

# Noodles for the Needy of China N.J. Group to Begin Abortion Law Study

**Catholic Press Features Denver** — There are worse things than going through life being called "the noodle priest" — like starving to death. So the Rev. John Romaniello, M.M., doesn't mind all the puns about his "using his noodle" to combat hunger, as long as his noodle-making machines keep going.

Father Romaniello, 68-year-old director of Catholic Relief Services in Hong Kong, is on a cross-country tour of the U.S. and Canada, doing anything he can to get more support for his noodle apostolate.

On leave from the Maryknoll order to work for Catholic Relief Services, Father Romaniello has spent most of his priestly life in China, but it was only 10 years ago that he became the "noodle priest."

The U.S. was sending millions of pounds of surplus flour to aid refugees from Communist China who were flooding into Hong Kong at the rate of 100,000 a year. A day or two after his arrival there as CRS director, Father Romaniello looked on in astonishment as he watched a wife hand over a five-pound bag of flour to a grocer in exchange for a one-pound bag of noodles. He quickly learned that flour — despite the good intentions of the U.S. — was useless to the refugees, who had neither the time nor the equipment to convert it into anything edible.

Father Romaniello's next stop was the hut of a noodle maker, where he studied the operation of an old wooden, hand-cranked contraption.

"When I left there I knew that I was going into the noodle business," the priest remarked. "It was the first time I'd ever seen a noodle machine, but I knew we could make a better one."



Father John Romaniello, Hong Kong's famed "noodle priest," cutting up a new batch before distribution to the poor.

With the aid of one priest who was an amateur machinist and another who was an amateur cook, Father Romaniello went to work. After six weeks of experimenting with various combinations of wheat flour, corn meal and milk, the priests finally did it.

"And then we had noodles," Father Romaniello exclaimed. "We ran around shouting at

each other. It was a wonderful time."

Father Romaniello now has 28 noodle-making machines operating on Hong Kong island, turning out a half-million pounds of noodles per month, enough to help feed 50,000 persons.

But why noodles? "They are tasty, they are a

high carbohydrate-protein food, which is very important, and they are the easiest food to be assimilated by the body," he replies, adding that noodles require only water, salt and fire to prepare for eating.

In Hong Kong, his choice of noodles proved specially significant for the mystical Chinese.

"Noodles have a good symbol in China," Father Romaniello said. "Noodles are a symbol of happiness. They are always eaten at birthday parties or weddings and other happy occasions."

Since it was an Italian, Marco Polo, who discovered macaroni in China and brought it back to Italy, it was only fitting that Father Romaniello should offer noodles to the Chinese.

Born of Italian immigrants and reared in New Rochelle, N.Y., Romaniello took an early interest in China and joined the missionary order at nearby Maryknoll, N.Y. He was ordained in 1928 and assigned to Kwangsi Province in South China, where he served until 1949, when the Communists took over the China mainland. After several years of persecution, he was expelled in 1951. Between 1951 and 1957, he went to Yale, where he studied economics and sociology, and wrote a novel about China, called "Bird of Sorrow."

"The title comes from an old Chinese proverb that goes like this: 'You can't stop the bird of sorrow from flying overhead, but you can keep it from nesting in your hair.'"

Today, Father Romaniello's noodles are being made also in Saigon, Taiwan, India, the Philippines, Peru, and other countries.

Trenton, N.J. — (NC) — A special legislative commission to study New Jersey's law on abortion and its enforcement will begin work here in late September.

Two assemblymen and five citizens at large — three of them clergymen — had been named earlier. Among the clergymen serving on the panel, which includes law enforcement and medical officials, is Father Thomas F. Dentici, family life director of the Trenton diocese.

The commission is due to report its findings to the legislature by January 1969.

While the commission will organize this month, public hearings will not be held until later in the year.

New Jersey's law prohibiting abortions "without lawful justification" has been under increasing fire in recent years. Dating back to 1871, it has been interpreted by the courts to mean that no abortion may be performed unless the life of the mother is in danger.

The courts, however, have called on the legislature to make the law more specific. A survey of the state's 21 county prosecutors disclosed only one was checking on the legality of abortions performed in hospitals in his area.

