

AMERICAN
CATHOLICS

and

PEACE

an historical sketch

by
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American Catholics and Peace: An Historical Sketch

JOHN TRACY ELLIS

"No more war, war never again!"¹ The relationship of the Catholic Church to the issue of war and peace was probably never given a more dramatic setting, nor an expression that reached a wider audience, than the address of Pope Paul VI before the General Assembly of the United Nations in October, 1965, that embodied those words. The general topic of the Church and peace is very broad, one with intriguing possibilities for the historian. But it has been traced elsewhere and the limitations of space will permit no more here than a summary account of the American Catholics *vis-a-vis* this most crucial of all the grave problems with which the entire human family is now confronted.²

"Nothing is comprehensible," said Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, "except through its history,"³ and this is none the less true for the manner in which the Catholics of the United States related to war and peace than it is for any other aspect of human affairs. The fact that Catholicism was a proscribed religion throughout the colonial period of American history meant that there was practically no trace of any Catholic policy pertaining to this subject. The adherents

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of the Church of Rome were a suspect and despised minority whose first real opportunity for citizenship came in 1776 with Virginia's enactment of a bill of rights that included religious freedom, a principle that soon found imitation in Pennsylvania and Maryland where there lived most of the approximately 30,000 Catholics of the time. Obviously, they had every reason to welcome the dawn of national independence, and one finds very little trace of loyalist sentiment in their ranks as there was among some of their Anglican neighbors.⁴ Nor was it surprising that the Catholics' emergence from the long night of the penal age should have found this tiny minority in a population of approximately 4,000,000 Americans, so timid and cautious about taking an active role in the new civil order created by the winning of independence.

The American Revolution came to an end in 1783, a year that saw Father John Carroll, soon to be the Catholics' first bishop, delineating an attitude that would characterize Catholic thinking for the indefinite future. He informed the Holy See of the advantages for the Church to be derived from the new nation's separation of Church and State with its accompanying religious freedom for all. It was the Catholics' duty, said Carroll, to use "the utmost prudence" to preserve these advantages by

demeaning ourselves on all occasions as subjects zealously attached to our government and avoiding to give any jealousies on account of any dependence on foreign jurisdiction more than that which is essential to our religion, an acknowledgment of the Pope's spiritual supremacy over the whole Christian world.⁵

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In these words Carroll expressed the principal motivation that lay behind Catholic acceptance of national policy, whether it be for war or for peace, during the nearly two centuries that followed. Actually, there was no reason to question Carroll's sincerity, even if he did speak for a minority that was anxious to conform to its country's policies lest it invite a return of the penal strictures of colonial days.

How this attitude worked in practice was demonstrated several decades later when American ships on the high seas were caught between the blockade of Napoleon Bonaparte and the British orders in council. While Carroll, by this time Archbishop of Baltimore and titular leader of the American Catholics, was clearly in sympathy with Britain, he deplored what he termed the "unaccountable impolicy" of the orders in council. When the new British Minister to Washington, David Erskine, submitted a treaty which the American government refused to accept, Carroll told his old English friend, Charles Plowden, an ex-Jesuit like himself, "After the disappointment caused by the rejection of Mr. Erskine's treaty, we lovers of peace hope that he has brought terms of conciliation." Conciliation, however, was not the mood of the moment in the United States, for as Carroll later told Plowden, "Our American cabinet, and a majority of Congress seem to be infatuated with a blind predilection for France and an unconquerable hostility to England."⁶

Such were Archbishop Carroll's private sentiments as confided to a close personal friend. Once the United States had declared war on Great Britain in June, 1812, however, his public pronouncements were

in quite another vein. Thus in a sermon preached on August 20 of that year he exhorted his people to contribute to the nation's preservation since, he maintained, it was a just war. Turning then to the role that had been played by President Madison, he added:

We have witnessed the unremitting endeavours of our chief magistrate to continue to us the blessings of peace; that he has allowed no sentiments of ambition or revenge, no ardor for retaliation . . . to withhold him from bearing in his hands the olive branch of peace.⁷

As in a number of other matters, it may be said that John Carroll set the pattern for his successors in the hierarchy, and in the years that followed more than one bishop was to call publicly for his spiritual subjects' support of a declaration of war when his private views were at some variance with official action. What Carroll's most recent biographer said of him, therefore, could *mutatis mutandis* be said of most of his successors, namely, "If in the deepest recesses of his heart John Carroll believed that Napoleon and his forces were the more impious of the European forces in the struggle, he would keep these convictions buried."⁸ Here one is reminded of his fifth successor in the See of Baltimore, Francis Patrick Kenrick, who in the early months of the Civil War confided to a friend:

