

Pope Offers Mediation In India-Pakistan War

Vatican City — (RNS) — India's and Pakistan's ambassadors to the Holy See were received by the Vatican Secretariat of State and given a memorandum calling for an immediate truce in the India-Pakistan war.

A Vatican offer to mediate in the conflict was contained in the document presented by Archbishop Giovanni Benelli, Deputy-Secretary of State, to Ambassador Mohamed Agim Husain of India and Ambassador Afzal Iqbal of Pakistan.

The memo pointed out the dangers of increasing the "misery and humanitarian problems" now facing the two countries, as well as the danger of the "involvement" of "other major powers," with a subsequent "serious threat" to world peace.

Urging an immediate truce, the Vatican statement said the Holy See stood ready to offer its powers of mediation "to arrive at a peaceful settlement."

The Apostolic Pro-Nuncios in New Delhi and Karachi have received instructions to keep in constant contact with the Indian and Pakistani governments "with a view to possible mediation."

Earlier, Pope Paul had expressed hope that the India-Pakistan war would not involve other nations, and urged Catholics to be "neither disappointed nor doubtful about peace in the world."

The pontiff's comments were made before crowds gathered in St. Peter's Square.

"We are grief stricken," he said. "Another war — this terrible human misfortune — has broken out. It does not matter if it is raging in 'far-off' countries, because there is no longer any idea of distance in the world. Neither does it matter if it is happening to nations that are 'foreign' to us, for there are no longer any nations that are not somehow related to all others."

Keeping Tabs

The Blackfriars theater group will present "Curly McDimple" at Xerox auditorium Dec. 31-Jan. 2, at 8:30 p.m. Reservations may be made for New Year's Eve only by calling 442-0570, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Rosarians at St. John's, Greece, will bring Christmas presents to Mass at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 15, and the gifts will be distributed later through the Office of Human Development. All women of the parish are invited to the social hour and tureen supper that will follow the Mass. The Joy folk group from St. Helen's parish will entertain. Mrs. William D'Ambrosio is chairman.

The Holy Angels Guild will give a Christmas party at 8 p.m. Monday, Dec. 13, at Holy Angels Home.

The children of St. Salome's parish will repeat their musical show, "Sing the Songs of Christmas," at 3:30 Saturday afternoon, Dec. 18, for their fathers, brothers and sisters and all others who missed the women's Christmas party.

The Women's Club of Old St. Mary's will have a Christmas party at 6:15 tonight Dec. 15, in the Downtowner.

Members of the 19th Seton Branch will be entertained at lunch Thursday noon, Dec. 16, by Mrs. Ronald J. McDonald of Electric Avenue.

All the children of Nazareth Hall, in kindergarten through grade 8, will take part in a Christmas entertainment Sunday afternoon, Dec. 18, in the school at 180 Raines Park.

Girl Scouts Troops 31 and 961 spent a recent long weekend in Pennsylvania, touring Amish country and visiting Philadelphia and Hershey. Expenses were earned by the girls and

Volunteers Called To Aid Refugees

A call for volunteers to help raise funds for East Bengal refugees went out last week from Rochester Concern for East Bengal Refugees, a local affiliate of OXFAM, an international relief agency which serves refugees exclusively.

Martha Doell, a teacher at Greece Olympia High School and a member of the Rochester group, said her organization "needs people to solicit funds by door to door appeal or to mail pamphlets."

Ms. Doell invites volunteers to call her at (716) 621-6140, during the day, or to call Liz Karch at (716) 442-2914.

Courier-Journal

Pope Receives Chinese Priest

Vatican City — (RNS) — Federico Alessandrini, the Vatican's press officer, acknowledged that an expatriate Chinese Roman Catholic priest, Father Wei Tsing-sing, had been received by Pope Paul VI and other Vatican officials, but insisted that he had been received only "as a private individual."

Father Wei, 68, a parish priest in Paris, came to Rome in mid-November on his own initiative to discuss the question of Vatican-Peking relations with members of the Secretariat of State and of the Council for the Public Affairs of the Church. The priest has not been in mainland China for more than 30 years.

Mr. Alessandrini observed that Father Wei was "enthusiastic and dynamic and full of ideas as to how we could improve church-state relations in the People's Republic of China. His opinion is based on the widest experience. However, he is considered as functioning only in a private capacity."

Controversial Bishop Named to Madrid See

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI has named Cardinal Vincente Enrique y Tarancan, an outspoken champion of church-state separation, to be the new Archbishop of Madrid.

The appointment of the 64-year-old Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of Spain to head the politically restive, and most populous archdiocese in Spain was part of a major shakeup in the Church hierarchy announced simultaneously here and in Madrid.

Under a Concordat between the Vatican and Spain, the Spanish Chief of State is entitled to take part in the choices of new bishops.

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