

EXPANDED ISSUE

PEACE DOSSIER 6

PEACE: A Witness of Faith

Raymond Hunthausen

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VAL NOONE



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When asked to write an introduction for Australian readers to an address on nuclear war made by Archbishop Hunthausen of Seattle in November 1982 at the Merton Center Pittsburgh, I hesitated at first, doubting that I could add much to what has been said by two churchmen such as Hunthausen, an archbishop, and Thomas Merton the activist-contemplative and Cistercian monk. Then I thought, why not? We're all in it together, not only these two shining examples of American Roman Catholicism, but when the earth's future is at stake, men and women of good faith throughout the world.

The horrific prospect of nuclear war is surely the first time in history when the whole of humanity has been given the opportunity to unite. If such a war should break out it will not be possible to contain it. Eventually the effects will be felt even in remote countries like escapist Australia. The chief reason I always feel bound to speak against nuclear war, knowing that I risk repeating myself, and that I shall be condemned by many as a doomsday bore, is the hope that I may sow a seed in the consciousness, appeal to the conscience, of all Australian escapees from reality, and perhaps persuade them to unite with those in the Northern Hemisphere who will be more immediately affected by a nuclear holocaust. In the most sophisticated centres of the world, church leaders are uniting with the more enlightened scientists. Writers and artists have begun to see in the anti-nuclear cause a source of less egotistical creativity. Then there are those organizations of medical men and women on whom would fall the burden of caring for a dying, wounded, in many cases mentally deranged population, in the absence of hospitals and the requisite drugs. Lastly there are the masses of ordinary men and women, the more thoughtful among them, who fear for the health and safety of their families. Women can play a most important part in maintaining peace, as the women of Britain have shown in their non-violent opposition to the installing of Cruise missiles on British soil.

Many Australians have shown their awareness of the dangers of nuclear war by their turn-up at nuclear disarmament rallies. But I feel that life here is too easy, the climate too conducive to mental laziness for a lot of us to keep alive the necessary sense of danger. Whenever I set eyes on a pregnant woman I say to myself: Is she truly aware of the dangers the child she is carrying may have to face? Does she realise her chief duty towards this child is to resist non-violently but firmly those who show signs of leading us into a nuclear war?

Younger parents among you were not yet born at the period of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But you may have seen photographs of the material devastation, images of human suffering, which followed the release of those first and comparatively primitive atomic bombs. I don't feel it is a ghoul's wish on my part to have every one of us jolt our too complacent minds from time to time by seeking out these pictures of hell on earth as a reminder of what could happen again, only on a far grander scale. Certainly it should be a prescribed exercise for those who devised the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, together with those who have inherited their policies and developed their techniques, to face up to the

pictorial evidence of this early holocaust, and ask themselves: Is a power game which leads to such desolation morally justifiable? Surely there are other ways of reaching accord with the enemy, as Gandhi found before being put to death, and as President John Kennedy discovered in his dealings with the Soviet in the few months preceding his assassination. The dangers of trustful negotiation and non-violent resistance may make this seemingly fragile argument too difficult for the average materialistic Australian to accept. Yet this same Australian has faced up to dangers and death in a series of wars. The unorthodox approach of non-violence is of course a more frightening alternative. Personally, having experienced something of the London Blitz and "normal" war in the Western Desert of Egypt, I shall preach non-violence to those of our youth threatened with becoming involved in any kind of war. I shall preach it to all those who face the contingency of nuclear war, and hope that my fellow Australians, from constantly reading and hearing about murder, rape, arson, petty theft, and condoned embezzlement in this so-called "pure" country, will not have become so callous and cynical that they are deaf to the doctrine which calls for non-violence and human unity in opposition to the super-criminals who are prepared to destroy a world they lust to dominate.

Catholic World



This Dossier presents to the Australian public for the first time an important speech on nuclear war by Raymond Hunthausen, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Seattle. Hunthausen has emerged as a key figure in the public shift of the American Catholic Church into opposition to US government policy on nuclear arms. He gave the speech printed here when accepting the 1982 Thomas Merton peace medal.

Hunthausen's speech gives the reader an opportunity to sample directly the new thinking on peace which large sections of the American people are discussing, and to the alarm of the Reagan administration, acting upon. This introduction will outline some relevant background about the US Catholic Church; report briefly on the Thomas Merton Center; and provide a biographical note on Hunthausen.

Reagan vs the Bishops — the Background

Meeting in Chicago on 3 May 1983 the national conference of US Catholic Bishops voted 238-9 in favor of a pastoral letter condemning the nuclear arms race. This historic letter from the leaders of a powerful and prestigious church — Catholics are 22% of the US population and 30% of US army personnel — sets the stage for one of the greatest religious-political clashes in US history.

Archbishop Hunthausen is exceptional among the bishops in taking his personal opposition to nuclear war to the point of publicly refusing to pay 50% of his income taxes. (It is widely accepted that at least 50% of every tax dollar in the US goes to war preparations.)

How has it happened that the American Catholic bishops have moved away from the close church-state liaison of the Cold War era?

The shift has become clear during the nationwide debate opened up by the bishops' plans to issue a pastoral letter on the morality of nuclear arms, entitled "The Challenge of Peace". There were three drafts of the document in the two years before the final letter was released.

Each was made public and each was the cause of major controversy. A pastoral letter is normally meant to advise Roman Catholics on moral problems. But this one is addressed not only to the 51 million US Catholics. The bishops are explicitly inviting US society as a whole to be engaged in the process of developing a new morality of peace.