The sympathies of Marylanders generally are with the South, especially since we are treated as conquered people. I do not interfere, although from my heart I wish that secession had never been thought of. . . .⁹

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If one is to understand this almost unvaried policy of support by American bishops to the public authorities in time of war, a policy that continued practically unbroken to the 1960's, he must keep constantly in mind the historical factors that had shaped it. First, it was virtually universal Catholic teaching that Catholics should uphold the hands of legitimately constituted governments. Secondly, the general antipathy of the American people for Catholicism which was a colonial inheritance and which again lasted down to the 1960's, was another powerful influence. The point was neatly summarized in a remark made to the present writer by the late Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., when he said, "I regard the prejudice against your Church as the deepest bias in the history of the American people."¹⁰

A third factor that should be kept in mind was the arrival in the United States between 1790 and 1920 of approximately 9,395,000 Catholic immigrants who by their sheer numbers quickly overshadowed the native Catholic element, prompted Americans to regard the Church as a 'foreign' institution, and, in turn, caused many of the Catholic immigrants and their children to seek refuge in urban ghettos where they took on a siege mentality. Their new cast of mind was never better illustrated than by the special pains they took to show their patriotism, and that in a way that left a deep imprint on the psyche of the general Catholic community. Under circumstances such as these it was a rare occurrence when one heard a Catholic voice lifted in dissent from so grave an issue as that of war or peace. Converts like Orestes Brownson and James A. McMaster, skilled controver-

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sialists with unassailable American backgrounds, frequently made known their dissent in a vociferous way. And there was likewise the altogether infrequent occasion when the scion of one of the very few Catholic families with a remote colonial background such as John Lancaster Spalding, Bishop of Peoria, whose ancestors had arrived in Maryland around 1658, would speak out in a similar vein. Unlike his immigrant co-religionists, Spalding was not inhibited by his family's recent arrival from foreign lands, and he did not hesitate, therefore, to express views that other Catholics would hardly have dared to utter. For example, when the American Protective Association's anti-Catholic crusade was at its height, Spalding scorned the idea that Catholics had to demonstrate their patriotism. "To protest is half to confess as to exhort is to reproach," he said. He then continued:

Our record for patriotism is without blot or stain, and it is not necessary for us to hold the flag in our hands when we walk the streets, to wave it when we speak, to fan our selves with it when we are warm, and to wrap it about us when we are cold.¹¹

Far more typical of the Catholic attitude toward patriotism, and what might be called its supreme test in the crucible of war, however, was the stand taken by the Irish-born John Hughes who ruled the See of New York from 1838 to 1864. In 1846 Hughes assumed direct control of the weekly Catholic newspaper, the *Freeman's Journal*, and during the series of incidents that spring leading up to the declaration of war on Mexico on May 13, the paper strongly deprecated a resort to arms. Moral justification for the American

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government's conduct was practically non-existent, a situation described by one historian when he remarked concerning the role played by President James K. Polk:

Polk, a staunch Christian, regretted having to break the Sabbath by working on his war message, but he eased his conscience by interrupting his labors long enough to go to church.¹²

Dubious as was the American position, once Congress had declared war the tone of the *Freeman's Journal* changed, and a week later it carried an article signed 'Sigma,' who many believed was Hughes himself. Up to the previous week, said the writer, there had been room for differences of opinion, but now there were no longer any just grounds for a Catholic to oppose the call of his country since it was his duty to obey that call "be the consequences to himself what they may." It was then stated:

When once war is declared by the supreme power of the nation, the citizen who dissents from the measure has only the right to express his opinion of it, but is not at liberty to oppose or throw obstacles in the way of its successful termination.¹³

That there was fairly widespread opposition to the Mexican War among Americans, especially in the East, was altogether true, and coming as it did during one of the Nativists' peak years, they charged that the Catholics' loyalty was in serious question since Mexico was a Catholic nation. "But the unanimity with which their press supported the war (with the single exception of Orestes Brownson of New England)," con-

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showed the church's action to have been determined from within rather than without, inasmuch as 59 per cent of its members lived along the Atlantic seaboard, the region of least popular support of the war.¹⁴

In other words, the Catholics reflected the position taken by the *Freeman's Journal*, whatever may have been their private thoughts about the issues in conflict between Mexico and the United States.

