

Refugee Report: The Days Grow Long In Hong Kong Camps

By John Dash

"There are more than 50,000 Vietnamese Refugees in Hong Kong," Catherine Wobus stated last week. And, she said, the government of Hong Kong, for all its benevolence in accepting the refugees into its already overcrowded population, finds that other countries have placed a low priority on resettling refugees which it has harbored.

Miss Wobus, executive director of the Catholic Family Center, had recently returned from a tour of China and a visit to the teeming city of Hong Kong where she spent several hours in the Kai Tak East East refugee camp, home for nearly 8,000 of those refugees.

She said that the camp was built and is run by Caritas, the international Catholic relief agency with headquarters in Switzerland.

Life in the camp is somewhat different from that in Malaysian refugee camps, Miss Wobus said. In Kai Tak East, "62 per cent of the 7,700 refugees work in factories." Caritas assumes responsibility for housing and help for those who cannot work, she said. "But the refugees work and buy their own clothing and food — some even have small 'luxury items' such as watches," she stated.

Nevertheless, this situation may change. Miss Wobus will present this week a report to John E. McCarthy, head of refugee efforts for the USCC, presented to her by Hong Kong Caritas chief Dolores Lee which states:

"Approximately 89 per cent of the refugees (in Hong Kong) are in open camps and about 60 per cent of the adults have found temporary employment in Hong Kong with which to support themselves and their families. This is acceptable at present, but a downturn in the economy would easily make refugees the object of considerable resentment if they had jobs at a time when local people were losing theirs. In the meantime, refugees swell the number using hospitals, public transport, recreational facilities and other services."

The situation was stated



Women prepare food outside the barracks at Kai Tak East refugee camp, as, below, children amuse themselves in their own fashions.



more bluntly by the Hong Kong Community Council for the Resettlement of Vietnamese Refugees which has said:

"Resettlement from Hong Kong has remained at a disappointingly low level compared with other countries, where refugee boats have sometimes been pushed back into the sea and refugees have been treated harshly. The people of Hong Kong finally came to the conclusion that by taking the Charter of Human Rights seriously, by caring for the refugees and sharing with them the little space we have, Hong Kong was being penalized."

Miss Wobus will present McCarthy with the council's

plea that governments "shorten their processing procedures, and accept refugees regardless of their skills, age and language ability."

The council has also urged "churches, civic organizations and individuals to engender favorable public opinion for these unfortunate people in support of more-resettlement programs and larger quotas for Hong Kong."

The Catholic Family Center through its Refugee Resettlement Program has in the past year resettled more than 225 Southeast Asian refugees in the Diocese of Rochester. The program is headquartered at 50 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604; (716) 546-7220.

cannonical mission' was withdrawn. He is no longer allowed to speak officially for the church. In the German situation, if you do not have the canonical mission, then the university can't hire you."

Many people within the church feel that the Congregation for Doctrine acted outside of its range of competence in taking action against Father Kueng, the Detroit bishop noted. He said he believed that a theologian whose teachings are suspect should be evaluated by his peers, "top-notch theologians," who meet with him and discuss his theories and on the basis of their expertise recommend to the Vatican whether he should continue to be permitted to speak in the name of the church.

Bishop Questions Kueng Decision

Ann Arbor, Mich. (RNS) — Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, while defending its right to stop Hans Kueng from teaching in the name of the Catholic Church, says he has reservations about the Vatican procedure used to evaluate the German theologian's writings.

Bishop Gumbleton met with 30 lay Catholics — faculty members at the University of Michigan and their spouses who belong to St. Mary's Church here. Believing that the Vatican's

depriving Father Kueng of the right to teach as a Catholic theologian was "repressive" and "intimidating," members of the group accused their church of damaging its own credibility of by using a dictatorial process to stop the free flow of ideas.

"The church has the right to supervise the teachings of its ordained ministers who speak out in her name," Bishop Gumbleton replied. "Father Kueng was not excommunicated. The only thing happened is that his

Historian to Speak

Henry Steele Commager, one of the nation's leading historians and foreign policy analysts, will discuss "Major Changes in American

Society," at Nazareth College's Otto A. Shults Community Center, April 21 at 8 p.m. The event is open to the public without charge.

