

Myron Charles Taylor

Harry S. Truman

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MYRON CHARLES TAYLOR

The Honorable Myron C. Taylor performed great services for both me and my predecessor in the White House as our special representative to the Vatican at a time when it was essential that the United States be represented in that quarter. Undoubtedly, no one could have performed that necessary job as well as he did.

When I went to Italy in 1956, it was my pleasure to visit the Institute Pius XII at the Villa Schifanoia in Florence, to which Mr. Taylor and his wife devoted so much of their energies. It remains a telling memorial to the friendship displayed by them and their country for the Italian people.

All of us should be deeply grateful for the unselfish works of this fine man and able public servant.

Harry S. Truman

FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

MYRON CHARLES TAYLOR

Myron Charles Taylor, LL.B. Cornell University 1894, Trustee of Cornell University from 1928 to 1953, and Trustee Emeritus from 1953 to 1959, died of pneumonia on May 5, 1959, at his home in New York City in his eighty-fifth year.

Mr. Taylor combined a unique career in the law, industry, finance and diplomacy.

Mr. Taylor was born in Lyons, New York, on January 18, 1874. After graduating from the Cornell Law School, Mr. Taylor practiced in New York with the firm of DeForest Brothers & DeForest. In the course of his practice, he became well acquainted with the problems of the textile industry and achieved a high degree of success in reorganizing textile corporations. Consequently, he became head of one of the largest textile plants in the country. As a result of his industrial experience, Mr. J. P. Morgan recruited Mr. Taylor into the steel industry. He served as Chairman of the United States Steel Corporation Finance Committee from 1927 to 1934 and as Chairman of the Board and as Chief Executive Officer from 1932 to 1938. He played a leading part in guiding the finances of that company, was instrumental in retiring its \$340 million of bonded indebtedness and, in addition, guided the company into wise, financial leadership before and during the depression. He was instrumental in adjusting its policies during the depression and the New Deal and in learning to work with labor after the enactment of the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1934.

In 1937, he became the first steel executive to sign with John L. Lewis' Congress of Industrial Organizations.

For these steps, he was widely praised for his policy of maintaining friendly relations with labor.

Upon Mr. Taylor's retirement in 1938 as Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of United States Steel Corporation, he was selected by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to head the American delegation to an international conference at Evian, France, for the purpose of devising a plan to aid German refugees. Under Mr. Taylor's guidance as permanent president, the conference adopted a plan which was accepted by the United States, Britain and France. During his service on the Intergovernmental Committee which had been formed to facilitate the re-settlement of exiles from Nazi Germany, Mr. Taylor was in frequent touch with the Vatican.

In 1939, Mr. Taylor was appointed by President Roosevelt as his personal representative to the late Pope Pius XII, who had been a guest

at Mr. Taylor's New York home in 1936 during his visit to the United States as Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli, Vatican Secretary of State. During the war years Mr. Taylor made several trips between Washington and Rome. After September 1942, Premier Mussolini refused to grant him transit and Mr. Taylor had to wait in the United States for nearly two years until Rome was liberated by the Allies. After that, Mr. Taylor was promptly received at the Vatican on June 21, 1944, and played a leading part in conferences with the Vatican until 1949 when he paid his last official visit to the Pope. His service in the Vatican was a diplomatic mission requiring great skill and finesse. His appointment provoked a storm of protest by Protestant leaders who called it a violation of the principle of the separation of church and state. Mr. Taylor, however, regarded his role as personal representative of the President at the Vatican as a continuation of the humanitarian work he was then undertaking as a personal representative on the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees. Mr. Taylor performed his unusual mission with great understanding and acumen. Before his retirement from government service in 1953, Mr. Taylor served on several missions for President Truman with the rank of Ambassador.

Mr. Taylor gave to Cornell the funds to build Myron Taylor Hall, the building housing the law school, and Anabel Taylor Hall, the interdenominational religious center named in honor of his wife. He also provided the Cornell Law School with funds for the Myron Taylor Lectures on Foreign Affairs, and funds with which to help erect a residence hall to be named for Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes who was one of Mr. Taylor's professors while he was in attendance at the Cornell Law School.

Mr. Taylor was a participant in numerous civil activities, received many decorations from foreign governments, honorary degrees from numerous universities, and many awards and citations from non-governmental organizations.

Among Mr. Taylor's other donations, he gave to Pope Pius XII his residence in Florence, Italy, for the establishment of the Graduate School of Art for American Women where students from a number of countries, including the United States, pursued their studies; he donated his family residence at Lyons, New York, to that city for the establishment of a community center; he gave a portion of his estate at Locust Valley, New York, to the Episcopal Diocese of New York for a diocesan center.

Mr. Taylor had a keen and incisive mind, was painstaking and thorough, had the courage and the vision to look forward rather than back,

and was not frightened by social change. In the discharge of his innumerable obligations, he was indefatigable and made excellent and thorough use of the vast fields of information available to anyone occupying an ambassadorial post at the Vatican. His common sense and good judgment were of great value to Presidents Roosevelt and Truman and to the nation. He was strongly influenced in his choice of a career by the guidance of the first President of Cornell, Andrew Dixon White, and, as in the case of President White, he regarded wealth as something to be used for the good of the state rather than as something to be amassed for personal aggrandizement. He was loyal and faithful in his attendance at meetings of the Board of Trustees at Cornell University, and his advice and judgment were always placed at the disposal of the various presidents of Cornell.

Arthur H. Dean

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, CORNELL UNIVERSITY