The pattern traced by the Catholics *vis-a-vis* the Mexican War became for the most part that of all the armed conflicts in which the United States engaged from the 1840's down to the war in Vietnam. To be sure, there were always some exceptions, such as a minority of those of Irish and German birth or extraction who held back during World War I and II, the former in opposition to fighting on the side of England, the latter because their fatherland was the adversary. But these were the exceptions, while the majority of American Catholics took seriously the repeated exhortations of their bishops and clergy to obey the government's commands and support its policies. For example, in the pastoral letter with which the hierarchy closed their First Plenary Council at Baltimore they admonished their clergy and laity:

Obey the public authorities, not only for wrath but also for conscience sake. Show your attachment to the institutions of our beloved country by prompt compliance with all their requirements, and by the cautious jealousy with which you guard against the maintenance of public order and private rights. Thus

will you refute the idle babbling of foolish men, and will best approve yourselves worthy of the privileges which you enjoy, and overcome, by the sure test of practical patriotism, all the prejudices which your principles but too often produces.¹⁵

The tensions of the moment were mirrored in these words of the bishops in May, 1852, namely, the deepening sectional strife that in less than a decade would lead to the Civil War, the lawlessness that was becoming more prevalent, and the calumnies that the Know-Nothings were then so busy spreading about Catholics. In the light of these circumstances the bishops' counsel was doubtless salutary, even if its implications for the Catholic community may have carried beyond the immediate situation that confronted the Church at that time.

The situation described above for the Mexican War was re-enacted in 1898 in the equally unjustified war of the United States against Spain. Preaching at the requiem for the victims of the *Maine* in his cathedral on February 28, Cardinal Gibbons remarked:

This nation is too brave, too strong, too powerful, and too just to engage in an unrighteous or precipitate war. Let us remember the eyes of the world are upon us, whose judgment we cannot despise, and that we will gain more applause and credit for ourselves by calm deliberation and masterly inactivity than by recourse to arms.¹⁶

In the two-month interval between the sinking of the *Maine* and the United States' declaration of war on April 25, the cardinal and his close friend, John Ire-

land, Archbishop of Saint Paul, were in frequent communication either in writing or by personal contact. Ireland had been requested by the Holy See to use his influence with his Republican Party friends of the McKinley administration to prevent hostilities, and in response he rushed to Washington in the last days of March and there worked feverishly for several weeks to head off the conflict. In the end the efforts of the two churchmen failed through no fault of their own, and they had to bear the added burden of fallacious statements in the British press that not only put their personal activities in a bad light but also cast aspersions on the American Catholics in general. In early May a denial of these imputations was issued by Cardinal Gibbons in the course of which he said:

Catholics in the United States have but one sentiment. Whatever may have been their opinions as to the expediency of the war, now that it is on they are united in upholding the government.¹⁷

Neither Gibbons nor Ireland revealed any disposition to question publicly the line taken by the American government. In that respect a recent writer was basically correct in stating that the documentary evidence gives no warrant for the belief that Gibbons "experienced any conscientious dilemma" in supporting the war. As the biographer of the cardinal, the present writer was also taken to task since, as the same writer maintained, for Gibbons and for Ireland, "(as for Ellis who clearly brands the war as unjust), there was no other course to follow. Tacitly at least, they had accepted the nation as the final arbiter of human affairs."¹⁸ Frankly, it was a situation where

the psychological conditioning would appear to have been so complete that the idea of public protest was not even thought of by Cardinal Gibbons and his biographer. The private correspondence of Archbishop Ireland at the time, however, would leave the impression that while he had misgivings about the course of action followed by his country, he chose not to express them. Thus a week after the declaration of war he confided to his friend, Monsignor Denis J. O'Connell, "I do not, I confess, like our present war: but great good will come from it, in the enlargement of American influence."¹⁹ A few days later he became more explicit when he told O'Connell whose controversial paper on Americanism had appeared the previous year:

Well, America is whipping poor Spain. I confess, my sympathies are largely with Spain; but the fact is, she is beaten. Now, Americanism will triumph, and practical application will be given to your pamphlet in Cuba and the Philippines. Cuba, at first independent will very quickly become American territory. Public opinion is growing in favor of retaining the Philippines. Our national pride is aroused, and we want to be a power in *toto orbe terrarum*. I am not much of an Anglo-Saxon: but, Anglo-Saxonism is to reign, and, if there is wisdom in the Vatican, it will at once seek influence with English-speaking countries, especially America. Unless this is done at once, humanly speaking the Church is doomed. The manifest destiny of the world is Americanism, as you explain the word.²⁰

