

Nixon Priest-Aide Called to 'Prayer'

Boston

The Rev. John McLaughlin's religious superior said yesterday he had summoned the Jesuit priest and White House adviser to Boston for "prayer and reflection."

The Rev. Richard T. Cleary, regional provincial of the Jesuit Fathers of New England, said Father McLaughlin might be asked to leave the White House. He also said Father McLaughlin could face dismissal from the order.

"I will be asking him to take a brief time away for prayer about his situation and reflection with me," Father Cleary said. He said Father McLaughlin had been asked to come to Boston as "soon as he can get time to do it."

Father McLaughlin is a special deputy adviser to President Nixon. He has been outspoken in his defense of the President and sharply critical of the chief executive's opponents.

In Chicago yesterday, Father McLaughlin urged a third member of the House Judiciary Committee to disqualify himself from the impeachment inquiry.

Father McLaughlin said that Representative Jerome Waldie (Dem. - Antioch) "quite clearly has convicted President Nixon in his head and in his heart" and has "severely prejudiced the impartiality" of the committee.

Father McLaughlin said he was speaking for the President. He previously has urged two other Democrats — the Rev. Robert Drinan of Massachusetts, also a Jesuit priest, and John Conyers of Michigan — to disqualify themselves from the inquiry.

"I am a spokesman for the President," he said. "My statements are consonant with those of the President. But I wouldn't want my statements to be taken completely literally."

In Washington. Waldie
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said, "I do not wish to respond to Father McLaughlin other than to pray for him and to trust he has a better understanding of the Bible than he apparently possesses of the Constitution."

Father Cleary said he could find no record that actual permission had been given for Father McLaughlin to work in the White House, although he noted that some "encouragement" had been given.

Father Cleary said he had spoken with Father McLaughlin in Washington recently and the priest believed he had received permission to work in the White House.

Father Cleary said he also had no record that Father McLaughlin had ever been given permission to live in the Watergate apartments.

"Speaking for myself, I would not live there," Father Cleary said, adding that Jesuits usually are required to live in Jesuit communities.

In response to questions, Father Cleary indicated he had three options in dealing with Father McLaughlin: to do nothing, to instruct him to leave the White House, or to recommend his dismissal from the Jesuit order, although his status as a priest would not necessarily be affected.

The Jesuit official, discussing Father McLaughlin's attitude toward the controversy over his status at the White House, said: "He likes to feel it's a political question. I do not feel it is. The question at issue is a religious one."

Father Cleary also was asked about Father McLaughlin's recent defense of Mr. Nixon's use of strong language as revealed by the edited White House Watergate transcripts.

Asked if he agreed with the defense, Father Cleary said: "I would be standing up against Moses if I did . . . 'Thou shalt not take the name of thy Lord and God in vain.'"

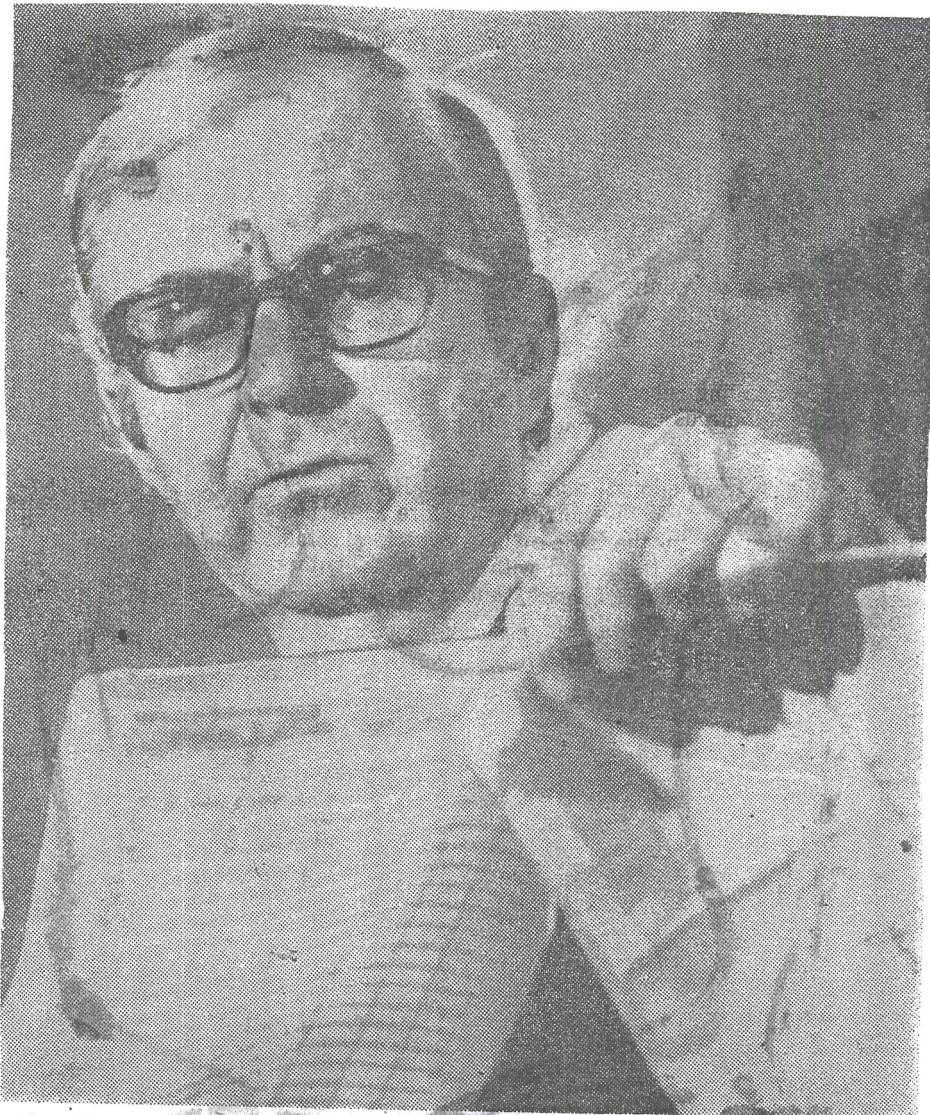
Father McLaughlin was criticized by the bishop of Providence when he challenged Senator John O. Pastore (Dem.-R.I.) for a Senate seat in 1970.

Associated Press



AP Wirephoto

REV. RICHARD CLEARY
Jesuit superior



AP Wirephoto

The Rev. John McLaughlin frowned yesterday in Chicago at an impeachment petition that he said was mailed by Jerome Waldie at government expense