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Series A: Writings and Addresses. 1947-1991

Box 1, Folder 20, "The New Realities", June 1963.



Law, Morality and War in the Contemporary World

Richard A. Falk. Praeger. 120 pp. \$4.00.

This fifth essay in the series of Princeton Studies in World Politics is an inquiry into the relevancy of the traditions of law and morality for the present conduct of international affairs and the furtherance of peace.

Journeys Toward Progress: Studies of Economic Policy-Making in Latin America

Albert O. Hirschman. Twentieth Century Fund. 308 pp. \$4.00.

The behavior of public decision-makers in Chile, Columbia and Brazil when faced with the need for economic reform in a specific area, is the basis of this study of the nature of the development process. "Reformmongering" is the author's word for a pattern of change, short of revolution, which may be utilized in Latin America with beneficial results.

A Vindication of Liberal Theology

Henry P. Van Dusen. Scribners. 192 pp. \$3.50.

The intent of the author, who retires this month from the presidency of Union Theological Seminary, is to assign for Liberal Theology a place as an original and distinguishable body of belief, and one which offers "the least inadequate, most credible and cogent interpretation of Christian Faith in the nineteen centuries of its history."

Pacem in Terris

William J. Gibbons, S.J., ed. Paulist Press. 80 pp. 35 cents.

Copies of the new encyclical, with "study-club outline" and a list of recommended readings, are now available in paperback form. The Latin text was consulted for preparation of this translation and slight modifications have been made in the English translation distributed to the press on April 10.

A History of American Foreign Policy

Alexander DeCondo. Scribners. 914 pp. \$12.00.

Both the historical and the thematic development of American foreign policy from colonial days to 1962 are the concern of this volume which has been prescribed for use as text or reference work. Maps and illustrations are plentiful.

The Jewish-Christian Argument

Hans Joachim Schoeps, David E. Green, trans. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 208 pp. \$5.00

Published in Germany in 1937 and now in its first English edition is a penetrating study of the themes underlying conflict between Synagogue and Church since the first century. The work concludes with an examination of contemporary developments which tend to further advance the progress that has been made from "argument to dialogue."

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The New Realities

Marc H. Tanenbaum

An understanding of the profound significance of *Pacem in Terris* involves an effort to comprehend the contradictory situation in which the West and, in particular, the Western religious communities find themselves at this moment of history.

The ultimate contradiction, obviously, is that posed for the entire human family by the nuclear age itself. The science and technology which hold out the possibility for the first time in man's recorded history of banishing the scourges of poverty, disease, and ignorance, are at the same time a Pandora's box of apocalyptic terror that enables modern man to "overkill" himself at least 125 times!

Others in this symposium will address themselves to the import of Pope John's encyclical for the paramount issues of nuclear test suspension and disarmament. I would only observe here in this connection that there is an arresting analogy between the Pope's vigorous initiatives for peace through his encyclicals and the Ecumenical Council, and the practice of the Catholic Church beginning about the middle of the 11th century to enforce a "Truce of God," which greatly restricted the time when it was permissible to carry on warfare. By means of the Truce of God, the Church prohibited warfare between contending parties from Wednesday evening to Monday morning of each week, and during the period of Church festivals. Thus, there were, at least theoretically, only eighty days for fighting in each year, and never more than three consecutive days. The difference between the unitary, feudal society of the Middle Ages in which the Church played a dominant political role and the present time is too obvious to require comment. Nevertheless, the question must be raised with a new seriousness—and I hope to do so later in this discussion—as to whether the Prophetic and spiritual resources of the world's major religions cannot be asserted at this critical hour to help achieve a 20th century "Truce of God" before the world destroys itself in a nuclear missile holocaust, and, almost tragi-comically, either through mechanical error or human miscalculation.

I have chosen to comment on those parts of *Pacem in Terris* which appear to have caught the great interest, if not enthusiasm, of many non-Catholics. Undoubtedly, the key propositions set forth by Pope John that imply the possibilities of radically improved relationships between Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and members of the Oriental religions are those found in Part I, under the section on "Order Between Men."