It would be difficult to find a more striking example

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of the extreme nationalism for which Henry Cabot Lodge and his followers then stood. Here was *Realpolitik* that put the Archbishop of Saint Paul thoroughly in tune with a period which, as one historian stated, "resounded with organized campaigns to arouse a vigorous 'Americanism.'"²¹

Even if space allowed, there would be relatively little value in accumulating examples of the unquestioning compliance of the leaders of the Catholic Church in the United States with their government's policies in regard to war and peace. Suffice it to say, World War I and World War II presented that government with far more plausible reasons for a resort to arms than had been true in the Mexican War or the Spanish American War. It was not thought exceptional either at the time or later, therefore, when the archbishops gathered in Washington for their annual meeting less than two weeks after the declaration of war on Germany in April, 1917, addressed a joint statement to the press in which *inter alia* they said:

Moved to the very depths of our hearts by the stirring appeals of the President of the United States and by the action of our National Congress, we accept wholeheartedly and unreservedly the decree of that legislative authority proclaiming our country to be in a state of war.²²

But if the Catholic attitude toward war and peace remained essentially unchanged through the ensuing forty years or more after World War I, the revolutionary decade of the 1960's brought a marked shift of opinion in this regard as it did in so many other

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aspects of life in both the civil and ecclesiastical realms. In the civil order no single event was more important in hastening this change than the election in 1960 of a Catholic to the presidency. A perceptive writer on John F. Kennedy's career summarized it well when he stated:

Because he was a Catholic, representing the one sectarian religion thought to be at odds with the culture-religion of Americanism, Kennedy, as a culture-hero, helped to broaden the basis of consensus in American life by encouraging the forces of encounter within American Catholicism, and by opening the minds of non-Catholics to new opportunities for human communication, learning and growth in dialogue with Catholics.²³

In other words, the spell of the Catholic ghetto had been broken and the 1960 election, supported by other causes such as their notably improved economic and social status, served to usher Catholics into the mainstream of American life. Moreover, two years before Kennedy's victory, another John had come upon the international scene. With Pope John XXIII's *aggiornamento*, the principal instrument of which was Vatican Council II, and among the most forceful expressions of which were embodied in his encyclicals, *Mater et Magistra* (May, 1961) and *Pacem in Terris* (April, 1963), the traditional thinking of the Catholics of the United States on the issue of international relations, to say nothing of numerous other topics, was shaken and moved forward in spite of the objections of certain conservative minds.

The Johnine encyclicals, confirmed and enlarged

by Pope Paul VI's *Progressio Populorum* of March, 1967, laid the axe to the root of many of the causes for war in such things as the woeful economic conditions prevailing in the underdeveloped countries. And it was done in so arresting a manner that these papal encyclicals enlisted the serious study and analysis of statesmen and scholars in international gatherings as no encyclicals had ever previously done. Here, then, was a prime reason for the Catholics of this country to break with their past and to demonstrate that their adherence to the leadership offered by the supreme pontiffs went beyond the lip service that had all too often characterized their reaction and that of their predecessors to the Church's social teaching. And in this transformation the Catholic community of the 1960's had the added advantage of the radically different approach to war and peace of the approximately 450,000 students in the Catholic colleges and universities, perhaps three times that number of Catholics enrolled in the secular institutions of higher learning, and the more than 30,000 seminarians, the vast majority of whom were much more sensitive to the papal teaching on peace than their parents and grandparents had been.

The sections of the encyclicals of Popes John and Paul dealing with the problems of international affairs have been examined elsewhere and need not be rehearsed here. The action taken by the world's more than 2,000 bishops assembled in Vatican Council II should, however, be noted as it was contained in the concluding chapter, "The Fostering of Peace and the Promotion of a Community of Nations," in the conciliar document promulgated by Paul VI on Decem-

