

in England, by its silence, is willing to accept or tolerate the racism of the South African government if it remains silent upon this issue. This is no small matter. For one thing, the Catholic Church's voice is quite a powerful one. It could really make some practical difference to policy. For another, black people in England will be more than ever convinced that the Catholic Church here is not against racism: is on the other side, against them.

No amount of doing good by stealth to black people in England can remedy this. No parish suppers, multi-racial youth clubs sponsored by kindly white Catholics—even if we had a lot of these, which we do not—no Catholic housing aid, even, can wipe out the memory that the Catholic Church chose to keep quiet when the situation invited a statement about racism. A statement is not a gesture that costs diocesan funds money. Its cost would be this: that if the bishops spoke out unequivocally about racism, by commenting on the arms issue instead of making broad statements about brotherly love that the listener can comfortably interpret in his own manner, there would be violent contention within the church. There are a lot of white Catholics with racist beliefs who would be very angry. Some of these would be prosperous and well-known laymen, the sort of people whose movements the *Catholic Herald* faithfully chronicles, along with news of Bing Crosby and Tessie O'Shea, just because they are (a) Catholics and (b) famous. There would be a rift within the Church more bitter than the rift between proponents of the old liturgy and the new. But I personally believe that the time is far overdue for the Catholic Church in England to make it plain: is racism a doctrine totally opposed to the Christian doctrine or is it not? Because the longer we keep silent on this matter, the more sure it is that the Catholic Church will find itself giving way to racist pressures until it is irrevocably on the wrong side of the most serious moral question of our time.

Whatever Became of Artukovitch? Reflections on a Croatian crusade by Hubert Butler

I.

I have been reading an 84-page pamphlet called 'Artukovitch, the Himmler of Yugoslavia', by three New Yorkers, called Gaffney, Starchevitch and McHugh. Artukovitch was Minister of the Interior, 1941 to 1945, under the dictator Pavelitch in the independent state of Croatia. Very few people have heard of him, yet if his story were told with remorseless candour, we would have a picture not only of

Croatia twenty years ago, but of all Christendom in our century. Everything that the New Yorkers relate should be already known to us, except for one startling paragraph. It is an extract from a memoir by Artukovitch himself. After describing how he escaped to Austria and Switzerland in 1945, he goes on:

‘I stayed in Switzerland until July 1947. Then with the knowledge of the Swiss Ministry of Justice I obtained personal documents for myself and my family, which enabled us to travel to Ireland. Using the name of Anitch, we stayed there until 15th July, 1948. When our Swiss documents expired, the Irish issued new papers and under Irish papers we obtained a visa for entry into the U.S.A.’

So evidently we in Ireland, had sheltered this notable man for a whole year. He was not, like Eichmann, a humble executive, but himself a maker of history, dedicated to the extermination not of Jews alone, but also of his fellow-Christians, the Serbian Orthodox. He himself in the spring of 1941 introduced and signed the laws, which expelled them from Zagreb, confiscated their property and imposed the death penalty on those who sheltered them. He established the twenty concentration camps, in which they were exterminated. Why do we know so little about his sojourn among us? Did he stay in a villa at Foxrock or in lodgings at Bundoran or in some secluded midland cloister? And who looked after him? The Red Cross? And did we cherish him because he presented himself to us as a Christian refugee from godless Communism? That seems to me rather likely.

Nowadays we usually estimate cruelty by statistics and Gaffney and Co. use the figures normally recorded for Croatia by Jewish and Orthodox writers, that is to say, 30,000 Jews and 750,000 Orthodox massacred, 240,000 Orthodox forcibly converted to Catholicism. Even if these figures are exaggerated, it was the most bloodthirsty religio-racial crusade in history, far surpassing anything achieved by Cromwell and the Spanish Inquisitors. I am sorry that Gaffney and Co. give so many photographs of headless babies, of disembowelled shopkeepers, of burning beards soaked in kerosene, for Artukovitch was, like Himmler, a ‘desk-murderer’, who deplored the disorderly and sadistic way in which his instructions were carried out. He was respectable and it is the correlation of respectability and crime that nowadays has to be so carefully investigated.

