

### WHAT PROTESTANTS THINK OF ROMAN CATHOLICS

The local Federation of Christian (Evangelical) Churches recently sponsored a three-day seminar on "Christianity and Communism" for one hundred pastors, church administrators and laymen in Manila. The meetings were conducted by a visiting Missionary, Dr. John C. Bennett, Professor of Theology at Union Theological Seminary, New York City.

Among the many interesting items that cropped up in the seminar as reported by the **Philippine Christian Advance**, Protestant monthly, are the following:

*"Among the delegates were those who were convinced that the major danger to the evangelical witness is not the threat of Communism, but what one called the unseen power behind the Philippine Government, the Roman Catholic Church. No government official dares criticize or speak against the hierarchy of the church today, whereas during the Spanish rule there was constant open conflict between the ecclesiastical and the civil authorities; this contrast was cited by a government official among the delegates as evidence of the actual power wielded by the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines. A District Superintendent testified that during the Italian elections he had prayed that the Communist candidates might defeat those of the Roman Catholic Church, in order that the Vatican might become subject to the will of a group drastic enough to deal with clerical abuses.*

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### ON MODERN YOUTH

It was close on midday when a pleasant young soldier came to request billets for himself and his Lieutenant. His name was Nicolas and he was as sure of himself as are most young Russians. The most cocksure of all are those between the ages of fourteen and twenty one, the age when youth does not think, not just in the Soviet Union but all over the world. By that I mean that they think a lot but that nothing sensible comes out of it, for they do not think as they should. That is why dictators are always so eager to get hold of their country's youth. I have always been repelled by the juvenile, and the present fashion of gushing over it disgusts me. The conceit and impertinence of these young Russian lads was just as intolerable as that of their European contemporaries in Fascist countries. Is it's youth a nation's flower? Not a bit of it. It's a dangerous charge of dynamite that ought to be kept under lock and key.

—From "Comes the Comrade", by Alexandra Orme, an account of the Russian Occupation of Hungary, 1944-1945. pp. 169-170.

Asked whether the conversion of a Huk or a Roman Catholic would be simpler, Dr. Bennett replied that while he had never met a Huk, he felt that disillusioned communists and former fellow travelers constituted a fertile field for evangelism.

"Other delegates expressed the opinion that there was more freedom to preach the gospel under the present regime in the Philippines than in a Communist dominated land. To them it was explained that the choice between Communism and the Roman Catholic control is hypothetical, since the influence of the Roman Church in the Philippines is modified by a democratic tradition inculcated by fifty years of American influence, by the growing power of secularism, and by a large group of liberal Catholic laymen who are anti-clerical in their political sympathies. Therefore Dr. Bennett said the Philippines could not be said to be an illustration of totalitarian Catholicism."

"Dr. Bennett cautioned the seminar delegates against being stampeded into a united front with Roman Catholics in a crusade against Communism."

We know that our Protestant friends are very nice people. We mean this very sincerely. That they should see in the Catholic Church a sinister power behind the Philippine Government is very sad indeed. We are sure that all this misrepresentation of the Catholic Church is due to the myths circulated in Protestant circles about her.

The Catholic Church is interested in only one thing—the salvation of souls and the reign of Christ over the hearts of men. To misinterpret this intention is the height of folly. We could laugh indeed, we could laugh loud and long at the damnable ignorance of those who would accuse her as bidding for anything like temporal power or wealth. Only it seems so sacrilegious to laugh at men who, wittingly or unwittingly, go against the most tremendous work going on in the world at all times and in all places till the crack of doom—the saving of souls. One can only hope—and pray that such men may see—and seeing believe "in Jesus Christ Whom God has sent" and in His One, Holy, Roman, Catholic, Apostolic Church.

#### PATIENCE — IMPATIENCE

Little Marilou was tired and restless and the preacher talked on and on.

Her daddy whispered: "Be quiet, Marilou. He is telling you how to go to heaven." In a loud whisper Marilou said impatiently:

"Well, we don't have to go today, do we?"