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ber 7, 1965, and entitled the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*. Having acknowledged at the outset the changed attitudes, especially of the young, toward accepted values in society, the bishops were at pains to set down a detailed analysis of the stance the Church should assume in regard to men's increased emphasis on the individual conscience. Methods of warfare designed for the extermination of entire peoples, nations and ethnic minorities must, said the bishops, "be vehemently condemned as horrendous crimes." And they added, "supreme commendation" was merited by those who had the courage openly and fearlessly to resist those who issued commands for the use of such methods and instruments of warfare. Urging agreements between nations that would eliminate these barbaric practices and advance improvements that would promote less inhuman consequences of military activity, the bishops declared:

Moreover, it seems right that laws make humane provisions for the case of those who for reasons of conscience refuse to bear arms, provided however, that they accept some other form of service to the human community.²⁴

Given the far more reserved tone of earlier pronouncements from ecclesiastical circles on the subject, this represented a gain even if the conciliar text fell short of the desire of some Catholics. It had not been easy to reach that goal in the council, and to sophisticated readers it will come as no surprise that one observer should have remarked:

In the name of goodness, conspiracies were

frequent; under the pressure of national politics, the purely spiritual idea of the Council took some sharp blows. For some English and American bishops, for instance, Christian pacifism could not be reconciled with stocks of nuclear bombs, and the nuclear politics of their governments were allowed to impinge on the final wording of the Council's statements on modern warfare.²⁵

The foremost living historian of ecumenical councils summarized situations of this kind well when he said, "At the councils, as in any other place where men contend with one another for the truth, fallen human nature exacts its toll. . . . [It] is the price which the visible Church has to pay for being in the midst of the human race."²⁶ During the council's third and fourth sessions (1964-1965) there had, indeed, occurred some lively debates on the subject of how best to foster peace. These exchanges showed a number of American bishops as vigorously opposed to anything that remotely suggested a pacifist position, and almost at the last minute an attempt was launched to secure a *non-placet* vote on the entire chapter and send it back for correction of its alleged errors. Nine Americans signed this petition, but in the end it failed.²⁷

The contrasting trends in Catholic circles on the subject of war and peace were highlighted, so to speak, during the Christmas seasons of 1965 and 1966. On December 19 of the former year Paul VI made a strong plea for a Christmas truce in the fighting in Vietnam, an activity in which he was ceaselessly engaged, when he addressed the crowd gathered in Saint Peter's Square.²⁸ On Christmas Day of the following

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year Cardinal Spellman, Military Ordinary of the American Armed Forces, preached at an open-air Mass in Vietnam. "This war . . . is, I believe, a war for civilization," he said, "certainly it is not a war of our seeking. . . . It is a war thrust on us and we cannot yield to tyranny and so has said our President and the Secretary of State." The cardinal's sermon drew fire in many quarters with the government-owned radio in Paris stating "the Vatican is visibly embarrassed," and the Moscow radio declaring the sermon "openly contradicts the Pope's appeal for peace in Vietnam."²⁹

In any case, the contrast was there for all the world to see, although it was not a new position for the Archbishop of New York who had been one of the nine who had signed the petition to have the schema on peace rewritten in the closing hours of the council the previous year. As host to Pope Paul on the latter's visit to the United Nations in October, 1965, the cardinal left nothing to be desired save strong support in the ensuing months for the pontiff's appeal for peace. In that respect, however, he was not alone, for as John C. Bennett, President of the Union Theological Seminary, remarked in reminiscing a year after the pope's appearance before the UN:

If Pope Paul had been able to get a genuine response from even 20 members of the hierarchy, so that they really threw their weight on the side of peace, his visit might have been more effective.³⁰

Under the circumstances it was little wonder that peace-lovers should have been thought to have been puzzled as to the reason why so few American bishops up to early November, 1966, had "spoken out

"the Vatican is visibly embarrassed . . ."

about the bearing that the Council and Pope Paul's pleas have on the Vietnam crisis."³¹ True, a few weeks later the hierarchy issued a joint statement that brought them into line with Vatican Council II's teaching on conscientious objection, although at the same time they were careful to state that a case could be made to justify the American presence in Vietnam as well as to ask Americans to have confidence in the sincerity of their national leaders, "as long as they work for a just peace in Vietnam."³²

While the bishops seemingly edged toward a more positive position, individual Catholics had quite outdistanced their pronouncements. At the opening of the 1960's the editor of a volume of essays entitled *Morality and Modern Warfare*, introduced the collection with the significant remark:

That the publication of this symposium on morality and warfare has the character of a pioneer effort fifteen years after Hiroshima indicates something of the failure of the Christian community to come to terms with that event.³³