The pastoral letter includes theological discussion of the theory of the "Just War" and of pacifism, as well as a section on biblical views on war and peace. In particular it proclaims: "We do not perceive any situation in which the deliberate initiation of nuclear warfare, on however restricted a scale, can be morally justified. Non-nuclear attacks by another state must be resisted by other than nuclear means."

Speaking of the moral choices facing Catholics in the armed forces they insist that "no Christian can rightfully carry out orders or policies deliberately aimed at killing noncombatants".

The final version of the letter is significantly stronger in one important respect than the one before it, which reportedly reflected the influence of bishops responsive to the pressures of the Reagan administration. The final version called for a "halt" (and not merely a "curb" as in the third draft) to the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons.

The letter attacks the concept of deterrence which has been the basis of US strategy. Following the stand taken by Pope John Paul II in his statement to the UN disarmament conference last June, the bishops argue that deterrence cannot be considered "adequate as a long-term basis for peace" and is justified only as a path to ultimate disarmament.

In response to White House attempts to co-opt the statement Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago who was in charge of the committee drafting the pastoral letter, and Archbishop John Roach, head of the bishops' national conference, issued a joint statement pointing out significant differences between the bishops and the Reagan administration on such points as "no first use" and "support for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty".

In a recent issue of the US establishment journal, *Foreign Affairs*, L.B. Van Voorst commented on the earlier backtracking by the bishops over the wording of the letter. This, he said, does "not detract from the fact that the bishops are preparing a ground-breaking condemnation of key elements of America's nuclear strategy, and that they enjoy the broad support of wide segments of Protestant opinion. A process has been set in motion, and a new level of debate unleashed". The English *New Left Review* has argued that the pastoral letter is "even more troubling in its importance for the Reagan administration" than the 700,000-strong disarmament rally in New York in June 1982.

The extent of the change in a once super-patriotic Catholic Church can be glimpsed by recalling the 1965 Christmas visit to the troops in South Vietnam by Cardinal Francis Spellman of New York. Reporters asked: "What do you think about what the United States is doing in Vietnam?" Spellman's answer was: "I fully support everything it does". Then paraphrasing the words of Stephen Decatur, he added: "My country, may it always be right. Right or wrong, my country".

What brought about the change from Spellman's day to Hunthausen and the pastoral letter? The enormity of the present stockpile with its threat of virtual destruction to our species is part of the answer. So is American Catholic awareness of what is happening in Central America, of the Reagan administration's support for local regimes which have connived in the murder of nuns and of such figures as El Salvador's Archbishop Romero.



OK, THAT'S GOOD—NOW HOLD IT.

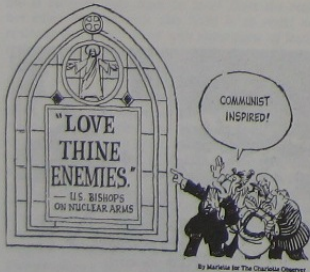
But institutions such as the Catholic Church do not change unless some people within that institution do a lot of hard work. The seeds of the present development were sown particularly by a few lonely figures such as the Jesuit moral theologian John C. Ford who in 1944 condemned the allied saturation bombing of non-combatants in German cities.

A small but significant minority of American Catholics protested the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The outstanding figure among this minority was the great radical and pacifist, Dorothy Day, editor of *The Catholic Worker* in New York. Her editorial of September 1945 bitterly attacked the US President: "Mr Truman was jubilant, the newspaper told us. True man; what a strange name, come to think of it. We have killed 318,000 Japanese. . . It is to be hoped they are vaporised, our Japanese brothers and sisters, scattered, men, women and babies, to the four winds, over the seven seas. Perhaps we will breathe their dust into our nostrils, feel them in the fog of New York on our faces. Feel them in the rain on the hillsides of Easton. . . We have created destruction. We have created a new element called Pluto. Nature had nothing to do with it".

Then in 1955 the Catholic Worker movement joined with the War Resisters League in a six-year long and ultimately successful campaign against nuclear aid raid drills. The *Catholic Worker* leaflet on that occasion outlined a theme that is echoed today by Hunthausen and many of the bishops: "We do not have faith in God if we depend on the Atom Bomb".

In 1959 this same group worked with the pacifist leader A. J. Muste on one of the landmark civil disobedience projects — an attempt to halt "the brains of the missiles" at Strategic Air command headquarters outside Omaha, Nebraska.

Other sections of the US church were also sowing the seeds of change in those Cold War years, in such areas as revival of New Testament studies, revision of liturgical practices, greater involvement in social justice issues and increased lay participation. This reform movement was summed up and further stimulated by Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council.



Pope John's encyclical letter, "Peace on Earth" (*Pacem in Terris*), which he issued in 1963 in response to the Cuban missile crisis, became something of a charter for the Catholic peace movement. Of special importance was the establishment in 1967, at the height of the Vietnam war, of the extremely successful (and still thriving) newspaper, *The National Catholic Reporter* which helped co-ordinate the emerging reform groups.

By the time of the Vietnam war the Catholic peace movement had grown considerably at the grass roots. The strands were many: draft centre raids by the Berrigan brothers and others, Catholic draft resisters, the writings of Thomas Merton, Gordon Zahn and many more, and the organizing work of the Catholic Peace Fellowship and Pax Christi through activists such as Eileen Egan and Paul Furfey.

