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Polish Priests Enjoy Greater Freedom, But Not Outside Churches

WARSAW (UPI)—Polish priests still must walk warily when they step outside their church doors.

In the care of souls, they have the greatest religious freedom of any Communist country. But the state jealously guards the line between spiritual and civil activities.

The days of secret arrests and political persecution of priests, including even Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, disappeared with other

harsh measures of the Stalinist era after October, 1956.

Church and state reached a working agreement two years ago and have maintained it despite occasional tension. But the state is still quick to act against any priest who appears to carry religion too far outside the church.

Early in February, a nationally-known priest, Father Marian Pirozynski, was sentenced to two years imprisonment. A self-appointed watchdog over observance of church dogma, Father Pirozynski had periodically since pre-war days lashed out at any weakening of the church. His targets were usually fellow priests, nuns, and their congregations.

He was found guilty by a Warsaw court of illegally buying rationed newspaper for his bimonthly "Homo Dei," of publishing the journal and other religious writings without official permission, of failing to obtain censorship approval of some publications, of bribing and corrupting state employees in printing plants and of minor foreign currency offenses.

Both judge and prosecutor stressed the case had "no political background" and there was no question of "anti-state texts" in the publications. The trial, which was public, was to be regarded simply as a civil and criminal code action.

The conviction followed the new pattern by which the Polish state, without mounting any major ideological attack on the church, makes it clear to the clergy where its freedom of spiritual action ends.

Father Pirozynski was the first priest sentenced to a prison term in 1959, but a scattering of similar trials, of less prominent clergymen, can be expected through the year. The charges, if they follow the course of 1958, are likely to be extremely varied, but few of the indictments will give any impression of an outright challenge to the defendants' religious work.

In the last quarter of 1958, at least seven priests were convicted by Polish courts. At least three priests are awaiting trial. These were some of the cases:

Fathers Tadeusz Podkowa and J. Wojcik, of villages in central Kielce Province, were sentenced to three months and one month respectively for inciting their parishioners to resist the removal of crucifixes from schoolrooms. Display of religious objects in schools is forbidden as an infringement of the rights of non-believers by the 1956 church-state agreement.

Father Karol Mazur of a southeastern mountain parish was given an eight-months suspended sentence for threatening to refuse absolution and benediction to any of his congregation who belonged to the Polish United Workers (Communist) Party.

Father Kazimierz Biernacki was found guilty of inciting his congregation to a battle with adherents of the Nationalist Polish Catholic Church, and given a one-year suspended sentence.

For trying to force non-believers to come to church, Father Tadeusz Jodkowski went to prison for six months.

Father Wladyslaw Tarkowski was found guilty of responsibility for erection of a faulty scaffolding in his church in the village of Tysowice. The scaffolding collapsed, killing nine persons and injuring 19.

Preaching a "provocative and untrue sermon which could damage relations between the church and state" brought a six-months suspended sentence to Father Tadeusz Moskal of Szczecin (Stettin).

FUND-RAISING EXPEDITION

MINEOLA, N.Y. (UPI) — When police arrested William Obergessell, 19, on burglary charges, they said he told them he needed the money to pay for a lawyer who was representing him in another burglary case.

Science Notebook

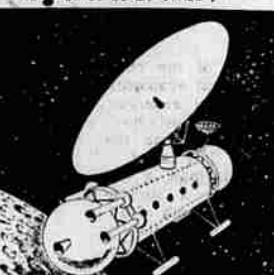
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Chance Of Woman Being US President Still Vague

WASHINGTON (UPI) — "Men will walk on the moon before a woman is elected president of the United States."

That view, expressed by a top GOP woman politician, is the most prevalent one held by politicians of each sex in both major parties today, in spite of the growing number of women in the once all-male political field.

However, some, like Mrs. Clare B. Williams, author of the remark and assistant chairman and director of women's activities of the Republican National Committee, think the statement doesn't rule out a "Madame President" in the future.

But others, most males too wise in the ways of politics to be quoted by name, doubt that woman will ever hold down the nation's No. 1 job even if science does put a man on the moon.

Perhaps the most emphatic comment against the idea of a woman in the White House came from a world-famous capital figure (male) who, declining to be quoted, complained, "There are enough things in the world to worry about today without thinking of a woman as president."

Mrs. Williams sees "no possibility" of a president in petticoats for the next 50 years. But eventually, she said, "when an outstanding woman comes along, who has training for the job equal to any man's, the day will come."

That day won't arrive, she added, until women have increased their activity in state and federal governments, developed a "leadership potential," and generally built up a confidence in their own abilities.

Today, she said, women's confidence is undermined from the time they are little girls, listening to admonitions that only men can "use a hammer, fly an airplane, keep track of money"—or be president.

When a woman does win nomination and gets elected to the presidency, Mrs. Williams said "it will seem a logical development and nothing revolutionary."

Mrs. Williams' counterpart on the Democratic National Committee, Mrs. Katie Louchheim, agreed that if the right woman comes along at the right time she could be elected chief executive.

But Mrs. Louchheim doubted it will happen in her lifetime.

On the male side, few wanted to take the question seriously. Sen. Prescott Bush (R-Conn.) for example, quipped in the only comment he chose to be quoted on,

"I doubt that during my lifetime the country will be fortunate enough to have a president of the feminine sex."

Sen. John L. McClellan (D-Ark.) and other gentlemanly Southerners

The most frequently expressed doubt, most frequently expressed serious doubts about a woman presidents were that a woman's role as mother, wife and housewife is too great an obstacle for a married woman to overcome en route to the White House. And, the politicians agreed, lack of a family would be too great a handicap for an unmarried woman to overcome if her name ever got on a ballot.

Early Dental Check Urged

NEW YORK (UPI)—A child's first visit to the dentist should never be delayed past the age of three, whether the youngster seems to need dental care or not.

This visit, says the American Dental Association, can be in the nature of a social call, giving the child a chance to get acquainted with the dentist on terms that do not associate him with discomfort or pain.

The idea is to get the stage for providing the youngster with dental care in those early years when the foundation is laid for healthy teeth throughout life.

Brushing should also begin at an early age, dentists agree, even though the first teeth will be later replaced. This establishes a pattern of dental care and prepares the child for the "six-year" molars, which are permanent teeth.

There are "kid-sized" toothbrushes and "kid-sized" toothpaste tubes to help interest the child in taking care of his teeth when it counts most.

For dentists say that the child without any home training and whose first visit to the dentist is put off until he's six, seven or even twelve years old is the one most likely to have tooth trouble later on.

MORNING AFTER

BUFFALO, N.Y. (UPI) — Karen Muldoon, 11, fell and broke her left wrist on the day after Thanksgiving, but managed to get the cast off in time for Christmas. The day after Christmas she fell and broke her right wrist.

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