The pace began to quicken in the next few years, however, and one could with reason speak of a turn in the tide of Catholic opinion becoming visible about 1966. For example, in that year two books were published by priest authors of which the titles told something of the contents, namely, *The Respectable Murderers* by Paul Hanly Furfey and *Non-Violence and the Christian Conscience* by Pie Regamey, O.P.³⁴ In July a pastoral letter of Cardinal Lawrence Shehan, Archbishop of Baltimore, focused attention on the war in Vietnam in a not uncritical way, and in October another pastoral by Paul J. Hallinan, Archbishop of Atlanta, and his auxiliary bishop, Joseph L. Bernar-

din, contained what were probably the most pointed inquiries to date from the hierarchy about Vietnam and the American position there.³⁵

The Catholics' *avant-garde* moved still further ahead with the notable address of Archbishop Hallinan in February, 1967, at the New York conference held under the title, "Vietnam and the Religious Conscience." And in Holy Week an open letter signed by over 800 Catholics who addressed their coreligionists in a call for "a reassessment of American involvement in Vietnam," was given wide distribution in both the Catholic and the secular press. In his New York speech the Archbishop of Atlanta had stated that while demonstrations and petitions had their place, it was Selma that had brought a new dimension into the fight for civil rights since, he declared, it had "challenged Americans to stop talking about racial injustice and do something about it." The archbishop maintained, "It worked and is working," and he then added, "The movement for peace urgently needs its own Selma to serve as a ferment within the national conscience."³⁶ When one thinks of Selma and Vietnam no American Catholic name emerges with more honor than that of James P. Shannon, former Auxiliary Bishop of Saint Paul-Minneapolis, who gave a witness in both causes that cost him keen personal suffering.

In the struggle to convert the Catholics of the United States to the crusade for world peace the efforts of a few valiant men have been long and unremitting; yet even as these lines are being written the certainty of their ultimate triumph is by no means assured. People do not quickly leave off old habits of thought and adopt new ones, a fact that might be illustrated in the present context by the relatively flourishing condition of the 2,000 or more posts of the Catholic War Veterans, a group organized in 1935, in

contrast to the Catholic Association for International Peace which was established in 1926 and which at the time of its demise in the spring of 1969 numbered about 700 members out of the nearly 50,000,000 Catholics in the country. In spite of the painfully slow advance of the peace movement among Catholics, however, some progress has been made. To be sure, the majority of members of the Church would doubtless be strongly opposed to the kind of campaign waged by the increasing number of priests, seminarians, and sisters, along with lay Catholics, during the late 1960's by way of burning draft cards, invading offices of draft boards to destroy records, and participating in what many of their coreligionists would regard as inflammatory demonstrations that imperil the public peace.

Yet even the most outspoken advocates of military action among the Catholics could not easily dismiss the official position taken by the bishops of the United States in their pastoral letter issued on November 15, 1968, as they had the demonstrators. In this document the hierarchy went far beyond any previous pronouncement in defense of the individual conscience on matters relating to war and peace. Conceding that there were some who no doubt had sought to evade military duty through moral or physical cowardice, the bishops were quick to add that a blanket charge of this kind was unfair to "those young people who are clearly willing to suffer social ostracism and even prison terms because of their opposition to a particular war." Conscientious objection to war as waged in the present age could not, they said, be "entirely the result of subjective considerations," and without reference to the message of the Gospel and the teaching of the Church. The bishops then continued:

As witnesses to a spiritual tradition which

accepts enlightened conscience, even when honestly mistaken, as the immediate arbiter of moral decisions, we can only feel reassured by this evidence of individual responsibility and the decline of uncritical conformism to patterns some of which included strong moral elements, to be sure, but also included political, social, cultural, and like controls not necessarily in conformity with the mind and heart of the Church.³⁷

The national pastoral further stated that if war was ever to be outlawed it would be because of the citizens of this and other countries who had rejected the "tenets of exaggerated nationalism" and had insisted on non-violent methods of settling disputes. In the light of their own principles the bishops called for a revision of the Selective Service Act to permit a refusal of military service for more personal and specific reasons springing from conscience than those grounded in a total rejection of the use of military force.

