

"Rouse Up Young Christian Workers And To-morrow We Will Go Forward to the Conquest of the World"- Canon Cardijn at Liverpool

CANON CARDIJN TELLS THE "C.H." FUTURE OF THE ENGLISH SPEAKING YCW DEPENDS ON ENGLAND

Founder Of Young Christian Workers Makes Flying Tour Of Industrial Centres

"The conquest for Christ of the working youth of the English-speaking world depends on England, not on Belgium."

This was the last message to the YCW in England given by Canon Cardijn in an exclusive interview with The Catholic Herald just before he left England for Belgium on Tuesday evening. Canon Cardijn arrived by air from America on Thursday last. That evening he addressed a rally of the London and district YCW, at which Archbishop Amigo, Bishop of Southwark, was present. On Friday the Canon addressed the Seminarians Study Week at St. Joseph's College, Beulah Hill. The same day he was entertained to a lunch at which Cardinal Griffin presided.

On Saturday Canon Cardijn visited the Girls YCW Headquarters at Manchester and addressed a meeting. The climax of the Canon's tour was reached on Sunday, when 1,300 YCW boys and girls from all over the country gave their founder a vociferous welcome and listened to his stirring address at the rally in the Picton Hall, Liverpool. On Monday he visited Birmingham.

C.H. reporters followed the Canon's rapid tour, and extract, from their reports are given on this page, page 5 and page 6.

By a Staff Reporter

"The conquest for Christ of the working youth of the English speaking world, now depends on England, not Belgium."

This was Canon Cardijn's last message to the YCW of England when I spoke with him at YCW National H.Q., in Lambeth, on Tuesday. As I left the Canon a taxi was at the door to take him to London Airport, and the evening plane to home, and Brussels.

Despite his whirlwind journey through England, the Canon was looking wonderfully fit and sun-tanned. He walked up and down his room in the Lambeth house where he has lived with the boys of the movement, answering my questions with dynamic energy. He has been profoundly impressed by his visit to this country.

"After my long journey I return to Brussels feeling very happy. and I shall go on to Rome to tell our Holy Father that I have found the movement strong and virile in spirit in England and with immense possibilities in the Americas."

I asked him if he had any special reflections to offer on the YCW Girls' Section in this country.

"I am delighted with it," was the quick and enthusiastic response. "It is most necessary if we are to be effective among the working masses that the girls should play their full part working in unity with the boys. That is the happy condition I have found in this country. At the Salford meeting I was particularly impressed by the girl propagandist."

He went on developing this theme in relation to the YCW Campaign for the Christianising of the Family.

"From these working boys and girls working together for the restoration of the masses in Christ. we will build the Christian families which are the future of the Church. They wage the campaign and they know their lives are part of the campaign. I have been impressed most favourably by the girls as well as the boys of the English YCW."

A TRIBUTE TO THE HIERARCHY

He went on to speak of the Hierarchy and his gratitude for the kindness shown him in this country. "The YCW in England has great advantages in its development, sustained as it is by the encouragement and care of the Hierarchy. I have been deeply touched by the kindness and enthusiasm of His Eminence, Cardinal Griffin, Archbishop Amigo, Bishop Bright and Mgr. Masterson. Their interest and generous support was most inspiring."

What progress was the movement making in the Americas, was my final question.

"It has tremendous possibilities," replied the Canon. "Everywhere I went I found great interest in it. The Bishops, priests and Catholic Action societies are giving it their attention. Last month, at a study week in Costa Rica, which I addressed, priests from 18 countries were present. Great possibilities."

He smiled and then he said; "This is a great and important moment for the Church. I return to Belgium very happy, and I shall go on to Rome to tell the Holy Father of this inspiring journey—to tell him that World JOC can play its part."

