

Vatican Reported Hard Pressed for Ready Cash

Vatican City (RNS) — The Holy See currently is so short of ready cash that it is unable even to help finance international meetings here of official Vatican agencies, it has been learned.

The financial situation grew so desperate at one point, sources disclosed, that last January the Vatican was forced to sell a piece of property in Italy just to "help meet the ordinary payroll of the Holy See."

Because of the money shortage, Vatican aides said, Church funds are now available "only for official Holy See travel expenses of the most urgent nature."

"Believe me," said one Vatican official whose request for funds to help defray the expenses of a secretariat meeting was rejected by the Vatican Secretariat of State, "there is a tight money

squeeze on in the Holy See right now and it is hitting everybody from the top down."

One example concerns a coming meeting of ecumenical commission leaders from almost every country in the world.

Some 70 leaders of national and regional commissions will gather for a week here in Rome, starting Nov. 15 under the auspices of the Vatican Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity.

"Normally, delegates from the developing nations are given money from the Vatican to handle all or part of their travel expenses and their room and board while here in Rome or wherever a meeting is held," a Vatican official said, adding:

"This time, the Secretariat of State just flatly turned down the request on the grounds — and solid grounds, I might add —

that there just wasn't any money available."

Soon after the turndown, the official said, the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of the People made it known that "it would entertain requests for funds to finance the travel and accommodations for Third World delegates to the meeting."

The congregation supervises the worldwide distribution of funds for Church programs in the mission fields.

"We have no problem with the United States, Canada, Europe and other developed nations on this score," a Vatican source said. "These people always were expected to pick up their own tabs for meetings of this sort even though they were sponsored by the Holy See."

"In fact, some of the richer nations have often donated money to help handle the expenses of people from poor nations who travel great distances for Vatican meetings."

One Vatican official said the investment portfolio of the Holy See "is not set up to meet the day-to-day expenses of the post-Conciliar Church."

"Either that," he added, "or there just is not enough money available for investment for the Holy See to meet the new financial obligations that came in the wake of Vatican Council II."

During and after the council, many new commissions and



secretariats were founded. These include the Secretariats for Christian Unity, for Non-Christians and for Non-Believers; the Council of the Laity, the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace and International Theological Commission.

"Added to this you have the heavy expenses for the Synod of Bishops and its permanent secretariat," one synod official said. "This permanent Church fixture is expensive to operate and the Vatican has to find money to keep it going."

As one secretariat official put it:

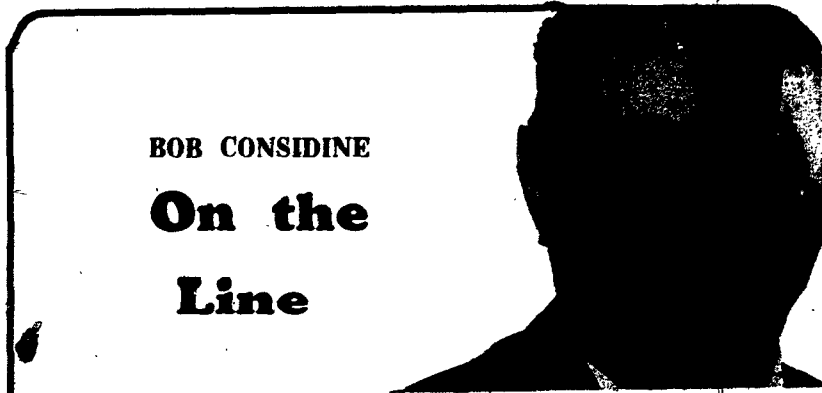
"With all these new secretariats, commissions and other agencies that were outgrowths of the Council, you have a tre-

mendous new financial burden for the Holy See."

"You read all these speculative articles about the billions of dollars the Vatican has stashed away in Swiss banks in numbered accounts and all the firms throughout the world that it controls," said one Vatican official, adding:

"Well, I personally reject this speculation as just that — speculation. The Vatican is hard-pressed for cash and the situation will probably get worse as time goes on."

"Sure, the Vatican has priceless art treasures. But they can't be sold and they don't bring in any money. In fact, you have to hire people to dust them off and guard them."



BOB CONSIDINE
On the
Line

Question: Do you think there'll be a day when the U.S. is not bugged by somebody named Nguyen, or Duong?

Answer: Ngo.

Retired Maj. Gen. Duong Van Minh, the CIA puppet who overthrew the South Vietnamese government of President Ngo Dinh Diem nine years ago, has come out against the Kissinger "peace is at hand" plan. He says a cease fire at this time, when the fighting is spread all over the country in small pockets, would be impossible to police by neutral forces and the UN. Better to have the estimated 150,000 North Vietnam invaders retire to large regrouping areas, where they can be more easily watched. President Nguyen Van Thieu won't budge until his land is completely clear of his enemies from the North.

