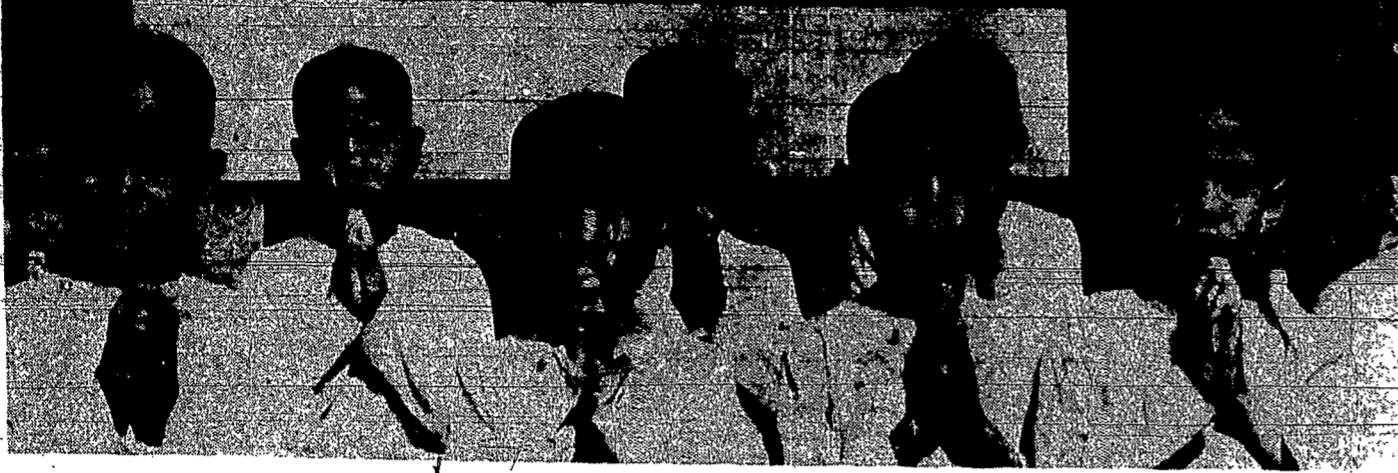


SOB

PLEASE, DON'T SHOOT AT ORPHANS' VILLAGE



The Sign Says It All

Boys from an orphan village near Long Thanh give the traditional Buddhist greeting as they stand before a sign erected by Allied troops in an attempt to protect the orphans from Vietcong attack. The village is supported by a number of religious and civic organizations. (RNS)

COMMENT FROM ROME

Nixon Trip Stirs Vatican Circulation

By FR. R. A. GRAHAM, S.J.
Special Correspondent

Vatican City — (RNS) — President Nixon's European tour, billed as a work trip, included a stopover at the Vatican and an audience with Pope Paul VI.

This is enough to start speculation in Italy, with the help of seemingly informed reports from Washington, that the President intends to raise the question of regular U.S. diplomatic relations with the Holy See.

The press has enough reason to think that way because of the precedent of Canada's Premier Pierre Trudeau. Before even coming to Italy and the Vatican, the Canadian leader openly declared that he intended to explore with the Pope the matter of direct Vatican-Canada relations. This he did, and it is understood that the Pope replied that any initiative of this kind on the part of Canada would be welcomed by him but that the Holy See would not make the first step.

Now it is Mr. Nixon's turn. There have been no open official relations since the resignation of Myron C. Taylor in 1949. For ten years, beginning with the first months of World War II, he had been the "Personal Representative of the President of the United States to Pope Pius XII with the rank of ambassador."

This formula was new to diplomatic practice but it was enough for a basis of direct and confidential contact between the President and the Pope.

The international situation has evolved a good deal since the close of the Taylor mission. The visit of Paul VI to the U.N. General Assembly, noteworthy in itself as a token of recognition of his international role, recalled the activity of the Holy See in various international conferences.

The active intervention of the Pope for peace in Vietnam can hardly have escaped the notice of the United States. In Latin America, the Holy See and the United States are increasingly involved in shaping the destiny of that immense area, one spiritually, the other politically and economically.

What continuing lines of exchange are possible between the White House and the Vatican?

Though the press talks of a new "personal representative," without real diplomatic relations, it would be surprising if Pope Paul welcomed a new Taylor phase. When Mr. Taylor resigned it was rather clearly understood that the Pope did not want another American representative of this kind.

From the Pope's viewpoint, the Roosevelt formula was permissible as an emergency measure but not as a permanent solution. Its continuance, among other difficulties, could jeopardize the papal diplomatic status with other governments and set a bad precedent.

These objections, it is widely understood, explain in part the nomination by President Truman shortly after Taylor's departure, of Gen. Mark W. Clark to be "ambassador to the State of Vatican City." The nomination was sent down from

the White House at the end of 1951. When asked why he had submitted the nomination of a man who said he wouldn't serve, at a time when hearings couldn't be held anyway, the President stated simply that the matter just didn't develop earlier.

The truth of the matter is that President Truman had promised Pope Pius XII that he would, in fact, name a formal diplomatic representative in succession to Mr. Taylor. The intermediary communicating this pledge was a close friend of Mr. Truman's, his own U.S. Attorney General James McGranery of Philadelphia (now deceased).