For those Catholics who had been waiting for an authoritative pronouncement from their Church on this highly controversial matter, the pastoral letter of November, 1968, was a truly heartening development. With it the bishops may be said to have made the kind of break with the American Catholic thinking and practice of the past that would allow for no reversal. It was another step in a gradual evolutionary process such as they had shown in following the lead of the Holy See in establishing in 1967 within their national secretariat, the United States Catholic Conference, the Division of World Justice and Peace. Some have remarked that if present trends within the Catholic world continue, "Rome may one day lead a

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world movement of conscientious objectors."³⁸ Should that as yet distant goal be brought closer to realization the Catholics of the United States would have in the bishops' letter of 1968 an effective instrument for putting their Church abreast of the Catholic world's most advanced thinking on some of the moral implications of mankind's greatest single peril, thermo-nuclear warfare. As the 1960's came to an end the American Catholics were thus in an infinitely improved position on this crucial question over that maintained through nearly two centuries by their forebears in the faith in this country. In that sense they were the better able as well to translate into the real order for themselves and their fellow citizens something of the spirit of the Master's words when He told the frightened fishermen gathered around Him at the Last Supper, "Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you, a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you."³⁹

1. "Address of Pope Paul VI to the General Assembly of the United Nations, October 4, 1965," *Catholic Mind*, LXIII (November, 1965), 7.

2. In the vast literature on the subject, see Harry C. Koenig (Ed.), *Principles for Peace. Selections from Papal Documents. Leo XIII to Pius XII*. Washington: National Catholic Welfare Conference. 1943; for a brief account, see William F. Roemer and John Tracy Ellis, *The Catholic Church and Peace Efforts*. Washington: Catholic Association for International Peace. 1934, a report of the Association's History Committee; John J. Wright, *National Patriotism in Papal Teaching*. Boston: Stratford Company. 1942.

3. *The Future of Man*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers. 1964. p. 12.

4. For the Catholics in this period, see John Tracy Ellis, *Catholics in Colonial America*. Baltimore: Helicon Press Inc. 1965.
5. This document was quoted in Annabelle M. Melville's *John Carroll of Baltimore, Founder of the American Catholic Hierarchy*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1955. p. 61. For a detailed treatment, see Charles H. Metzger, S.J., *Catholics and the American Revolution. A Study in Religious Climate*. Chicago: Loyola University Press. 1962. Following Spain's entrance into the war against England in June, 1779, orders were given by the Spanish commander in California to the Franciscan missionaries for prayers for victory. In conveying this request to the superiors of the individual missions the general superior, Father Junipero Serra, wrote from Monterey on June 15, 1780, in part as follows:

. . . of each and everyone of Your Reverences I most earnestly ask in the Lord that as soon as you receive this letter you be most attentive in begging God to grant success to this public cause which is so favorable to our holy Catholic and Roman Church and is most pleasing in the sight of the same God Our Lord. Our Catholic Sovereign is at war with perfidious heretics. And when I have said that, I have said enough for all to join with His Majesty in the manner in which Heaven grants us to do so. [Antonine Tibesar, O.F.M. (Ed.), *Writings of Junipero Serra*. Washington: Academy of American Franciscan History. 1966. IV, 17].

The absence of an ecumenical note is here more striking than in the case of Carroll who in 1783 spoke of the pope's "spiritual supremacy over the whole Christian world."

6. Carroll to Plowden, September 19, 1809, and January 27, 1812, Melville, *op. cit.*, pp. 271-273.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 274.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 275.
9. Kenrick to Eliza Allen Starr, Baltimore, August 5, 1861, James J. McGovern (Ed.), *The Life and Letters of Eliza Allen Starr*. Chicago: Lakeside Press. 1905. p. 148.
10. John Tracy Ellis, *American Catholicism*. Second edition, revised. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1969. p. 151.
11. "Catholicism and APAism," *North American Review*, CLIX (September, 1894), 285. Some years later in an address entitled "The Patriot" delivered on Washington's Birthday, 1899, Spalding remarked:

There is a higher love than love of country,—the love of truth, the love of justice, the love of righteousness; and he alone is a patriot who is willing to suffer obloquy and the loss of money and friends, rather than betray the cause of truth, justice, and righteousness, for only by being faithful to this can he rightly serve his country. (*Opportunity and Other Essays and Addresses*. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Company. 1900. p. 193).
12. Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People*. 6th ed. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. 1958. p. 256.
13. *Freeman's Journal*, May 20, 1846, Sister Blanche Marie McEniry, *American Catholics in the War with Mexico*. Washington: The Catholic University of America. 1937. p. 19.
14. Clayton Sumner Ellsworth, "The American Churches and the Mexican War," *American Historical Review*, XLV (January, 1940), 320-321.
15. Peter Guilday (Ed.), *The National Pastorals of the American Hierarchy, 1792-1919*. Washington: National Catholic Welfare Council. 1923. p. 192.