The three writers tell Artukovitch’s story with much emotion, because, as is plain, they wanted him extradited and hanged. But in itself the story is of the highest importance, for no earlier crusade has been so richly documented. If the abundant material were coolly and carefully studied, how much could we learn about human weakness and hypocrisy! We could observe how adroitly religion can be used in the service of crime. When Pavelitch and Artukovitch and their armies retreated, they were sure that, on the defeat of

Germany, England and America would turn upon Russia and they could return to Zagreb. Therefore nothing was destroyed, the state documents were stored in the Archiepiscopal Palace, the gold (dentures, wrist-watches and all) was hidden below the deaf and dumb confessional in the Franciscan monastery and cemented over by the friars themselves. The newspapers of the time, secular and ecclesiastical, are still to be seen in the Municipal Library, but this huge pile of documents, the Rosetta stone of Christian corruption, has not yet been effectively deciphered.

These terrible Church papers, 1941 to 1945, should destroy forever our faith in these diplomatic prelates, often good and kindly men, who believe that at all costs the ecclesiastical fabric, its schools and rules, its ancient privileges and powers, should be preserved. The clerical editors published the Aryan laws, the accounts of the forced conversions, without protest, and endless photographs of Pavelitch's visits to seminaries and convents and the ecstatic speeches of welcome with which he was greeted. Turn, for example, to *Katolicki Tjednik* (the Catholic weekly), Christmas 1941, and read the 26-verse 'Ode To Pavelitch', in which Archbishop Sharitch praises him for his measures against Serbs and Jews. Examine the Protestant papers and you will find the same story. Is it not clear that in times like those the church doors should be shut, the church newspapers closed down, and Christians, who believe that we should love our neighbours as ourselves, should go underground and try to build up a new faith in the catacombs?

Why did our professional historians not deal with all this long ago? They seem to wait till history is dead before they dare to touch it. But does a good surgeon only operate on corpses? They have wholly misinterpreted their functions, for it is their duty to expose the liar before his contagion has spread. While Artukovitch was on his way to Ireland, a Dublin publication told us authoritatively that the massacre of the Serbian Orthodox had never happened. In Count O'Brien's book on Mgr Stepinac, page 15, we read:

'They (the Orthodox) were offered by Pavelitch the choice between conversion to the Catholic faith or death. . . . But the Catholic Church as a whole, all her bishops and the overwhelming majority of her priests, led by the Archbishop of Zagreb, made this evil plan impossible.'

It is odd that, when O'Brien wrote this, he should not have known how passionately Archbishop Sharitch of Bosnia had supported Pavelitch, he surely knew that Bishop Shimrak, the editor of the leading Church paper, had issued a manifesto in favour of the forced conversions, and how much of 'the evil plan' had been fulfilled. He cannot have been unaware that all the bishops, including the Protestant Dr Popp, had received medals for co-operation from Pavelitch. This, of course, is no proof that they did co-operate,

but they would scarcely have been decorated if their resistance had been public and absolute.

Yet the book has an introduction by the Archbishop of Dublin and on its dust-cover its veracity is commended by two cardinals, three archbishops, four bishops and every Catholic paper in the British Isles. Later it was laid by Cardinal Spellman on the foundation of a new Stepinac Institute in the U.S.A. It was from ignorance, not from complicity, that these prelates applauded the book. They were deeply misled and, *ruat caelum*, they should now admit it.

