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(Continued from page 2)

Since he gets from the time he enters his 10-year training period until he dies, his progress is watched closely by superiors.

In picking a bishop to head a diocese, the Vatican sends confidential questionnaires to certain priests seeking information about traits of those being considered for advancement. Additional information on eligible candidates is available in detailed personnel files in dioceses.

What happens when a churchman gets in trouble? In many cases, if the person has not run afoul of canon law to the extent he must be "defrocked," he quietly retires underground and restricts its operations.

There is evidence that this policy has kept the Catholic Church strong in Poland. After concluding an agreement to leave the Church, Polish Communist boss Wladyslaw Gomulka in 1957 said: "This (Catholicism) does not correspond to the ideology of our party, but we cannot sacrifice our own even in the face of reality. We cannot exert any pressure on the believers and we must take into account the fact that the recent conflict between the Church and the state has turned millions of believers against the people's regime."

Waking Temporal Power

In the past, especially during the medieval period, the Church wielded much political and civil power, as well as spiritual authority. Kings and princes were happy to form alliances with the Church to strengthen their power. Today in Rome many Church people disapprovingly of that period, contending the Church lost more than it gained by temporal alliances.

Although the Vatican exerts little temporal authority nowadays, it does, through its State-Secretariat, maintain ambassadorial relations with 41 countries plus diplomatic contacts of other types with 11 other nations. Notably absent: The Church in its management and financial resources may seem to operate with policies that are relatively consistent and not unlike those of many other religious organizations. It is difficult, then, for many Catholics to understand how the Church decides to act with regard to political questions.

How many wonder does the Church decide what position to take toward the varied and changing political powers in countries where it is strong? How does it determine its policy toward pro-Communist Castro in Cuba, and now does it square this position with its past relationship with Batista's Cuba? And back to the Church via Latin America's Communist doctrine in Poland, where it has reached a shaky "truce" with the Communist government?

When faced with such questions, churchmen in Rome say that what appears to be inconsistent policies, backing and flailing or procrastination are in reality expressions of the Church's primary, never-changing policy: Preservation of the Catholic Church itself.

Caste and Ecclesiastical

The Church usually speaks out on political matters only when its existence is believed to be threatened in an area. It is this philosophy which is prompting some churchmen in Cuba to warn against Castro's Communist leanings, although they may have been silent toward abuses under dictator Batista. Batists, so the reasoning goes, did not threaten the Church. Castro and Cuban Communists are considered direct threats to the Church's existence in Cuba.

How then can the Catholic Church in Poland come to a like-and-lethal agreement with the Communist regime? Church authorities in Rome insist their situation has not compromised the Church's basic stand against Communism; they contend their position in Poland offers another example of the Church's primary policy, to preserve itself.

Churchmen See No Conflicts

Archbishop Karl J. Alter of the Cincinnati Archdiocese recently said in a Catholic publication: "There is no doctrine of the Catholic Church which is in conflict with the Constitution of the United States, and hence there can be no conflict between the obligations imposed by the Church and those imposed by the Constitution."

Settling Church Policies

In a recent and widely disseminated speech, the Rev. Gustave Weigel, a prominent Jesuit theologian at Maryland's Woodstock College, said this about the possibility of a Catholic

Catholic churchmen say that in a situation a long-range view. It must decide what action will leave it in the strongest position when Communism dies out as it follows, all man-made institutions will do the Church regards itself as a divine institution which will exist.

Churchmen believe that by focusing attention on Church matters rather than on politics in Poland, the Church can continue to reach Polish folks and generate new adherents. Outright opposition to Communism there, they argue, would drive the Church underground and restrict its operations.

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Basically, the article in L'Observatore Romano not long ago listed a statement defining the role of a Catholic in public life. It was issued to clarify the position of Catholics holding public office in Italy, where Communism has been a definite threat. Positions taken by the Vatican newspaper L'Observatore Romano may be set by the Pope, who under the doctrine of Papal infallibility, is considered incapable of erring when speaking officially on questions of faith and morals. Even when Papal pronouncements do not come under the doctrine of infallibility, for resign or another, many statements on such matters as birth control, divorce and the dangers of Communism may have the effect of setting Church policies.

Some Church policies in local and regional areas grow out of decisions which are not directly bound by rigid canon law or by Papal pronouncements. In such cases, the character of a priest in a parish or of a bishop in a diocese may have much to do with what policies are followed, just as the character of the Pope is of prime importance in determining broader policies.

The statement said that sometimes "politics touches the altar" and when it does, the Church has a duty to inform the faithful concerning directions they should take in their conduct. But the statement was tempered by the thought that "there is a broad field" in which a Catholic politician can move without conflicting with any Church regulations.

Kennedy's Statement

No Catholic church officials have risen to

dispute the statement made by Sen. John F.

