

Vatican Idea: No Diplomatic Title for Lodge

Vatican City — (RNS) — For reasons that seemed to him justified in the national interest, President Richard M. Nixon has created a channel of direct communication between himself and the Vatican. Just what is the meaning of the new Vatican "embassy" and what can it be expected to achieve?

The problem is all the more important because of the delicate religious affairs that are likely in the nature of things to get mixed up in this kind of dialogue. One thing is striking at the outset: Nixon has only done what other Presidents, of both parties and at different stages of recent American history, have done themselves. Spontaneously, without any pressure from American Catholics or from the Pope, they came to the conclusion that some kind of contact with the Pope is necessary.

That Paul VI or his predecessors are the heads of the Catholic Church is not so decisive as the fact that they do exercise a considerable moral influence

in matters directly involving American interests and aims.

In announcing the President's decision appointing Henry Cabot Lodge to be his special envoy to the Vatican, without any formal title or formal accreditation, the White House spokesman said that it is "important to have the benefit of the Vatican's information and views on a continuing basis and to exchange views on a continuing basis."

This is a euphemistic way of saying that Lodge will do what any other American ambassador in the capitals of a hundred countries, large and small, is called upon to do.

This is, basically, to have all the elements necessary for a correct evaluation of a world situation and also to make sure, on the other hand, that the recipient of these diplomatic attentions be fully informed from a qualified spokesman what the United States policy is.

Even without the formalities of diplomatic representation, Lodge will speak for the President and what the Pope says to

him he can be sure will reach the President. The new Vatican post is no sinecure given as a reward for party contributions but, as Lodge's own personal record would suggest, part and parcel of the ongoing, far-flung United States foreign policy.

In some ways, the new "Lodge formula" is a step backward from the "Taylor formula", since the Nixon appointee will not enjoy the semidiplomatic status of Myron C. Taylor in the Roosevelt-Truman era. This is related to the fact, according to good sources, that the Vatican intimated that the status of Taylor was exceptional in diplomatic practice and could be justified only in unusual times. It would be better, it was said, to have a representative with no claim to diplomatic character than a representative whose status was obscure. Nixon has now chosen the first of the alternatives in naming a "Presidential visitor."

Truman, on the other hand, chose the second alternative. According to information given to this writer years ago by the late Atty. Gen. James McGranery, Truman sent him to the

Vatican to tell Pope Pius XII that he intended to name a full ambassador after the resignation of Taylor. Truman kept his promise when in October 1951, he sent to the Senate the nomination of Gen. Mark W. Clark to be "Ambassador to the State of Vatican City." The resulting storm of protest, however, caused him to withdraw Gen. Clark's name.

Why this power of attraction of the Vatican for the Presidents of a country that professes with such stark austerity the principle of separation of church and state?

The answer lies essentially in the respective world positions of both Pope and President.