Some of the correspondence between Artukovitch and Stepinac has been published in English by Richard Pattee and, collating with Gaffney, we see how Stepinac, a brave and merciful though very simple man, was hopelessly compromised by his official connection with the state. It was only his own flock whom he could help, and even them very little. For example, he appealed to Artukovitch on behalf of one of his priests, Father Rihar, who had defied Pavelitch. His failure was absolute, for this is how Artukovitch replied:

'Zagreb. 17th November, 1942. In connection with your esteemed request of 2nd November, 1942 . . . notice is hereby given that Francis Rihar by the decree of this office of 20th April, 1942, No. 26417/1942, was sentenced to forced detention in the concentration camp at Jasenovac for a period of three years . . . because as pastor at Gornja Stubica he did not celebrate a solemn high mass on the anniversary of the founding of the Independent State of Croatia . . . nor did he consent to sing the psalm *Te Deum Laudamus*, saying that it was nowhere prescribed in ecclesiastical usage. . . .'

Stepinac appealed again, but Rihar had been already three months at Jasenovac and, therefore, according to the rules of this camp, he was killed.

How, anyway, could Stepinac defend Father Rihar with any authority, since he himself had done what Rihar refused to do? Gaffney and Co., on page 42, reproduce seven photographs of the celebration of Pavelitch's birthday on 15th June, 1942, and a letter from the Archbishop exhorting his clergy to hold a *Te Deum* after High Mass the following Sunday, 17th June, because of 'Our Glorious Leader'.

Since Pattee omitted this very relevant letter, it is strange that he printed Stepinac's correspondence with Artukovitch about the Jews, for this makes it clear that in acknowledging the authority of Pavelitch, the Archbishop, for diplomatic reasons, felt obliged to accept the terminology of the anti-semites and their human classifications. For example, on 30th May, 1941, he urged Artukovitch 'to separate the Catholic non-Aryans from non-Christian non-Aryans in relation to their social position and in the manner of treating them'.

Much has been written about Communist distortions of history, but only recently has our own inability, as Christians, to report

facts honestly been closely investigated. Now, after twenty years, the dam has burst and the truth, a turbid stream, is inundating our self-complacency and irrigating our self-knowledge. Catholic scholars are leading the way. For example, Professor Gordon Zahn has shown how selective is the documentation on which the biographies of Christian heroes of the resistance is based. Their sermons and speeches were pruned of all the compliments they paid to Hitler and his New Order and no row of dots in the text mark the excision of these now-embarrassing ecstasies.

In the long run, remorseless truth-telling is the best basis for ecumenical harmony. Hitler once explained to Hermann Rauschnig how he intended to use the Churches as his propagandists. 'Why should we quarrel? They will swallow anything provided they can keep their material advantages.' Yet Hitler never succeeded in corrupting the Churches as effectively as did Pavelitch and Artukovitch, who professed to be Christians. We shall not be able to estimate the extent of their success and how it might have been resisted, while a single fact is diplomatically 'forgotten'. It is well known that those who suppress history have to re-live it.

II.

How did Artukovitch (alias Anitch) get to Ireland? I wrote to Yugoslavia, to America, France, Germany and questioned Yugoslavs in Dublin and London. The Yugoslavs, both Communist and anti-Communist, had no information. A friend in London, who had been to Trinity College, Dublin, remembered someone saying: 'I'd like you to meet a very interesting chap called Anitch', but the meeting had never happened. In the end M. Branko Miljus, a former minister of the pre-war government in Belgrade, who now lives in Paris, got some news for me from a friend in Switzerland. If I seem to give too many names and details, it is so that his story can be checked and completed.

The first stage of the journey is fairly well known. Pavelitch and Artukovitch had escaped to Austria, when the Croatian state collapsed. They seem to have been arrested by the British in Salzburg and, after 'a mysterious intervention', released and there was an interval of hiding in monasteries at Sankt Gilgen and Bad Ischl. The Yugoslavs were in hot pursuit, so Pavelitch fled to Rome, disguised as a Spanish priest called Gomez. Artukovitch stayed on till November 1946, when he met the learned Dr Draganovitch, Professor of Theology at Zagreb, who was touring the internment camps with a Vatican passport. He had secured the release of many hundreds of Croat priests, who had fled with Pavelitch. Now he obtained for Artukovitch papers under the name Alojz Anitch and put some money for him in a Swiss bank. Two other priests, Fathers Manditch and Juretitch, also came to his aid. The former, the treasurer to the Franciscan order, controlled a printing press at the

