

Discussion on the Vatican and the Holocaust

by Allan Carter

Could the Vatican have stopped the Holocaust? According to Dr. John Conway it couldn't have. However, it may have been able to slow down the pace of anti-semitic views during World War II.

Conway and many other authorities on Vatican diplomacy were in Fredericton on Thanksgiving weekend for a symposium called "The Holy See in the Modern Age: Vatican Diplomacy in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries."

Conway's discussion was on "The Vatican, Germany, and the Holocaust."

Since Conway is an Anglican he made it very clear that his studies and conclusions were not dictated by what he termed as "in-house loyalty."

Discussing the procedure of studying the topic historically, Conway mentioned that as a result of criticisms directed at the church in the 1960's, the Vatican decided to publish the archival documents relevant to the Holocaust.

In addition to the publication a new openness was apparent in the Vatican towards dealing with such issues. Conway described the change as a welcome one which added "greatly to our understanding."

But, the "myth-making" did not end with the Vatican's new stance, in fact it stimulated it. One such myth, Conway said, is the view that "if only the Pope had spoken out, the Holocaust wouldn't have happened." Conway believes this view is "historically unattainable."

"It is wishful thinking to believe that the Pope could have waved a magic wand and solved the problem," said

UNB health plan switches to Blue Cross quick-pay system

by Kelley McDermott

The health and medical benefits of full-time UNB students will be covered by Blue Cross for the 1991-92 year.

This comes as a surprise to some students, because many expected to be covered by the Mutual Life Plan upon which a referendum was held last March during the Student Union elections.

According to Jim MacGee, a SU Business Rep, who is in charge of the Health Plan, the main reason that the Blue Cross was chosen is because its plan includes an indirect quick pay system which the Mutual Life Plan does not have.

An indirect quick pay system enables the student to receive an immediate refund of 80% of the cost of a prescription upon bringing the receipt to the Blue Cross Office on Priestman Street.

Before students can take advantage of their health plan,

Conway.

The myth-making, however, was also done by the Catholics, stressed Conway. Many tried to argue that the German

Conway said that it would naturally offend Jews to see churches and monasteries in the extermination camps. However, he feels that there is a "belief that this place must be holy" and that it is a "sad fact that Jews and Christians must fight about what is holy."

Thomas Kuttner, a UNB professor and chair of the discussion on Sunday, said that through the Vatican his Jewish family was able to get to America during World War II.

He believes that many of the Jews today want the Church to recognize the grievous errors it made during the Holocaust rather than justify them.

Kuttner argues that no historian can say that if the Vatican did oppose the Nazi regime it would have made the situation worse for the Jews.

Conway admits that such a view is only speculation. However, he points out that Pius XII knew that "it was not him that would pay the price" for his opposition but the Jews.

Professor Conway is from the University of British Columbia. The discussion, which was held at the Kingsclear Hotel and Resort on October 11, was chaired by Dr. Gilbert Allardye, a history professor at UNB.

Other discussions which were held during the symposium included "Vatican Diplomacy in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries", "Relations with Eastern and Western Europe", "The Vatican and the Middle East", and "The Vatican and the

United States"

The symposium was organized by Peter C. Kent, UNB's Dean of Arts and John F. Pollard of Anglia College, Great Britain. Catholics were also victims of Nazism and that they were as innocent as the Jews. Conway described the view which maintains that Catholics and other Christians were also the oppressed during the Holocaust as the "amnesia view."

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But Conway stressed that the views the Vatican held concerning the Nazi regime were not only seen in the Vatican. "Everybody was enthusiastic with the new era which protected and restored

Germany's name," Conway said. He believes that there was an enormous danger in these enthusiastic attitudes which were promoted through nationalistic views.

While the Vatican may have signed the Concordat in order to "stabilize the whole situation," this approval of the Nazi regime made it difficult for any church to argue that Nazism was wrong.

Therefore there was no significant Catholic opposition to the Nazis. And the few Catholics who did protest the Nazi movement or try to help the Jews were either expelled or forced into silence by the Vatican

Conway believes that for some time there was considerable room for opposition against Hitler and the Nazi regime. In fact, he feels it is conceivable that if the Vatican had opposed the Nazi regime "it could have had an influence on the pace of anti-semitism."

There was a "complete paradox" in the Catholic Church, said Conway. Some Catholic authorities supported Hitler while others were helping the Jews to immigrate.

"There was nothing done to contradict the wide-spread anti-semitic views." Conway

described the attitude of the Catholics by stating that if the "Jews were not of their [Catholic] flock, they had no particular obligation towards them."

In discussing Pius XII's role during the Holocaust, Conway argued that "Pius XII did not wish to risk what little credibility he had. Any outspoken challenge would have even greater challenged the Vatican's credibility."

Despite the "failure mark" that the Vatican has left in the history of the Holocaust, Conway feels that the new stance taken by Vatican is encouraging.

"The statements of Pope John Paul II are irreversible." There is a more "sympathetic approach to Judaism". Conway recognizes that this does "not satisfy everybody." However, he added we are no longer "suffering from the insensitive idea that the only saving way is to revert to Catholicism."

During the discussion period, one member on the panel commented that he had "a very unclear, disturbing picture" when he considers that today in many of the extermination camps "we find crosses and monasteries."

The Singapore Experience at UNB

Press Release

On Tuesday October 8th, The Singapore Students Association held a Singapore Experience in the SUB to bring UNB students and staff the tastes and sights of Singapore.

The students in the group sold tickets for a luncheon of an excellent variety of food from South East Asia, and prepared displays on the historical, social economic and cultural aspects of Singapore.

Professor Shirley Cleave,

who was in attendance at the event, commends the Singapore Students Association for giving UNB the chance to "experience Singapore" here on campus, and says the interest and enthusiasm shown by the crowd that gathered at lunch time was simply a reflection of the pride and enthusiasm of all the students who worked so hard to stage the event.

Janet Lloyd, a fourth year Civil engineering student who attended the Singapore Experience, enthused that she

was amazed by the size and range of the presentation.

Her only complaint was that the unique handicrafts and souvenirs on sale at the event sold out before everyone could get what they wanted.

"UNB has the chance to experience Singapore."

- Prof. Cleave

Lloyd says "all in all, I was very pleased with the display and I'm anxiously awaiting next year's Experience."



Students experience the tastes and sights of Singapore courtesy of the Singapore Students Association.