

Series Four—1973

AMERICAN AMBASSADOR MARTIN DISSUADES POPE PAUL FROM GESTURE TO THIRD WORLD

Paul's Papal policy carries him in the direction of being open to all comers and all shades of opinion, especially from the Left. That policy suffers a rude shock in January 1973. A delegation of American anti-Vietnam War activists arrives in the Vatican asking for an audience with the Pope and carrying as a gift for him some fragments of an American bomb dropped on Hanoi.

Paul's policy has been to receive such anti-war groups and Vietcong representatives.

But American Ambassador Graham Martin succeeds in persuading Paul not to receive this delegation. Increasingly, United States authorities are realizing how Paul's mind is working, and what could happen if Paul's policies should affect the mind of the next Conclave and the policy of Paul's successor.

PAUL EFFECTS FURTHER CRUCIAL SHIFT IN TRADITIONAL POWER BLOCS

On March 5, Pope Paul creates 29 new Cardinals. Only seven are Italian—Sergio Pignedoli is among them. Twelve are Third World Cardinals. With these appointments, Paul has upset still further the Traditionalist balancing power of large European groups: the Italians alone, or the Italians and the Spaniards together, or the French with the Italians and the Spaniards. No European bloc can ever dominate a future Conclave.

With this last change in numbers, Paul is ready to move on to the next part of his plan for reform of the Conclave system—and of the Church.

*PAUL'S FIRST FORMAL PROPOSAL FOR
REVOLUTION IN WORLD-WIDE CHURCH
GOVERNMENT*

On the same March 5, at a secret Consistory of his Cardinals, Paul asks the College about the possibility of "utilizing in the election of a Pope the contribution of the Oriental Patriarchs and of elected representatives of the episcopate, that is to say, of those who make up the permanent Council of the Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops."

Apparently simple words! But this is "Romanese" for one of the most far-reaching changes proposed in over twelve hundred years of Roman Catholic history.

Paul's idea concerns more than merely slicing up the pie of Papal elections among more Electors. He wants more than a mere democratization of Conclave by the inclusion of a few men who aren't Cardinals. He is aiming for more than an increase in the number and the diversification of Electors. He is asking his Cardinals to approve two measures that would have effects neither Paul nor they can foresee.

First, he is asking them seriously to weigh the feasibility of reforming the relations of Papacy and bishops so that, *as they now are*, non-Catholic Churches such as the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Anglican Church can achieve *de facto* union with the Roman Catholic Church. This is a huge change. Always, up to now, Rome has said that the non-Roman Catholic Churches would finally have to submit and "return" to the fold of Catholicism.

Second, he is asking the Cardinals seriously to weigh the feasibility of electing the Pope, after his own abdication, on the very broad basis of Electors drawn both from the Catholic Church and from non-Catholic Christian Churches. If they consent to that, it will mean that the Pope they elect will be handed, as the mainstay of his Papal policy, the principle of governing in conjunction with all those Catholic *and non-Catholic* Electors.

In all of this, Paul has taken seriously the admonition of

non-Catholic churchmen: "Peter (meaning the Pope) must give up his imperial power in the Church, in order to gain authority in spirit and in moral stance."

It will take a couple of years for all the opinions and reactions to be gathered in, analyzed, and brought to a conclusion. But Paul's efforts along these lines will fail.