

English Section

Demand Religion in Public Schools

German Protestants Are More Concerned Than Brethren Here

By J. J. GILBERT

At a time when the people in the United States are witnessing efforts to extend even further the almost complete secularization of public education, one reads with particular interest of the opposition which the people of Berlin are exhibiting to attempts to de-Christianize education there.

The Protestant churches of Berlin are standing shoulder to shoulder with Catholics in their deprecation of certain provisions of the new Education Law adopted by the Berlin City Council.

Here in the United States, long smoldering antagonism to the teaching of religion has leaped into flame. This antagonism has joined with and seems to dominate a sort of "united front" which is fighting against the released-time program of religious instruction for pupils attending public schools.

The released-time program has been widely adopted to make possible some religious instruction for children who would not otherwise receive it at all. There is no compulsion or discrimination, and the instruction is given only at the parents' request, and with the parents' cooperation, in the religion which the child professes and by a qualified teacher of that religion.

Clergy's View Is Strange

One would naturally suppose that the principal objection to this program would be that it is inadequate, that it does not go far enough. But what we are witnessing today is a strenuous fight to abolish this program altogether because the teaching of religion to children is "divisive." Not a few ministers of religion have subscribed to this almost incomprehensible stand. Not a few people have been terrified and have withdrawn without analysis before the charge that this program threatens the separation of Church and State.

In Berlin, on the other hand, protests that have poured in upon the City Council following its adoption of legislation striking a serious blow at the continuance of religious education express the fundamental view that "freedom of religion and parental rights can not be disregarded even by a parliamentary majority."

Catholic parents, expressing "great concern" over the new law, have declared that they "will never be satisfied with a law which violates their holiest rights regarding the entire education, specifically however the religious education of their children in school, and which oppresses their conscience in the fulfillment of their God-given duties."

The Catholics of Berlin want tax-supported denominational schools, or at least public schools in which religious instruction will hold a place equal to that of other studies in the curriculum.

The Protestant Church of Berlin-Brandenburg also has protested to the Berlin City Council. It calls the new law's provisions contrary to the principle of true democracy. It says that the Protestant Church cannot accept the new Education Law because (1) religion is given a place in the curriculum secondary to other studies; (2) no place is given to Christianity in a secularized community school, and (3) the law prevents parents from giving their children a Christian education in private schools.

Fear Control by State

The Joint Committee of Church and Religious Groups has also protested. The Evangelical Woman's Welfare Society has declared that its members will not have their

responsibility for the education of their children invaded and curtailed, and that they will not have their children made "the weak-willed and conscienceless tools of the State."

It would seem that the Germans, who have lost so much in a material sense, are clinging to spiritual values. They are closer apparently to the elemental realities of this situation, which, if religion is to be accorded only a secondary place in education or indeed barred altogether from the life of the child—the aim of the secularists—it can only eventuate ultimately in imposing upon the people of the yoke of material Communism.

In our own country, notwithstanding the appearance of an apparent "united front" of secularists and some religious-minded people, including ministers of the Gospel, to oppose religious instruction under released-time programs, there seems to be a growing understanding on the part of religious-minded people generally of the basic values at stake in this controversy.

Indeed, it is the aim of secularists to emphasize differences among religious groups an oppose religious education on the ground that it is "divisive." Religious-minded people, by forming a "united front" of their own in defense of religious education, whether in their own schools or in released-time programs, will provide the best answer to the secularists and strengthen surely and deeply the foundations of Christian civilization.

News from Soviet-Occupied Lithuania

(Reprinted from "Current News on the Lithuanian Situation," compiled by Lithuanian Legation, Washington, D. C., Vol. V, No. 12, June, 1947)

EYE-WITNESS REPORT

(Continued from last week)

Cultural Life

There are several Russian-language high schools in Lithuania. From the first year of elementary school the Russian language is a compulsory subject. Russian and German, but not English, are taught in the high schools. The pupils are divided into morning and evening groups. The shortage of teachers is serious. Some teachers who teach in grammar schools have not even finished elementary school. Only textbooks translated from the Russian, of which quantities are published, are available in the universities there is a great lack of scientific literature.

Young people avoid choosing trade school, since after graduation three or four years of service are compulsory wherever the government directs. The militia rounds up the children of the "bourgeois" and forces them to go to trade schools as a sort of exile.

The universities of Vilnius and Kaunas are functioning, but their purpose is primarily the indoctrination of Leninism-Marxism-Stalinism; other studies are of secondary importance. In the University of Vytautas the Great in Kaunas, Professor A. Purėnas was dismissed from his post as rector, and replaced by a young physician, J. Kučinskas, a member of the Communist Party. The rector of Vilnius University, Bieliukas, was forced to leave his post. The universities do not recognize formerly conferred doctoral degrees, and theses must be corrected and defended now. There are obligatory courses in Marxism for the professors. Every week they must attend political lectures and must prepare condensed reports. The vice-rectors of both Lithuanian universities are Russians. They supervise the work of the professors, control their lectures, and keep watch on their activities.

Professor V. Jurgutis, former cabinet minister, Governor of the Bank of Lithuania, and a former inmate of a Nazi concentration camp, was dismissed from the university faculty and turned out of his living quarters for the alleged propagation of liberal economics. Professor A. Janulaitis was dismissed for reportedly having said in his lectures that it was a historical fact that the Russians and the Lithuanians have never got along together.

