

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor's Note: In October, 1966, Dr. Robert Padden published in *The Americas* (XXIII, 199-200) a sharply critical review of a book entitled *The Catholic Church in Mexico, (1519-1910)* (México City: Privately printed, 1965), by Paul V. Murray. In accordance with our policy, I have opened the pages of the magazine to an answer by the author, and a rebuttal by Dr. Padden. No editing has been done, except for obvious errors in typing.

June 5, 1967

Dear. Fr. Kiemen:

I was surprised and embarrassed at the review of my book by Mr. Robert Padden, published in the October, 1966 issue of *The Americas*, pp. 199-200. The tone was so belligerent and personal that I searched my memory to see if I could remember having offended him in any way. I found him listed in the *National Directory of Latin Americanists*. He holds the M. A. and Ph.D. degrees from California (Berkeley) and taught there. Among other interests he lists cultural history of the *mestizaje* in Mexico and the colonial history of New Spain. With such obvious excellent preparation and indicated interest, I can only wonder why he did not cite his sources in his devastating review. Too, I find it disquieting that in 361 pages of text he could not find one thing that was of value, not one thing that a prospective reader could be recommended. Sarcasm, scorn, ridicule, and open or insinuated charges of dishonesty in the use of sources are not commonly found in the pages of your review.

Mr. Padden says I include myself among those lay and religious scholars "who are trying to get a new view of Mexican history . . ." (p. 182). However, the complete quote has to do with the Mexican bishops reply to the Reform Laws and should read: "We who are trying to get a new view of Mexican church history cannot afford to pass over the statements of the opponents of these Liberals [the men of the Reform]—churchmen whose lives and deeds command our admiration and respect."

In the Foreword, I wrote: ". . . I can state what this volume . . . is *not*. It is very definitely not a scholarly monograph, written in carefully weighed 'objective' and 'scientific' language meant for scholars and specialists in the field of Mexican affairs. It is *not* a complete history, copiously documented at every turn, all-embracing, 'definitive,' 'the final word'." What it *was*, I wrote, was "a kind of exploratory study for the general reader, for students, and even for people teaching Mexican History or general church history." "[It] tries to break new ground in its presentation of biographical material on several bishops, other members of the clergy, and laymen." I do not think readers have been defrauded on these counts.

I stated that a "positive approach is emphasized in the facts presented about the work of La Sociedad Católica, the Catholic Social Congress, and the contributions made by Catholics in the field of education, general culture, journalism, social justice and, finally, in national politics. By stressing contributions made by many devoted men and women, it underlines the need to study carefully the work of the lay apostolate from the very day we can mark its modern emergence, at just about the time the men of the

Reform achieve their final success." I truly believe that I have brought forward new material—or made old material newly available—as indicated above. The information on American foreign policy and the Church; the Protestant movement in Mexico; and the conciliation policy of Porfirio Díaz are other topics treated *in extenso* in a way that I do not think has been attempted in any volume with which I am familiar.

Mr. Padden continues: "The author's thesis, which is not new at all, is one which makes the Protestant Reformation and the international Masonic Conspiracy share responsibility for every evil which has befallen the Catholic Church since 1517. Historians whose works fail to square with this thesis, religious as well as lay, are ridiculed or ignored by the author." This "new view" ascribed to me "is not only unscholarly, but is equally unacceptable to any intelligent general reader." I could quote from several Mexican writers who have read the book and praised it; some are scholarly, some are general readers. But let us look at the matter of the Protestant Reformation.

There is very little about it in the book and most of what there is was inserted for the benefit of my *original readers* (not mentioned by Mr. Padden in his strictures on the "Foreword")—the members of St. Patrick's Knights of Columbus Council in Mexico City. I wrote as an American, stressing details for Americans, many of them transients in Mexico, to whom I tried to show something of the largely-post-Reformation background of the United States. This I contrasted with the predominantly Catholic background of colonial and modern Mexico. If this is a wrong approach, the reviewer could have shown why; and also where I falsified the account.

