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4/21/75

ITEMS TO BE ANNOUNCED OR VOLUNTEERED

The President will meet today at 5:30 p. m. with Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, Personal Representative of the President of the Vatican. There is no specific agenda, and it is expected that the President and Ambassador Lodge will discuss a range of issues. Secretary Kissinger will also attend the meeting.

STATEMENT OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

President's Meeting with Apostolic Delegate to the United States

Monday, December 22, 1975

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The President met today at 12:30 p. m. with The Most Reverend Jean Jadot, the Apostolic Delegate to the United States, for the purpose of receiving a personal copy of His Holiness Pope Paul's annual "Day of Peace" message. The Pope's message this year is entitled "The Weapons of Peace". It stresses the importance of people everywhere remaining aware of the moral and spiritual values which must be considered in establishing the foundation of a peaceful and humane international order.

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Q: Do we have diplomatic relations with the Vatican and isn't Archbishop Jadot an ambassador?

A: We do not have formal diplomatic relations with the Vatican.

Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge serves as the President's personal envoy to the Vatican. In this capacity, Ambassador Lodge makes periodic visits to Rome to discuss on an informal basis matters of mutual interest to the United States and the Vatican.

The Archbishop is the Apostolic Delegate to the United States. As such, he serves as the Pope's representative to the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church in America.

Q: We understand that this is the President's first White House meeting with the Apostolic Delegate since taking office. Does this somehow foreshadow a new policy between the United States and the Vatican -- the Catholic Church?

A: As I stated, the purpose of today's meeting was for the President to receive Pope Paul's "Day of Peace" message for 1976. The Pope traditionally presents such a message to heads of state and governments around the world at this time of year. Pope Paul is a major spiritual and moral leader in the world. The President values continuing consultations with the Vatican on humanitarian and similar issues of mutual interest.

Q: When did the President meet with the Pope?

A: The President met with Pope Paul VI on June 3, 1975, on the occasion of the President's visit to Vatican City.