

**I**N THE name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. O Mary, conceived without sin, mediatrix of all graces, pray for us." (After this prayer, Father Tong turned toward a picture of President Mao, with a deep bow, then addressed the gathering.)

"Men who do not believe in God or in soul, men who do not recognize the Pope as vicar of Christ assert the movement for the triple independence to be nothing but a patriotic movement. They acknowledge religious freedom and allow purely religious relations between the Pope and the faithful. But today, in the name of that same movement, we are called upon to take a stand against the representative of the Pope, Msgr. Riberti. And perhaps tomorrow, in the name of the same movement, we may be urged to attack the Pope, the vicar of



MAO TSE TUNG

both state and Church! But the very opposite is the case. The more things develop, the wider becomes the rift between the two parties, so much so that today it has come to the point where it is no longer possible to turn back. Soon, even the last ray of hope which kept us up will be darkened. I reproach myself for being unable to change things for the better, and for that reason I think I can do no better than offer my soul to the one party and my body to the other, hoping to further the mutual understanding of the two parties. I cannot do otherwise as long as a mutual understanding will not be reached, but I do not regret any sacrifice on my part.

"Those in authority have repeatedly declared that they do not intend to resort to force. Hence, I feel obliged to speak my mind frankly and never to say what I do not mean to say. If a declaration is in keeping with my conviction,

# I ADMIRE THE COMMUNISTS!\*

By Father  
John Tong Che Tche

Christ. And the next day, why should we not be pressed into assailing Our Lord and God, Jesus Christ Himself?

"No doubt, theoretically speaking, one could make distinctions regarding these attacks. In fact, however, there is but one God, one Pope, and one representative of the Pope. No distinction, no separation can be granted in this respect. I would indeed cease to be a Catholic were I to subscribe to the triple independence.

"Gentlemen! I have only one soul, which cannot be divided; I have a body, which allows partition. It seems to me best to give my whole soul to God and the Church, and my body to my country, for I do not refuse to serve my country with my body if demanded. Materialists who are convinced that there is no soul must be contented with the surrender of my body.

"How beautiful it would be if state and Church could work together! In that case the Church would be grounded on the real triple independence, to be recognized as frankly and never to say what I do not mean to say. If a declaration is in keeping with my patriotic movement indeed. How much good would be effected for

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For sometime the Red propaganda had been directed toward establishing a national Catholic Church in China and, as a first step, had advocated the removal of the papal representative, Msgr. Riberti. In Chungking, his residence, a big demonstration was staged against him, attended by the gross of the population. Among the speakers of the day were, almost two Catholics, one of them even a priest, who voiced their disapproval of the foreign dignitary and came out in support of the nationalist movement. The bad effect of these speeches was more than offset by the vigorous words of Father John Tong Che Tche, who roundly scored the scheme of triple ecclesiastical independence, from foreign aid for the clergy, from foreign personnel, from religious ideas foreign of Chinese thought. In consequence of his frank statement, the 45-year-old priest was arrested in the sacristy of his church, never to be heard of again (June 2, 1951). The text of his speech, smuggled out of China to Rome, is given here in full.

I'll sign it; if not, I'll never pretend to agree with it by merely giving my signature.

Suppose I would go against my conscience out of fear and say what I am not convinced of or sign a declaration at variance with my conviction, I would deceive the state. If I excused myself afterwards by saying that I did wrong under duress, I would likewise deceive the Church authorities. Would that not be tantamount to sowing the seeds of discord between state and Church?

"I am a Catholic indeed. This does not hinder me from expressing my admiration for the Communists. They do not believe in God or in a soul, nor in heaven and hell — in this they are mistaken. Still, more than one quality of theirs compels my admiration, rouses my lethargy to action, and reminds me of the millions of martyrs of the Church in the course of the past 20 centuries.

"I admire the Communists because they defy death, never giving up their conviction. They do not say, like General Li Ling, glossing over his surrender: 'I did not choose to die, but saved my life for my future task! And should I cling to life under the pretext of preserving

(Continued on page 38)

## I Admire the Communists

(Continued from page 10)

myself to be of use to the Church in times to come? The Communists like to say: 'For one man who falls, ten thousand will rise.' Should a Catholic, then, forget that the blood of martyrs is the seed of christians?

"I admire the Communists because they are not afraid when they have been accused of foul deeds. They will say: 'The eyes of the people see clear and cannot be deceived in such things.' That's why they proudly march to the place of their execution. And should a Christian shrink from being accused unjustly, from being persecuted? Should he regard it as worthless and absurd to die innocently? Then he would be oblivious of the fact that our supreme Judge is God Almighty, Who is full of wisdom and goodness. Who is justice and right personified.

