

DRAFT MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION * MEETING OF PRESIDENT FORD WITH POPE PAUL VI

VATICAN CITY JUNE 3]

The President:

FORD. In 1956 Mrs. Ford and I visited Rome and were received by the Holy Father.

POPE PAUL. This moment is very precious for us. We try to do our best to follow your efforts towards peace and justice in the world. We try to carry out our own task with faith and dedication. We of course have no political interests; we # only want to help the cause of peace. We are fully aware of the heavy responsibilities of your job and we pray for your continued success.

The President:

#. Both myself and the people of the U.S. are most grateful for your broad humanitarian interests as well as for your own search for peace. Your efforts to help humanity are the greatest in the world and we thank you very much. You yourself have contributed much in the area of peace. The U.S. has sought in all parts of the world to achieve and maintain peace. We are concerned about peace being maintained in Europe. And let me say most emphatically that the U.S. is dedicated to the strengthening of Europe and ## that we are going to stay in Europe.

Pope Paul.
We are also concerned about the maintenance of peace. Our ministry is that of peace and brotherhood among peoples. With regard to Europe, we are very grateful for your efforts toward peace in Europe. Europe, however, is is not deeply united. The historical habits which ### make countries consider themselves different from one another are ### still stronger than the spirit of unity. At the present time our voice is more humble, even though more authoritative, since we have no temporal possessions. We try to build friendship among peoples, including those whose faith is different from ours or



DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958 Sec. 3.6

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P. (cont'd) those who are alien to our interests. There is one great effort that we make, that of giving to our catholic family and to all christians the one same attitude of considering all to be brothers and of all being good to one another.

The President

I want to say most emphatically that the words that you have just said have a broad and tremendous impact not only on all catholics but also on all those who are devoted to ~~po~~ other religions. Your spiritual impact is very great throughout the entire world and we thank you for your leadership.

Pope Paul:

We have no other mission. Each year we send out a letter to our people calling for love of peace. There should be a new psychology as the base for brotherly love. We try to change the attitudes of the new generations, particularly the young people. We do our best, hoping that our undertakings are in harmony with the policies of the U.S., a country in a position of leadership. We do not want to exert leadership. We realize that it is not easy to change the heart of man. We are glad at this time to have the opportunity to thank the U.S., particularly its President, because we see that the U.S. has really peaceful attitudes towards all peoples, even though you may find differences among them. Whatever you undertake, be persevering in the fulfillment of your mission. You may not always be praised by public opinion, but you should be the leaders in the ~~eff~~ efforts to unite peoples in justice and harmony.

F. The U.S. has indeed great responsibilities.

P. We pray for you.

F. We have a very great # opportunity. And I am trying as president to provide the leadership that is so much needed in this world. For if the



F. (Cont'd) U.S. neglects its responsibility, we do not deserve the role that has been given to us. We keep a high, strong level in our contacts and negotiations both with our allies and our adversaries. I can assure you that that is the mission of this administration. Now for a personal touch: our oldest son, age 25, is studying in a seminary and will dedicate himself to serve his fellow man, thus making up for his father's sins.

P. Your words are very significant. They show how Divine Providence can guide our steps towards that new world where peace and harmony will be the consecration of our work.

F. I would be most grateful for any recommendations that you may have regarding my responsibilities. And I can assure you that any recommendations from you will be most significant.

P. It is not our intention to abuse/^{your}suggestion but rather to make use of it. We can inform you discreetly of any number of points of view. We do not want, however, to have an openly stated mission. While we have not drawn a list of ^{points} questions, we hope by the present note, which covers ~~#####~~ certain points, to better explain to you, Mr. President, what our thinking is.

F. We will find the note in question very helpful. Please feel free to communicate with us at any time on any issue, because your broad view of the world can be very helpful to us in the shaping of our policies.

P. Cardinal Cook^e told us that he had made known to you some of his views.

F. We think highly of Cardinal Cook^e. We know that he wants to help in the attainment of the policy objectives of the U.S.

P. At the present time there is polarization of the great powers, which



P. (cont'd) brings about the divisions between East and West as well as the # internal divisions within Europe. It is very important that this polarization and divisions be overcome. We want to help in any way in making this new world one of love, justice and peace. We also understand the magnitude of your tasks and realize that sometimes things do not come out as we wish.