CHURCH'S SOCIAL TEACHING NOT YET KNOWN TO WORKERS

Does a Cardinal tell me, 50 years after Rerum Novarum, that the people know nothing of the Church's Social Doctrine? the Pope asked Cardinal Saliege, in February this year. This was among the more interesting revelations made by Canon Cardijn in his address to seminarists from all over England, attending a YCW Study Week at St Joseph's College, Beulah Hill, on Friday morning last.

Recalling his visit to Rome in May this year. Canon Cardijn said:

I spoke to His Holiness the Pope and he is very, very anxious. He sees very well that the future of the Church depends greatly on the attitude of the working people of the Church towards Communism and the Church. The most touching moment of that audience was when the Holy Father repeated the words that Cardinal Saliege had recently said to him.

The Cardinal, Archbishop of Toulouse, was in Rome to receive the Red Hat and had had a private audience, during which he had said: "Holy Father, the greatest danger for the Church to-day is that the working class knows nothing about the social doctrine of the Church, or does not believe in that doctrine."

"Is that possible?" asked the Pope. "Fifty-years after Rerum Novarum, 15 years after Quadragesimo Anno a Cardinal comes to tell me that the people know nothing about the encyclicals, know nothing about the social doctrine of the Church. Is that possible? In the different countries of the world there are people who do not know the social doctrine of the Gospels, of Jesus Christ, of the Popes, that I myself have repeated so often by encyclical, by letter and by the wireless."

Twenty-one years ago Pope Pius XI made the same painful declaration to me. I was speaking to him for the first time, and he asked me what I wanted to ask him. Trembling at this my first interview with the Pope, I answered : "Holy Father, I want to win to the Church the masses of the working classes."

He stopped me and said : "This is the first time anyone has come to me and said he wanted to win the masses. Everyone says I will form an elite. I will form a little group of good Christians.' "It is not an elite that the Church needs, not a small group, but the masses of the working classes, An elite, yes, but an elite from the masses to win the masses, to be in the masses and for the masses, apostles of the masses. The Church to-day needs not an elite of the working class but the masses of the working classes.

Then the Pope said to me the words you have heard repeated so often: "The greatest scandal of the 19th century is that the Church lost the masses of the working class. The greatest service you can do the Church is to win them back. The masses of the working people need the Church, but the Church needs the masses of the working people."

My dear seminarists, we must meditate those words, and the situation of a Church without the working class. A Church of riches, a capitalistic Church is not the Church of Christ. The Church of Christ is for all.

AT THE YCW GIRLS' HEADQUARTERS

"My dear President and YCW Leaden. 36 years ago I came to Manchester to study the problems of working youth. And now I am here again to see how strong our Movement has become. It is a dream come true." So said Canon Cardijn to the leaders of the girl Jocsists at their National Headquarters in Salford on Saturday."

"You Young Christian Workers are the hope of the conquest of the world!"

In Cuba They Look To London.

From a C.H. Reporter

On Friday Canon Cardijn was entertained at lunch, at which Cardinal Griffin presided, and at which the Cardinal formally welcomed Canon Cardijn to England. In his reply the Canon had these significant remarks to make on how people look to England for example and inspiration. "In the colonies," said Canon Cardijn, "I met many priests who spoke of the movement. I was in Hong Kong, where there are many sections for Young Christian workers, and they were all interested in London. In Cuba, too, it was the same thing. Surely,' you will say, 'They look to Spain in Cuba '. But no, again London was the example.

"So I think we have a most important mission, and I am so happy to see what you are doing. After a time I shall return to Rome and I shall tell the Pope all I have seen in the different countries I have visited.

"I think we are going to see a renewal of the spirit of apostolate; I think there is the greatest hope of conquest, if only we can form militants, leaders, apostles in the working environments.

"I become more and more convinced that working people are not Communists at heart. Many of them vote for Communists because they think they will help the working people, and not because they are against religion and the Church. They do not know that the Church would help them in their needs, and so they have turned to Communism."

SOURCES

Joseph Cardijn, *The future of the YCW depends on England*, in *Catholic Herald*, 13 September 1946, p.1-6.

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