

# How 'Final' is Our Commitment in

By GARY MacEOIN

I have hitherto kept out of the impassioned national discussion of Vietnam, not because I thought I knew less about the facts than many who were shouting, but because I considered advice redundant where minds were made up.

Today, it seems less clear that decisions are final, so it may be helpful to correct some misassumptions.

The most basic one, it seems to me, concerns what is usually called our commitment to South Vietnam. This is an issue to which I have long been close.

Gary MacEoin's column regularly appears on our editorial page. This article, we thought, deserves special prominence. He had been in Vietnam years ago, before most Americans knew such a place existed. He writes, therefore, with much more than recent acquaintanceship.

I knew the late President Diem when he was a political exile in the United States. In early 1955 I drafted documents which helped win an extension of the time provided in the 1954 Geneva Agreements for those who chose to move south to freedom from the Communist north. From that time I was a member of the executive committee of the American Friends of Vietnam until I resigned last year. (I resigned because I was going abroad for an extended stay at a moment when I was far from happy with the directions in which that body was being pulled).

Now, we have no commitment whatever under the Geneva Agreements. Neither the United States nor South Vietnam signed them. Subsequently, however, on various occasions, Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson gave assurances that the United States would give military and economic aid to protect South Vietnam from both internal and external subversion.

These were undoubtedly serious statements of United States policy and intention. But were they more solemn and more irreversible than those given to Poland before and during World War II

by the Western allies, or than those given by President Kennedy that we would not recognize military regimes ousting democratically elected governments in Latin America?

Another kind of commitment also exists in Vietnam, though I have seen little reference to it in the current discussions. Thanks to United States encouragement and provision of ships, nearly a million refugees fled to South Vietnam from the north after the Geneva Agreements.

I visited some of their settlements near Saigon a little over a year ago, and for them the outlook was bleak. The Saigon regimes that followed Diem's assassination had all discriminated against them to the point that they had completely lost confidence in them. Yet the Vietcong held even less attraction. A Vietcong victory would mean swift vengeance on them as traitors who had abandoned the Communist paradise and sold their country to the French and Americans. As they saw it, their only hope was to move once more, even as far away as Australia or Brazil.

Whatever the concrete solution, it seems to me that we do have a moral commitment to this group. But that is quite different from saying that we must con-



A suspected Vietcong and his child . . . part of the strategy necessary for victory