It was not until 1972 that the US Catholic bishops as a group made any public criticism of US policy in Vietnam. But in explaining why the bishops have taken the stands they have in the 1980's Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee told reporters recently: "The turning point was the bishops' attitude towards Vietnam. . . It caused the bishops to look more carefully at the US position in the world".

In some ways then the present developments among the US Catholic bishops amount to a catching up with the Catholic peace groups and the secular peace movement. But we have reason to expect that the increased commitment of the bishops to the work of peace will itself have a noticeable multiplier effect on the peace movement, both in the US and elsewhere.

The Thomas Merton Center

Archbishop Hunthausen's address was delivered at the Thomas Merton Center in Pittsburgh on 18 November 1982. Each year the Thomas Merton Center presents a medal to a figure who has established an outstanding but consistent lifestyle of peace and justice. The 1982 medal was awarded to Hunthausen because of his tax resistance in opposition to the nuclear arms race. The previous year the medal went to the People of Poland, and the year before to William Winnipsinger, the president of the International Association of Machinists, a trade union of aerospace workers, for the union's strong stand against the arms race. In 1979 the award was given to the Australian pediatrician and peace activist Helen Caldicott.

Named after the famous American Trappist monk, Thomas Merton, the Center is the headquarters of an organization for peace and justice which grew out of a radical Catholic background. It was founded over ten years ago when a group who were actively opposing the Vietnam war needed a place to work from. These people had been profoundly influenced by Thomas Merton who had died just a couple of years before.

The Thomas Merton Center operates from a house in the working class section of Pittsburgh. It is supported by monthly pledges from like-minded people and manages to pay half a dozen meagre salaries to peace activists. Half the steel plants in Pittsburgh are shut down and huge numbers are out of work, so, not surprisingly, one of the emphases of the Center is to link the nuclear issue with employment. It is active in the Mobilization for Survival and Jobs With Peace initiative.

Molly Rush, the present director of the Center, and one of its founders, is the wife of an unemployed worker. She was also one of the Plovshares Eight, the group who broke into a General Electric plant in the town of King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, in September 1980 to smash the nosecones of Mark 12A missiles and pour blood on files. This was in protest against the US first strike policy.

About Hunthausen

Raymond Hunthausen, 62, is the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Seattle in Washington State, USA. His diocese, the geographical area of which he is in charge, includes Bangor, on Puget Sound, where the Trident submarines are based. Hunthausen opposes the Trident program and has described Bangor as "the Auschwitz of Puget Sound".

Born in 1921 in a mining town in Montana, Hunthausen was in the seminary when the atom bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. "I'll never forget that day because I was appalled, I just could not believe what had happened. . . But I was ordained (in 1946) and lived with this reality just like the rest of the world". Hunthausen first graduated from Carroll College in Helena, Montana, and then in 1952 took a master's degree in chemistry at Notre Dame. He returned to Carroll College as a professor, subsequently became athletic director and then in 1957 was appointed president of the college.

In 1962 he was ordained a bishop for the diocese of Helena and recalls making a number of statements with another bishop about the intercontinental missiles being deployed in Montana, "the first public witnesses that I, with others, was willing to take. It frightened me to death. I wasn't sure of my position, and I had that sense of being unpatriotic. I also got involved in a counselling service for conscientious objectors".

In 1975 Hunthausen was transferred to Seattle. There he met with pacifists Jim and Shelley Douglass of the Pacific Life Community. What they were "saying coincided with how I felt; but I wasn't doing anything about it". Hunthausen told *Sojourners* magazine (January 1982).

He first received international publicity in January 1981 when, in a speech to the Lutheran Synod at Tacoma in Washington State, he urged tax resistance. Hunthausen continues: "I thought maybe my remarks would create a stir, rattle around Seattle for a couple of days, and go away. But they didn't. They stayed around. I must say it bothered me that the media picked up on the issue of taxes and lost the crux of what I really wanted to say, which was that the issue of nuclear weapons is one that prompts us to be men and women of faith and ask if we have put our security in our weaponry rather than in God".

When asked about local reaction Hunthausen explained: "A worker at Boeing told me that he and several of his friends customarily arrived early at work to play cards before they went on the job. He said that he and the others haven't played cards since I made my statement. They've been discussing it and the implications in their lives. He was neither happy nor angry, but simply noted that it had forced them to use their personal responsibility, to examine their work and see how closely allied it might be with the nuclear effort. Most of the letters I've received have been supportive. But some people I've talked to feel a deep fear that all they have worked hard for

and acquired will be taken away from them, and they equate that with what they identify as a frivolous statement on my part.

Hunthausen may perhaps take comfort. History will some day see him (as some of us see him now) hand in hand with all those who have wrought our true vision; who stood somewhere, made their moral gesture, and paid up. Whether these be the saints; Francis rebuilding the tottering church, Ignatius laying down his sword, Mohandas Gandhi marching to the sea, or in America, Martin Luther King in Birmingham jail — or whether these be the fashioners of civic vision; the Boston tea party (hosts and guests), the abolitionists and ex-slaves, the labor organizers, the fighters for women's rights, the resisters against war.

In any case, the bishop's moral gesture is linked to theirs; and together these stand in contrast to those who claim our history and disclaim our morality; the robber barons, the politicians, the racists, the entrepreneurs, the war-makers and profiteers.

And now an American bishop joins with the modern visionaries of our history. Can we speak of many bishops? We shall have to see, we are only at the beginning.

Meantime, it is the moral gesture that counts. Or as they say, a little courage goes a long way. It may yet be that the courage of a few will turn peacemaking from a cottage industry into a fire storm of the spirit.

