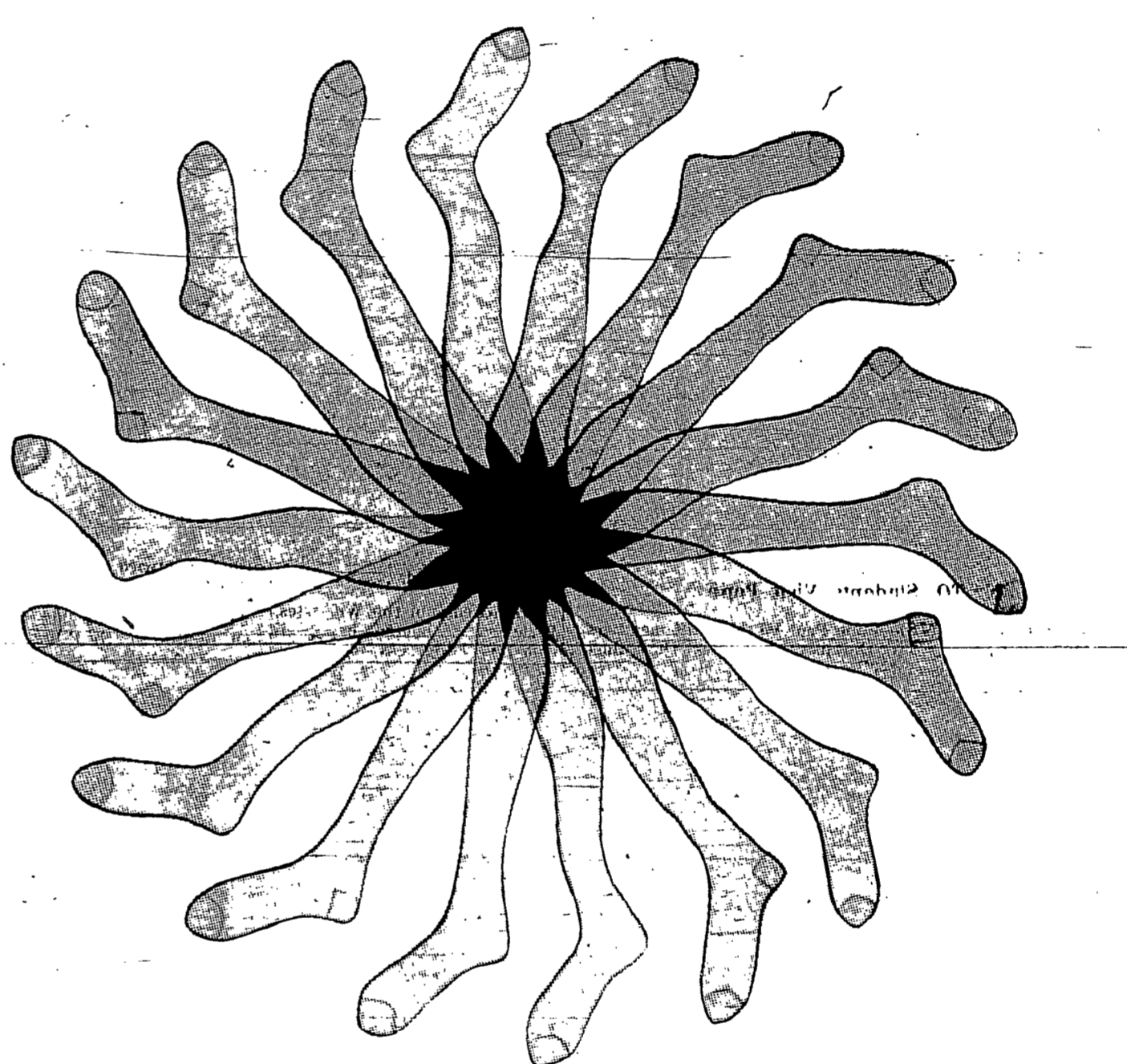
Since the communists took over, the number of priests in the country was cut in half.

If the restrictions now applied continue, and there is no indication that they will be relaxed, a report from a reliable source in Prague said, the priestly stock may be virtually extinct in another 20 years.

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Bishops Seek

Madrid — (RNS) — While it for all citizens, the Spanish particular regard" to the Roman in education, the bishops statement.

Divorce Cla

Rome — (RNS) — The Italian Parliament has approved a divorce bill which lists these marriage: legal separation for at fault; legal separation for non-consummation of the marriage more than 12 years.

Converts May 1

Oslo, Norway — (NC) — The Northern European countries. "Vital bishops to allow conv their membership in the M

Ecumenical C

Toronto, Belgium — (NC) — Ramsey of Canterbury and Leg Brussels will join with other Belgium's first ecumenical ch use of military personnel at the Allied Powers in Europe.

Mission Asks 1

Bombay — (RNS) — The Salvation Army has appealed continued to admit Army wo

Games To Pl

Mexico City — (NC) — Gomer of Mexico City has is to be held in this country in Mexican Catholics to "work-fo

NATO Stud

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pr and students of the NATO-E work for world peace in the tions they will occupy.

Houses Built F

Koynanagar, India — (NC) earthquake here have been the initiative of a Jesuit pr

Father V. Deleury, S.J.

built shelters for 124 familie in the earthquake of Dec. 1



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