# Vietnam?

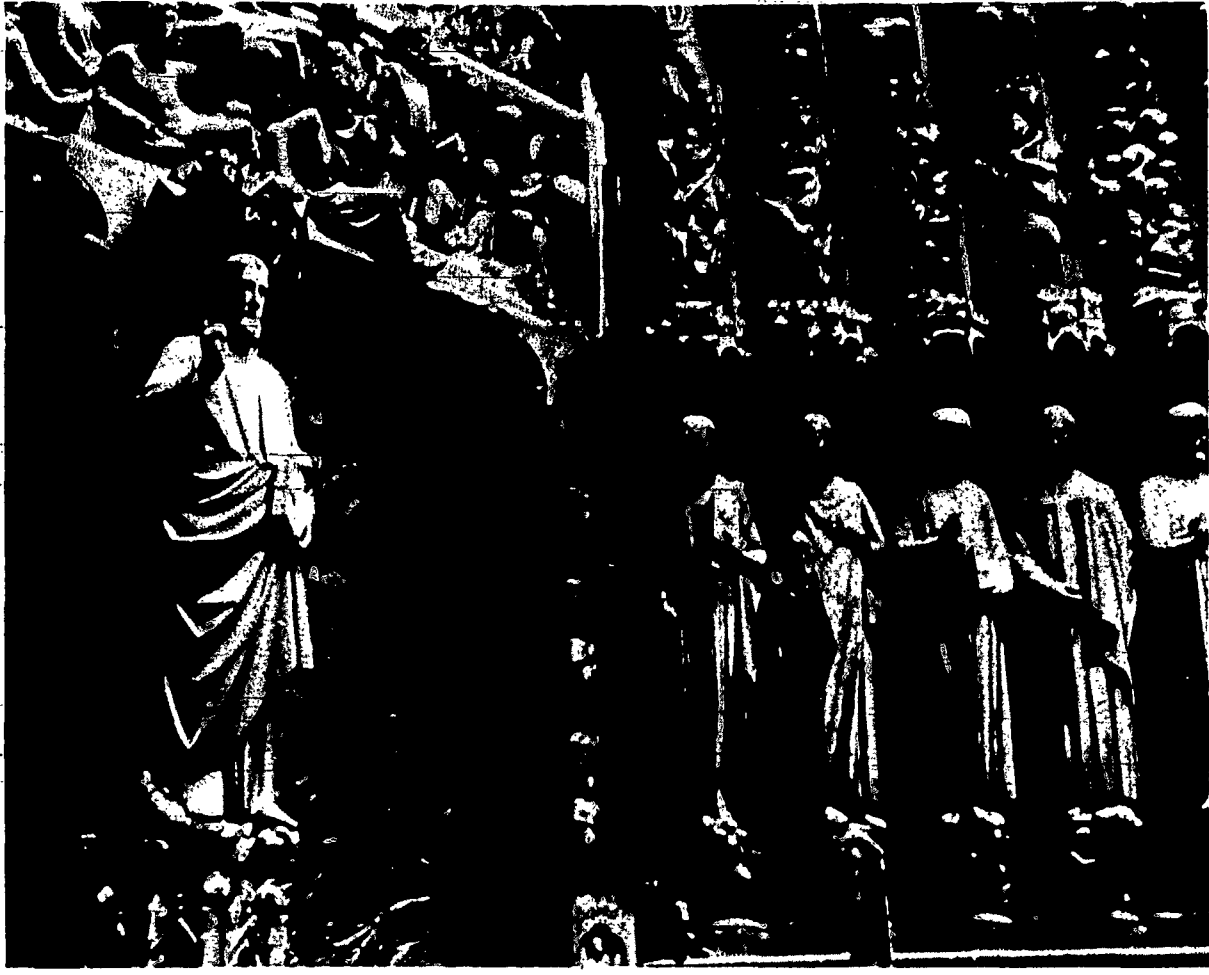
tinue the present policy of pulverizing Vietnam. Quite apart from the morality of what we are doing (and Paulist Father John B. Sheerin has raised that basic issue), the practical wisdom has to be examined.

If our real objective is to contain China in south-east Asia, as I believe it is, then we are our own worst enemies.

Vietnam's historical relationship to China, as Joseph Buttinger documents in a masterly way in "The Lesser Dragon," is like that of Ireland to England.

To contain China, one builds up Vietnam. One does not destroy it. The more we obliterate the industrial regions of North Vietnam, the more we draw the Chinese south into the vacuum and increase the dependence of the Vietnamese on China.

Assuming the need for a policy of containment of China, we have to find a better expression for it. We are doing what every American strategist has always condemned, becoming involved with a major Asiatic power in the area where its numbers are most effective and our might least applicable.



## Go... Teach...

The majestic figure of Jesus Christ, the divine Teacher, stands flanked by His Apostles at the main entrance of famed Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. Twenty centuries since He commanded them to teach His gospel to all men, only five per cent of the world's population has as yet heard His message.

# The Catholic COURIER Journal

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE ROCHESTER DIOCESE

77th Year Rochester, N.Y., Friday, March 4, 1966 Price 15 Cents

## Church's Teaching Task Sunday Study Theme

"Go into the whole world. Preach the gospel to all men."

That command, the farewell command of the Lord, was given nearly twenty centuries ago.

The task of carrying out that command has stirred the imagination and the courage of His Church . . . but the task grows more massive each day.

Twenty centuries since the Lord's command was given statistics show today less than one-twentieth of the world's population has as yet heard His message.

The exploding ninety-five per cent of the rest of the world is still mostly oblivious even to the fact that He ever came to earth.