Italian camp of Fermo and assisted the Ustashe (Croatian nationalist) refugees with funds and propaganda. Juretitch had been sent on a mission to Fribourg by Archbishop Stepinac, so he and Manditch, both former students of Fribourg University, were able to secure a welcome there for Artukovitch. Archbishop Sharitch, Pavelitch's poet-champion, had got there ahead of him. Both Draganovitch and Juretitch had been appointed by Mgr Stepinac to the Commission of Five for the Conversion of the Orthodox in November 1941. These three were important people to have as sponsors. The ecclesiastics of Fribourg must have been impressed. They recommended Artukovitch to the police who got him a *permis de séjour*. There were other difficulties, which, according to report, Artukovitch smoothed out by the gift of a Persian carpet to an influential official.

But meanwhile the Federal Police had learnt that Anitch was the war criminal Artukovitch. They told him he had two weeks in which to leave Switzerland. Once more the Franciscans came to his aid. The prior of the Maison Marianum at Fribourg recommended him to the Irish Consulate at Berne. And so it happened that in July 1947 Artukovitch landed with his family on the Isle of Saints, sponsored by the disciples of that saint, who had prayed:

'Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace!
Where there is hatred let me sow love,
Where there is sadness, joy!'

I do not know where Artukovitch spent his Irish year, but one day, as a matter of history, and perhaps of religion, we shall have to know. If Artukovitch had to be carried half-way round the earth on the wings of Christian charity, simply because he favoured the Church, then Christianity is dying. And if now, for ecumenical or other reasons, we are supposed to ask no questions about him, then it is already dead.

On 15th July, 1948, Artukovitch with an Irish identity card left Ireland for the U.S.A. where he settled as a bookkeeper, near his wealthy brother in California, still under the name of Anitch. It was over two years before his true identity was discovered. The Serbian Orthodox were slow to move. Oppressed by the communists at home, dispersed as refugees abroad, they still managed to publish the facts in books and papers in London, Chicago, Paris. In 1950 M. Miljus, and two other prominent monarchist politicians in exile, sent a memorandum to the Fifth Assembly of the United Nations urging it to implement its resolution of December 1946, which had branded genocide as a crime against international law. They asked that its member states should take into custody, till a Commission be appointed to try them, some 120 Croat nationals, who had taken refuge among them. On the long list appended the names of Artukovitch, Archbishop Sharitch, Fathers Draganovitch and Juretitch and many Franciscans were mentioned and some of the

scarcely credible Franciscan story was related. It is stated that a Franciscan had been commandant of Jasenovac, the worst and biggest of Artukovitch's concentration camps for Serbs and Jews (he had personally taken part in murdering the prisoners and Draganovitch, with the rank of Lieut.-Colonel, had been the chaplain). The memorandum relates how the focal centre for the forced conversions and the massacres had been the Franciscan monastery of Shiroko Brijeg in Herzegovina (Artukovitch had been educated there) and how in 1942 a young man who was a law student at the college and a member of the Catholic organisation The Crusaders, had won a prize in a competition for the slaughter of the Orthodox by cutting the throats of 1,360 Serbs with a special knife. The prize had been a gold watch, a silver service, a roast sucking pig and some wine.

How can this be true? One recalls that great hero of Auschwitz, the Polish Franciscan Father Kolbe. But it *was* true and rumours of it had reached Rome. Rushinovitch, Pavelitch's representative at the Vatican, had reported to his Foreign Minister in Zagreb the remarks of Cardinal Tisserant, with whom he had an audience on 5th March, 1942:

'I know for sure that even the Franciscans of Bosnia-Herzegovina behaved atrociously. Father Shimitch, with a revolver in his hand, led an armed gang and destroyed Orthodox churches. No civilized and cultured man, let alone a priest, can behave like that.'