Kennedy last month before a meeting of the

Greater Houston Ministerial Association. At

that time Sen. Kennedy said, among other

things: "Whatever issue may come before me

as President, if I should be elected — on birth

control, divorce, censorship, gambling, or any

other subject — I will make my decision in

accordance with my conscience tells me to be in the national interest, and without re-

gard to outside religious pressure or dictate.

And no power or threat of punishment could

cause me to decide otherwise."

In answering a question about the possibil-

ity of any state-church conflict in the presi-

dency, a member of the Curia, the Church's

ruling body in the Vatican, answered briefly:

"There have been many Catholic governors in

various states of the United States, while Catho-

lics have been common in numerous Ameri-

cian cities. There are many Catholics hold-

ing such positions today. I know of no case

where Catholic doctrine conflicted with

the official duties of the executive office. If

there are no such conflicts at the local and

state levels, why should we assume there

should be any at the national level?"

Regarding politics at the state and local lev-

els, Monsignor Burks of the Chicago Archdiocese says: "We have never spoken out for or

against a political figure and we never will

do so again." He added: "It might be legiti-

mate to speak out if there were to be legisla-

tion dangerous to morals, but that would be

the obligation of a decent person." The Chi-

cago Archdiocese has a registered lobbyist at

the state capital in Springfield, Ill. The Arch-

diocese has never sponsored any legislation,

but it has made its position clear on several

issues.

Settling Church Policies

How Catholic Church officials decide on a

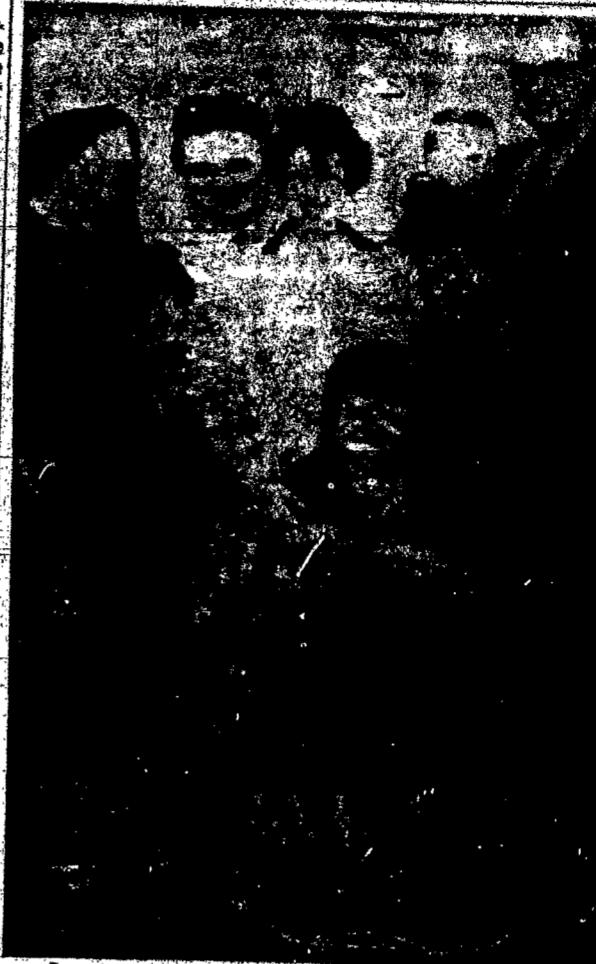
course of action in any given situation does

not lend itself to a simple answer. Many de-

cisions can be made quite simply by applying

canon law, the collected decrees, bulls, con-

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Friday, October 14, 1960



To Help The People'

New York.—(RNS)—Dr. Harry Purcell, prominent

St. Louis surgeon, is shown with his family and Mother

General Mary Benedict, M.D., of the Medical Mission

Sisters of Philadelphia, before leaving the United

States to work at a Catholic mission hospital in New

Delhi, India. The 47-year-old physician will set up a

training school for native doctors and nurses in addition

to his surgical work. His family will be given a

private home, and the school-age children will attend

a convent school operated by the Sisters of Jesus

and Mary. Dr. Purcell gave up an extensive practice

at three hospitals in order to go to India. Explaining

this, he said simply: "We want to help the people and

the Church in India." Mother Mary Benedict went

aboard to bid the Purcells goodbye and wish them

luck.

Uganda Nuns

Saints—(NC)—Two mem-

bers of an all-African com-

munity of nuns have been

studying in the United States

at Seattle University under

scholarships established for

in the history of the 140-year

African students by the school old Santa Cruz diocese.

In Bolivia

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IT'S AUTUMN... TIME FOR WOOL IN POLLY BERGEN FASHIONS OF THE FOUR SEASONS



You've admired her striking good looks, on your TV screen... now Polly Bergen, one of the entertainment world's best dressed women, designs clothes especially for the career girl. Shown here, just three of a wonderfully freshening collection of wools, each with that certain star-studded quality that marks a fashion success.

Sibley's Career Shop, Second Floor,
Oneida Square, Newark, Newark, Newark.

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