The rule of Big Minh, as he is called, lasted only from Nov. 1, 1963, to Jan. 30, 1964. He was pushed out by Maj. Gen. Nguyen Khanh. He retired to Thailand to raise orchids, but surfaced again in Saigon several years ago and briefly opposed Thieu's election last year. He dropped out before election day with an announcement that the election was rigged. Since then, Big Minh has been a quiet rallying point for anti-Thieu former generals, colonels and officials. It is a mark of his potential power that he has not been forced into oblivion, as has one-time Premier Nguyen Cao Ky.

It is not the first time Big Minh bit the hand that led him to power — the hand of the American taxpayer. He pledged that he would see to it that Diem and his troublesome brother, Nhu, would be given safe passage out of the country after being unseated. Instead, they were murdered.

Ben Javits, 78-year-old big brother of New York's senior Senator, Jacob Javits, said at Toots Shor's busy new joint, "This is going to be a big test for me. It's the first time I've been out in a crowded and noisy place since I had my pacer put in eight months ago. If it works here, I'll outlive my grandfather. He lived to be 102."

He unbuttoned the upper part of his shirt and asked me to feel the lump on his chest.

"That's it," he said, taking a sip of chablis. "Because of it, there is no way I can die suddenly of a heart attack. I've had two attacks, you know, and wanted no part of a third one."

Courier-Journal

"It is powered to monitor the electric valve of my heart, the valve that produces the beat. My normal beat is 64 or 65 a minute. The pacer is set for 70. It has worked so well that my doctor tells me that there's no reason why I shouldn't be playing tennis again."

I asked him how long the battery lasts.

"Four, six months," Mr. Javits said. "A person with a pacer checks from time to time, of course. I take my own pulse and blood pressure each day, and carry these," he said, pulling out a small bottle of tablets. "So far, I've had no trouble and don't expect any. I've told my doctor that I intend to live at least five more years in order to put over my idea of ownership and then two more years to hold hands with my wife, Lily."

Ownership is the fetish of Ben Javits. He has written a book about it, plans a series of newspaper ads about it, but has had relatively little success selling his philosophy. Briefly (though I'm not sure it can be briefed) Javits feels that the more than 100,000,000 owners of the American economy — stockholders, small insurance company policyholders, etc.—should unite like a vast union, and compel company (and governmental) executives to pay more attention to their demands.

He served me with what amounted to a summons, his open letter to George Meany urging the labor leader to press for the revision of the anti-trust laws or their administration "so that every business in this country can operate and register as a 'public utility' and have the right to earn a rate of return on sales or investment that will provide a real base for prosperity. Our Gross National Product is earning less than 4 per cent and it should earn 6 per cent, which would mean the difference of \$200 and \$300 billion additional money in circulation in the first year and more as time goes on." He cannot understand why the owners of the American economy — which affects each person much more intimately than does the government — pay so much less attention to that than to their political leadership.

I said sorry, didn't understand ownership, and why didn't he let his kid brother Jacob in on the crusade.

"I offered to do just that, ten years ago," Ben said. "Jack heard me out, then said no, I guess I understand why Jack's political."

Pontiff Stresses Renewal

Vatican City (RNS) — "Fidelity" to essential and eternal elements, and "inwardness" are the two characteristics of "authentic renewal" in the Church, according to Pope Paul VI.

Speaking at his customary Wednesday general audience on the ongoing need for renewal in the post-conciliar Church, the pontiff said he felt that the concept of renewal "had not been correctly understood by everyone."

Renewal, he said, can be placed in "an equivocal position" by those persons who focus on "condemnation of the past," or who opt for "detachment from institutional structures," or who espouse "secularization of the Church."

He said that "not enough attention" has been paid, or is being paid, to two fundamental features that renewal must have to be "authentic": adherence to the "essential and eternal elements" of the Christian revelation, and an "inner" transformation that entails "continuous self-reform and purification."

And, over all, said the Pope, genuine renewal demands that members of the Church perceive in every single human being "the image of Christ," and treat everyone as "a brother or sister" who is to be respected, served and loved.

"This," he added, "is the kind of renewal needed in the Church — and in the world."

Father Drinan Wins Re-election

Boston (RNS) — Rep. Robert F. Drinan (D-Mass.), a Jesuit priest and former dean of the Boston College Law School, was re-elected to his second term in Congress by an almost 20,000 vote margin over liberal Republican Martin A. Linsky.

Father Drinan, an outspoken critic of the Vietnam war and a supporter of the Democratic Presidential nominee, Sen. George McGovern, garnered more than 110,000 votes to Linsky's 92,000 with 98 per cent of the precincts counted.

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