

The Issue Of Vatican Ambassadorship.

German theologian Karl Adam in "One and Only", recently published, appeals to Catholics and Protestants, asking them to understand each other, so that Catholics do not see Protestantism as mere chaos or Protestants Catholicism as mere arrogance. Both groups are bound by the command to love one another. If the rending of Christendom is heart-rending, Catholics and Protestants must search their consciences.

It is a point of honor not to attribute dishonorable motives lightly. Now is the time to exploit goodness, not evil. From the White House came the word: "The President has decided that it is in the national interest for the United States to maintain diplomatic representation at the Vatican (44 nations are represented here). . . It is well known that the Vatican is vigorously engaged in the struggle against Communism."

This announcement came as an aftermath to a previous presidential speech when he urged Christian churches to unite and appose Communism "In this crisis of human affairs all men who profess a belief in God should unite. . . We should lay aside our differences and come together now. . . All churches, all creeds, are menaced. . ."

The published reactions of some (not all) leaders of the Protestant churches and organizations have been hostile. The Bulletin has not the time, nor is this the place, to engage in what might well become a vindictive controversy. But it does advise Notre Dame students to know what issues are involved: political Romanism (?), the separation of Church and State, the First Amendment. All Catholics, and sincere Protestants who have the courage to be objective, will feel the hot air of recrimination that hot-heads who are "going to hold mass meetings from one end of the nation to the other to arouse the people" are bound to foment.

We need a calm, intelligent look at the record of the United States' previous relationship with the Vatican. Prejudice blinds the intelligence. When the truth is not what the bigot wants it to be, he twists its image out of shape in his own mind to focus his vision on the victim of his dislikes. In doing this he does not hurt the truth, but he does injure his own spirit and disqualifies himself as an honest, fair critic.

"All that the people fear in the Church, all that they hate in her, all against which they harden their hearts and thicken their heads, all that has made peoples consciously and unconsciously treat the Papacy as a peril, is the evidence that there is something in it which cannot be looked at languidly. . . The measure of the madness with which men hate her is but their vain attempt to despise." G. K. Chesterton, a convert.

We will not concern ourselves with first-rate bigots; we leave them to the judgment of God. But it is disappointing to read published statements of those of our non-Catholic brethren who heretofore have been showing us, as we them, mutual signs of friendship and cooperation in a common effort to pull together against the Soviet peril.

When President Truman, a devout Baptist, appoints General Clark, an Episcopalian and 33rd Degree Mason, to be Ambassador to Vatican City in order to serve "the purpose of diplomacy and humanitarianism"—when this is classified as "one more indication of the rising dominance of political Romanism in this country". . . one wonders if the Rev. Robert J. McCracken is implying that the late Archbishop John T. McNicholas lied when he categorically declared:

"We deny absolutely and without any qualification that the Catholic Bishops of the United States are seeking a union of Church and State by any endeavors whatsoever, either proximate or remote. If tomorrow Catholics constituted a majority in our country, they would not seek a union of Church and State. They would, then as now, uphold the Constitution, and all its Amendments. . ."

Prayers (deceased) father of Ted Steffen. Ill, grandmother of Joe Swift (Far); Rt. Rev. Msgr. Walter J. Tobin. Critically injured, Jack Haddock, ex-'51. 5 special intentions.