Reaffirming virtually on every page the principle

of "the dignity of the human person in the light of divinely revealed truth," Pope John, in moving accents of Christian humanism, established the commitment of the Church to uphold and foster "the natural rights" of every human being, and in those areas of human freedom and conscience in which the Church heretofore has appeared to non-Catholics, and indeed to a number of Catholics, to represent a threat to a pluralistic, democratic society. (In the Yale Divinity School study of Protestant textbooks, recently published as *Faith and Prejudice*, the Catholic Church scored lowest and most negatively among all the religious groups described in the textbooks of several Protestant denominations. The themes around which the negative portrayals of the Church clustered were those of Catholic persecution of Protestants during the Reformation and in present day Latin countries of Catholic domination, as well as over the Catholic "conspiracy" to subvert religious liberty in these countries. The study was based on textbooks published during the 1950s and earlier.)

"By the Natural Law," Pope John declares, "every human being has the right to respect for his person, to his good reputation; the right to freedom in searching for truth and in expressing and communicating his opinions . . . and he has the right to be informed truthfully about public events."

"Every human being has the right to honor God according to the dictates of an upright conscience, and therefore the right to worship God privately and publicly."

"The freedom of the human person requires that every man enjoy the right to act freely and responsibly. . . . This is to be done in such a way that each one acts on his own decision, of set purpose and from a consciousness of his obligation, without being moved by force or pressure brought to bear on him externally. For any human society that is established on relations of force must be regarded as inhuman, inasmuch as the personality of its members is repressed or restricted, when in fact they should be provided with appropriate incentives and means for developing and perfecting themselves."

Pope John bases virtually each of his positions on declarations of the Church Fathers, and in particular, of his predecessor Popes from Leo XIII to Pius XII. Any student of Catholic history knows very well that these emphases and traditions have been present in the Church since Patristic times. Why does it appear suddenly that the Church is undergoing a revolution?

A primary factor, of course, is the personality of Pope John himself, his overwhelming humanity and charity, his pastoral concerns, and his publicly declared insistence that the Church apply the "medicine of mercy" in place of the "medicine of severity," both in relation to the inner life of the

Church as well as in relationships with "all men of good will." I wish to submit, however, that the decisive force which has undergirded this renewal and reform ("aggiornamento," the bringing of the Church up-to-date), has been the recognition on the part of the Pope and those Church leaders who share his progressive outlook of the radically new realities which confront the Church, indeed, all Western religions, and the West itself.

For the first time since the emergence of Christianity in the fourth century as an established, organized religious community, Christians—and allied with them Jews and all others who count themselves as citizens of the West—find themselves at one and the same time as a minority and a majority. Out of the three billion people who inhabit our planet today, less than one billion are Christians and Jews. Every year 22 million non-whites, non-Christians are born into the world as contrasted with 8 million who are born Christian and Jewish. The annual population growth rate, for example, in southwest Asia is 2.6% as compared with 0.7% in northern and western Europe. Roman Catholics today number some 18% of the total world population, and population projections indicate that by the year 2000, the world Catholic community will number 9-to-10% of the 6 billion inhabitants of the earth. In the United States, the leader of the Western Alliance and the arena of the greatest growth and strength of Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism, the birth rate has been dropping since July 1961 and has persisted long enough to establish a significant downward trend.

The emergence of communism as a global pseudo-religion with an effective missionary enterprise and a determined anti-theistic ideological program, represents the most powerful and unprecedented opponent in the 1,500 year experience of Western Christianity. Since the end of World War II, 14 formerly "Catholic" countries have become Communist satellites and more than 100 million Christians are now behind the Iron Curtain. The largest Communist parties in the world, outside of the Iron Curtain, are found in predominantly "Catholic" countries; namely, France and Italy. The Communist takeover of Cuba and the considerable inroads of communism in other parts of Central and Latin America are sources of profound anxiety to the West. None of the dominant nations in the world today are "Catholic" as contrasted with the pre-World War II situation when Catholicism was a major political force in France, Italy, the Balkans, and in Europe generally—and Europe was the major force in the world.

Another dimension of these "new realities" is the rise of the nationalisms of Africa and Asia. In many of these countries, Christianity is regarded as "the white man's religion," the handmaiden of Western

imperialism and colonialism. The tragic massacres of missionaries in the Congo and Angola reveal the depths of the hostility of the African toward the Westerner, even if he was at one time considered a Christian benefactor. The harassment and banishment of Christian missionaries in the Sudan is only the most recent of a long series of acts in many parts of Asia and Africa that have reduced Christians to tolerated minorities.

