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Editorial (Volume 2, Number 6)

Paul Mojzes
Rosemont College

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September 1982

EDITORIAL

The September issue covers Roman Catholic Churches in Czechoslovakia and Poland. The two essays differ. The article on Czechoslovakia was written by a West German Roman Catholic professor of theology, Dr. Josef Rabas. Having been born in Czechoslovakia he retained a strong interest in his church's fate in Czechoslovakia. Rabas concentrates on the church's encounter with the state. If it appears that he highlights primarily the oppression and martyrdom of that church and not the opportunities created by the post-World War II situation it should be pointed out that it appears that the Roman Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia was particularly hard hit. In a previous issue of OPREE (Vol. II, No. 2), Dr. Paul Bock stressed the Protestant experience in Czechoslovakia. The Protestants chose a path of adaptation to the new order; the Roman Catholic, a larger church, took a more rigid stance and was treated more harshly. For instance, no monastic orders exist today in Czechoslovakia which is a great blow to a church in which monasticism plays a crucial role.

In contrast, the Roman Catholic Church in Poland played a much more significant and public role in the post-war life of Poland. Dr. James Will, who had twice previously contributed to OPREE (Vol. I, No. 2 and Vol. II, No. 4), delivered a banquet address at the Third North American Christian-Marxist Dialogue. The slightly modified transcribed address reflects his experience in Warsaw during the onset of martial law and his analysis of the exceptional role that church played in recent Polish history. Since Poland is still very much in the news we hasten to share this essay with the readers.

Paul Mojzes