

Committee met in October 1968 in Paris, and for the first time two different points of view were embodied in the communiqué issued at the end of the meeting. Further attempts to persuade the whole Working Committee to condemn the invasion were, as might have been expected, unsuccessful and in October 1969 Dr Ondra, the General Secretary, was forced to resign. Dr Hromadka immediately declared his support for Dr Ondra and resigned as President. The western churches and the Japanese, and some of the Latin American representatives, withdrew their support from the organization. But the struggle broke the elderly Dr Hromadka and he died shortly after. It was after this that the big expansion in the Third World took place, and the emphasis shifted from east-west to north-south relations. Since that time the majority of western members of the CPC have been individuals who represent no one but themselves; Laslo Revesz' strictures certainly describe some of them. The situation in the eastern churches themselves varies from country to country, a fact of which readers of this journal will not need to be reminded.

Mr Revesz' article has appeared at a moment when the authorities in the eastern bloc, who would like to control the CPC, may be deciding that it is no longer worth the trouble; they need the support of the western churches to make the organization credible, but they would have to concede too much to persuade them to resume their support. But they would not have come to this conclusion if the CPC had been, from the beginning, the docile puppet which Mr Revesz describes.

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*Le Jésuite Clandestin, Mgr Michel d'Herbigny*

by Paul Lesourd, Editions P. Lethielleux, Paris, 1976, 240 pp., 44 Frs.

Was Michel d'Herbigny (1880-1957) the victim of a grave miscarriage of justice, when he was stripped of his episcopal dignity in 1937 and silenced for the rest of his life in a French Jesuit novitiate? Mr Lesourd, a retired history professor, answers that question with a categorical affirmative. He hopes that the biography will initiate the posthumous rehabilitation of this once influential French ecclesiastic who is today all but forgotten.

Betraying a passionate interest in Russia's religious destiny soon after he joined the Jesuits in 1897, d'Herbigny became in the 1920s Pius XI's trusted adviser for Russian affairs. Consultor, and later President, of the Papal Commission for Russia established in 1925, he was secretly made

a bishop in 1926. During two subsequent visits to the Soviet Union he made the unsuccessful attempt, essentially through secret episcopal consecrations, to restore the Catholic hierarchy there, which the Bolsheviks had wiped out in 1923. In 1933, instead of receiving a cardinal's hat as many expected, d'Herbigny suddenly fell into disgrace and was forced into semi-retirement in Belgium. Attributing this blow to the intrigues of the Soviet secret service, the plots of Polish political and ecclesiastical circles, Mussolini's hostility, and the action of the Jesuit General, Lesourd does not seem to admit the possibility that d'Herbigny himself, owing to his numerous indiscretions and errors of judgment, was at least partially responsible for his fall from power in Rome. As for the even more cruel blow that struck d'Herbigny in 1937, Lesourd's description of the events and circumstances tends to obscure rather than to clarify the matter. Whether the Jesuit was innocent or guilty of the wrong doings imputed to him, cannot be established with certainty until the relevant dossiers in the archives of the Vatican and of the Jesuit Curia in Rome become accessible to historical research.

The biography contains some other lacunae. For instance, d'Herbigny believed that the Orthodox Church in Russia was doomed to die under Bolshevik persecution. On the other hand, he thought that the Red regime would be short-lived. In anticipation of the communist collapse, he posted a small army of Jesuit, Redemptorist, and Capuchin missionaries of the Eastern Rite along the Soviet frontier, in Estonia as well as in Poland. More reinforcements were being trained in special West European seminaries. With the arrival of the awaited D-Day that would open the gates, this missionary force was to invade Russia and to embark on her "spiritual conquest" or conversion to Catholicism. At the same time, d'Herbigny and his Commission were also active in the main centres of the Russian emigration, with the aim of encouraging Russian conversions to Catholicism of the Eastern Rite. This policy, inaugurated by d'Herbigny and continued even for some time after his disgrace, proved abortive and was finally disavowed at the Second Vatican Council. Of all this, Lesourd's work says next to nothing.

The book suffers from the major weakness of being based almost exclusively on one-sided and partial sources, namely on an unpublished autobiography by d'Herbigny and on other personal papers emanating from him and his family. Evidently Lesourd has not said the last word on d'Herbigny. But his book possesses the unquestionable merit of reviving the almost faded memory of a significant historical figure, and it is to be hoped that it will incite other historians to shed more light on the fascinating and intriguing life and career of this French Jesuit.