However, I think it grossly unfair to say that I made "the Protestant Reformation and the international Masonic Conspiracy" responsible for all the ills of the Mexican Church. Certainly I have made constant references to Masonic influences in Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Mexico, and other parts of Latin America. The "Reading Guide to the Chapter" indicates sources in every case where the lodges are much discussed. Chief sources for Mexico are José María Mateos, *Historia de la Masonería en México desde 1806 hasta 1884* (México, 1884); and L. J. Zalce y Rodríguez, *Apuntes para la Historia de la Masonería en México* (2 tomos; México, 1950). I believe the latter, with more detail in some 1045 pages of text, is more reliable than Mateos. In reference to Maximilian's Masonry, Zalce quotes both Mateos and an American Masonic historian, R. Chism, *Una Contribución a la historia masónica de México* (México, 1899).

Zalce is also the author of a summary sentence which gives solid substance to the idea of a Masonic "plan" (I did not use the word "conspiracy") in Mexican affairs when he writes about the lodge that offered Maximilian the 33° degree; and for which, in turn, the Emperor offered to act as "protector": "Siendo esto así, como desde muy antiguo ha sido, nada tiene de extraño ni censurable que masones de origen europeo, como el mismo hermano Lohse, encontraran natural y conveniente el "protectorado" imperial para la alta masonería de México, tanto más cuanto que aquel a quien se ofreció era de ideas más liberales que muchos de nuestros posteriores gobernantes, que invocando nuestras leyes constitucionales o pasando sobre ellas, han escalado el poder y desde la altura de éste han vivido en amistoso

entendimiento con el alto clero, han protegido el tenebroso poder absorbente de éste violando los principios que nuestras leyes consignan y que son elaboración decidida de masones, contribuyendo éstos a la obra emancipadora del pensamiento, de la conciencia y de la dignidad de la persona humana, desde 1834 hasta 1917." (Zalce y Rodríguez, *op. cit.*, pags. 236-237.)

The fact that Freemasonry was condemned by Clement XII in 1738; and by Pius IX and Leo XIII; and by Canon 2335, indicate that the papal authorities and the Church in general had good reason to be aware of Masonic intervention in those countries where the Church was once predominant and where Masons were often the most prominent leaders in attacks on her. "Plans" or "conspiracies"—call them what you will. They can be found and traced in all the countries mentioned; and in Mexico the lodge writers themselves furnish the evidence. I am reasonably certain that the majority of presidents, and a high percentage of Liberal and Revolutionary leaders since independence, have been Masons. The *Bimuario de la . . . Logia "Valle de Mexico"—1935 a 1937* (México, 1937), p. 15 lists under "Masones Prominentes en la Historia Civil de México" Presidents Victoria, Guerrero, Gómez Pedraza, Vice-President Gómez Farías, Presidents Echeverría, Bravo, Juárez, Díaz, Gov. Bernardo Reyes of Nuevo León, the famous writer Lic. Ignacio Manuel Altamirano (as Grand Master of this lodge), Presidents Madero, Calles, Portes Gil, Ortíz Rubio, Rodríguez and Cárdenas. We are certain that Miguel Alemán was a Mason; and there is likelihood that at least two of his successors were or are. If there is no important connection between Mexican politics and Freemasonry, how would one explain this "coincidence"?

Mr. Padden attacks my presentation of Juárez as one of several "colossal" distortions I present in my book. I do not think any modern biographer of Juárez has successfully refuted the picture drawn of him by Francisco Bulnes in his *Juárez y las Revoluciones de Ayutla y de Reforma* (México, 1905) and *El Verdadero Juárez* (México, 1904). More recently, there are the carefully documented studies of José Fuentes Mares, *Juárez y los Estados Unidos* (México, 1960); *Juárez y la Intervención* (México, 1962); *Juárez y el Imperio* (México, 1963), all of which I recommend to Dr. Padden. Rather than take direct issue with me, the reviewer could have trounced Dr. Frank L. Knapp, Jr., for the estimate of the Benemérito I quoted on pp. 251-252, drawn from his *The Life of Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada* (Austin, 1951). As for Juárez being "a willing instrument of the Masonic Conspiracy" (conspiracy is Padden's word, not mine), I think it is eminently true. Finally, I feel sure the reviewer will allow me the freedom to present in a book I wrote, had printed and paid for myself a view of Juárez that is different, even one that Mr. Padden does not like.