Tisserant had probably got some of his information from the Italian general of the Sassari division at Knin, who had reported that Shimitch had come to him as local representative of the Croatian government and had told him that he had orders to kill all the Serbs. The general had had instructions not to interfere in local politics, so he could only protest. The killing, under Franciscan leadership, had begun. The following year the Superior of the Franciscan Monastery in Knin was decorated by Pavelitch for his military activities with the order of King Zvonimir III.

The Croat bishops themselves were aware of what was happening. The Bishop of Kotor, Dr Butorac, while agreeing that the moment was propitious for mass conversion, wrote to Mgr Stepinac (4th November, 1941) that the wrong type of missionaries were being sent—'priests in whose hands revolvers might better be placed than a crucifix'.

In parenthesis, I should say, how fascinating are Rushinovitch's accounts of his audiences in Rome with Pius XII, with Cardinals Tardini, Montini, Maglione, Sigismondi and Spellman. Only Tisserant, and to a lesser extent Montini, the present Pope, appear to have fully grasped what was happening in Croatia. In Cardinal Ruffini the Ustashe had a firm supporter.

The memorandum made little impression on the United Nations,

since it had no member state behind it. It had accused Tito's government, which *was* a member state, of sheltering many Croat criminals and using them to break down the anti-Communist resistance of the Serbs. However, in 1952 Tito appealed to the U.S.A. for the extradition of Artukovitch. The California Courts to whom the case was referred argued that the extradition treaty of 1901 between U.S.A. and Serbia had never been renewed and that therefore Artukovitch could not be handed over to Yugoslavia. Six years later the Supreme Court rejected this view (by 7 to 1) and decreed that the case must be tried again in California. In the meantime Artukovitch had become a member of the Knights of Columbus and a much-respected figure, who gave lectures to institutes and interviews on TV. When he was arrested again 50,000 Knights sent petitions on his behalf to Congress, and the West Pennsylvania Lodges of the Croatian Catholic Union forwarded a resolution that 'his only crime is his ceaseless fight against Communism' and that he was a champion of the rights and freedoms of all the peoples of the world.

That was the way his counsel, O'Connors and Reynolds, presented him, too, and Father Manditch, who had helped him in Switzerland, was once more by his side, in charge of another printing press and now Superior of the Franciscan Monastery in Drexel Boulevard, Chicago. His papers *Nasha Nada* and *Danica* (*Our Hope* and *Morning Star*) not only supported him, but in their issues of 7th May, 1958, urged their readers to send subscriptions for the Ustashe refugee fund to Artukovitch at his address in Surfside, California.

Another very useful ally was Cardinal Stepinac's secretary, Father Lackovitch, who had sought asylum at Youngstown, Ohio. In Europe Stepinac had been almost beatified for his implacable hostility to Pavelitch and Artukovitch, but now *The Mirror News* of Los Angeles (24th January, 1958) reported Lackovitch as saying that he had seen Artukovitch almost daily and that he had been 'the leading Catholic layman of Croatia and the lay spokesman of Cardinal Stepinac and had consulted him on the moral aspect of every action he took'. The murderers of the Old World had become the martyrs of the New.

The American public was so ill-informed that it was possible to get away with almost anything. Father Lackovitch even made a statement (printed without repudiation by Pattee, page 129) that 200,000 of the converts from Orthodoxy were returning 'with a right intention' to a church, which 'for political reasons' they had been forced to abandon. In fact, of course, the Serbian Orthodox had been in schism for some three centuries before the Protestant Reformation. Cardinal Tisserant, who had a rare tolerance of disagreeable truths, denounced Rushinovitch vigorously, when he tried out this argument on him:

'I am well acquainted with the history of Christianity and to my knowledge Catholics of Roman rite never became Orthodox. . . .

The Germans helped you kill all the priests and you got rid of 350,000 Serbs, before you set up the Croatian Orthodox Church. What right have you to accuse others and keep on telling us that you are guardians of culture and the faith? In the war with the Turks the Serbs did just as much for Catholicism as you did and perhaps more. But it was the Croats, all the same, who got the title of Antemurale Christianitatis.'