The nomination of Clark aroused a chorus of protests, probably not to the President's surprise, particularly in Protestant circles. But he at least sent the nomination in for Senate confirmation, thereby marking a new

stage in the (not so short) history of U.S. relations with the Papacy.

Another shortcoming of the Taylor formula, from the Vatican's standpoint, was its sporadic nature. Mr. Taylor came to Rome when President Roosevelt was in difficulties — for example, in 1941, when he desperately needed to win support for Lend-Lease aid to Russia. He therefore sent his representative to appeal for the Pope's at least passive support, which he got. All this was convenient for the President but not always for the Pope.

A high Vatican official—who might have been Msgr. Domenico Tardini, later papal Secretary of State — was quoted as saying, "When the President needs the Pope, he sends Taylor on another trip to Rome. But when the Pope needs the President, Mr. Taylor is not at hand."

Vatican and Diplomacy

The pattern of diplomatic representation to the Vatican around the world seems to correlate to some extent with religious population statistics, but there are a number of significant exceptions.

Finland, 98 per cent Lutheran, is the only nation with an overwhelmingly Protestant tradition that presently maintains an ambassador to the Vatican.

Countries without diplomatic representation there include, besides the U.S. and Canada, Switzerland, Scandinavia and East Germany — the heartland of Protestantism.

West Germany, which does have relations with the Vatican, has a small Protestant majority, but it is estimated at only 51 per cent and Catholic-Protestant cooperation has been the keynote of the ruling Christian Democratic party ever since the end of World War II. The Netherlands — which has an ambassador to the Vatican, is about 40 per cent Catholic, 37 per cent Protestant.

Great Britain has maintained a minister plenipotentiary at the Vatican since 1938, but in 1968 the government formally declined to raise its legation to the rank of an embassy. The other nations represented by ministers rather than ambassadors are territories nearly as small as the Vatican itself: Monaco and San Marino.

Most predominantly Catholic countries, such as Italy, France, Spain, Eire, Austria, Belgium and virtually all of Latin America, have Vatican representation, with Mexico the major exception.

Some of the nations with ambass

adors to the Vatican include only a tiny minority of Catholics in their citizenry. Among them are Japan, Nationalist China, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Turkey and a growing number of new African states.

One major state not represented at the Vatican is Israel. The obstacles, however, seem to be technical rather than religious. The Vatican, rather formal and cautious in its diplomatic gestures, seems to be awaiting the conclusion of a treaty between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Similarly, it is delaying Church administrative changes in the formerly German territories now under Polish rule until a West German-Polish treaty establishes the permanent status of these territories.

One of the most active areas of Vatican diplomacy in the last few years has been in negotiations with Communist countries. Several of these countries now have representatives at the Vatican, usually below the rank of ambassador. Yugoslavia has been represented by an envoy at the Vatican since the beginning of 1967 and Cuba has a full ambassador. Poland and Lithuania have charges d'affaires filling in respectively for an ambassador and a minister whose posts have not been filled for years.

Romania and Hungary were formerly represented but now have no diplomats permanently at the Vatican. Unofficial reports of negotiations which might lead to resumption of diplomatic relations are heard occasionally. Czechoslovakia has also shown interest in regularizing its relations with the Vatican, and statements by Czech officials indicate that this interest has survived last October's invasion by the Soviet Union and other Communist nations.

Anglicans in Canada: 'No Serious Objection'

Toronto — (NC) — The Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, after consultation with the Church's National Executive Council, sent a letter to Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, advising him he sees no serious objection to the appointment of a Canadian envoy to the Vatican if it would "advance the cause of Canada."

Archbishop H. H. Clark observed, however, there is some fear that the proposed appointment might impede the growing spirit of ecumenism in Canada.

"Despite this," the primate said, "Anglicans are open to hear the reasons why this proposal is being considered at this time."

He said he hopes the proposal does not involve any changes in the status of the present representative of the Vatican in Ottawa.

The Anglican position is strikingly different from the one taken by Dr. Robert B. McClure, moderator of the United Church of Canada.

Shortly after the prime minister announced that Canada was consid-

ering exchanging representatives with the Vatican, Dr. McClure issued a statement which sharply criticized the Canadian move.

And, in recent weeks, opposition had been mounting.

The Canadian Baptist, published by the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec and the Baptist Union of Western Canada, said in an editorial that a diplomatic exchange with the Holy See would be "a backward step."

Rev. Harold Triner, editor, took the prime minister to task for his statement that if a representative were sent to the Vatican, it would be for political, and not for religious, reasons.

"This is sheer nonsense," Rev. Triner said. "The Vatican is only in the most artificial sense a state since Mussolini and the Pope came to terms in Italy, the Vatican has been nothing more than a modest size estate... to pretend the Vatican is more or different is false."

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NCC Expected To Oppose Move

New York — (RNS) — A key committee of the National Council of Churches warned here that the Protestant and Orthodox organization would be obliged to oppose the "ill-advised gesture" of U.S. diplomatic relations with the Vatican should one be made.

The Committee on Civil and Religious Liberty in a telegram to the White House, advised against the rumored move and asked the chief executive not to "enter into diplomatic relationship" with the Vatican.

A formal link with the Vatican was termed by the NCC committee a "service" from an outmoded past. "The telegram said it could 'only disrupt growing ecumenical harmony without producing any significant diplomatic gains.'"

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