

Reckless Rumors

[The resignation of Mgr Joseph Charbonneau]

"Resignation, with Rumors" was the heading of all-knowing *Time's* account (Feb. 20) of ailing Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau's request to be relieved of the burden of administering the Archdiocese of Montreal. A flat denial from the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Ildebrando Antoniutti, failed to shake *Time's* conviction that Archbishop Charbonneau "had really been eased out (on February 11], partly at the instigation of Quebec's high-handed, labor-hating Premier Maurice Duplessis" because of His Excellency's stand in the asbestos strike last year. "Was the Archbishop Too Hard on Capitalism?" was the question captioning the *Christian Century's* reporting (Mar. 1) of the Charbonneau resignation. Shaking his head sagely, the *Christian Century's* editor concluded: "Big business knows its way to the Vatican. So now the archbishop is out, the bishop (Most Rev. Philip S. Desranleau of Sherbrooke, Que.) may follow, and the rest of Canada's clergy can ponder the implications of what has happened."

... and a Few Facts

Not merely the clergy but the laity as well have now been invited to ponder a lengthy pastoral letter, *The Problem of the Worker in the Light of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, issued March 26 by the twenty-five ordinaries of the civil Province of Quebec. The pondering process began on that date and was to continue for two weeks. The bishops directed pastors and chaplains of religious communities to read an officially prepared résumé of the pastoral and to comment on its contents. Among the highlights: 1) an admission by the Holy Father that the Church has sometimes been accused of having favored subversive systems or prepared the way for them through teaching its social doctrine; 2) a flat assertion that "in modern economic life, labor has not the place to which it is entitled in justice"; 3) a warning against "the thought that the Church is the ally of the powerful"; and 4) a word of praise for the Sacerdotal Commission of Social Studies. Of this last the bishops said:

The happy influence which it has already exercised leads us to hope that it will give a powerful impulse to the necessary action of priests, and even of the laity, in the work of social restoration and the uplifting of the working classes.

The collective pastoral gives *Time* and the *Christian Century* something to ponder: the dangers of guessing in the dark.

Source: Unsigned, "Reckless Rumors ... and a few facts", in *America*, April 8, 1950, p. 3 [*America* is the publication of the Jesuit Order of the United States. It is published out of New York.] Some small typographical errors have been corrected.