According to the Methodist publication, the *Christian Advocate*, the establishment of Islam as the official religion of Malaya resulted in a ban on religious teaching by missionaries and the use of the radio for evangelical purposes. In Nepal, Methodist missionaries were allowed to open a hospital on the promise that they would not evangelize and that the government could take over the equipment in five years if it so desired. In Ceylon, the government has nationalized 2,500 Catholic and Protestant schools which served 140,000 students. In the United Arab Republic, Christian schools are permitted to stay open on the condition that they allow the teaching of the Koran in the classroom by a Moslem teacher.

Accompanying the rise of nationalism is the resurgence of the Oriental religions, once regarded as moribund. Of the 242 million Africans, for example, there are 35 million Christians. Islam, which numbers some 430 million adherents in the world, converts seven black Africans for every one African converted either to Catholicism or Protestantism. Every embassy of the United Arab Republic in Africa has an "attache" for Islamic affairs, which is a euphemism for a Moslem missionary. Similarly, Buddhism (153 million adherents), Hinduism (335 million adherents), and Confucianism (300 million adherents) have been undergoing a renaissance and have become increasingly competitive with Western Christianity.

The problems of religious liberty, freedom of conscience, the right to proselytize, freedom of movement, the relationship of church to state, racial and religious discrimination—once regarded as the pre-occupations of Westerners and Christians in the internal relationships between Catholics and Protestants on the one hand, and Christians and Jews on the other, have now been catapulted onto the world screen. In an age in which there is instantaneous global communication, it is no longer possible to "keep under wraps" for long, or to withhold from the judgment of a restive and interdependent human family, acts or attitudes which reflect contempt for the human person or which deny him his "natural rights."

An attack on a Negro in Birmingham is condemned the next day in an editorial in a Ghana newspaper. The denial of the religious rights of a Protestant or Jew in Spain or in Colombia is the subject of a consultation within a matter of hours

in New York or Geneva. The harassment of Christian missionaries in Jerusalem is protested on the front pages of Christian newspapers in various parts of the world. The banishment of priests and nuns from Indonesia results in an immediate protest.

From the foregoing, I would summarize three conclusions, and then make a proposal:

(1) A world teetering on the brink of nuclear destruction can little afford the perpetuation of an atmosphere of hatred, division, and suspicion.

(2) The human society, both West and East, threatened by moral decay and materialism, needs every human and spiritual resource to meet the overwhelming needs and challenges of our age. Repressive, mutually antagonistic religions and racial and ethnic group conflicts will paralyze mankind in its effort to meet the challenges of survival. The monopolies and hegemonies of the past must give way to a global pluralism in which, in the words of *Pacem in Terris*, "the universal common good, that is, the common good of the entire human family" is promoted.

(3) Religion itself will be irrelevant if it continues to perpetuate the glaring contradiction between preaching high moral principles and allowing the undisciplined practice of the opposite.

Pacem in Terris, I would finally suggest, together with similarly far-reaching documents of the World Council of Churches, and analogous pronouncements by world Jewish bodies, make clear that there is in fact a consensus on the central moral issues of world peace and world community on the part of the three-faith communities in the West. As a first step toward mobilizing the tremendous spiritual energies that reside among the millions of adherents of Christianity and Judaism toward the realization of the peace objectives that are shared by these traditions, I formally propose that appropriate leaders of the three-faith communities take the initiative in convening on the American scene a "National Conference on Religion and World Peace." The recent conference on "Religion and Race," with which I was privileged to be associated as program chairman, is testimony to the great impact that such a combined religious witness can make. Based on the success of such an enterprise, one could then visualize the possibility of a world-wide meeting of a similar character. When leaders of the world's major religions will come together at one table to pursue justice, charity, and peace in freedom, we may well be witness to the beginning of the translation into reality of the prophetic vision of messianic peace for all mankind, *Pacem in Terris*.

"So far public opinion in this country seems to ignore the difference between 25,000,000 dead as the probable result of all-out counterforce warfare and 215,000,000 dead as the probable result of all-out countercity warfare between the great powers. We seem to turn away from any effort to make counterforce nuclear war, if it comes, fall far, far short of all-out. So, in addition, do we gloss over the qualitative moral distinction between tragically killing or sacrificing human beings as an indirect result of knocking out military targets (counterforce warfare) and the murderous policy of deliberately killing them in totally devastating countercity warfare. The only ground for hope is that our leaders who must make the decisions will not be so irresponsible."

from

THE LIMITS OF NUCLEAR WAR: THINKING ABOUT THE DO-ABLE AND THE UN-DO-ABLE

by Paul Ramsey

just published by the Council on Religion and International Affairs

56 pages

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