



Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem ®
* *Knights of Malta* *

May
2004

Chancellor's Update

A Speaker from the Recent Past

In the previous issue we questioned if there was anyone to speak out against the unbelievable culture of our time. It appears that someone did speak out when the disease was only first appearing. The speaker was Bishop Cuthbert O’Gara whose insight was based not solely on textbook knowledge, but also by having lived under adverse conditions. During his twenty-eight years in China he witnessed famine, occupation by the Japanese, takeover by the Chinese Communists and suffered two years of hunger and psychological torture in a filthy prison, where he was constantly watched by Communist guards.

After being expelled from China he came to the United States where he occasionally gave speeches to various Catholic and anti-Communist organizations. The Catholic press carried articles about his appearances, but even though he spoke during the height of the Cold War, he never attained the recognition of his colleague bishops. What was his message? He said that, when the Communists troops took over China, they were followed by the propaganda corps. All residents were organized into specific groups and forced to attend a series of lectures. He expected the first lecture to be on the merits of communism or on the principles of Marx or Stalin, but instead the people were told how man descended from the ape! Why? Once Darwinism destroys the belief in God, in the human soul and in the afterlife, a vacuum is created and Communism can enter to fill that void.

As he continued speaking to various groups in the United States about communism, he began to sense indifferentism and often antagonism toward his message, even at Catholic colleges. Due to his aroused curiosity he began a serious study of what was causing this in the United States. His study eventually centered on secularism and liberalism and learned that their advocates as early as the 1840’s promoted no religious teaching or use of the Bible in public schools; abolition of theological oaths in government and courts; and abrogation of laws based on Christian morality. Coincidentally, at almost the same time Horace Mann, the father of public education in the U. S., was promoting public schools with no religious influence. As Mann’s movement started growing, even President Lincoln reminded the American people not to forget God and His blessings.

Later in the Twentieth Century John Dewey, the Apostle of Thomas Mann, viewed man as merely a biological organism. His philosophy contains no absolutes. Man must grow by adaptation to his present problems and environment (Ed. Note: Situation Ethics?). In other words Dewey promoted Secularism or Atheism.

The good bishop wrote, “Secularism has already made tremendous inroads into every phase of our national existence. Business and government, labor and education, religion, the arts, the sciences, all have felt its base impact. No department of our national life is immune. Consciously or unconsciously, Secularism is being preached and taught in our secular universities and who will dare deny that this evil influence is not felt even in the supposedly guarded environs of our Catholic institutions of higher learning. Most terrible of all, Secularism is apotheosized (deified) in the lives of our people. Every organ of communication – the stage, television, radio, moving pictures, the press – all carry their message of raw materialism. No spiritual values; no fixed canons of morality; what the majority (sic) want and do determines the acceptable norms of conduct. Dare to question these norms and you are at once branded as old-fashioned and reactionary – a square. The incantation of Secularism is everywhere being dinned into our ears – eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.

“Basically, philosophically, Communism and Secularism are one; both are predicated on the same premise – the materialistic concept of life. They are one in their materialism, one in their pragmatism, one in their atheism. It is high time that our American people, especially our Catholic people, awoke to this fact and realized its malevolent implications.

“If man is all animal, if there is nothing in his make-up but matter, if man’s soul is not immortal, if man’s only motivation is economic and pleasure seeking – no eternal destiny, no absolutes, no God, - then Kosygin and Brezhnev and Mao Tse Tung are right and differ from our American secularists only in being more logical in following a false philosophy to its ultimate, hideous conclusion: the complete degradation of the human person.

“In other words, we are nourishing in our breast at home the very viper whose head, with so much fanfare and sinister hypocrisy, we set out to crush in the far corners of the globe.” (The Surrender to Secularism, The Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation, 1967).

The good bishop concluded by asking, “Is the West Still Christian?” “Which Way Americans?”

A voice spoke; some heard and continued to promote Catholicism and Christianity. Years passed, many died and others in smaller numbers continued to live the Faith. Many Catholic institutions of higher learning in reality became secularized and many Catholic schools closed. Is there any question why today man is viewed as just another beast in the forest? Whither America? Whither Europe? Whither Christian civilization?

To be continued

Annual Retreat

Plans for our annual retreat on Sunday, August 1, 2004 are being finalized. Please reserve the date. Details will follow.

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Jerusalem 1048-1291, Cyprus 1291-1310, Rhodes 1311-1523, Malta 1530-1798, Russia 1798-1907, U.S.A. 1908-