

LEBANESE REVOLT: COMIC OR TRAGIC OPERA ? REGRESSION ?

Khirbet Kanafar, Lebanon, Feb. 2-- This is the third occasion we have had to print accounts of life in the seething Near East, as reported by The Seminarian reporter, Tom McClellan, stationed in this small Lebanese town. On the basis of his earlier reports the term "seething" may seem exaggerated, but as this report will indicate, the Fertile Crescent is no place for heart patients to recuperate.

"A little more than a month has passed since that fateful day when another of the all-too-frequent Middle East revolutions took place. One evening, a young Army captain in Sidon gathered his troops together and advanced toward Beirut; his object: the overthrow of the government. A few hours later, several men were dead, the revolt had been crushed, the young captain had gone into hiding, and the republic had been saved.

"To the detached observer this seems like just another such revolution - and in the style of comic opera at that. But to one who has witnessed the presence of troops and tanks everywhere, who had looked into the barrels of loaded machine guns aimed at him, and who has been searched by government officials things seem a little more serious than that. What is more, the fascinating puzzle of political intrigue and stories of personal experience compel one to consider this "comic opera" more seriously.

"The young captain from Sidon was not alone in his attempt at revolution; behind him was a strong and fanatical political party that is well supplied with weapons and ammunition and has the support of foreign powers. "P.P.S." are the initials for the People's Socialist Party. It has been outlawed in every other country in the Middle East. Its one central doctrine is Arab unification - but its own special brand. (Continued on p. 3, column 1.)

This week the Seminarian readers may think we are in a state of regression by the appearance of our old form of masthead. The staff wishes to dispel any controversy on this subject by noting that due to technical difficulties beyond their control, the printed mastheads were not ready before the issue went to press. We assure you that the next issue will carry our now famous design.

SECOND QUARTER TO END

On Friday, February 16, the second quarter of the 1961-62 academic year will draw to a close, bringing with it the traditional three days of exams. Because of the reading almost every seminarian must catch-up on, there will not be a Seminarian next week.

The next issue will be published on February 28, 1962.

WANTED - DEAD OR ALIVE

The wife of an Olney resident has asked that announcement be made of her reward of \$5000 for the capture vel mortuus of the man who on Sunday, February 11, attempted to steal her mink (?) coat. Those who have any information leading to the apprehension of this individual should contact the Seminarian office immediately.

HEYER DRIVE

By this writing every seminarian has received his little black cylindrical bank from a member of the Heyer Commission. This year the collection received will aid the Lutheran Church in British Guiana carry on its mission. Each time a coin into the coffer clings another man into seminary springs.

We are privileged to share in a small but substantial way in a program of training Guianese for the gospel ministry. Won't you help?

THE PASTOR'S READING - PART III
GENERAL

(A special word of thanks to Professor Seltzer for this contribution to the series of articles on the reading for the pastor.)

It is presumed that the seminarian will have become acquainted with the important works in the several fields of theology while he is a student: works of major importance, as well as those of an ephemeral quality. These works will continue to serve for study and reference when he leaves the seminary for a parish. Journals and book reviews will supplement these books for further work in areas of special interest, perhaps in liturgy and church art.

The minister will doubtless wish to have materials for study and interest in fields other than these particular areas. The following suggestions may be useful.

Biographies, particularly of leaders in the church, are especially rewarding. F. Holmes Dudden's biography of Gregory the Great, and the Life of William Lawrence have left indelible impressions of great Christian personalities upon this writer. In these lives are mirrored the ideals and struggles of great spirits to achieve the fulness of a Christian service. It is good to have a large and nourishing biography somewhere on your desk, to which you may turn in moments that are free.

Journals of contemporary events: The New York Times (daily) for full news coverage; The New York Times Book Review, for knowledge of the world of books (separate subscriptions are available for this); a general religious magazine, such as The Christian Century; a general news digest, such as Time.

Books in general fields, fiction and non-fiction, according to one's interest: much in the human scene is reflected in the publications in general fields. Church people are reading
(continued page 2, column 2.)

Pardon me while I continue to dwell on the TV program about ecumenicity a couple of weeks back; there was so much worthy of further note! One of these was the appearance of Hans Asmussen.