Mr. Padden makes a grave charge, heavily laden with sarcasm, when he accuses me of the "use of apocrypha to identify Maximilian's Carlota as a 'Red,' and one of the worst kind—who owned several sets, in various languages, of the complete works of Voltaire (p. 207). Surely the general reader must wonder what a 'Red' was considered to be in 1864," (This is all he has to say about the 3-part Chapter XX, with 56 pages of text.) The reviewer does an injustice to his own scientific training and to fair play by failing to note the circumstances I cited: That Maximilian "is reputed to

have said: 'I am a Liberal but that is nothing compared to the Empress—she's a Red.' Both in the text and in the Reading Guide I said clearly that Fr. Jesús García Gutiérrez (*La Iglesia Mexicana en el Segundo Imperio*) (México, 1955) was of great importance for the topic; and it is he who cites, p. 42, Countess Reinach Fousse-magne, *Charlotte de Belgique impératrice du Mexique* (Paris, 1925), p. 199, as his source for Maximilian's statement. This is hardly apocryphal; and the reasonable condensation of material is in accordance with the advice in my Foreword, p. 10, where I wrote: "As to bibliography and footnotes, I have tried to be generous with the former and parsimonious with the latter . . .," a statement that supported the earlier remarks about the nature of the book which proved so irritating to Mr. Padden.

The reference to the works of Voltaire is taken from the important *Reminiscencias* (2a. ed.; Puebla, 1921), of Archbishop Eulogio Gillow y Zavalza, who is shown, p. 88, as visiting the Empress while still a young priest, newly-returned from Belgium. After the interview, she showed him her library, "donde le señaló con jactancia colecciones completas y en distintos idiomas de las obras de Voltaire. El Rey Leopoldo [her father] tuvo fame de volteriano. Parecióle al jóven sacerdote impropia esa demostración de volterianismo." Mr. Padden knows that these observations form part of an effort I made to indicate why Carlota could carry on formal Catholic practices but could treat Apostolic Nuncio Meglia with great disrespect and scorn; and could write in the same vein about Pius IX.

If we can accept that Countess Reinach did not lie about Max's "Red" remark, there is no mystery connected with what the term meant in 1864. In 1848, Lamartine harangued a Paris mob that wanted "to force adoption of the red flag of social revolution as the national emblem . . ." shouting that ". . . the red flag has been carried only around the Champs de Mars . . . the tricolor . . . around the world." The government declared that the tricolor, with the inscription "Republique Francaise," would be the official flag. (John B. Wolf, *France, 1814-1919* [New York, 1963], p. 183.)

Leopold Schwartzchild, in *Karl Marx: The Red Prussian* (New York, 1947), p. 167, adds that the provisional government ruled that "red bows should be fixed under the tricolor, and red cockades should be worn in the button holes, as symbols of the new national unity." He tells us that Karl Marx noted the new Workers' Guards in the streets and saw them as the chosen army of tomorrow's revolution. Those wearing the red badge of national unity were, "without exception, workers. The bourgeois were satisfied with the tricolor. So even the wearing of the colors revealed to all the world the existence of class antagonism, and instead of symbolizing unity red became the symbol of the true state of things—the symbol of division and conflict" (*op. cit.*, p. 170). Still in Paris, Marx organized a "club for German Workers" who were trained as agitators but "on no account must they use words like socialistic or communistic" (*Ibid.*, 172). In 1848 also, Metternich fled Austria and King William IV of Prussia had to bow to a mob demanding democratic rule (*Ibid.*, 174-175).

Returning to Prussia the same year, Marx planned "a communist invasion of Prussia—of Germany." "A pamphlet called Demands of the Communist

Party of Germany was written and printed, and bundles of them were given to each of . . . 300 missionaries." "It was about this time [1848] that the first copies of the Communist Manifesto reached Paris from London . . . in the German text, the French translation being still in the press" (*Ibid.*, 176-177). When Marx used his Communists to agitate in Paris demonstrations, "They took part to a man, wearing red ribbons on their breasts." When a demonstration failed, "People no longer talked of a demonstration, but of a putsch which had failed. Hard things were said about the 'reds' and the 'communists' who tried to hinder the establishment of democracy, and to bring the country under their yoke" (*Ibid.*, 178).

As for the Austro-Hungarian Empire, to whose reigning Habsburg house Maximilian belonged (he ruled briefly as governor of Lombardo-Venetia), as early as 1847 it is said that "The exacerbation of the masses ran so high that some official reports speak of the danger of communistic ideas" (O. Jaszi, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy* (Chicago, 1961), p. 86. Giuseppe Garibaldi fought with red-shirted revolutionists in Rome, 1848-49; and his "Thousand"—although not completely outfitted with red shirts on the eve of the Sicilian invasion, May 5, 1860—got them later in Palermo and went down in history as "Garibaldi's Red Shirts" (G. M. Trevelyan, *Garibaldi and the Thousand* (London, 1965), p. 21; pp. 188-189.