"I admire the Communists because of a third quality. When they feel they are right and cannot convince others, they still know how to stick to their belief without wavering. When they are unable to refute their opponents at a discussion, they do not capitulate and make concessions to them regarding their ideas, nor do they despair of their party and desert it. Is it possible for a Christian to forget that his Faith derives from God? Why should he, when unable to defend his cause successfully, give up his viewpoint and declare that he is

wrong? In the end, he would twist the truth of his doctrine, upset the order of the Church, and become a traitor to God and his own soul. And if I should perchance be a traitor to God and my soul, who could vouch that I would not betray my country and my people? Therefore I will not waver in my Faith and, still less so, shall I make other Christians waver in their convictions or abuse my position as a priest to undermine the Faith of the faithful.

"The Communists, whom I admire, and their government genuinely respect our Catholic Church, which I love. They endeavor to win the support and aid of Christians. I must say I feel honored because of this. Must I not double my efforts to be a steadfast Christian, who can also meet the noble purposes of the Government?

"I have a great desire to invite you also into my dearly beloved Church, in order to lead you to God and make you our brethren in the Faith. Do not consider me a fool talking nonsense, nor think that I am not serious. I am fully convinced that idealistic Communists, once they get to know the Catholic Church, will become Catholics living wholly by their Faith, far superior to a Catholic of my caliber. So I pray to God to turn many Sauls into Pauls within the Communist party, far surpassing the miserable priest that I am. This is my view of the

situation.

"I beg your pardon for the faults of this address, which it was impossible for me to prepare as I would have liked to. I wish to point out, moreover, that my speech has not been authorized by the Church authorities and hence cannot claim to give the viewpoint of the Church. Nor has my talk been approved by the government. My words are merely an expression of what I conceive to be an ideal, which perhaps will remain my own beautiful dream for the time being.

"To sum up: I am a Chinese Catholic, I love my country, I love my Church too. I reject emphatically whatever is at variance with the laws of my country and the precepts of my Church, and I refuse to cooperate with whatever may cause discord. But if the government and my Church cannot come to an understanding, there remains nothing for a Chinese Catholic but to die sooner or later. Why not offer one's life even now, in order to bring about an early understanding of the parties now one against the other? If my proposals are rejected and any mutual understanding is declined, then any peace move is blocked. If, despite the desperate situation, a solution is attempted courageously, the objective, namely, reconciliation will be reached. Once more, pardon all the deficiencies of my speech."

## What is Russian Communism?

(Continued from page 11)

from the moment Russia was invaded, they completely somersaulted, praised the war, and demanded that the allies should open a second front. A certain Australian member of Parliament replied to a Communist objector at a public meeting: "Yes I am in favor of a second front — in Siberia!

To speak of Russia as being "our gallant ally" during the war is to utter sheer nonsense. Russia was never an ally in the accepted sense of the term. This I emphatically pointed out in a lecture in Australia during the war: "Let us suppose that three nations, A, B, and C are allies. This means that, if of the three is attacked, the other two will come to their assistance, and that, if two of them are attacked, the third will come to their help. Now, Australia has her back to the wall, fighting Japan, and what does Russia, our so-called ally, do? She fails to lift even a little finger

against our most dreaded foe; she has even a trading pact with Japan!"

I have no wish to revive the cruel memories of the terrible war — the most terrible in history. But I could not refrain from pointing out the fact that Communists throughout the world viewed the struggle not with the eyes of national patriots, not with the eyes of their own country, but with jaundiced eyes — with eyes, implanted in them, as it were, by Moscow.

### A COMMUNIST'S FIRST LOYALTY IS TO SOVIET RUSSIA

"The first requisite for a Communist," writes Louis Budenz, "is to understand that he is serving Soviet Russia and no other nation or interest. Never will he be permitted to express one word of reservation or criticism of the Soviet Government, its leaders or their decisions. Whatever they say or do is always 100 per cent right, and America can be right only by being in complete

agreement with the Soviet Union. Never, during the twenty-five years of its existence, has the Daily Worker deviated from that rule; never has it ceased to prostrate itself before the Soviet leadership." (This is My Story, p. 234.)

"The Communists in the United States openly admit their allegiance to the Communist International at Moscow, and glory in the fact that they obey all the orders issued from there immediately and implicitly." — H. R. Report No. 2290, 71st Congress, 3rd Session, Jan. 17, 1931, p. 9.

The *International Communist*, French edition, August 5, 1935, declared: "Those who say we do not take orders from Moscow are against the proletarian state. It proves they are allied to the bourgeoisie . . . and are the enemy of the proletarian class. . . . To receive orders from Moscow, as Dimitrov said, is to follow the example of Lenin and Stalin."