To point up the Church's immense responsibility of teaching Christ's doctrine to the world for a letter from Bishop Kear-

ney to be read and sermons to be preached in parish churches of the Rochester Diocese this Sunday, March 4.

The prayers and commitment of Catholics to this task locally will be asked for at Masses on this date, designated as Christian Doctrine Sunday.

Monsignor Albert H. Schnacky, diocesan director of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD), coordinating agency for the diocese's instruction of both adults and children, is optimistic

for the teaching program within the twelve-county diocesan area—although he readily admits the bleak picture on the worldwide scale.

"Every acre of our Diocese is covered," he reports. And the lately-staffed CCD program in new Holy Spirit parish in Penfield and also new Holy Name parish in Greece "should be models as they develop."

Both parishes have been at the forefront of the continuing moralistic and social school construction so the two parishes have established "a solid foundation," as Monsignor Schnacky describes it, "for a parish-wide catechetical program which doesn't stop when a child gets a diploma."

Monsignor Schnacky puts considerable emphasis on the "fall" in the Lord's command—to include adults in the Church's teaching program as well as youngsters.

This Christian Doctrine Sunday, he says, has precisely this target in mind, a long-range focus on next September when he hopes far more adults will enroll in the catechetical courses to be teachers of religion to youngsters in parishes or simply to be well-informed adult Christian people.

The courses are conducted on a one-evening-a-week basis at the School of Religion in Fairport, the Catechetical Center in Gates, the School of Religion at Ithaca and the study course conducted by the Atonement Sisters in Elmira. The Fairport, Gates and Ithaca schools are staffed by nuns of the Missionary Helpers of the Sacred Heart.

Monsignor Schnacky estimates that more than 4000 lay people are currently engaged in religious instruction programs in the Diocese.

He counts 53,244 Catholic pupils in public schools, from kindergarten through high school, as enrolled in parish catechetical instruction. He estimates another 15,000 Catholic pupils are still "being missed" despite numerous efforts to enroll them too.

Parochial and Catholic high schools of the Diocese have a current enrollment of 58,506, a number that will show negligible increase in the years ahead, while the total number of Catholic pupils in public schools will continue to soar.

Monsignor Schnacky quite aptly summarized the situation. "Actually, we're quite well off here in the Rochester Diocese with buildings and teachers and pupils enrolled in the thousands. But we also have to share our responsibility for the Church's task to bring Christ's message to people in other areas who don't have all the resources we do. Our horizon has to be bigger than our own backyard and when we look in that direction, the task ahead is immense. That's why we need to keep our people informed, involved and praying."

And the magnitude of the total situation can be dimly grasped by realizing that even Monsignor Schnacky's guarded optimism locally takes into consideration only "all" those people who are already committed to be Catholics.

There then remains "all" others. Where can the Church find a voice to speak to so great a multitude? —Father Henry Atwell

## A Pious Teenager — the Radio Rosary

Today is a teenager's birthday — a pious, constant, unexcitable teenager — 16 years old, the Family Rosary for Peace.

The infant was born on the airwaves of one radio station as a Lenten devotion and has grown to its present every-day-of-the-year network of two radio stations and three TV cable outlets.

The nightly broadcast at 7 p.m. links the entire Rochester Diocese in praying the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary — and once a week, every Satur-

day, includes broadcast of the Mass also.

Father Joseph Cirrincione, still most modest in talking about the program he has faithfully moderated for 5859 consecutive broadcasts will be at the microphone tonight, March 4, as he has on most every other night during the past sixteen years.

The program began on Rochester's radio station WSAY and then expanded to Auburn's WMBO-FM and TV cable outlets in Elmira, Corning and Hornell.

Besides the nightly Rosary broadcast, which originates live at St. Francis of Assisi parish center in Rochester, the Angelus is broadcast as a recording on the same stations three times daily — early morning, noon, and early evening, in what is believed to be the only such arrangement in the nation.

Father Cirrincione says the Rosary voice reaches beyond diocesan boundaries as well from Canada, Pennsylvania and other states, indicating.

