

Top-Level Contacts Made Over Problems With Spain

Vatican City (RNS) — Pope Paul met for more than an hour with Spain's Foreign Minister Lopez Bravo in an audience obviously aimed at quelling a dispute between the Franco government and the Holy See.

The Spanish envoy also spent more than an hour meeting with

CUF Leader Calls 'Morning' Pill Same as Abortion

New York (RNS) — Pro-life forces will have to push for new laws to deal with such devices as a "morning after" pill now being developed, an official of Catholics United for the Faith warned here.

"We are calling them contraceptives, but actually they are abortion," said K.S. Whitehead, executive vice-president of the conservative lay organization.

Scientists are also working on a pill, he said, that a woman could take after missing a menstrual period to remove the lining of the uterus. This, he said, would amount to an abortion if the woman had conceived, though it would not be possible to know definitely if there had been conception.

"We're going to have to have a law that outlaws this technique," he said. "Such methods aren't going to be met with the normal anti-abortion laws we're trying to get."

Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Jean Villot.

As is usual in such top-level diplomatic meetings, neither the Vatican spokesman nor the Spanish diplomatic party had any statement following the meeting.

It is known that Spanish government officials in recent months have been troubled by the outspoken sermons and other actions of liberal Spanish Catholic bishops and priests who are demanding reforms and freedom from the government of Generalissimo Franco.

The government was given a voice in the naming of Spanish bishops in the concordat between Spain and the Holy See signed in 1953. Prior to that time,

Fisher Library Gets Memorabilia

A collection of materials relating to New York State and the Rochester area, from 1800-1900, has been donated to the St. John Fisher College Library by Mrs. Helena V. Conheady of Grand Avenue.

Included are more than 750 novels and popular works, nature writings, music and history volumes and hundreds of picture postcards.

kings of Spain traditionally always had a say in the selection of Catholic bishops there.

Pope Paul, about five years ago, called for meetings at which the Concordat could be altered to conform with modern day demands, particularly the changes in Church government and operation brought about by Vatican II.

The Council made clear that it did not want governments any longer exercising powers in the selection of prelates and that it wanted political connections between governments and the Holy See cut to a minimum, especially in predominantly Catholic nations.

According to reports here, the Spanish bishops issued a document in which they complained of a lack of political freedom, claiming representatives of the Church were not permitted to speak out openly in favor of free choice of government among the people.

Instrumental in these contacts was Archbishop Giovanni Benelli, Sub-Secretary of the Vatican Secretariat of State, who formerly had spent some time in Spain in a Church post.

He is credited with having drawn up a plan whereby the Catholic Church could obtain full freedom in choice of bishops despite Gen. Franco's insistent demands for such a voice.



With Few Possessions

Carrying some of her possessions, including a painting of Christ, a woman makes her way through the rubble which was once Managua. Following the earthquake which destroyed most of Nicaragua's capital, residents picked through the ruins of homes, salvaging belongings. (RNS)

Religions Have A Challenge in 1973

"Unfinished business" rather than dramatic new agenda items is likely to dominate the religious docket in 1973.

A News Analysis In the U.S., the theory, practice and interreligious implications of Christian evangelism will be high on the list of priorities as Key '73, with broad Protestant and some Roman Catholic participation, calls "the continent to Christ."

The year opened with an international conference on "Salvation Today" in Bangkok, Thailand, under World Council of Churches sponsorship.

Consideration of the salvation theme can be anticipated around the globe as all Churches seek to respond to personal longings for experience of transcendence in a world where social justice must also be a religious goal.

And there will be:

- Debate, and possible court actions, on abortion, tax credits for parochial education and church taxation in the U.S.

- Strides for peace in Indochina, Northern Ireland, the Middle East and elsewhere.

- Religious and political upheavals in southern Africa and Latin America.

- Teachings considered basic to Catholic education, as the U.S. hierarchy anticipates the release of a document on this issue forcefully raised in post-Vatican II years.

- The role of women in ministry, highlighted when the Episcopal Church's General Convention in October takes up the question of women priests.

- Conflict between moderate and conservative Protestants, which will undoubtedly be aired

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as the much-divided Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod holds its biennial convention in the Summer.

On other fronts, at least seven U.S. Protestant denominations will be implementing national restructures approved in 1972 and the eight-denomination Consultation on Church Union (COCU) will be attempting to shore up support following 1972 setbacks.

American Catholic bishops plan to issue a pastoral on the Virgin Mary and the 40th Eucharistic Congress will open in Melbourne, Australia, with Pope Paul not expected to be present.