Reading Hunthausen's words, and grateful for his courage, I thought of a woman whose long loneliness was in fact a long and life-giving series of just such gestures. In her light we shall see the light. Dorothy Day, pray for us.

Daniel Berrigan

"I visit a different parish every weekend, and many people go out of their way to thank me for bringing up the issue. My sense is that my statement has provided a moment of challenge, and that was primarily my purpose — to acquaint people of the diocese with the realization that it is the responsibility of each of us to look at the gospel, examine its implications, and take a personal stance.

"I have been invited to an open meeting of three parishes located four miles from the Bangor submarine base. The people there are either in the military or work in connection with it. It is significant that I did not force myself on these people; they invited me, because they want to know what I think."

The following pages will introduce the reader to the main themes of Raymond Hunthausen's thinking. He speaks to all those concerned about the fate of the earth; and he challenges us to do all we can.

Val Noome

Archbishop Hunthausen is shown preaching in "Gods of Metal", a 1982 film (27 minutes, Colour, 16mm). Molly Rush, the director of the Thomas Merton Center, is also featured. This film is available from the St Columban's Missionary Society, Woodland Street, Emsendon North 3041, (03) 379 3544.

PEACE : A WITNESS OF FAITH

(Speech given by Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen in Pittsburgh on 18 November 1982 when accepting the Thomas Merton Peace Medal)

THE ULTIMATE VIOLENCE

I would like to acknowledge the kind invitation extended me by the Thomas Merton Center to be with you this evening, and to pay special tribute to the memory of the man after whom the Center is named: a Cistercian monk known to his community as Father Louis, and to the world as Thomas Merton . . . a man whom Anthony Padovano, in his recent book *Human Journey*, has described as "the symbol of a century — of its turmoil and sensitivity, of its conflict and restlessness, of its furtive peace and fugitive wars, of its holocausts and Hiroshimas and Harlems and hopes." . . . A man whose personal writings reflect his own struggle with the burning issue before us tonight: the ultimate violence in our world — nuclear war.

The public concern that has grown around the issue of nuclear war is a dialogue the voices of which arise from every social class, from every age and ethnic group, profession, trade and religious denomination. It is a dialogue not free of pain, nor wrenching human differences, even within the Christian community. It is a dialogue that has created what some have called a "crisis of conscience" for Christians as we seek to educate ourselves on the issue of modern warfare in the light of Christ's own teachings, and seek to chart a national course in the interest of humankind.

And, yet, however anguishing that process and however various our personal convictions on the subject of the nuclear arms race, I believe that we share some common realizations that would find little disagreement amongst us:

- The realization, for example, that we have come somehow to accept the arms race as inevitable and to look upon the nuclear "balance of terror" as the prevailing climate in the international relations among the peoples of this planet.
- The realization that this race for nuclear superiority has taken on a life of its own; and that the production and stockpiling of weapons has escalated out of all proportion to any nation's need to defend itself.
- The realization that it is neither reasonable nor just to expend \$600 billion a year for weapons and only some \$35 billion to alleviate human misery — to provide food, shelter, medicine and education.
- The realization that the weapons of war (nuclear and conventional) are supported on the backs of the poor and the disadvantaged who are the first victims of the arms race.
- The realization that we can no longer consign to heads of state and government planners alone, the formation of our national nuclear policies when these men and women seem unable or unwilling to control the escalating military expenditures and preparations for war, and when they can only move forward to yet another "ultimate weapon".
- The realization that no responsible public leader (political or religious) can any longer claim that "a limited nuclear war" is possible.
- The realization that in nuclear war, there are no winners.
- And the growing realization that the nuclear arms race is perhaps the gravest spiritual crisis in our history, a crisis we must face not only collectively, but individually as well.

"Hiroshima challenged my faith as a Christian in a way I am only now beginning to understand. That awful event and its successor at Nagasaki sank into my soul, as they have in fact sunk into the souls of all of us, whether we recognize it or not".

This is a subject I have thought about and prayed over for many years. I can recall vividly hearing the news of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in 1945. I was deeply shocked. I could not then put into words the shock I felt from the news that a city of hundreds of thousands of people had been devastated by a single bomb. Hiroshima challenged my faith as a Christian in a way I am only now beginning to understand. That awful event and its successor at Nagasaki sank into my soul, as they have in fact sunk into the souls of all of us, whether we recognize it or not.

I come to you today, as a religious leader, if you will, but also as a fellow American whose love of country and concern for its survival give me no choice but to speak out, to share with you simply my own beliefs as they apply to the terrible race toward nuclear holocaust.

I do not believe that the stand that I have taken is disloyal to my country. Rather I believe it reflects a love for our country because it reflects a belief that it is responsive to challenge for moral growth. In a question like the nuclear arms race, I believe it is God Almighty who is calling us to take such a stand.

I would like to clarify a few points about which some seem to be misinformed. First of all, as a religious leader, as a bishop, I have not only the right but the duty to speak out on the concrete issues of the day as they affect the values of the Gospel tradition. It is not enough for a bishop to utter general principles: he must also take the risk of applying them in the best way he knows how to the actual life situations that confront his people.

At the same time, I must say that I do not pretend to speak for every Catholic. No pope or bishop ever does; in fact, if bishops waited for complete consensus before speaking out, they would never say a word on any social issue of significance. Rather, I have called all of us to consider this issue and have given my own response. I invite all of you to examine the situation in the light of the Gospel values.

