

Life in Belfast: 'Constant Tension'

By FATHER LEO E. McFADDEN
NC News Service

Belfast, Northern Ireland — "Things look bad here," Father Francis Teggart of St. Peter's parish told me after bringing me in from a blustery afternoon and sitting me down in front of a mug of strong tea.

"You hear an odd shot once a week," he said. "It is nothing like last August, of course, but life has become a constant tension."

Two days before the Feast of the Assumption last August, the men of the "Falls" section of Belfast, a Catholic ghetto, were manning barricades to enclose the neighborhood. The women and children had been moved to a guarded area of the parish, when Father Teggart heard the first shots of some 200 marauders. This mob was

beaten back by a band of boys who had only stones to hurl, but until one hour before the first Mass on Aug. 15, the church and school were under constant fire.

"At 1:30 a.m. we got our first automatic weapons, four to be exact," the priest told me, "and that took the heart out of them." In the meantime, however, the rows of flats behind the church and the playground were raked with rifle fire.

If there is one ray of sanity in all this furore, it is the presence of the British army and the political influence of the government from London. The Catholic minority "accepts" the army but wildly distrusts a policeman.

The government of Northern Ireland, aided directly by London, is involving itself in equality in jobs and housing, the crux of all the trouble. Only with peace will industry

return, they argue, and many have listened.

But many will not, and there is the lurking danger of extremists on both sides who are quick to turn the most casual events into explosive politics. A housing tract near a riot area wins an architectural award, but the venture is condemned by one Catholic spokesman as a political move. The Inspector general of the police allows the residents of Falls Road to patrol their own area at night. The peace has been kept and the crime rate has dropped, yet a Protestant minister complains loudly over this "surrender of the government."

Machine guns "disappear" from an army storehouse. Gun runners are arrested in London. Petrol bombs rip open a barracks or devastate innocent shops near a political headquarters.

A resident of Falls Road told me of burning a building on the Protestant side last August. "They were shooting at us from the rooftop. It was a sniper's platform in 1920,

and again in 1936. So a third time was just too much. We burned it down. They will never snipe at us again from that building."

That may be the epitome of Northern Ireland. "That building" may no longer exist, but in the minds of many on both sides it still stands as a symbol of trouble.

English, Welsh Priests to Meet

London — (RNS) — The first national conference of English and Welsh Roman Catholic priests will be held at Wetherby, Yorkshire, this June.

The overall purpose is to obtain "a truly representative expression" of the views of priests on pastoral problems and "specific difficulties" they encounter. The topics discussed will be chosen by the clergy themselves.

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Folksingers Harry Belafonte (upper left) Judy Collins (upper right), and Peter, Paul and Mary entertain a capacity crowd at New York's Madison Square Garden during a benefit concert for the Vietnam Moratorium Committee. The program, "Winter Carnival for Peace," also offered performances by Richie Havens, Dave Brubeck, the cast of "Hair," and others. (Religious News Service)

Bishop Christopher Butler: Anglican-Rome Unity Seen Possible Soon

London — (NC) — Auxiliary Bishop Christopher Butler, O.S.B. of Westminster proposed at a London unity service the idea of a "great Church" of the future in which a separate Anglican Church would be in communion with Rome and acknowledge the primacy of the Pope.

The Bishop, vicar General to John Cardinal Heenan, said that under such a scheme the Anglicans could retain their own bishops, liturgy and other traditions. He said he did not consider the field of disagreement between the two Churches involved essentials.

Bishop Butler told reporters later that papal primacy should not present any greater difficulty to Anglicans in the future than the present formal status of Queen Elizabeth as "Supreme Governor" of the Church of England.

The bishop, himself a former Anglican and now a member of the Joint Permanent Anglican-Roman Catholic Unity Commission, here said the proposal was not new. It was made as long ago as the Malines Conversations in the 1920s when English Catholics and Anglicans held unofficial talks on the question of reunion. "It is entirely orthodox," he added.

"The practical operation of papal primacy is to be distinguished from the doctrinal status. The pope for instance is infallible when he defines, but whether definitions should be a common or rare phenomenon is a matter of theological opinion. In fact he defines very rarely indeed. Theologians point to two occasions (not counting the first Vatican Council which was an ecumenical council) since 1850."

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Lutheran Deaconesses... Sound Familiar?