I cannot be certain that the term "rojo" was used to describe the "Puro" or extreme radical wing of the Liberal Party in Mexico in Maximilian's time. However, Bulnes, in his *Juárez and the Revoluciones de Ayutla y Reforma* cited above, written before 1905, says of Gómez Farías and his supporters (italics his): ". . . en 1847, no existía en México un *partido rojo* y, como se verá, lo que existía era una *camarilla roja* marcadamente demagógica tendiendo a socialista" (p. 143).

Here are various definitions of "rojo" existing *before* 1864—democratic, socialistic, Communistic, radical, liberal. Maximilian could have had any of them in mind. Mr. Padden may have his choice.

The reviewer makes me out to be as "critical of other social scientists" as I am of "most historians who have failed to tell the truth about the Church in Mexico." Chapter XIII is dedicated to a discussion of Church fees and clerical wealth; and in it I cite many sources. He takes me to task because I wrote: "Economists and money experts are sometimes a confusing group. Their cogitations have done little to clarify the rightness or wrongness of Church holdings in México" (p. 120). I stand by the statement and conceive it as no attack on those mentioned. Mr. Padden could help me and students of Mexican affairs by referring to *one serious study* of the topics I discussed.

He asserts I attacked anthropologists when I wrote: "Experience teaches that the study of religions, primitive, ancient and modern, often seem to have a strange fascination for people who regard themselves as unreligious." I stand by the statement. If we were to restrict our reading to Mexico alone, I believe the record will show how much has been written—good, bad and indifferent—about Christian and pagan religions here in Mexico by people "who regard themselves as unreligious." Compare, for example, Manuel Gamio, *La Población del Valle de S. Juan Teotihuacán* (3 tomos;

México, 1922) with R. Ricard's *Le Conquista Espiritual de México* (México, 1947); and the recent writings of Canon Angel María Garibay, too numerous to cite here. Again, I am proud to be numbered among the early students of that great pioneering anthropologist, Msgr. John M. Cooper. His teachings and orientation were in my mind when I founded and helped to organize the department of anthropology at Mexico City College in 1948-1949. The quality of work done by teachers and students there during my years as vice-president and president (to 1961), is a matter of record and a clear refutation to any charge that I am an "enemy" of anthropologists.

Following his method of picking out a partial quote to attack—but without balancing it with opinions or sources of his own—Mr. Padden says my "formula for the appraisal of the Church" is ". . . we should judge the institution by its results, turning to the Biblical phrase that a bad tree does not give forth good fruit; and since so much good fruit came from the Mexican Church there is no doubt at all that it was a good tree" (pp. 83-84). Here I am paraphrasing Fr. Mariano Cuevas, S. J., Mexico's most important Church historian; but I make his judgment my own. I think there are enough facts in the book for the general reader—or even a trained reviewer—to judge for himself and then register charitable disagreement if he is so inclined.

Mr. Padden's parting shot is: "In his closing remarks the author gives birth to yet another contradiction. After depending upon non-objective, unscholarly, and sometimes irrational methodologists, Mr. Murray makes a plea for 'objective scholarship' and acceptance of his vision of a Mexico at religious and political peace with itself. Can he be serious?"

Yes, I am "serious" and I hope for a school of scholars dedicated to Mexican church history. I believe I have been fair in answering Mr. Padden's "non-objective, unscholarly, and sometimes irrational methodologies"—his own words against me—in his review. Nowhere in it did he cite chapter and verse to prove me wrong. If he cares to do so I shall certainly give his corrective view the most careful and serious consideration.

PAUL V. MURRAY

México, D. F.

Nov. 30, 1967

Dear Father Kiemen:

I must apologize for your long wait for this note. It had slipped my mind until our meeting in Dallas at the recent Ibero-American Conference.

I have read Mr. Paul V. Murray's long and pained response to my review of his book. I stand by that review. The response does, however, set me straight about Mr. Murray: It is apparently inconceivable to him that a practicing historian could read his book and find it wanting and say so in a frank and honest review. Hence he looks for personal reasons for such a review. There are none. The book is the thing.

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