

The Church in Spain

Secret Meeting Revealed

MADRID — (NC) — Que Pasa?, a right-wing Spanish newspaper, has revealed the plans of the banned Madrid meeting of Operation Moses, a secret group of progressive priests and laymen.

Releasing the agenda more than a week ahead of its official publication date, Que Pasa? said the Operation Moses group was made up of priests "proven to be subversive" by their participation in the May 11 demonstrations against police brutality in Barcelona.

Ignored by Catholic papers, the conservative journal's story was picked up by most of the secular newspapers, who termed the group "the leaders of open rebellion against the bishops of Spain."

According to the article, Operation Moses wants a strict division between the Church and state in Spain. Specifically they ask that:

—The Church renounce all privileges and protection;

—The Church and clergymen be subject to the same laws governing other institutions and citizens in Spain;

—All clergymen renounce public offices they may be holding;

—Complete freedom of religion be granted in Spain, so that true religious unity may be fostered, and that the current "farce of religious solidarity may be abandoned";

—The histories of the Church in Spain be revised to conform with the facts, and that members of the Church show penitence for their sins and errors of judgment;

—There be a new emphasis on brotherhood, rather than on the militarism and nationalism now dominating Spanish thought.

Portuguese Bishops Relax Rules

LISBON — (RNS) — Portugal's Roman Catholic priests may wear dark clerical suits instead of cassocks whenever they are not officiating at religious services . . . and they may go to the movies or attend bullfights.

These concessions were announced by the Portuguese hierarchy in its first joint statement since the close of the Second Vatican Council.

The permission to frequent places of public entertainment replaced strict rules in various dioceses against priests going to the cinema or theater.

However, the bishops stressed that priests must avoid entertainments which are "improper to their ecclesiastical status."

In their joint statement, the bishops spoke of the close bonds that should exist between priests and their bishops. It cautioned them against "unrest and disobedience" and said they should renounce any "unpriestly activities."

Appointed

CHARLESTON, S.C. — (NC) — Bishop Ernest L. Unterkoefler has appointed Msgr. John L. Manning and William J. Croghan as vicars general for the Charleston diocese. Father Creston J. Tawes has been named vicar for religious education in the diocese.

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Meeting Denounced

MADRID — (NC) — The press office of the Archdiocese of Madrid has denounced the clandestine character of a meeting of priests and laymen planned for the outskirts of Madrid.

Under the code name of Action Moses, they were reportedly planning to publish a document of protest against the hierarchy.

Informed of the group's plans, Archbishop Casimiro Morcillo Gonzalez of Madrid issued a statement pointing out that the meeting had not been authorized and advising anyone involved to contact the bishop of his diocese.

Four Priests On Trial

LERIDA, Spain — (NC) — Bishop Aurelio del Pino Gomez of Lerida will set up a new tribunal to judge four priests accused of slandering him.

A tribunal had already been set up, but the priests lodged an appeal on the grounds that its composition did not inspire their confidence.

In an open letter, the four priests had protested the sale of Church-owned land to tenant farmers working the land. The priests claimed that the price the Church was asking was too high and that the sale would force the people off the land.

They criticized the sale as "contrary to the spirit of the Second Vatican Council," and pointed out that the original grant of land to the Church, made several centuries ago, was as a stipend for Masses to be said for the former owners.

The bishop later ceded the land to the farmers, but at the same time the chancery office criticized the four priests for having "sown discord among the clergy and people, and for having caused confusion in the souls of many."



'Looks like an 'acid test' for Ecumenism.'

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Paul-Emile Cardinal Leger, Archbishop of Montreal (left) greets the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, Arthur Michael Ramsey. The British Primate is on a month-long tour visiting Churches in Canada.

Christian Unity—Real Possibility

OTTAWA, Ont. — (NC) — Archbishop Michael Ramsey of Canterbury, spiritual leader of 44 million members of the Anglican Church throughout the world, has been wearing a ring which was presented to him by Pope Paul VI during his tour of Canada.

In speeches and sermons the Anglican primate repeatedly has referred to the historic meeting he had with the Pope last March as evidence of the growing understanding and communication between Anglicans and Roman Catholics.

In his public appearances in Canada, the archbishop is receiving further evidence of that fraternal spirit. In Montreal he was greeted by Paul Emile Cardinal Leger of Montreal, and here in Ottawa two Catholic prelates attended a service which the primate addressed in the Anglican Christ Church Cathedral — Archbishop M. J. Lemieux of Ottawa and Bishop P. E. Charbonneau of Hull. Representatives of the United Presbyterian, Lutheran, Baptist and Greek Orthodox churches also were present.



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