16. *Church News* (Washington), March 5, 1898.
17. *Washington Post*, May 4, 1898.
18. Dorothy Dohen, *Nationalism and American Catholicism*. New York: Sheed and Ward. 1967. p. 147.
19. Ireland to O'Connell, Saint Paul, May 2, 1898, John T. Farrell, "Archbishop Ireland and Manifest Destiny," *Catholic Historical Review*, XXXIII (October, 1947), 292.
20. Ireland to O'Connell, Saint Paul, May 11, 1898, *ibid.*, p. 295. The pamphlet to which Ireland referred had been read by O'Connell as a paper at the International Catholic Scientific Congress in Fribourg, Switzerland, on August 20, 1897, was privately printed, and bore the title, *A New Idea in the Life of Father Hecker*.
21. John Higham, *Strangers in the Land. Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. 1955. p. 75.
22. Minutes of the Meeting of the Archbishops of the United States, The Catholic University of America, April 18, 1917, p. 1, copy. On April 5, the day before Congress' declaration of war, Cardinal Gibbons had issued a statement in which he said: "In the present emergency it behooves every American citizen to do his duty, and to uphold the hands of the President . . . in the solemn obligations that confront us. The primary duty of a citizen is loyalty to country. This loyalty is manifested more by acts than by words; by solemn service rather than by empty declaration. It is exhibited by an absolute and unreserved obedience to his country's call." (John Tracy Ellis, *The Life of James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, 1834-1921*. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company. 1952. II, 239). Wilson was naturally gratified at the archbishops' "very remarkable resolutions," as he termed them in a letter to Gibbons. Their statement, he said, "warms my heart and makes

me very proud indeed that men of such large influence should act in so large a sense of patriotism and so admirable a spirit of devotion to our common country." (Wilson to Gibbons, Washington, April 27, 1917, Ellis, *op. cit.*, II, 240). He felt quite differently about Pope Benedict XV's peace note of August 1, 1917. Many years later Jules J. Jusserand, French Ambassador to Washington at the time, stated, "The President plainly showed me his ill-humor at Benedict XV's wanting to 'butt in' (his own words)." [Jusserand to Henry E. Bourne, Paris, January 25, 1932, *American Historical Review*, XXXVII (July, 1932), 818].

23. Lawrence H. Fuchs, *John F. Kennedy and American Catholicism*. New York: Meredith Press. 1967. p. 224. As Fuchs said in another connection of Kennedy, "Before his death, and perhaps even prior to his election, he was to do more to blunt the ancient mutual hatred of Catholics and non-Catholics than any American had ever done." (*ibid.*, pp. 31-32).
24. Walter M. Abbott, S.J., and Joseph Gallagher (Eds.), *The Documents of Vatican II*, New York: Guild Press. 1966. p. 292.
25. Peter Nichols, *The Politics of the Vatican*. London: Pall Mall Press. 1968. pp. 294-295.
26. Hubert Jedin, *Ecumenical Councils of the Catholic Church. An Historical Outline*. New York: Herder and Herder. 1960. pp. 234-235.
27. Vincent A. Yzermans (Ed.), *American Participation in the Second Vatican Council*. New York: Sheed and Ward. 1967. pp. 215-222.
28. *New York Times*, December 20, 1965, pp. 1 and 4.
29. *New York Times*, December 26, 1966, p. 11.
30. Quoted by Joseph Gallagher, "The American Bishops on Modern War," *America*, CXV (November 5, 1966), 548.
31. *Ibid.*

32. New York *Times*, November 22, 1966, pp. 1 and 18.
33. William J. Nagle was the editor and the book was published by Herder and Herder.
34. Both books were published by Herder and Herder.
35. "War and Peace. A Pastoral Letter to the Archdiocese of Atlanta," John Tracy Ellis (Ed.), *Documents of American Catholic History*. rev. ed. Chicago: Henry Regenery Company. 1967. II, 696-702.
36. *Catholic Messenger* (Davenport), March 9, 1967, p. 5.
37. *New World* (Chicago), November 22, 1968, p. 10.
38. James R. Jennings, "The Church and Peace," *America*, CXX (March 15, 1969), 304.
39. *John*, XIV, 27.

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