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Mr. Bush to the U.N.

George Herbert Walker Bush is an attractive, intelligent Republican now completing his second term in the House of Representatives from his adopted state of Texas. In time he may develop into an effective Representative for the United States at the United Nations but there seems to be nothing in his record that qualifies him for this highly important position.

The chief of the American mission at the United Nations should either be an outstanding diplomat or someone of demonstrated national stature who has ready access to the President. Mr. Bush is a novice in diplomacy. Although President Nixon obviously rates him highly he is unknown nationally.

The report that, after his most recent defeat for the United States Senate, the Nixon Administration first considered Mr. Bush for the chairmanship of the Republican National Committee will not be an asset in his work at Turtle Bay. In fact, the choice of Mr. Bush is only the latest oddity in a bizarre chapter that began with the newspaper report of the imminent appointment to the United Nations post of Daniel P. Moynihan, the President's counselor on urban problems. That was a surprise to the present ambassador, Charles W. Yost, a distinguished career diplomat who had acceded to Mr. Nixon's request two years ago to serve "for the duration."

Mr. Moynihan eventually declined the United Nations post, and now Mr. Bush will take on what he rightly calls "a great and awesome responsibility" at a critical time in the relationship of the United States with the United Nations. This country is ever more frequently in a minority on crucial issues ranging from the Mideast to southern Africa and the admission of Peking.

It will take much hard work—in Washington no less than at Turtle Bay—if Mr. Bush is to cut American losses and provide sustained leadership for an imperative rejuvenation of the United Nations organization and perhaps the restructuring of the Secretariat itself. We wish Mr. Bush good passage but we cannot pretend that his appointment arouses the hope and expectation generated in other years by the naming of an Adlai E. Stevenson, an Arthur J. Goldberg—or a Charles W. Yost.