Tantur: A Dream Come True

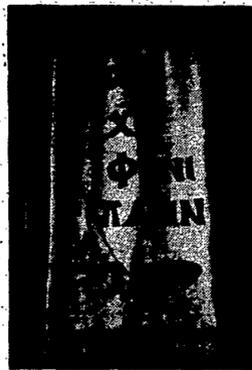
By Father John C. Murray, CSB
Exclusive to the Courier-Journal

Tantur, Israel. — It's like a dream come true for a theologian to spend his sabbatical leave in the Holy Land. It's an even rarer privilege to share that academic and religious experience with other theologians of different denominations from all parts of the world. The Ecumenical Institute for Theological Research here provides all these opportunities and more.

The institute came from a suggestion made by the non-Catholic observers at the Second Vatican Council. In a private audience with Pope Paul VI, they proposed that the ecumenical theological study scholars had been engaged in during the council, should be continued on the regular permanent basis once the council was over. Pope Paul agreed.

Tantur is built on a 35-acre site, on a hill adjacent to the main road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. We have a magnificent view of Bethlehem from our dining room. Jerusalem's towers also are visible, four miles to the north, from our roof.

Tantur's motto, "The light of Christ shines for all," was originally found written in Greek on a fourth century oil lamp. The institute chose this motto to express its dedication to the mystery of universal salvation in Jesus Christ. Life in the institute (academic, prayer and community) is focused to penetrate and shed light on this mystery of salvation. Theological problems and issues that are



Tantur's motto: "The light of Christ shines for all."

common to all Christians are the objects of scholarly research. Each theologian has his own individual project which he presents to the group and receives in turn discussion and constructive criticism. Among those at the institute are: David Jaeger, liaison secretary of the United Christian Council of Israel; Pierre Bonnard, an expert in the Gospel and Epistles of John, and a member of the Reformed Church; and Dr. Wesley Brown, a Baptist from Southern California who is director of the summer sessions at the institute.

Each member of the scholars' community is called on to lead the ecumenical family in prayer during the day. The ordained members, take turns leading the Sunday liturgy and preaching. Sunday's celebration is considered special and everyone is expected to be present, the degree of participation, however, is left to each individual in the light of his faith and personal conscience.

The question of intercommunion is always a

delicate matter, but I think Tantur has found a unique solution for its special situation: the minister presiding at the Sunday liturgy is responsible for informing the congregations of the conditions those present may share in the Eucharist. The Catholic priest says: "Although in the light of the unresolved differences that still separate us as sister churches, I cannot invite you to partake of the Eucharist in the name of my Church, nevertheless you are welcome at the table of the Lord in the light of your faith and conscience."

Perhaps the most lasting influence is the community life we share. In this setting what we are as Christians on every level of life suddenly becomes transparent. What we share is more than theological ideas. It is our feelings about life, about ourselves, about our own faith and love for Jesus Christ and neighbor in the very places He made holy by becoming man. It is at this point that ecumenical unity becomes something urgent—we want to make real and vital rather than just apious idea to talk about in a classroom. It is not a question-and-answer way of life we lead here. One member put it this way:

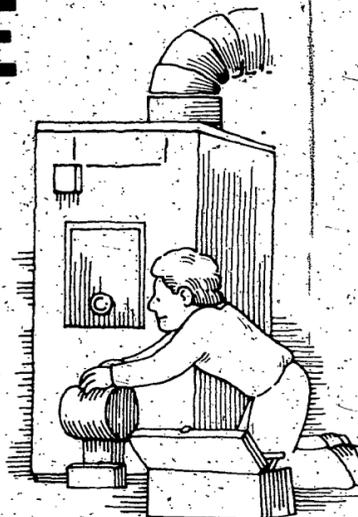
"Questions give rise to answers which eliminate the question. We deal with problems that have no answers, only solutions — and the solution is just a way of living with the problem, it does not eliminate the problem."

(Father Murray is professor of religious studies at St. John Fisher College. He will return to the U.S. in early summer.)

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