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New President and Religion

Bishop Sheen	6
Around the World	5
Commentary	19
Diocesan	7
Editorial	6
Entertainment	14
Sports	17
Interracial	18

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By WILLIAM WILLOUGHBY

Washington — (RNS) — With Richard M. Nixon ready to take up residence in January at the White House, observers here ask the question: What will be his reaction to the petitions and influences of organized religious groups?

Churchmen's calls at the White House on matters of national and international import were almost routine in the last eight years.

Mr. Nixon, however, has had but little contact with religious agencies involved in issues of the day. There is no record, for example, of Mr. Nixon having been invited to be the speaker at any major or national Protestant or Catholic conference on U.S. crises since the day he left the Vice Presidency on Jan. 20, 1961.

Observers believe that the trend of dialogue between churchmen and President, begun by Gen. Eisenhower and maintained by Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, will be continued.

Counting Mr. Nixon, four successive Presidents have had at least one common religious influence — the friendship of evangelist Billy Graham. Mr. Graham had, and has, a first-name relationship with Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson and now Nixon.

Mr. Nixon readily admitted that partially in him was the "inspiration" instilled in him by Mr. Graham that caused him to begin his successful quest of the Presidency, a quest delayed by defeat at the hands of John Kennedy and the debacle which attended Mr. Nixon's bid for the governorship of California.

There is no doubt that Mr. Graham and his wife will be frequent White House guests. Early in the Johnson Administration the same was true. Mr. Graham preached the inaugural sermon for President Johnson. It is a strong likelihood that he will repeat for Mr. Nixon.

It was natural for Mr. Johnson to have an interested and at times importunate clerical group beating a path to the White House. Sweeping social and civil reforms were being promoted as never before, and most major Churches welcomed the trend. The exchange of views was beneficial to both.

But as clergymen began to become vocal against the war policies of Mr. Johnson in Vietnam, partially because they charged that heavy expenditures were vitiating such things as the War on Poverty, the visits with the President tapered off.

What will be Mr. Nixon's relationship with them is not known. His own religious affiliation, the Society of Friends (Quaker) operates

one of the most vocal of the religiously-affiliated legislative offices in Washington. Quakers make up an historic Peace Church, but Mr. Nixon has been called a "hawk" for his stand on Vietnam, on armaments and on the non-proliferation treaty.

There probably will be strong overtures regarding the future of the many innovative or improved social welfare programs initiated by the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations. A more conservative approach would seem likely by Mr. Nixon, with possible retrenching in vital areas looming as real fears for the clergymen.

He is a Quaker who attends a Methodist church, and sometimes a Congregational church, but pictures of him going to, or leaving, church services are few and far between. This used to be a "must" for a man wishing to advance in politics.

When he was Vice President, the Nixon family attended the Metropolitan Memorial Methodist church in Washington, D.C. Their attendance at this particular church was attributed to their two daughters who joined the church choir — Julie, in the family tradition, became the choir's vice-president. For seven of his eight years in Washington he never attended the Friends Meeting of Washington.

Bishops Discuss Pastoral Letter on Sacredness of Life

(Compiled from Courier-Journal sources)

Washington — (NC) — Prolonged discussion of a pastoral letter to American Catholics on the dignity of human life, which was expected to touch on marital morality and modern war, marked yesterday's session (Nov. 14), of the semi-annual meeting of all U.S. Bishops here.

The proposed pastoral, according to Bishop James P. Shannon, auxiliary of Minneapolis-St. Paul who gave the first general details of the letter to newsmen on Wednesday, will have three parts "to emphasize the sacredness and dignity of human life":

1. "Marital morality, including the issue of contraception";
2. "Selective conscientious objection, considering the dignity of human life in war";
3. "Tremendous corollaries of the technological revolution as it touches human life."

The discussion covered a revised draft of the long-expected statement from the Bishops to the nation disturbed by conflicts over the papal encyclical "Humanae Vitae," which prohibited contraceptives, and the peace-demonstrations protesting the Vietnam war.

The first pastoral draft was presented by Pittsburgh's Bishop John J. Wright, who had sent a questionnaire to all bishops about its content. He said 219 bishops had replied with these votes on whether a wanted topic is to be explicitly treated in document:

- Contraception and abortion, 194 yes; 19 no.
- Pastoral guidance on Humanae Vitae, Pope Paul's encyclical on birth control, 161 yes; 17 no.
- Vietnam war, 121 yes; 64 no.
- Selective conscientious objection, 142 yes; 51 no.
- Question of conscience and morality of specific wars, 143 yes; 44 no.

The bishops were given a draft of the pastoral several weeks ago and were asked to submit written suggestions or changes.

It was reported at the press briefing that the pastoral will be about half the length of the 23,000-word document published last January and will be addressed to all the people of the Church, not just the clergy.

It begins with stress on the basic value of human life, and also on the role of conscience in human conduct. It will relate a discussion of the sacredness of life within the family to the sacredness of life in the prosecution of war.

At the Monday press meeting, New Orleans' Archbishop Philip M. Hannan said: "All the statements I have read, precisely the statement of the French bishops, does say contraception is a disorder and it is wrong. The U.S. pastoral certainly will not be in contradiction to anything that the Holy Father has said in Humanae Vitae. But Humanae Vitae is not a full theological discussion of all the nuances of freedom of conscience. Therefore, in the pastoral letter you can very well have a treatment of those things which impinge on matters brought up in Humanae Vitae."

Greensburg's Bishop William G. Connare, reporting for the bishops' Committee on Missions, proposed a new structure to coordinate the work of all missions. The members would be from the conference of bishops and the Conferences of Major Religious Superiors of Men and of Women.

Bishop Alexander M. Zaleski of Lansing, in discussing the work of the Doctrine Committee, stressed it is intended as theological service to individual bishops or groups of bishops — it is not an "amateur Holy Office" — organized to seek out theological error. He stressed that doctrinal development is a continuing reality in the Church and said the bishops should recognize this fact.

He urged bishops not to be hasty in placing labels on theologians who earnestly and conscientiously strive to assist doctrinal development in these changing times. He spoke at some length about the obligation to preserve true doctrine in the Church, at the same time recognizing conditions necessary for legitimate dissent in the teaching function.



At the bishops' meeting in Washington, Bishop Sheen chats with Auxiliary Bishop Warren L. Boudreaux of Lafayette, La.

French Bishops Stress Birth Control Conscience

(NC News Service)

Lourdes—The assembly of French Catholic bishops declared here that although contraception is always a "disorder," it need not imply moral guilt on the part of married couples who practice it. This is a matter the couple must decide for themselves after serious reflection before God, the bishops said.

A declaration by the 120 French bishops at the meeting praised the spirit of Pope Paul VI's encyclical, Humanae Vitae, which reaffirmed the Church's ban on artificial birth control.

A Catholic couple has the duty to try to abide by the teachings of the Church and the duty of preserving the stability of their marriage, the bishops said. When these duties conflict, a couple must prayerfully decide which

duty takes precedence, they said.

Following is the passage on "conscience of duty":

"Contraception can never be a good. It is always a disorder but this dis-

(Continued on Page 2)

German Diocese Gets Married Diaconate

Rotterburg, Germany — (NC) — The Rotterburg diocese became the second in this country to revive the permanent diaconate when nine married men were ordained deacons here.

The first married deacons in this country — five — were ordained in April in the Cologne archdiocese.