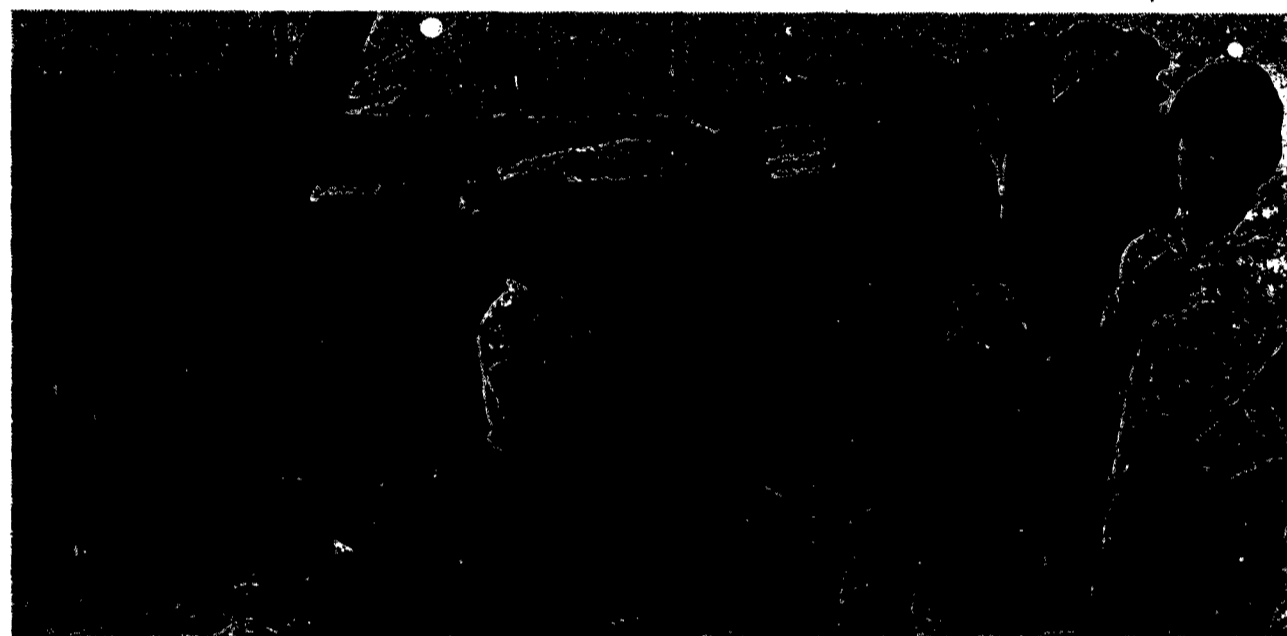
No political candidate ever lost a Catholic vote who pronounced against diplomatic relations with the Vatican. Nixon will get no particular thanks from Catholics and no credit from Protestants.

The Administration is aware that the new relationship with the head of the Catholic Church does not and cannot affect the position of the Church in Amer-

ica. The Nixon decision, like that of all his predecessors who took action in this area, is freely determined by foreign policy considerations.

The paths of the United States and the Holy See cross in many places (Vietnam, Latin America, the Middle East, Eastern Europe), on many moral issues (peace, development, human rights, human welfare). The Vatican Council in its decree on the Church in the Modern World has virtually given the Pope a mandate for more aggressive action in this area. Paul VI, need it be said, is pushing Church action in this regard. His successors will no doubt carry it on further.

Another particular attraction of the papacy for U.S. Presidents is apparently that they feel they can dramatize in a forceful way their own good intentions, which are of course constantly under fire from critics at home and abroad. Yet at the same time, they are not so simple as to believe that, in so doing, they can identify the Pope's cause with the cause of the United States.



Disaster Victims

In the ruins of what used to be their home, three small boys register disbelief as they look over devastated Chimbote, Peru, hardest hit by earthquake that ravaged a 600-mile section of the country's Pacific coastline.

NCC Endorses Catholic Stand On Brazil 'Reign of Terror'

New York — (RNS) — An agency of the National Council of Churches endorsed a statement by its Catholic counterpart in Washington, D.C., and denounced a widespread "reign of terror" against political dissent in Brazil.

The Latin America Department of the NCC said in a statement on "political repression and terror in Brazil" that it declared its solidarity with the Committee of International Affairs of the U.S. Catholic Conference in issuing its own five-point position on Brazil.

First, the statement noted, "as churchmen and citizens we condemn the torture of men and women anywhere, at any time and under any circumstances," and secondly, "we call upon the Congress of the U.S. to schedule a congressional hearing on the effects of U.S. government policy in Brazil . . . determine to what extent public funds are used to support political repression in Brazil."

In addition, the NCC agency called on the World Council of Churches to invite the Vatican to share in an investigation of the possible abuses of civil liberty in Brazil and to publicize the results of the probe.

The statement noted that more than 600 U.S. industries operate in Brazil as well as hundreds of other U.S.-based institutions and agencies. It said that approximately 2,100 U.S. Protestant personnel represent

ing 120 denominations and agencies, and 700 U.S. Catholic missionaries and lay workers live and work in Brazil.

"Christian concern must center, in such a situation, upon the loss of human rights and the deprivation of that dignity which belongs to all men as creatures of God," the statement observed.

By GEORGE BARMANN

The Hague, The Netherlands — (NC) — Tomorrow is not doomsday.

That is the message from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations on the eve of the second World Food Congress.

