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# Enough Rabbits

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By DANIEL LYONS

When President Nixon flew to Peking and Moscow there was euphoric elation by some writers and there were dire predictions by others. This was particularly true regarding the Peking trip. How do the trips look in retrospect?

Occurring in an election year, it is logical to presume that the primary motive of Mr. Nixon was political. He got things started, he seemed to say, "but you have to give me time to follow through." Three or four years, perhaps?

Apart from what he would gain politically, President Nixon seemed to be under no illusions about the trip. When the Chinese Cardinal, Paul Yu Pin, met with him in Washington shortly before he left for Peking, the Cardinal told him: "Mr. President, I have known Chou En-lai since 1936, and he is a notorious liar." Mr. Nixon replied spontaneously: "I know that, I know that."

A few months earlier, when a Los Angeles TV commentator, George Putnam, met with Mr. Nixon at San Clemente, he was told several times by Henry Kissinger: "Don't you see, George? We have to keep pulling rabbits out of the hat. And we don't have enough rabbits to last us past July."

It was a remarkable prediction. July is over, and they don't have any more rabbits, though one could argue that if you run a place right, the rabbits will multiply by themselves. Still, we should not be too hard on politicians who are first and foremost opportunists. It is inbred in the system.

Concerning the trip to Peking, it is easier to point to the bad side. Any good that may come from it cannot be seen this early. Most of the results are yet to come, and depend largely on what we do in the meanwhile.

Certain features were bad. Putting Red China in the United Nations at

the expense of Taiwan disturbed not only Taipei, but Japan, Korea, Thailand, the Philippines and other Asian friends. It also tended to restore those "China experts" who were so wrong when they told us 25 years ago that Mao was not a Communist but a democrat. The false prophets are being given credence again, as we wait for Mao to hold his first election. Taiwan is humming along, however, despite it all.

The trip to Moscow was an anticlimax, after watching all those peasants sweep up the snow in Peking's Red Square with homemade brooms. Americans advocating a strong national defense were indignant that Mr. Nixon would agree with Kremlin's leaders to freeze us in second place militarily. But we already were in second place and had been for some time. The danger would be to feel complacent about the SALT accords, or to put any faith in them.

As long as the voters keep putting so many doves in the Senate we will remain in second place. It was not the first time we had placed ourselves behind by treaty. We put ourselves in second place with the limited Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty in 1963, as Edward Teller has pointed out.

The nuclear era has not changed things as much as we imagine. It has been with us now since 1945. The old balance-of-power approach still has its place. The future will probably belong to whoever ends up with mainland China on its side. Will it be the U.S.S.R. or the U.S.A.?

Who knows? The next government in Peking may leave the ranks of Communism and join forces with the United States. It is worth working for. It could be our only hope.

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*The Rev. Daniel Lyons, S.J., is editor-at-large of Twin Circle and the National Catholic Register, and former dean of Gonzaga University.*