Secondly, I strongly reject the notion that because the episcopal office is a religious office, a bishop may not speak out on issues that involve the political realm. As Thomas Merton has pointed out religious life cannot be led unless it identifies itself with the whole of humankind. "The whole gamut to man's activities today constitutes an indivisible whole. You cannot divide social, economic, political, and purely religious work into water-tight compartments." (quoted from Padovano, *Human Journey*). Although it is true that the disarmament has a political side, it is also true that it has a moral side that I, as a Christian leader must address. To think that religious leaders have no right to speak out on social and political issues that touch the welfare of persons is to reduce the role of religious leader and of Christianity to the realm of individual morality. It is to declare with the secularist mentality of recent centuries that religion is to be locked up in the sacristy and in the home.

NUCLEAR WAR IS IMMORAL

My basic position is that all nuclear war is immoral because there is no conceivable proportionate reason which could justify the immense destruction of life and resources which such a war would bring about. Since, in my judgement, the continuing arms race makes nuclear war inevitable, participation in that arms race is immoral in the present context. That is essentially the same position that both Popes Paul VI and John Paul II took when each addressed the full Assembly of the United Nations. I am sure all of us remember Paul VI's words that still ring so clearly: "No more war, war never again! Never one against the other", or even "one above the other", but always, on every occasion, "with each other".

Hence, I have proposed that failure to achieve mutual disarmament leaves us with only one moral position in this tragic situation, the position of unilateral disarmament with trust and reliance on the Lord as our security. Such a position will sound to some naive; I believe it is even more naive to think that we can continue a nuclear arms race and not lead to a devastating nuclear war.

I am told by some that unilateral disarmament in the face of atheistic communism is insane. I find myself observing that nuclear armament by anyone is itself atheistic, and anything but sane. I am also told that the choice of unilateral disarmament is a political impossibility in this country. If so, perhaps the reason is that we have forgotten what it would be like to act out of faith.

I think that the race toward nuclear supremacy by the two super-powers can and must be stopped before it ends in the destruction of an entire world. The way in which our country is now racing toward that finish is by the systematic proliferation of nuclear weapons, the first-strike capability of which is apparent to all.

"We can choose — first personally and then nationally — not to participate in this immoral race. Unilateral disarmament, personally and nationally, is the choice to stop this insane competition. We must bring ourselves up short in this frantic activity of destruction and examine the incredible state to which we have brought ourselves and the more incredible direction in which we are heading."



I believe you and I should stop this race to holocaust. First, by ending our own personal participation in it, and then by bringing an end to the development of these weapons of destruction by our nation. We can choose — first, personally, and then, nationally — not to participate in this immoral race. Unilateral disarmament, personally and nationally, is the choice to stop this insane competition. We must bring ourselves up short in this frantic activity of destruction and examine the incredible state to which we have brought ourselves and the more incredible direction in which we are heading. Then we need to turn country and world around. We can end the arms race if we can choose peace unilaterally in our own lives. I believe that choice is possible. I believe that choice is humane. I believe that choice is civilized.

From a moral standpoint, and this is shared by every religious tradition I know of, there can be no justification whatever for the killing of millions of people, much less the extermination of the entire human family. Each human life is sacred. "Thou shalt not kill", we are taught in the Judeo-Christian tradition, however civilized the violence. Because each of us is made in the image of God, human life is sacred. Jesus accepted his own death on the cross rather than allow his disciples to take up the sword and kill in His defense. More importantly, Jesus refused to use the power of God — the legions of angels of Matthew's gospel — to coerce his opponents. He laid down his life so that his enemies and all people might live — a supreme example of opting for the power of love through non-violence rather than the use of violence in an absolutely justifiable cause.

From a moral standpoint, from what in our tradition we call the "natural law", it is apparent to the mind and heart of each of us that we have no right to take the life of another. This simple truth is available to each of us on this planet. Life, in all of its stages and each of its forms, is sacred.

I acknowledge that we Christians have been responsible for outrageous violations of this simple truth. The truth persists, nonetheless, in spite of our sins. The truth that we must respect the sacredness of human life — all human life — is at the heart of our tradition, as conveyed through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The sacredness of human life is a truth, I believe, embedded in the hearts of all of us, obscured only by years of our uncritical acceptance of the propaganda of war and such social expedients as the legislation of abortion, the encroachment of infanticide and positive euthanasia. Many in our nation today practise a kind of selective respect for life. Some recognize the insanity of war, but are blind to the systematic destruction of the life of the unborn; others are appalled by abortion, but find security in the potential destruction of millions of human lives through the use of nuclear weapons. How can we as a nation expect our cries for peace to be credible in the eyes of the world when we maintain this schizophrenic moral state?

At heart, none of us really believes in killing. We are a people of life. And from this life springs hope and faith. I cannot believe that the Giver of Life will somehow abandon the human race when that life is more universally threatened than at any other time in history.

"Many in our nation today practise a kind of selective respect for life. Some recognize the insanity of war, but are blind to the systematic destruction of the life of the unborn; others are appalled by abortion, but find security in the potential destruction of millions of human lives through the use of nuclear weapons".

Moving from the sacredness of human life — an awareness which in varying degrees is etched upon every human soul — to justifying a nuclear deterrent or first-strike policy is for me an impossible leap. Yet as Americans we have for decades proclaimed to the world that we are prepared — reluctantly perhaps, but we are prepared — to kill ten and hundreds of millions of our brothers and sisters if their governments should attack us. Now we have taken the additional step of preparing to kill those countless members of our family before their governments attack us — a nuclear first-strike policy. Neither moral law nor international law can support us in this posture. Certainly the just-war doctrine of the Christian tradition condemns clearly such policies. Under the just-war doctrine the massive killing of civilians can never be justified. As the Second Vatican Council of the Catholic Church put it:

"Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and humanity itself."