Commenting on the breakthrough with new crop varieties, the food congress said it is clear that in this century "we do not face the slide into widespread famine feared by many agricultural planners and demographers over the past decade."

The promising FAO statement stands in sharp contrast to the warnings of impending world-wide mass starvation being sounded in many quarters, especially in the United States.

The Netherlands government

Noting that it is not the business of American Churches to be concerned with every nation's affairs, the NCC agency said, however, that "the cries of oppressed people must not be ignored and especially not when these cries come from people whose lives are affected by the policies of . . . institutions in our own country."

will be host to more than 1,000 delegates from all over the world. They will include statesmen, writers, scientists, farmers, economists, church leaders, and representatives of farm and commercial organizations, all participating in their own names and not in behalf of governments.

The FAO's Indicative World Plan for Agricultural Development estimates that the growth of population alone in the developing world in the 20-year period ending in 1985 will increase demand for food by two-thirds. And rising living standards will lead to an even greater demand.

"Nevertheless," the FAO said, "it seems quite feasible for most countries to produce the extra supplies, although several developing countries in Latin America, the Near East

30 Clergymen Demand Accounting from Bunker

Washington, D.C. — (RNS) — Charges of "indescribable" brutality in the suppression of dissent in Saigon were aired here by a group that included Father Robert Drinan, S.J., dean of the Boston College Law School.

The group asked that Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker be called home to tell Congress about "his role in the current suppression of South Vietnamese dissenters."

Ambassador Bunker was alleged to have refused to see American relief workers who sought his intervention in behalf of tortured students. Opposition to President Thieu was said to be active mainly among students, who were said to feel that the U.S. ambassador interfered in "Vietnamese internal affairs."

Those making the charges included United Methodist Bishop James Armstrong of the Dakotas; Alfred Hassler, head of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) and Rep. John Conyers, Jr. (D-Mich.)

The four were part of an anti-war fact-finding team which visited South Vietnam a year ago. Comments made at the press conference, however, were not based on that trip so much as on continuing contacts

and on accounts which have appeared in Saigon newspapers.

The press conference was called by FOR in hope that public airing of alleged repression in South Vietnam would spur news attention by the American press corps in Saigon.

According to Mr. Hassler, South Vietnamese newspapers which cover the protest to the Thieu government are periodically confiscated.

He charged that the reaction of Saigon to opponents "has been indescribably brutal. Monks and nuns have been killed or badly wounded in a police assault on the National Pagoda; hundreds of students have been severely beaten and thousands arrested; leaders, young men and women, have been tortured by the most sadistic means imaginable."

Mr. Conyers said it "would be impossible for the (American) press to be unaware of what is going on."

The group asked that correspondence from the Saigon Student Union to Vice President Agnew and House Speaker John McCormack be made public. The letters are said to protest the role of Ambassador Bunker in South Vietnamese internal issues.

UN: World Famine Not Imminent

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"Nevertheless," the FAO said, "it seems quite feasible for most countries to produce the extra supplies, although several developing countries in Latin America, the Near East

and North Africa could remain in a deficit position," requiring heavy imports in 1985.

At the same time, if provisional production objectives of the Indicative World Plan (IWP) are achieved, "other developing countries, particularly in Asia, will have sizable export availabilities. Cereal supplies on world markets would thus be ample by 1985."

The IWP bases its optimistic appraisal on the development of new high-yielding cereal varieties which it says could be grown on about one-third of the croplands in the developing world by 1985, compared with about five per cent today.

The World Food Congress is expected to lay down urgent priorities to increase agricultural output and to try to provide the spark to mobilize peo-

ple, resources and public opinion to achieve development in agriculture on many fronts.

An FAO bulletin singles out a new book, "Seeds of Change," by Lester R. Brown, which apparently is helping to set the tone of the 1970 congress.

Brown prepared a report on world food production for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1955 which began with the statement: "The less developed world is losing the capacity to feed itself." In his new book issued less than five years later, he writes about the "turnaround on the food front," declaring:

"Dramatic successes in raising food output in the poor countries are beginning to dispel the gloomy forecasts of widespread famine and worsening hunger."