

Mr. Mann's Resignation

Despite the debate about his influence on Latin American affairs that will continue after he leaves office, Under Secretary of State Thomas C. Mann deserves the appreciation of the country. He has been called a hard-liner, and in some respects this is true—though that is not always a term of obloquy. But often he has deliberately made himself a lightning rod for the wrath of those irritated by disagreeable but nonetheless necessary actions. Although he has recommended policies, he has still been the agent of the President and the Secretary of State.

Certainly Mr. Mann's forte has not been public relations. His bluntness has precluded a bedside manner. In speeches and other appearances he has sometimes seemed unimaginative and occasionally obsessed with communism. Some Latin Americans have complained that he was insensitive to revolutionary aspirations and the reasons for them, and that he was therefore not *simpatico*. Informally, Mr. Mann often has been charming, indoctrinaire and highly effective. But psychologically his reputation for toughness has appeared to some to represent a step back from the efforts toward mutuality of the Kennedy era.

Perhaps part of the contradiction has stemmed from his impatience with high-flown rhetoric and some varieties of do-gooder. He has not been a reactionary; he played an instrumental part in the attempt to stabilize commodity prices in the Hemisphere. But he has been disillusioned; he has believed that in Latin America, particularly, idealistic promises are not a substitute for performance. It is illustrative of his technique that when a Latin American diplomat once told him that a certain recommended reform was "politically impossible," Mr. Mann replied he was sorry that in the circumstances the United States could not extend help—