"The intention alone to wage nuclear war is an inconceivable sin. That intention can never be morally justified. From the rejection of any intention whatever to use nuclear weapons, it follows that unilateral disarmament is an unavoidable moral imperative. If we cannot morally use them, nor intend to use them, how can we justify having them?"

International law from the Hague Convention in 1898 to the present day has spoken this same truth. Indiscriminate weapons, uncontrollable in their effects, are morally and legally forbidden, even by standards which have in the past allowed for the possibility of just wars. And as every Catholic school child is taught, we must never intend to do and prepare to do what we are morally forbidden to do.

With the nuclear holocaust, the sin lies first in our intention — what we are willing to do. While we may be reluctant as individuals, we are clearly willing as a nation to incinerate millions. The intention alone to wage nuclear war is an inconceivable sin. That intention can never be morally justified. From the rejection of any intention whatever to use nuclear weapons, it follows that unilateral disarmament is an unavoidable moral imperative. If we cannot morally use them, nor intend to use them, how can we justify having them? Though we know, in fact, that our possession of nuclear weapons over 37 years has involved the continuous threat of their use, heightened at such times as the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Vietnam War. Indeed, the very doctrine of deterrence is an implied threat to use these weapons. If we are morally forbidden to use or threaten to use these instruments, is it not a moral imperative to divest ourselves of them?

Why does that moral imperative derived from the depths of human life — the true imperative that we should disarm ourselves of holocaust weapons — make us feel naked? Why do we feel stripped and threatened at the thought of not having nuclear weapons?

WORSHIP OF IDOLS

I believe it is because we make idols of these weapons. We truly worship these weapons, committing billions of dollars to their construction and the lives and intelligence of thousands to their care and development. In so doing, we make the lives of the poor of the world immeasurably more desperate and despairing. Ultimately, we reject both a faith in our common humanity and our God, in favour of trusting the protection of our lives to these weapons of destruction. It is in this conclusion that this idolatry — defended as "realistic" — betrays its essential denial of human reality. Does anyone really believe we can achieve peace by making the peoples of the world supremely vulnerable? Or, that the only road to peace is through the carnage of war? All idolatry, in the end, is superstition, even if it be this highly sophisticated idolatry. It is an attempt to escape the demands of real life — hard work, self-sacrifice, cooperation, personal denial, commitment and courage — in the mindless pursuit of the easy answer, the quick solution to life's problems. Such a blind rush into a fantasy based on an essential lie must lead through all kinds of immorality to its own contradiction. As Jesuit Father Richard McSorley wrote, in his article "It's A Sin To Build A Nuclear Weapon", in 1976:

"The taproot of violence in our society today is our intention to use nuclear weapons. Once we have agreed to that, all other evil is minor in comparison. Until we squarely face the question of our consent to use nuclear weapons, any hope of large scale improvement of public morality is doomed to failure."

I have argued the case for unilateral disarmament first from a moral standpoint because that is the basic ground from which I came to my position, and the source of the primary reasons which lead me to propose unilateral disarmament to begin with. I accept this moral imperative not out of a vague sense of idealism, but because it provides a clear insight into the reality which must guide our political decisions as well. The possibility of unilateral disarmament seems incomprehensible in this country only because we worship the nuclear god and we have heard for decades the lies that to that deity. We are controlled by what St. Paul in his epistles has called "principalities and powers", by which Paul meant spiritual realities of the world in which we live and think. Two such demonic realities today are nuclear weapons and the enormous propaganda in their behalf. We are possessed by them.

In order to exorcise ourselves of those demonic weapons and their ideology, we must pray for moral vision. We have to begin to see the reality beyond our weapons and our propaganda — a real world in which our security personally and as a country is not in fact bound up in a destructive nuclear presence.

W. H. Ferry, a writer on the subject of unilateral disarmament, has pointed out:

"A prime prerequisite to unilateral disarmament would be an analysis and understanding of power in a world in which war no longer can decide anything except the extent of national suicide."

Because of our history and conditioning we find it impossible today to understand the real power on an international scale divorced from armed force. It was an atheist dictator who once posed that question in relation to the Pope by asking, "How many divisions does he have?" But our attitude as a nominally religious society is hardly any different. We identify power with armed force.

Gandhi was the prophet of our age who spoke of a different kind of power: the power of nonviolence. Gandhi identified the power of nonviolence with Jesus' power of love on the cross. He summed up that nonviolent power by his term, "satyagraha," which in translation is truth-force, and is identical with love-force, the force which truth and love carry within themselves. Gandhi said that truth and love are two sides of the same force of reality and that they are more powerful than the atomic bomb. They are also the answer and the alternative to the atomic bomb.

1963: FOUR MONTHS OF TRUST?

The nonviolent force of truth and love can begin to be felt in our nuclear world through a decision to disarm unilaterally. Let me give an example from our history to show how that can happen. I quote from one of our local writers on this very important subject, the President of Educators for Social Responsibility, Professor Abraham C. Keller. In a recent article for the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Professor Keller describes a brief period in our history, inter-significant impact on our enemy, the Soviet Union.