This theologian is one of a number of German Lutherans who have begun to do more than merely deplore the separation of Evangelical and Roman Christendom. For many years he has been active in the Sammlung ('gathering') movement, an organization to promote a truly catholic theology within the Evangelical churches and to foster conversations with Roman theologians. The theological principles of this movement are now available in English in The Unfinished Reformation.

This book is valuable for the view it gives of progress in ecumenicity in Germany. One of the authors (besides Asmussen) is Max Lackmann, who has gone a step further now in the organization of "The League for Evangelical - Catholic Reunion". He will be here on campus as my guest on March 25, when I hope he will be able to speak about his work to those who may be interested. I quote from page 109 of the book, Lackmann's article, to give you something of the tenor of his thought:

"Regardless of our right to speak from outside' since the Reformation..., would not our Catholic brethren be more readily attentive to our 'Evangelical ideals and concerns' if the lost principles of Catholic life were again discovered and accepted among us, and if Evangelical Christians made it known that their contra is to be understood only as proceeding from a profound Catholic Christianity with and for the Church of Rome?"

George Weckman

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Pastor's Reading - con't.
these books, and the minister must have an acquaintance with them if he is to understand the thoughts and mores of his people. Such reading is not only for relaxation for the minister; it may be regarded as purposeful relaxation.

The older "image" of the pastor in the community was that of a learned man (Gelehrter) and a spiritual man (der Geistliche). Perhaps the image has grown dim today. But the minister's reading can help him to rise to the full stature of the servant of Christ and the Church.

LEBANESE REVOLT (Continued)

The P.P.S. calls for the unification of the countries which are in the area of the old Syrian Empire of Biblical times. Such a union would include Iraq, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. The one important country excluded: Egypt (and Nasser). According to the P.P.S. Egypt is a non-Arab country made up of a peculiar race of people alien to the people of the Fertile Crescent.

"A second important tenet of this party is that it divorces politics from religion. This has led to the charge (probably true) that it is in reality atheistic and anti-religious. It is reported that the leaders of the P.P.S. have said that anyone who believes in Mohammed is a fool, and anyone who believes in Christ is a bigger fool. This position leads to the alienation of the P.P.S. from several important groups: Lebanese Christians who fear unification with predominantly Moslem countries, the Moslem Arabs who consider Nasser the savior of the Arab world and defender of the true religion of the Prophet, and finally those who are patriotic and love and respect the Republic of Lebanon; for the P.P.S. also says that anyone who is patriotic to his country is a fool - unless he is patriotic to the el Shams (the sun) - the new Syria.

"The members of the party are trained to be soldiers of a particular fanaticism, even more so than the Communists or Nazis. Although their political philosophy is unclear, they seem to be violent anti-Communists. It's possible that this may appeal to some western powers, and this may have influenced the P.P.S.'s backing of the attempted coup. Thus, the story is even more complicated that it at first seems.

"Immediately after the attempted revolt there were cries that there were British war ships off the coast of Lebanon and were in contact with the P.P.S. Although this seems at first dubious, almost everyone believes that the British actively support the P.P.S. in their bid for power. The British vigorously deny any involvement in the recent revolt - perhaps too vigorously. At any rate, it pays to have an American passport now and not a British one; people in the villages say the Americans have a good heart but the British are always meddling. But even Americans are looked

upon with some suspicion.

"Another question is, Is Jordan a puppet government of Great Britain and was King Hussein a supporter of the P.P.S. in the recent revolt? Most people think so. Relations between Jordan and Lebanon have become quite strained for the first time in the history of the two nations. Recently Hussein appointed a new prime minister who is an avowed supporter of the P.P.S. It is unclear what the results of this will be.

"One of the consequences of the whole affair has been the arrest and detention of many supporters of the P.P.S. Tragically a large number of Palestinian refugees are involved. A group that is always discontented and lost in a country that is loathe to accept them, they are ever ready to find new solutions to their problems and quickly accept those who promise to regain their homeland in Israel. Since they are disillusioned by the unfulfilled promises of Nasser, it seems natural for them to turn to the P.P.S. Now many of them are in jail and the Lebanese people are even more suspicious and resentful of their presence.

"This is the story of another "comic opera" revolution in the Middle East. It may also be a segment of a continuing struggle as old as history itself between the powers of the Nile and those of the Fertile Crescent."

