

freedom in so many countries is the cause of constant distress at the Vatican. To attempt to do anything constructive about it on a bilateral basis is always a delicate matter. There was the occasion in 1970, for instance, when Paul VI gave an audience to rebel leaders from the three Portuguese African colonies, and strained relations with Portugal. In openly expressing disapproval of government action, the Holy See is especially vulnerable to reprisals, for an offended government may promptly harass or suppress the national Church. Hence expression of disapproval, even if provided by specific acts, is usually couched in general terms, though there have been exceptions.

Political prisoners have in recent years been a growing problem, as more and more constitutional governments have been displaced by violent means. Priests, and in some cases bishops, have been imprisoned with other opponents — actual, potential or imagined — of the new regimes. Retention in prison without trial and torture of prisoners have been the subjects of repeated diplomatic protests on the part of the Holy See. In the instance of Guinea in 1971, the summary execution of some 150 political prisoners was publicly condemned in the strongest terms by the Pope himself.

The Church enjoins its bishops and clergy not to become involved in political activity, and its faithful to avoid violence. There is a difference here between the Roman Church and others. The World Council of Churches, in providing financial assistance to resistance movements in Southern Africa, may support armed resistance. The Church of Rome is firm in not permitting its resources to be used for any but peaceful means of protest.

Focus on Vietnam, Middle East

Prolonged or recurring local wars have been of the utmost concern to Paul VI and those around him, as they were to John XXIII when, in 1963, he issued the encyclical *Pacem in Terris*. This concern, with Vietnam and the Middle East especially, probably had more than anything else to do with President Nixon's revival in 1970 of the practice in the 1940s of having a personal envoy of the President accredited to the Holy See. Henry Cabot Lodge admitted to repeated discussions with Paul

VI on means of ending the Vietnam and the diplomats of other countries consistently found the problems of achieving durable peace there foremost in mind of the Pope.

While the Holy See has diplomatic relations with nearly all the Arab countries, it still does not have an exchange of ambassadors with Israel. But interest in the problems relating to creation and survival of the state of Israel is intense, likely to be in evidence when a head of state, such as Golda Meir, a minister of state, or a diplomat is received by the Pope. Not only would he give him greater satisfaction than any other head of state, but he would play a helpful role in achieving a just and lasting peace in that part of the world where the Christian Church finds its origins.

Broadly speaking, then, the objectives of Vatican diplomacy are twofold: (1) by promoting the welfare of people. With Canada, there is little for discussion under either heading on the domestic scene. In countries where the Holy See has concordats, acting as a voice of the state in the affairs of the Church, such as the appointment of bishops in Spain, there may be some difficult exchanges under (1). With countries having oppressed minorities or oppressive minorities in power, there may be frequent or prolonged discussions under (2).

Canada shares the Vatican's concern for the welfare of people everywhere. A program of international assistance is an important part of Canadian foreign policy and Canada has demonstrated a readiness to share in peacemaking and peacekeeping on numerous occasions. Exchanges of information and views can be helpful to the Vatican and Canada in discussing differences in their points of view and pursuing their common ends. Canada is held in high regard by the present Pope and those closest to him, as a country in which people of diverse origins live together amicably and as an unselfish and intelligent voice in world councils. Conversely, Canada respects the Holy See as an informed and unselfish power in international affairs. With the existence now of diplomatic ties, this mutual trust should be maintained and facilitate the achievement of common aims.

Clergy held as prisoners of new regimes have constituted growing problem