"On June 10th, 1963, in a commencement address at American University in Washington, Kennedy announced that the United States would no longer conduct bomb tests in the atmosphere. His speech was not only printed immediately in Pravda, but the Voice of America program which broadcast it was not jammed as its programs regularly were, and the President's words quickly reached the Russian people.

"On June 11, in the United Nations, the Soviet Union withdrew its objection to a Western proposal to send observers to war-torn Yemen, a proposal which it had been opposing as a capitalist plot. Three days later, on June 14, again at the United Nations, the United States withdrew its objection to the seating of the Hungarian delegation, which it had been calling a puppet of the Soviet Union. The next day, June 15, Premier Khrushchev took to the air with congratulations to Kennedy for his speech and announced that the Soviet Union was discontinuing the production of strategic bombers.

"In July, the Soviet Union stopped its bomb tests in the atmosphere, and on August 5 representatives of the two nations made the test-ban final by signing the Treaty of Moscow, which was ratified by the U.S. Senate in September. On October 9, Kennedy lifted the grain embargo and allowed the shipment of \$250 million worth of wheat to the Soviet Union. Also in October, the two nations signed a pact agreeing not to orbit nuclear weapons in space. Where years of negotiation for a test-ban had failed, a single step by one of the parties brought brilliant success and, though briefly, established a momentum of goodwill which went beyond the bomb-tests themselves.

"In November 1963, President Kennedy was assassinated, and hopes for a continuation of the process which he had set in motion and which had been received with exuberance by many, were buried with him. All observers have agreed that throughout the cheerful series of events of June to October the Russian responses were quite proportionate to the American initiatives. Both sides, it has been granted by all, looked mighty good."

Not only the hope of those unilateral initiatives but the very memory of them lies buried with President Kennedy. We have forgotten such history because it does not fit the attitude that we can find our security as a nation only in arms, combined with threats and counter-threats. In that rare case when President Kennedy risked unilateral initiatives, more was accomplished in four months than has been achieved in 20 years of disarmament negotiations based on fear and mistrust.

"Dividing the real world between the two nuclear super-powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, does not exhaust the whole. The majority of nations that make up the human family do not share the nuclear obsessions of these super-powers, and they would strongly support concrete steps towards peace initiated by either nation."



A step-by-step process of unilateral disarmament by the United States could transform the spiritual and political world in which we live. It could introduce into that world the forces of truth and love, the existence of which we have forgotten as totally as we have forgotten the God we have replaced with nuclear weapons. Dividing the real world between the two nuclear super-powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, does not exhaust the whole. The majority of nations that make up the human family do not share the nuclear obsessions of these super-powers, and they would strongly support concrete steps toward peace initiated by either nation. A conversion to unilateral disarmament by one of the nations could initiate a moral revolution within the United Nations alone. I believe the other nation would respond in the same way that Premier Khrushchev responded in 1963 to President Kennedy, with reciprocal initiatives for peace. The nuclear disarmament race would be underway.

UNILATERAL DISARMAMENT

I believe in unilateral disarmament not only because it is a moral imperative but because it is, I think, the most practical way to break through the mutual fear and mistrust which dictate international relations today and which drive us to the brink of nuclear destruction. Disarmament negotiations based on fear and mistrust are a smokescreen for war. Such negotiations serve the main purpose of placating concerned citizens who believe that something is thereby being accomplished in the interest of peace. Such fear-ridden negotiations have in fact produced Salt I and Salt II, both of which allow for more, not less, nuclear arms. Unilateral disarmament, by introducing trust into the process, transforms that process and invites reciprocal trust — in fact generates a new force in international relations, the transforming power of love that begins with nonviolence and ends in a genuine peace for the peoples of the world.

Unilateral initiatives are not a substitute for disarmament treaties. They are the way to make such treaties possible. Unilateral initiatives create mutual trust, which is the foundation for disarmament treaties. It is possible today to escalate that kind of trust rather than weapons, in the same way that President Kennedy did in 1963.

At the time of President Kennedy's unilateral initiatives for peace, another prophet of our time, Pope John XXIII, spoke to this issue through his great encyclical, *Pacem in Terris* [Peace on Earth] (1963), helping to create the understanding for such steps toward peace. Pope John said in that document that "the fundamental principle on which our present peace depends", namely "equality of arms", can be replaced gradually by another, "which declares that the true and solid peace of nations consists not in equality of arms but in mutual trust alone." Disarmament and peace will come through our learning to proceed, step by step, from a reliance on equality or superiority of arms to a process of mutual trust alone.

ANOTHER SUFFERING

My friends, there is no denying that unilateral disarmament like any nonviolent process brings its own kind of suffering and even death. It is different from the suffering and death brought on by war in that it is a suffering and death which comes from saying no to the killing of others. Refusing to kill, disarming for peace, creates a transforming, non-violent power — but it comes at the price of suffering, a suffering out of love. At its root, the power of nonviolence is that sacrificial love — so clearly evident in the life of Jesus — that same love sustained and deepened in the truth-force and love-force of which Gandhi spoke.

If we want peace, friends, we have to be willing to suffer and perhaps die for it — out of love for our brothers and sisters. How can we believe that peace is less costly than war? The transforming power of nonviolence seeks a goal far greater than any war could hope to seek: a just and peaceful world, a nuclear-free world. Today we know as little of the power and the methods of nonviolence as we knew of the power of the atom a century ago. I believe the power of nonviolence is in its depths an infinite power because it is based on love, the love of an infinite God. It is a power capable of sustaining us in our struggle through to that nuclear-free world. If we give ourselves over to that power, and practice it through a living nonviolence, we will also experience suffering. The nonviolent struggle for a new world has its price, our own suffering out of love.

