

**'Christ in the Communist Prisons'**

**Helen Keller Story Fascinates Inmate**

This is the seventh in a series of excerpts from the book "Christ in the Communist Prisons" by the Rev. Richard Wurmbrand.

Although Josif's sentence had only weeks to run, he showed little excitement. But at least he was planning for the future. "No more wild dashes for the frontier. My sister in Germany will work for a permit for me to leave Rumania and another for us to go to America. I'll perfect my English and learn a trade."

Still, he had not entirely mastered his bitterness at having to confront the outside world with a disfigured face. One evening, he repeated some verses of the New Testament in a way that revealed he was moved by them.

I told him how Helen Keller, although blind, deaf and dumb, had become one of the most admired women in America. He was fascinated as I described how she taught herself to become a fine pianist, aided only by a piece of sounding wood held in her teeth, its other end fixed in the piano; and how her work had brought Braille to thousands of blind people.

"She wrote, in one of her famous books, that although she had never seen the starry heaven, she had heaven in her heart and could spread the beauty of God's creation before a world that has senses but often fails to use them."

I told him that Helen Keller came from a wealthy family. If she had been "lucky" like other girls in possessing all her senses, she might have frittered her life away. Instead, she used what the world calls "evil" as a stimulus to reach new heights of achievement.

It had not taken long for our prison administrators to get over their anxiety at Stalin's death. There had been serious trouble in the slave camps of Siberia, and they were determined to show no weakness. Old restrictions were revived; new ones created. The windows were closed and painted over, despite the doctors' protests, and we could open them only an inch at night when the guards weren't looking. In summer the heat and stench were stifling.

Outside, too, the church's suf-

ferings increased. We heard from newly arrested Orthodox priests, that Patriarch Justinian had become a mere tool of the Party. One of his most callous acts was his treatment of Mother Veronica, a nun revered throughout Rumania.

Years before, as an unlettered peasant girl, Veronica claimed to have had a vision of the Virgin Mary, who appeared to her in a field, asking that a convent be built on the spot. After several such appearances had been recorded, contribu-

tions poured in, and two hundred girls took the veil. In the years that followed, the Holy Virgin's shrine became a place of pilgrimage resembling Lourdes, and after the Communist takeover the legend that the Virgin would redeem Rumania acquired new meaning.

One day Justinian arrived in a limousine and began his ministrations by excommunicating the priest of the convent church. Then, as head of the church, he advised the nuns that they

were wasting their time preparing for an afterlife; much better to go out and take their pleasures in the world. Why should they forego their sexual rights for an illusion of future bliss? The nuns ignored him and refused to leave their refuge.

So Justinian's visit was followed shortly by a Security Police raid. The sisters who would not break their vows were shamefully abused, and finally the convent was forcibly shut down.

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**Pa. School Aid Bill Held in Committee**

Harrisburg, Pa.—(RNS)—The Pennsylvania Senate's appropriations committee, by a vote of 15 to 7, defeated an effort to bring the House-passed parochial and private school aid bill to the floor of the Senate for open discussion.

Meanwhile, 28 organizations representing Protestant, civic, Jewish, Negro, educational and farmers' interests, issued a pamphlet asserting uncompromising opposition to the proposal.

The Rev. George I. Evans, president of Friends of the Public Schools, said "this is the first time so many organizations of so many diverse interests have banded together to

express unified opposition" to the non-public school aid program.

As passed by the House, the bill provides for the purchase of educational services from parochial and other non-public schools in modern foreign languages, mathematics, physical sciences and physical education.

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**Thousands Demand End to N...**

Washington — Thousands of white Americans gathered Wednesday at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial demanding government do more to end the Vietnam war.

In connection with the Day demonstration of the People's Campaign, Mrs. Martin Luther King Jr. said her late husband's campaign as the last America to solve its problem in a non-violent manner.

About 4,300 police and Guardsmen were on duty to avert trouble.

No certain decisions were a result of the demonstration to disband Resurrection to continue it to make of the government.

The inhabitants of New York City had suffered through wet week, with their plans ruined.

It is evident that no more Poor Marchers still live in wood-and-plastic shantytowns. The Lincoln Memorial peak, the camp held by the people.

Even those who remain come listless and complacent leadership, disrespectful by the camp marshals, food and a falling off. Several reporters have been tackled.

The camp lately has been a series of fights remaining and by robbery have reported things like portable radios stolen.

Despite these problems core remaining swear by the Rev. James Bevel, the Jackson and Hosea Williams. They complain on middle-echelon leadership.

After Tucker took over active leadership, he set the "99 demands" list. Various federal departments end of April all had to be before the campaign could begin.

Then, at midweek, Young and Miss Marian lawyer who has been in SCILC on Capitol Hill, a new scaled-down list which could have been out of Rustin's notebook three major pieces of 1 priority items. These were:

• Passage of the public jobs bill sponsored by S. Clark (D. Pa). This 2.4 million jobs, half in and half in the private the next four years. The appear slim, but some tion of it might get congressional (appropriation other problem).

• Passage of the Johnson's housing bill to million units in the next and to step up the pace million low-income units created over the next Senate already has passed the House probably will.

• Repeal of the welfare in the 1967 Social Security. Repeal is virtual in this session of Congress bill carries a provision the freeze's effective date 1968, to July 1, 1969, most surely will become discussion of the matter when the 91st Congress January.

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