F. We can work together to get a brighter sky for all mankind. I wonder whether it would be possible for you to come to the U.S. in 1976 ## in connection with the Eucharistic Congress. I hope you will honor the U.S. with your visit.

P. The Eucharistic Congress is for young people.

F. But you are young ### in spirit

P. I would consider the possibility of such a beautiful trip as a pleasant spiritual duty, since it would be helping your country in the celebration of an important date. It is my wish and that of my bishops to give all our support to peace. Such work for peace is exemplified by the leadership of the U.S. Please consider that you have in myself a man who is trying to promote peace, an undertaking which is a part of the overall concept of the policies of # the U.S.

F. Getting back to the Bicentennial celebrations in 1976, I want to say that you would give the Bicentennial a great spiritual blessing if you were to come. Such a gesture would be most helpful, not only ## to the young but to all peoples of the world.

P. We will see what can be done with the help of God. At the present time I cannot make any commitments. Maybe we could bring some of the others at this time.



P. (cont'd) Secretary Kissinger is an old friend. We have already met 2 or times. His work has been very significant, both in its aims and in the step by step ~~###~~ by step approach. I believe that the step by step approach is the right one, even though it may not always be successful.

/ From this point on both Secretary Kissinger and ^{ARCHBISHOP} ~~Cardinal~~ Casaroli were present at the meeting /

P. President Ford has encouraged us in and thanked us for our efforts on behalf of peace. He also asked whether there were any problems we wanted to ~~mention~~ mention or any suggestions we wanted to make. To start you may wish to know our views about the Middle East. We are glad to see that something is about to happen in that area, and you have our best wishes for success. There are two kinds of events in the world: divisive ones and those that bring people together.

CASAROLI. Dr, Kissinger has just told there were some hopes of/a ^{bringing about} "rapprochement" between Israel and Egypt before the Geneva conference.

KISSINGER. I know the Vatican can keep secrets because there has been no public mention of this matter. We are trying to defuse the situation and trying to take another step forward in bringing Israel and Egypt closer together before going to Geneva. ^a Sdat has good will and he ^{and} ~~and~~ President Ford made some progress. If Rabin agrees we can ~~make~~ make further progress. But if Rabin does not agree, then we have to try the comprehensive solution.



P. Our formula is is a composite, organic one - not as exclusive as Israel's - which tries to find some form of peaceful coexistence in Jerusalem. Of course we stay out of any political or military considerations.

C. The U.S. Govt. knows our position regarding Jerusalem. The only thing

/CASAROLI (cont'd)

is that a general formula is more difficult to put into practice.

K. Within a reasonable time we will make our position known on issues such as the organic whole, including Jerusalem, and will be influenced by the paper given to us by the Holy Father. We could prevent an immediate war if there could be an agreement between Israel and Egypt. Then our comprehensive ideas regarding the whole problem could help.

(Paper on Jerusalem handed over at this time to Secretary Kissinger)

P. Lebanon is a special^c country where there has been a successful formula for the coexistence of Moslems and Christians, until now. This shows that coexistence is possible. We recommend that the balance should not be ~~upset~~^{upset} for the sake of that country.

C. But now the balance has been upset by the presence of ~~300~~ 300,000 Palestinians, who are not Lebanese citizens and are mostly Moslems.

K. And they are heavily armed.



C. Lebanon can be a symbol of the coexistence between different religious groups, and it can also be a window to the West.

P. We trust that with your wisdom you will find a solution to the Palestinian problem. It will remain an explosive issue until it is settled.

C. The Holy Father has received appeals from Palestinian leaders asking him to do something to put an end to violence. Arafat and other moderate Palestinian leaders are prepared to recognize the existence of Israel.

K. In any contact between the Holy Father and Palestinian leaders, any influence on Arafat would be helpful. We cannot have direct contact with

K. (cont'd) the Palestinian leaders. It is necessary to settle the Palestine issue if there is going to be peace in the area. It is a question of time. Still it would be helpful if those who support our views could exert a beneficial influence.