This led state law enforcement officials to draft guidelines governing legal aspects

**PHI Sales Drop**  
Sao Paulo, Brazil — (NC) — Sales of birth control pills in drugstores here dropped 20% after the publication of Pope Paul VI's encyclical, *Humanae Vitae* the newspaper *Estado de Sao Paulo* reported.

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## Books

### 'Kennedy and Sirhan -- Why?'

New York — (RNS) — The first book on Sirhan Bishara Sirhan and the factors which led to the assassination of Sen. Robert Kennedy last June will be published soon, and it is bound to create a storm of controversy.

Dr. M. T. Mehdi, secretary-general of the Action Committee on American-Arab Relations, announced publication by New World Press of his new book called "Kennedy and Sirhan... Why?"

The book, to be released in Los Angeles, where the assassination occurred on June 5, deals with the psycho-social and political forces which allegedly led Sirhan B. Sirhan of Jerusalem to kill the New York senator and aspirant for the Democratic party's presidential nomination.

The author claims that Sirhan, an Arab, will not receive a fair trial in Los Angeles unless he is first correctly understood and adjudged by the American public at large. He maintains that the prospective jurors, "whoever they are and whoever they might be, are already prejudiced in favor of Robert Kennedy" about whose wife, Ethel, and family they are aware. On the other hand, he continues, these jurors know nothing about Sirhan, his life "and the circumstances which made him a refugee, destroyed his life and forced him to do what he did."

Recalling that Sirhan's notebook carried the notation "June 5th. — Robert Kennedy must die," Dr. Mehdi holds that the date is associated with events in the Middle East a year before. He maintains that on June 5, 1967, Israel launched its "surprise attack" against "Sirhan's people" — a military victory "which was achieved with President Johnson's endorsement and Robert Kennedy's support." This was a "factor in Sirhan's decision," Dr. Mehdi claims.

Dr. Mehdi asserts that Sirhan "depised" President Johnson who was said to have been his "real target." However, since Sirhan was unable to "get his target," he decided to try "the heir apparent" — and Robert Kennedy held that title, he says.

The author denies any assertion or insinuation that Sirhan was insane.

While saying that Sirhan's act of assassination was "il legal," he argues that Sen. Kennedy's call to send 50 jets to Israel which they might take more Arab territory and kill more of Sirhan's people, was "immoral."

Dr. Mehdi feels that Sirhan's act was immoral only in the sense of the decision of former President Harry S. Truman to drop the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima. If President Truman

#### VISIT TO ISTANBUL

Istanbul — (RNS) — Metropolitan Nicodim of Leningrad and Novgorod, director of Foreign Affairs for the Russian Orthodox Church, will visit Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, spiritual leader of Eastern Orthodoxy, the Ecumenical Patriarchate announced here.

#### One Million in Food

Montevideo, Uruguay — (NC) — Catholic Charities of Uruguay reports that Catholic Relief Services of the United States has chartered one million dollars worth of foodstuffs through 2,000 distribution centers in this country in 1968.

man's action was to save American lives, the author maintains, Sirhan's act also must be examined in the light of actual circumstances of the moment.

As to the possible argument that Sen. Kennedy might ultimately have decided against sending those jets, the author maintains that in such a case Sirhan's act could be called "a kind of preventive war."

Dr. Mehdi concludes that if there were 5 million Arabs instead of Jews in the United States, then every American politician, including Sen. Kennedy, would have praised "Arab nationalism" instead of "Jewish Zionism."

The book is due out on Oct. 1. The Action Committee on American Arab Relations has its offices in New York.

### Bishop Sheen to Be Subject of Book

The publication date for "The Wit and Wisdom of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen," edited by Bill Adler, has been set for Oct. 27.

The topics on which the bishop speaks are love, marriage, sex, education, God, freedom, the nature of democracy and the moral state of the country. The bishop is known for his fresh and flowing style, speaking to every man with a true feeling for humanity and with an un-

versality which transcends religion and politics.

Adler has been the editor of many books including the "Kennedy Wit" and "Love Letters to the Beatles."

Prentiss-Hall, Inc., is the publisher.

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