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Pope Deplores Peace Snag; U.S. Clerics Decry Raids

Questions 'Painful Delay'

By PAUL HOFMANN
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ROME, Dec. 22 — Pope Paul VI said today that the reasons for the break in the Vietnam peace talks were not "sufficiently apparent."

In a clear allusion to the renewed United States bombing raids on North Vietnam during the last few days, the Pope gravely declared that "the unforeseen worsening of events has intensified bitterness and anxiety in world opinion."

In an address to the Sacred College of Cardinals, he reiterated his hope that the "painful delay" in the negotiations on Vietnam may not "endanger the attainment of peace in those anguished regions."

"With increased fervor," Pope Paul said, "we offer up our prayer that the oppressive conflict may have an equitable and

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satisfactory conclusion as soon as possible."

Pope Paul's brief and bitter remarks about Vietnam came about halfway in a 15-minute report on the state of the world and of the Roman Catholic Church.

The occasion was the customary audience for all cardinals present in Rome for the exchange of Christmas wishes with the Pope. Thirty-five cardinals and other high prelates attended the audience in the Vatican's Consistorial Hall.

In his address, the Pontiff also discussed the situation in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland, on the Indian subcontinent and in Korea. Speaking about the plights of Christians in Communist countries, he singled out Albania where, he said, the future of the church seemed hopeless.

In his references to the Middle East, the Pope welcomed what he described as an almost complete suspension of military activity, but regretted that the state of war was continuing "without effective steps toward the seeking of peaceful solutions."

Pope Paul warned that efforts to increase military potential in the Middle East were "a permanent and serious danger in an area that is so sensitive and delicate."

He noted that this danger threatened "values cherished for many reasons by a large part of humanity," and continued:

"It goes without saying that the gradual acceptance of situations without a clear juridical foundation internationally recognized and guaranteed cannot but render more difficult, rather than facilitate, a just and acceptable solution that takes due account of the rights of all: We think in particular here of the Holy City, Jerusalem, which in these days is remembered with greater intensity by the followers of Christ, and of which they too ought to be able fully to consider themselves 'citizens.'"

Vatican officials explained later that by his passage Pope Paul had meant to restate the thesis of the Roman Catholic Church, often propounded that an international treaty should regulate the status of the city of Jerusalem and of other holy places in Israel and Jordan.

The Pope declared that his hopes for peace in the Middle East were shared with "greater and justified urgency by the sons and daughters of the people of Palestine who for so many years have been awaiting and calling for a just recognition of their aspirations,

not in opposition to but in necessary harmony with the rights of other peoples."

While making this plea for the acknowledgment of Palestinian demands, Pope Paul did not mention Israel by name.

Turning to Northern Ireland, the Pontiff again appealed to all groups there "that sentiments of civilized understanding and of Christian charity may finally prevail among all—as, we already know, they do prevail among the majority of that industrious and faithful people; they prevail over resentment, even though justified, and over the temptations of rancor and revenge."

The Pope expressed the hope that eventually "a respectful and cordial coexistence might be established in Ulster. He avoided mentioning specifically either Roman Catholics or Protestants.

Pope Paul praised the recent negotiations between North and South Korea, and the exchange of prisoners between Pakistan on one side and India and Bangladesh on the other. He said that these limited gestures of goodwill should be "a prelude to the prompt return of the thousands and thousands of people who remain through force far from their home-

lands."

In the final section of his address, devoted to the Communist countries, Pope Paul said that the Vatican "has for some time been engaged in a sincere and patient effort to establish or reestablish everywhere—even in the midst of difficulties created by particular ideological systems or by governments—a clear and honest relationship such as to guarantee to the church, as the saying goes, sufficient living space."

The Pope gave to understand that all such attempts had been futile with regard to Albania where, he said, life was "extremely difficult" for the Roman Catholic Church and for other religious communities. He added:

"With the shepherds stricken and the flock dispersed, one cannot see what human hope remains there for the church, but we want to go on hoping, even if it is hoping against hope."

Mission Impeded

Without naming names, but clearly meaning the Soviet Union and China, Pope Paul said that "there are also other immense regions in which the life of the Catholic church is practically speaking stifled, not only because it is represented by minorities that are statistically small though certainly not without importance, but because she is effectively impeded in the exercise of her religious mission."

In the opening part of his address, which discussed strains and protest within the Roman Catholic Church, Pope Paul seemed to take an authoritarian and conservative line.

He observed that "a contagious process of the general and pathological dissatisfaction that has pervaded the present generation" was the deep cause of the unrest in the church.

The Pope, who is 75 years old, noted that a gap between older and younger churchmen had developed, and decried that it had caused "many spiritual and practical situations in the ecclesiastical structure that are anything but peaceful."

Most of these tensions, Pope Paul said sternly, "can be reduced to a single and generic classification—a crisis of obedience."