C. Regarding the Helsinki conference on European security, we try to be helpful.

F. We do not think that the Western European nations should capitulate and give in to Russia and accept the proposals of the ~~Warsaw~~ Warsaw pact countries. Such an attitude would expose the West to criticism. We # urge our allies to insist on substance so that the Warsaw Pact nations do not prevail. A capitulation just for the sake of having a conference would be bad tactics for the U.S. and Europe.

K. It's the # question of the third basket.

F. The Holy Father could have a good impact on some Western allied nations which are not as strong as they should be. Any influence in that area would be to the best advantage of mankind.

P. There has to be perseverance.



P. We encourage and appreciate the efforts by the U.S. to feed the hungry and help those in need of development. We admire your leadership and spirit of good will which is fully consistent with our religion of peace and love.

F. Since I became President the U.S. has expanded its food programs. As stated by Dr. Kissinger last week, the U.S. is an active participant in the World Food Council, so that countries can develop and enhance their food growing capabilities.

P. That is an excellent formula and it points to a new world based on cooperation.

F. I know that you are concerned about the human problems in Indochina. We have made an effort to bring out ~~#####~~ 125,000 refugees, of which about 100,000 are in the U.S. or Guam. We want to make certain that they become part of the U.S. and we welcome them as we assimilate them in our society, with the help of the people of the U.S.

P. It is indeed a very great and noble undertaking on your part. Unfortunately because of its very greatness many do not understand it or even give it the wrong interpretation. We praise the actions of your country and are willing to help. Also we thank you and may God bless you.

C. How can it be avoided to have develop in Spain a situation similar to that in Portugal ?

F. We were pleased when there was a movement that brought democracy to Portugal. We are, however, disappointed with the present situation. The people are in favor of democracy and freedom, but do not have the opportunity as citizens to control their government. We hope that the people in Portugal can have true democracy. Even though the situation is not to our liking, I feel that if we all can help the Portuguese people to insist on having real democracy, that can be a good example in the future for Spain.

K. We have doubts as to the methods used by some countries in Europe regarding help to Portugal. We feel that helping the radicals does not help the moderates. Portugal could develop into a combination of Yugoslavia and Algeria. If it were to stay in NATO in that form it could have a bad influence on Italy, leading to the historical compromise which we do not want. We are concerned about the radical elements that seem to have taken over the Armed



K. (cont'd) Forces Movement.

F. We find it hard to understand how a Portugal with a Communist government can be a partner. The Alliance was created for the purpose of opposing Communism, so if a member of the Alliance becomes Communist through the back door that could destroy the Alliance. We need therefore to strengthen the democratic forces and help the people to take away the government from the radicals.

P. We admire and praise your courage in making a stop in Spain. It may encourage the forces of reason. It certainly was an original political gesture. We realize it involved some risk but it was a wise move.

F. Our feeling is that we cannot have Portugal as an example for the wrong forces. So we are concerned about any impact of Portugal on Spain and on other countries, including Italy.

➤ If we encourage the right forces in Portugal and contact the good forces in Spain that should be good for the Alliance.

P. At the present time the Communists have moved into the Mediterranean, the sea so closely linked to our civilization. We do not know their intentions. We are glad to see the U.S. ~~supporting~~ supporting constructive forces that can be helpful.

K. I told ~~the~~ Archbishop Casaroli that we would welcome some guidance on Spain as we do not know the whole situation. And we are to cooperate in efforts aimed at preventing the development of a situation similar to that in Portugal. We would also welcome any ideas as to which forces to help in Spain. We should try to take preventive action so as not to be overtaken by events.



P. Spain is a very religious Catholic country. Spain has great expectations. We try to advise moderation in Spain's approach to cooperation with the rest of Europe, which has rejected it for the time being. The situation in that country is very special, and any assistance is appreciated. We can only encourage your wise efforts and give our moral support.

F. This meeting was a great thrill for me and also a great opportunity. We will work in these areas of humanitarian efforts aimed at peace and freedom.

P. There is much good that can be done in many delicate parts of the world, such as Ethiopia, Malta, Portugal and Cyprus. There are many complex situations that require much good will. We trust God and we try to help. You know you have in me a modest but true friend and ally of the U.S.