New York — (RNS) — Lutheran deaconesses are no longer women who wear a starched bow under the chin and carry a basket on the arm, the Board of College Education and Church Vocation of the Lutheran Church in America was told here.

Reporting on changes in deaconess life style was Sister Louise Burroughs, associate secretary for the LCA Deaconess Community.

"Many people have the notion that we are something that is left over from the last century," said Sister Louise. "We want to bring the Church up-to-date on what's going on." Her other comments:

• Dress. Lutheran deaconesses now wear "pretty much what they want." Uniforms are worn on some formal occasions but since the mid-1950s members have been permitted to choose uniforms or street dress.

• Income. Deaconesses once received allowances and full care, with income from services going to the Motherhouse. Now a deaconess decides whether she wishes to receive a salary.

• Living arrangements. Members are not required to live together or at the institution where employed. Many maintain apartments.

• Marriage. While Lutheran deaconesses have always been allowed to leave for marriage, the rules were changed in 1969 to permit marriage and continued service as a deaconess.

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Catholic Schools In Florida Shun Segregationists

Miami — (RNS) — Catholic schools in southern Florida have been told not to accept students whose parents do not want them to attend integrated public schools.

Msgr. William F. McKeever, superintendent of schools for the Archdiocese of Miami, has issued an order that prohibits parochial school principals from accepting transfers "at least through September."

Explaining that the order would not apply to first-graders, Msgr. McKeever said: "We saw the danger that we might unwittingly cooperate with those parents who are trying to avoid integration. I just thought the principals should be forewarned that this pressure would come on them and to reiterate the policy of the diocese."

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Black Pastor

Father Harold A. Salm... in the Archdiocese of New York, for what he described as reasons.

He was installed as pastor of St. Charles, Harlem, in 1968 and Delegate of Harlem by the Archbishop.

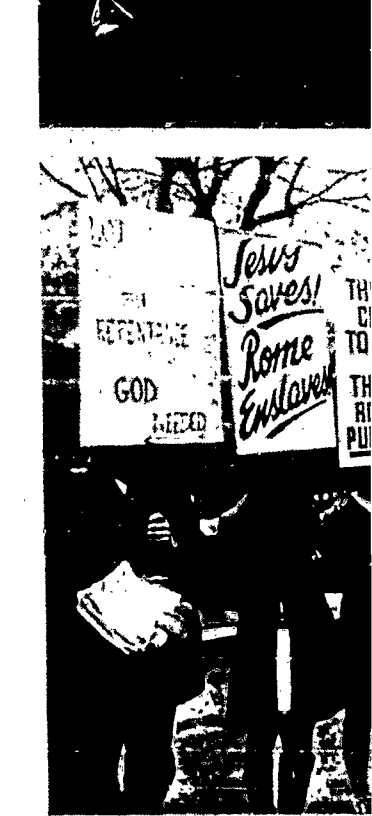
A letter to his parish secretary, Cardinal Cooke would take up the matter.

The only other black pastor in the Archdiocese of New York, Lawrence Lucas, recently died in Upper Manhattan.

School Segregation

The Episcopal Diocese of New York in support of a resolution opposing private schools has urged that no buildings be used for racial segregation.

"Education is totally a human beings," the resolution stated.



March for March

Anglican supporters of a Protestant demonstration route of a "silent march" in an "act of reparation" for their beliefs during the march started at 10 a.m. and ended at 5 p.m. Protestants were burned and countered the demonstrators Ireland's controversy Paisley, in Smithfield.

Anti-Celibacy Described

Chicago — (RNS) — Francis E. McMahon, professor of philosophy at Roosevelt University here, declared that critics of the rule of priestly celibacy "should resist from their demands." McMahon also characterized an anti-celibacy argument as "fallacious" and as revealing a "grave philosophical error."

Dr. McMahon, a former president of the American Catholic Philosophical Association, said in his statement that his words were addressed to two men in particular: "The Rev. Dr. J. A. O'Brien of the department of theology at the University of Notre Dame, and the Rev. Francis X. Murphy, who is a pseudonym of Xavier Rhymer, under the articles on the Vatican Council which appeared originally in the New York magazine and later in 'Form'."

Dr. McMahon, then charged that both Father O'Brien and Father Murphy argued that the right to marry was inalienable, natural right, implying that it can be abrogated by nobody.

Their argument, the professor said, is "fallacious, reveals a grave philosophical error. They overlook the fact that it is one thing to possess a right and another thing to exercise it."

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