I have not dealt directly with the question always asked in regard to unilateral disarmament: What about the Russians?

I do not believe that we are the only nation in the world to cherish our homes, to love our children, to yearn for peace and to feel compassion for human misery.

Nor do I believe that all the people of Russia are pounding their shoes in the forums of the world in a universal cry for war.

Thomas Merton has said that "violence derives from a set of illusions about ourselves and about the world in which we live. The enemy is not the other but the tendency in all of us to make the other different and to declare ourselves the norm and the center of human behaviour." (quotations from *Human Journey* by Anthony Padovano).

And so it often is with Christians . . . Are Americans, do you think, the only people created in the image and likeness of God? Can there be no reconciliation possible between the nations of the world who have nothing to gain from nuclear war but destruction and human suffering? Are we so intellectually and morally bankrupt as a nation that we can conceive of no other strategies for peace but "ultimate weapons"?

If humanity is to survive, we must choose a new understanding of reality, centered on faith and the sharing of our lives and resources, or we shall be destroyed by the fruits of a "security" predicated on the systematic annihilation of the human race.

Faith determined every step in the life of Christ. His realism of faith is rooted in the understanding that the God of Love is ever-present and waiting, waiting for the act of faith and compassion that can open up the reality of what Jesus called "the kingdom of God" — a world of love, justice and peace. The reality is always at hand, and can be realized through our conversion to a compassionate faith in a loving, caring God.

"If . . . that worst of development should in fact happen and we should some day find ourselves occupied by a totalitarian power, I think we must then continue to rely on that divinely based power of non-violence with more trust than we have ever placed in nuclear weapons. And I believe that non-violent love will in the end prevail, as it prevailed for the early Christians after three centuries of Roman persecution."



I cannot believe that others would remain unchanged as we take these steps for peace. Divesting ourselves of holocaust weapons is not an overnight process. The process itself, as I have suggested is what would create an alternative kind of power in us and others, and indeed, a new kind of world. But I am willing to grant that the way of peace will have its cost in suffering in our lives, and I am willing to grant that in the end the worst thing short of nuclear war might occur. If in that new world, that worst of development should in fact happen and we should some day find ourselves occupied by a totalitarian power, I think we must then continue to rely on that divinely based power of non-violence with more trust than we have ever placed in nuclear weapons. And I believe that nonviolent love will in the end prevail, as it prevailed for the early Christians after three centuries of Roman persecution. Striving to live non-violently, we must expect suffering and death — a sacrificial love, dying for the life of others, is the way of nonviolence. It is the HOPE of the nuclear age.

We are called to witness to that faith.

Archbishop Hunthausen explains his tax resistance decision this way:

I believe that, as Christians imbued with the spirit of peacemaking expressed by the Lord in the Sermon on the Mount, we must find ways to make known our objections to the present concentration on further nuclear arms buildup. Accordingly, after much prayer, thought, and personal struggle, I have decided to withhold 50 per cent of my income taxes as a means of protesting our nation's continuing involvement in the race for nuclear arms supremacy.

It is true that as a general rule the laws of the state must be obeyed. However, we may peacefully disobey certain laws under serious conditions. There may even be times when disobedience may be an obligation of conscience. Most adults have lived through times and situations where this would apply.

Thus, Christians of the first three centuries disobeyed the laws of the Roman Empire and often went to their death because of their stands. They were within their rights. Similarly, in order to call attention to certain injustices, persons like Martin Luther King engaged in demonstrations that broke the laws of the state.

The point is that civil law is not absolute. It is not a god that must be obeyed under any and all conditions. In certain cases, where issues of great moral importance are at stake, disobedience to a law in a peaceful manner and accompanied by certain safeguards that help preserve respect for the institution of law is not only allowed but may be, as I have said, an obligation of conscience . . .

Render to Caesar without question, and without question we will get nuclear war.

As Christians, we once had a commitment of refusing income to Caesar. The Church resisted that idolatry, at the cost of martyrdom. What has happened to the Christian belief in the Cross and rejection of idolatry?

Now, on a more blasphemous scale than any homage paid to a first-century Caesar, we engage in nuclear idolatry. It is not God in Whom we place our trust, but nuclear weapons . . .

I believe that the present issue is as serious as any the world has faced. The very existence of humanity is at stake.

I am not encouraging those who wish to avoid paying taxes to use my action as a justification for their own personal gain. I plan to deposit what I withhold in a fund to be used for charitable peaceful purposes. There comes to mind the needs of those workers who will require assistance should they decide to leave their nuclear war-related jobs, the bona fide peace movements, the Academy of Peace and Conflict Resolution programs, or programs for the aid of pregnant women who have chosen not to terminate their pregnancies by abortion.

I am saying by my action that in conscience I cannot support or acquiesce in a nuclear arms buildup which I consider a grave moral evil.

I urge all of you to pray and to fast, to study and to discuss, and then to decide what you shall do to combat the evil of the nuclear arms race. I cannot make your decision for you. I can and do challenge you to make a decision.

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The following organisations will also serve as Centres of Distribution for this issue:

Australia Quaker Peace Committee, Friends House, 631 Orrong Road, Toorak, Victoria, 3142.

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Clergy for Peace, C/- Phillip Huggins, Chaplains Office, Monash University, Clayton, Victoria, 3168.

Division of Social Justice, Uniting Church in Australia, 130 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria, 3000.

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