Listeners, many of them shut-

outs or elderly people unable to attend church particularly in winter, report the program is a deep consolation to them. Many families kneel together for the devotion each evening.

Father Cirrincione estimates the program has resulted in the recitation of at least 220 million Rosaries and hopes to reach the quarter of a billion mark during the coming year.

He also said listeners may send their intentions to the St. Francis parish center to be included in the prayers of other listeners, that water from our Lady's shrine at Lourdes, France, is available on request, and . . . as the program like its listeners has financial problems . . . contributions to keep the radio Rosary on the air will always be appreciated.

## Australians Split On School Aid Issue

Canberra — (RNS) — A recent decision by the leaders of Australia's Labor Party to bar extension of federal aid to parochial and private schools has stirred a major political controversy with heavy religious overtones.

Roman Catholic Archbishop Eric O'Brien of Canberra and Goulburn described the stand of the Labor Party Executives as "one of the most amazing political mistakes ever made in a civilized community." He added that "public opinion ought to pull down" the men who fostered the no-aid policy.

E. G. Whitlam, deputy leader of the Opposition in Australia's Parliament and a possible nominee for Prime Minister in any

country-wide victory by Labor, condemned the action of party leaders. In a letter to the party secretary, he said:

"I must reiterate my conviction that there will never be enough trained teachers and facilities and equipment . . . in this country until the Commonwealth does the same and as much for teacher training in technical and secondary and even primary education as it does for universities . . . and until it does so irrespective of whether the teachers and pupils are at state or private institutions."

Newspapers described Mr. Whitlam's comment as indicating a "revolt" within the Labor Party.

## Registration Date for Pupils March 14th

Registration for pupils who plan to enter parochial schools in September will be held Monday, March 14.

Monsignor William M. Roche, diocesan superintendent of schools, said children registering for kindergarten must complete their fifth year of age by Nov. 30, 1966, and first grade applicants must complete their sixth year of age by that same date.

Parish bulletins should be consulted for time and place of registration.

## IF YOU MOVE . . .

let us know about it so we can keep your Courier coming to you on time. Phone or mail us notice of your change of address. Include your old address and new address and the name of your parish.

Courier Journal, 35 Scio St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604. Phone - 716-454-7050.

## Bishops Propose Revision Of State Divorce Bill

New York State's Catholic bishops this week asked for a revision, but not the killing, of proposed changes in the State's present divorce law.

At legislative hearings in Albany, their spokesman, Charles J. Tobin, called for:

- Mandatory, rather than voluntary, efforts at reconciliation prior to divorce;
- A "proctor" or legal guardian to represent the State in all divorce cases, not just those where children are involved.
- Clarification of such terms as "cruel and inhuman treatment" and "abandonment for two years" to prevent "loose and broad interpretation."
- Elimination of the proposed justifying reason of "living apart for two years" which, Tobin said, would be "tantamount to divorce by consent."

He said the Catholic Church is opposed to divorce but "we will not take any steps calculated to impose our religious beliefs upon others."

State Senator John H. Hughes, head of the Judiciary Committee, commenting on Tobin's statement, said, "The prospects for a bill are much better now than earlier in the session. I don't think Mr. Tobin's suggestions will influence the bill except on its merits. We've all recognized that the bill, which we've barely had time to study, needs amending."

FERRY FLOWERS for all occasions. Ethel M. Perry assisted by Tom Zavaglia, Mgr. Ed. Wolpert, Asst. Mgr. MICHAEL A. FAHEY, Adv.

Electric Shavers - Sunbeam, Remington, Schick. Free Trial. William S. Thorne, Jeweler, 318 Main St. E. - Adv.



## Rugby Champion Now a Priest

Rome — (RNS) — Father John Cootes, a newly-ordained Australian priest, is playing with the Lazio rugby team of Rome while completing his theological studies at the Propaganda Fide College. He is shown here with Pope Paul VI at his recent ordination in St. Peter's Basilica and later in action on the field.