Continuing trends evident in the late 1960s, evangelism (including such questions as the meaning of Christian mission and how salvation may be understood in the late 20th Century) has been boosted into the spotlight by a variety of theological and cultural forces.

One of those forces is resurgence of tradition-oriented Christian groups contending that the Churches have become overly involved in social action. But that is only one.

The turn of many youths toward Eastern mysticism and occultism and "Jesus People" criticism of both liberal and conservative churches is spurring across-the-board reassessment of the distinct role of religion in personal and group life.

More universal is the awareness that human beings do not find the meaning, personal involvement or freedom they seek in totally secular contexts. The rising tide of spiritual questing has led to renewed appreciation for evangelism.

Without giving up commitments made to ecumenism, so-

cial justice, interracial progress, women's rights and world peace and development in the 1960s, virtually every U.S. Church in 1973 is seeking ways to undergird spiritual needs and intensify consciousness of mission among clergy and laity.

Evangelistic thrusts, in some instances, take on the character of a return to fundamentalistic or strict traditionalist understandings of faith. Most, however, are stressing that any individual commitment to God must be accompanied by a pledge to put love and justice into practice.

A three-year World Mission of Reconciliation Through Jesus Christ, launched in early 1973 by the Baptist World Alliance, is emphasizing international and interracial fellowship as well as personal Christian commitment.

Likewise, the official literature of Key '73 gives due attention to Christian responsibility in social and political arenas, as well as sounding the more traditional notes of biblical authority, individual salvation and a personal God.

One of the most interesting Key '73 developments is the involvement of perhaps two dozen Roman Catholic dioceses in an effort initiated by evangelical Protestants. Providing considerable latitude in the style and degree of participation, Key '73 is expected to command substantial Protestant and Catholic energy in many areas of the nation this year.

Key '73, meanwhile, has raised some anxieties and evoked some criticisms. Reflecting the feelings of Protestants and Catholics emphasizing social change, Dr. Donald G. Bloesch of Dubuque Theological Seminary in Iowa said in the January 3 issue of Christian Century that Key '73

stands in "danger of confusing evangelism with promotionalism."

Dr. Bloesch also warned against oversimplification of the Christian Gospel, but he warmly applauded the emphasis on repentance and prayer which, he added, "are the preconditions for the renewal of the church and society in our time . . ."

Some Jewish leaders have voiced fear that Key '73 might create an atmosphere in which drives to convert Jews to Christianity could arise. While Key '73 has no plank identifying Jews as a target for proselytization, other organizations with that purpose do exist and are particularly active on college campuses.

A new chapter in modern Christian-Jewish relations in America may be written in 1973 as representatives of the two faiths work through the implications for dialogue and social interaction raised by Christian evangelism.

Attention to mission and evangelism is not likely to deter an expanding interreligious coalition that is lobbying for peace in Indochina. 1973 was less than a week old when Protestant, Catholic and Jewish peace advocates gathered in Washington, D.C., to make their voices heard, and to lend support to members of Congress demanding an end to the bombing in Vietnam and a withdrawal of all U.S. forces.

Speculation on what might happen in Northern Ireland and the Middle East in 1973 seemed of questionable value as the new year opened. There are some indications that the Catholic hierarchy in both Northern Ireland (Ulster) and the Republic of Ireland may be more aggressive in peace efforts.

Right-to-life groups and those backing liberal abortion laws

are sure to clash, especially in New York State where a second attempt is shaping up in the legislature to repeal a provision allowing abortion on demand up to the 24th week of pregnancy. A repeal measure passed in 1972 was vetoed by Gov. Nelson Rockefeller.

A ruling on the complicated and emotion-wrought abortion issue is expected from the U.S. Supreme Court, which also has before it tax credit plans for providing some public assistance to parents of children in parochial schools.

The matter of tax exemption for Churches and religious organizations looms. Several states and cities are considering the possibility of decreasing the amount of church-held property free of taxes. Some religious groups, notably Protestant and ecumenical agencies with social action backgrounds, continue to charge the Internal Revenue Service with using its investigative power to dampen social ministries.

Debate and possible action in Congress to clarify the extent to which non-taxed groups can attempt to influence legislation and public policy is not unlikely. The current law forbids tax free organizations from using a "substantial" part of its funds for lobbying.

The year unfolded with U.S. Catholic bishops voting approval of a draft document on Basic Teachings for a Catholic Religious Education, designed to spell out the "irreducible minimum of doctrines" required in post-Vatican II instruction. Work continues on development of an American catechetical directory.

Unexpected developments may overshadow everything scheduled and anticipated. But without any surprises, the "unfinished business" in religion promises a challenging 1973.