Not a single volume of the dictionary of the Lithuanian language has been published under the Russians.

Opera exists only in Kaunas. The musician Likerauskas was deported to Russia. Choral groups are few. Several artists have been arrested, among them Maziška and Kučingis Jr. Few plays have been written by Lithuanian playwrights remaining in Lithuania. No new original literature is being published. The writer Jakubėnas was reportedly arrested for writing a poem satirizing the Soviet-held elections ("We voted so well that the percentage was 103"). K. Boruta was also arrested.

(To be continued)

TOKIO GI-RESIGNS TO ENTER SEMINARY

TOKIO, Jan. 14.—A former merchant seaman, now a sergeant with the occupation army here, received permission yesterday to exchange his olive drab for the cassock of a priest.

Gen. MacArthur granted the request of Francis Xavier Courtney, Portland, Ore., to become the first enlisted man to remain in Japan for work outside the occupation.

Mr. Courtney, a graduate of the University of Notre Dame, has re-

ceived his final discharge and will begin his eight-year course of study for the priesthood at Don Bosco seminary, Itabashi, Tokio. The school has 35 pupils from 14 nations and the house language is Italian, which Courtney said he was learning rapidly.

When he joined the service 18 months ago he had "absolutely no intention" of remaining in the Far East after his tour of duty.

Our main business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance; but to do what lies clearly at hand. Thomas Carlyle.

Pope Discusses Church Freedom

Holy Father Lays Down Vital Conditions for Its Work

VATICAN CITY, Jan. 12.—Pope Pius XII expounded three "indispensable conditions" that must be met by governments if the Church is to be in a position "to develop her activity and work in a manner corresponding to the present and future necessity of the world," in an address to Robert Despradel, who presented his credentials as Ambassador from the Dominican Republic to the Holy See.

The Holy Father formulated these conditions as follows:

- (1) "Freedom of movement in the field of education of youth;
- (2) "Availability of proportionate means in the formation of a clergy capable of providing for the spiritual necessities of the faithful with a wide and free apostolate;
- (3) "Material and spiritual conditions that favor the protection of the Christian family and the progressive education and perfection of a chosen legion of the laity who, in the ranks of Catholic Action, will be able to appreciate, in peaceful collaboration with their fellow-citizens and for the true good and ordered progress of their people, the great truths and vital values, of the Holy Faith."

Morality the Issue

The Pope said that "the great spiritual battles which are the dominant note of our days and on the outcome of which the moral countenance of humanity may largely depend, demand clear-cut objectives and resolute champions." He added: "A clear vision and a firm resolution are inseparable when the eternal norms given by God are to be applied. The Church of Christ is the competent and irreplaceable teacher of these norms. Her radius of action extends to all corners of the earth, without exclusion of any race and without depending on any form of government. "Her ability to fulfill her proper function with fruitfulness and in

depth, so that this function may be of greater or lesser efficacy in social and public life, and the abundance of the peaceful fruits which are attendant upon this education, depend substantially upon the degree of liberty and freedom of action that is granted to the activities of the Church by the States and their forms of government."

MASS BROADCAST BROUGHT A FINE

But Mexico Official Revokes It in Usual Decision

MEXICO CITY.—Fine of 10,000 pesos (about \$2,000), imposed on radio network XEW by the General Office of Communications for broadcasting a sermon from the Cathedral of Tepeyac during the Guadalupan festivities recently, has been revoked by the Minister of Communications and Public Works, Dr. Augustin Garcia Lopez.

In his revocation order, Dr. Garcia stated that from statements of witnesses it appears that the network's broadcasts did not threaten the security of the nation, did not endanger peace and public order, did not attack the government or personal interests, and did not serve as an inducement to crime.

In broadcasting the Guadalupan festivities other Mexican networks put on the air the renditions of the Roman singers, who were taking part in the ceremonies, but interrupted their broadcasts when the liturgical parts of the Mass were sung and when the sermon was delivered, broadcasts of which are forbidden by Mexican law. Either intentionally or through error XEW carried the entire ceremonies.

Commenting on the revocation of the fine, the newspaper "Ultimas Noticias" declared: "This success, though partial, gives Mexico the hope that some day sound judgment will replace lack of understanding and culture will prevail over folly."

Canada Names Catholic

As Envoy to Yugoslavia

OTTAWA, Jan. 15.—Emile Vaillancourt, 48, Canadian Minister to Cuba, has been named first Canadian Minister to Yugoslavia. He opened the first Canadian legation in Cuba, and now will have the same duty in Belgrade.

Canada has had diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia since 1942, but accredited Canadian representative has been Gen. Georges P. Vanier, who also served as Canadian representative of several other countries. General Vanier is now Canadian Ambassador to France.

Mr. Vaillancourt is a former student at St. Mary's College, Montreal.

Irish Airlines to U. S.

DUBLIN, Jan. 15.—Aer Lingus Irish Air Lines) has selected March 17, the Feast of St. Patrick, Ireland's national saint, for the opening of its thrice-weekly constellation service between Shannon Airport and New York and Boston.

Gob Humor

(From the "Dope Sheet," U. S. Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Va.)
Cook—Look here, my man, I made ples before you were born.
AS—Okay, matey, but why serve them now?

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