Tom McClellan

OH NO!

The following is an actual advertisement for a Lutheran college, taken from the memorial issue of The Indicator published by Mt. Airy Seminary in 1889:

ROANOKE COLLEGE

In the Virginia Mountains

Thirty-Seventh Year, 1889-90

Several Full Courses for Degrees. Good Business Department. Special Attention to English. French and German spoken. Library 17,000 volumes. Best moral, social and religious influence. Five churches in Salem. NO BAR-ROOMS. Healthful climate - mild winters. Expenses for nine months, \$150. to \$195. (including fees, board, etc.) Students from 16 states, Indian Territory, and Japan. Illustrated catalogue free.

PH: America is great because she is good.

(Compliments-Martin E. Marty)

Book Review:

The Last Temptation of Christ by Nikos Kazantzakis (Bantam Books)

The Last Temptation of Christ is a novel which vividly portrays the humanity of Christ. In a sense, this book is an autobiography of the author's own struggle or of any Christian's struggle between his own will and the will of God.

The Last Temptation has been called heretical, which it may very well be. But the image of Jesus which dominates the book is still a visual masterpiece. He is portrayed as a sensitive young man in love with life, who just wants to settle down in the local carpenter's shop with a wife and family. But he can find no peace in this role, for he is confronted by the will of God, vividly symbolized by the haunting figure of an angel with the fierce head and piercing eyes of an eagle. This is the Jesus of Nazareth with whom the reader struggles in his agony. Should he conform to the will of the Father which leads to the cross or should he live the life which his human desires cry out for?

The portrayal of the miracles, the temptations and the parables are likewise a struggle between the human doubts of Jesus and the will of God which works through him. Even on the cross he experiences temptation and renounces the Father's will in one final dream of living for himself. But in this "last temptation" Jesus is triumphant, and the book ends with the cry of victory, "It is accomplished!"

Besides its graphic portrayal of the humanity of Jesus, The Last Temptation of Christ contains many insights into the message which he brought. In my own mind the parable of Lazarus and the rich man stands out. Kazantzakis carries the story behind the gospel version when Lazarus addresses God saying:

"God, how can anyone be happy in Paradise when he knows that there is a man - a soul - roasting for all eternity? Refresh him, Lord, that I may be refreshed. Deliver him, Lord, that I may be delivered."...God heard his thought and was glad. "Lazarus beloved," He said, "go down; take the thirster by the hand. My fountains are inexhaustible."

A controversial point, perhaps, but just one point among many that make this book worth adding to one's library.

Jon Parsons

Editorial Notes:

** If nothing else, The Seminarian is getting notoriety. In the Epiphany 1962 issue of Church Renewal, a newsletter published by Una Sancta Press, recognition is made that we are publishing something down here in Mt. Airy which is not to be confused with "the journal of the same name published by Concordia Seminary, St. Louis." If one of our columnists had not been mentioned, we would have thought our only claim to fame was that we should not be confused with Concordia's journal. (Heaven help us if we were!)

In the same issue is a letter that bears reprinting here from two Roman seminar-ians:

Brothers in Christ,

Concerning two items in your welcome publication: we were amazed to read of Lutherans celebrating the Eucharist in Latin at St. Gregory of Nyssa, Chicago. It's time One Holy Catholic Church admits Martin Luther was 100% correct in demanding the Liturgy in the people's language. Our unity is (and will be) in the Holy Spirit and the Word, not in the tongue!

You described the ecumenical theology in the Atonement publication as, "...generally of the unmodified return-to-Mother variety." Ouch! We concur, it is indeed. We think Dr. Hans Küng expresses the true Catholic attitude when he says, "Reunion will be neither a Protestant 'return' nor a Catholic 'capitulation' but a brotherly approach on both sides..."

Jan 3, 1962

Company of St Paul
(Secular Institute)
Rome, Italy

Two comments: Strange, isn't it, how the tables turn? and
From little acorns mighty oaks do grow.

** Kudos are due this week: First, to our professors who keep writing and speaking for the benefit of the whole Church (notably Dr. Reumann in The Lutheran this week.) Second, to the Worship Committee and Faculty for the new statement. Now if we use it in a real spirit of love and mutual acceptance -- that will be the proof of the pudding.