



# CATALAN *Newsletter*

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## ousting of Abbot Escarré Confirmed by Subsequent Developments

Our news release of March 16, 1965, informing that Abbot Dom Aureli M. Escarré, of the Monastery of Montserrat, had been "called to Rome due to Government pressure" has been confirmed by subsequent developments in Catalonia.

### Duster Denied to New York Paper

The New York Times of March 20 carried an item from Madrid denying that the Abbot had left under "official pressure", while confirming in most other respects the information contained in our press release. Unfortunately this is only too natural. There never is any "official" pressure of this sort -- but the "unofficial" pressure may at times be so strong that it has to be denied even by those victimized by it. The facts, however, speak for themselves, even though they can hardly be ascertained by long-distance reporting from Madrid.

### Document Circulated in Catalonia Tells of Abbot's Removal

After Abbot Dom Escarré's departure from Catalonia on March 12, by indication of the Secretariat of State of the Vatican, a clandestine document circulated in Catalonia detailing the many points of controversy between the Catalan Abbot and the Spanish authorities and explaining the various pressures exerted through diplomatic channels to have him removed from his post.

The document describes the growing antagonism of the Spanish authorities for Abbot Escarré dating back to April 27, 1947, Day of the Virgin of Montserrat, when 100,000 persons congregated at the mountain Monastery in an act of religious fervor and Catalan reaffirmation. From that moment on the relations between the Monastery and the regime kept worsening. The main points of contention being: the Abbot's public denunciation of the lack of political freedom and social justice; his early and strong leadership in the field of religious freedom; his call for Christianity in Government; and his staunch defense of the National, Cultural and Human Rights of the Catalan people.

### How Pressure Was Exerted

The objective of the Spanish authorities was to have the Abbot sanctioned ecclesiastically and removed from Catalonia. The Government sought his condemnation through the Secretary of State of the Vatican.

After repeated rebuffs from the Vatican, where the Abbot is well liked for his enlightened religious views, the Spanish government finally approached-- on February 1964, and seemingly with better response -- the powerful Religious Congregation, presided by Cardinal Antoniutti, former Nuncio to Spain and a known friend of the regime.

