

Lodge Appointment, a Buddhist Victory

By FATHER PATRICK O'CONNOR

Buddhist Institute confided to an American correspondent that they were praying for the return of Ambassador Lodge.

However friendly personally to Catholics, Lodge was regarded as politically favorable to the militant Buddhists during his eventual 10 months as ambassador in Saigon from August, 1963, to June, 1964.

Most Vietnamese Catholics, who have borne more than their

fair share in the defense of their country against the communists, will receive the news of Lodge's reappointment with apprehension if not dismay.

They felt he did not understand the situation when he was in Saigon before. In their opinion his policies played into the hands of neutralists and anti-Catholic elements.

Ambassador Lodge first arrived here in August, 1963, the

day after the security forces of Vietnam's Catholic President Ngo Dinh Diem had raided Buddhist pagodas that had been centers of anti-government agitation. His first visit, on the morning after his arrival, was a well-publicized one to two pagodas who had been given refuge in the U.S. foreign-aid headquarters.

Three days after the Ngo Dinh Diem government had

been overthrown, the following November, Ambassador and Mrs. Lodge visited Xa Loi pagoda, the G.H.Q. of the Buddhist campaign, and received "a hero's welcome," according to the Vietnam Press agency.

President Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother were murdered on Nov. 2 in an armored car after they had given themselves up to the victorious military. Eight months passed before any U.S. embassy statement was made in Saigon deploring their deaths. It was made on June 26, 1964, by Ambassador Lodge in a press conference on the eve of his departure. He also recalled that he had tried to persuade President Diem to accept safe conduct out of the country before the coup fighting reached its climax.

Ngo Dinh Can, youngest brother of the late president, was not tried and executed on any charge connected with his Catholic religion. But the American handling of his case embittered many Vietnamese Catholics — and non-Catholics, too.

From Sept. 1 to Nov. 2, 1963, the U.S. embassy here had given political asylum to Thich ("Venerable") Tri Quang, Buddhist leader who is anti-American and anti-Catholic, and two of his companions. On Nov. 5, three days after the coup d'état, Ngo Dinh Can was received by the U.S. consulate in Hue on the understanding that the American authorities would do for him what they had done for Thich Tri Quang.

Can was induced to leave Hue for Saigon in an American plane in American custody, under the impression that here he would still enjoy American protection. On the Saigon airfield his American escort handed him over to the waiting Vietnamese military. Six months later he was executed after a trial that could not be called fair.

U.S. embassy authorities said that a consulate cannot legally give asylum and that the refugee, anywhere outside an embassy, could not be saved from arrest. The fact remains that Can was accepted by the Hue consulate for political asylum and after the embassy in Saigon had been consulted.

When Can had been condemned to death, Ambassador Lodge appealed to former Prime Minister Gen. Nguyen Khanh for clemency. He was refused. He traveled to Hue to ask Thich Tri Quang, who had himself enjoyed refuge in the embassy, to support his plea. The latter refused.

In late 1963 and early 1964 high American officials accompanied Vietnamese military leaders on elaborate visits to the headquarters of the Cao Dai and the Hoa Hao sects.

Ambassador and Mrs. Lodge did indeed visit Catholic institutions throughout the country. But neither he nor any of the front-rank personages from Washington visited a large Catholic center of population such as the Honai complex of villages, resettled by Catholic refugees from the north.

An organized crowd of Buddhist students took over the non-official send-off program for Ambassador Lodge when he was leaving. A speaker praised him as a sort of champion of the Buddhists, a role that he did not disclaim.

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Sudan Terror Unabated

Leopoldville — (NC) — Three Sudanese priests and 52 seminarians fled across the border into the Congo in mid-June, according to word received here from the frontier town of Faradje. They brought details of terror that included the killing of seven Christians in church.

They told this terrorist activity by Sudan government troops occurred late in May. Appearing at the minor seminary at Tore in South Sudan, the soldiers accused the seminary officials of "owning" radio transmitters, helping guerrillas and conspiring with Americans. There was gunfire, and every one at the seminary, professors and students alike, fled for safety.

Later one of the priests, a Sudanese, returned to Tore to find that the mission and seminary had been sacked and destroyed. All houses in the village with glass roofs had been burned. It was then learned that the mission station of Yei had also been sacked, and at the mission of Yambio Moslem soldiers came into a church and killed seven worshippers.



Japanese Catholics Visit Pope

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI welcomes leaders of a group of Japanese Catholics he received in an audience at the Vatican. The group included recent graduates from universities in the Tokyo area. In a brief talk, the Pope urged them to help propagate in their country the "precious pearl of the Catholic faith."

Deacon Work For Ministers?

London — (RNS) — The Roman Catholic hierarchy of England and Wales has set up a special committee to study ways and means of using converted Anglican clergymen as clerics, instead of simply as laymen, on pastoral work, it was disclosed here.

First hint of the plan was given by John Cardinal Heenan, Archbishop of Westminster, when he told the annual meeting of the Converts' Aid Society that they would have to be ready to "enter a new apostolate and help these men to fit themselves for the Catholic Church, not as laymen but as clergy." The Convert's Aid Society, associated with the priestly work, much they can do, if they even had, for example, the tonsure to make them clergy, to allow them to remain what they have always been, men of pastoral work."

Methodists Name Council Envoys
New York — (RNS) — Seven delegates — observers and alternates — were named by the World Methodist Council as representatives to the Vatican Council's fourth session starting in September.

In announcing the names, Dr. Lee F. Tuttle, the Methodist Council's secretary, explained that only three seats have been assigned to Methodist observers in St. Peter's Basilica. Those named, he said, will serve as "rotating teams" because of the seating and the observers' prior commitments and regular duties.

U.S. observers named were: Bishop Fred P. Corson of Philadelphia, president of the World Methodist Council; Dr. Albert C. Outler, theology professor and chairman of the Graduate Council of Humanities at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas; Dr. William R. Cannon, dean of Emory University's Candler School of Theology, Atlanta, Ga.; and Dr. Robert E. Cushman, dean of the Church — not as laity but as clergy.

Lutheran Talks Begin On Nicene Creed Topic

Baltimore — (RNS) — At Dr. Warren A. Quambeck, professor of systematic theology, Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., representatives of the two communions acknowledged that "the problem of the development of doctrine is crucial today and is in the forefront of common concern."

Presiding at the sessions were Auxiliary Bishop T. Austin Murphy of Baltimore, a member of the Bishops' Commission and chairman of its Subcommittee for Dialogue with Lutherans, on the first day and Dr. Empele on the second day.

At the opening brief devotional period of the historic talks, Bishop Murphy read Verses 17 and 13-21 from the Fourth Chapter of Ephesians using the Revised Standard Version of the Bible. The Catholic prelate then recited the petition for church unity in the Prayer Book and Hymnal of the Lutheran Church, after which the participants joined in the Lord's Prayer. The Lutheran Service Book and Hymnal had been given to Bishop Murphy as a gesture of friendship on March 16 when representatives of the two groups planned the theological conversations.

At the next joint meeting of the Lutheran and Catholic representatives, the group will continue its examination of the Nicene Creed by studying in depth one article: "We confess one Baptism for the remission of sins."

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