When I was in California, I went to see Father Mrvicin of the Serbian Orthodox Cathedral at West Garvey, near Los Angeles and asked him why the Orthodox and the Jews of California had tolerated so many lies. He told me that at the time of the extradition trial he had circularized close on a thousand Serbs, who must have known well about Artukovitch, urging them to give evidence, but very few had replied. Life in U.S.A. was hard for them as refugees, they did not want to affront a powerful community, Macarthyism was not yet dead and they were shy of associating themselves with an appeal that came from a Communist country. A naturalized American, who took the matter up, died violently and mysteriously.

As for the Jews, though 30,000 with their 47 Rabbis had been murdered in Croatia, Croatia was far away, and many who had escaped to U.S.A. had owed their safety to holding their tongues. Even so, the Jewish War Veterans of California, *The Valley Jewish News* and some Gentile papers like *The Daily Signal* of California came out against Artukovitch. But most Americans felt for the unknown refugee and his five children the easy charity of indifference. Finally the Yugoslav government did some profitable deals with the U.S.A. and became indifferent, too. It is now interested only in proving that Artukovitch was a helpless stooge of the Nazis and that therefore the Bonn government should pay compensation to Yugoslavia for the damage that he and the Ustashe had done.

The other day I came across a *History of Croatia*, published by the New York Philosophical Library. The author, Mr Preveden, acknowledges various 'inspiring messages of commendation and encouragement'. One of them comes from 'Dr Andrija Artukovitch of Los Angeles'. He is quite a public figure. He may have changed his address but his telephone number used to be Plymouth 5-1147.

Not many people now want him hanged and there would not be much point in it. He was an insignificant man, who got his chance because there had been a great breakdown in the machinery of Christianity and he was able to pose as its protector. Why did this breakdown occur? Can it be repaired and, if so, how? So long as we are obliged to pretend that the breakdown did not happen, we shall never find out.

Postscript

Since I wrote this, there has been an easing of tension between Communism and Christianity, most notably in Yugoslavia, where

diplomatic relations with the Vatican have been resumed and there has been friendship between Catholic and Orthodox. For example, in a Christmas message, Bishop Pichler begged forgiveness of the Orthodox Church and their Serbian brothers for all the wrongs done to them and funds have been raised by Catholics to restore the destroyed Orthodox churches.

Some of the leading Orthodox are not wholly happy about all this. Is it spontaneous or government inspired? Is it possible that Tito fears the deep-rooted and passionate nationalism of the Orthodox more than Catholic universalism, which can be manipulated by external arrangements? Under the amnesty to political offenders, many Ustashe have returned home, notably Father Draganovitch, one of the five 'regulators' of the Forced Conversions, who escorted Pavelitch and Artukovitch to safety. He is in a monastery near Sarajevo editing the Schematisam, a sort of ecclesiastical year-book, whose publication has been suspended since 1939. Some of his returned colleagues are more active politically.

There is, of course, everything to be said for peace and conciliation but the brotherly love that is brought about by diplomatic manoeuvres is often a little suspect.

Lead Us Not into Temptation by Aelred Baker, O.S.B.

Liturgy is a great thing for sending people to sleep. It does not matter how archaic a word or phrase in the liturgy is, or obscure or even downright nonsense, it can still be said, provided it is said or sung often enough. Witness the remarkable lines of some popular hymns. This is even true of such an exalted thing as the Lord's Prayer, which has been said somewhere in the liturgy from the earliest times.

Englishmen still say 'hallowed' long after the word has gone out of current use, largely because Englishmen have always said 'hallowed' since at least the days of King Alfred. This is not an English eccentricity. The Greeks have always recited the Lord's Prayer with the word *epiousios*, which is known to have been unintelligible to second-century Christians. Nobody then and nobody since has ever heard of this word in any other context, and nobody is really sure what it means. And yet for century after century the Greeks have gone on saying it.

If this is so of single words, it is more so with whole phrases. The meaning of the line 'lead us not into temptation' is no less obscure