

# War Toys, Good or Bad: Debate Goes On

The running battle over the psychological effects of "war" toys is highlighted once again by the Christmas shopping season.

Machine-guns, warships, jet bombers? No, say the Parents for Responsibility in the Toy Industry; no, says Frank Caplan, president of Creative Playthings.

According to Caplan, war-toys don't even pay. He has challenged manufacturers "to explore the fields of weight and gravity, speed and time, light and shadows, energy and matter, the behavior of living things, vibration and sound, beams in optics, shape and form in art, imagery and language."

"Toys that leave little to a child's imagination, or are too complicated for him to maneuver, frustrate and leave him completely disinterested," Caplan says. "They can afflict him with a loss of self-confidence and destroy his will to explore and learn."

"A child wants actively to participate in this busy world of ours and we should give him the means to do so, beginning with good sturdy blocks when he's a toddler so he can build and reproduce in his own way the world that he sees about him."

The Parents Committee, which is a mothers' committee, really, has made a practice in recent years of picketing the annual Toy Fair in New York, where buyers prepare their wholesale Christmas lists.

These mothers hold that "children who have learned to glorify violence are much more likely to unleash it when they grow up."

Their protests have been echoed widely by women's church organizations. No major religious body has adopted a moral stand.

In Minneapolis and other areas, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has been backed by local church bodies in urging upon parents that "there are many creative alternatives to war toys" and that they weigh their responsibility for providing their children with wholesome playthings.

That concern over the issue of military toys is not limited to the United States is evident

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from the fact that last year the Austrian Catholic Family Association issued a statement emphasizing "the duty of all the faithful not to develop the latent destructive tendencies in children by giving them toy guns, cannon and militaristic games."



## OPEN HOUSING IS MORALLY RIGHT

### Open Housing 'Morally Right'

Louisville, Ky. — (RNS) — Thousands of these stickers are being distributed by the Louisville Area Council on Religion and Race in an effort to promote open housing. A message accompanying each package of stickers declares that "this lets your neighbor know in a quiet and yet forthright way your conviction that open housing is morally right."

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"Rather," the organization added, "we should educate them in the joys of peace. War is a catastrophe. It brings with it suffering and misery to mankind."

Several years ago, delegates to the Christian Peace Meeting

in Kyoto, Japan (a major toy-making country) issued this statement:

"Toys are important tools in the education of children. But the toys we find in shops today are tanks, guns, pistols and war planes. When we consider the bad influence that these toys might have on our children, our Christian consciences do not allow us to be silent. We urge that the production of all 'weapon toys' be discontinued as soon as possible."

### Toys Don't Create Wars

In the other camp stands Jerome M. Fryer, president of the Toy Manufacturers of the U.S.A. "Toys don't create wars," he says. "Wars create war toys. Unless you eliminate the adult activity, you can't stop the child from duplicating it. If you took away dolls, would girls stop having babies?"

He was backed by Lionel Weintraub, president of the Ideal Toy Corporation, who had this to say: "In the Soviet Union, no war toys are permitted. If they've eliminated war toys for children, have they eliminated aggression?"

A New York man who has worked with hundreds of boys 7 to 15, says:

"Toys should reflect something about the world around the boy. Trouble is, too many people who lost their way try to protect boys from knowing what the world is like."

"Take the toy soldier away. Take competition away. Take conflict away. You may be sure

you won't have much left of the boy of the 1960's."

"What I have against toys is this: One, they are too expensive. Two, they need too many batteries. Three, they are evil when they are purchased merely to compensate a child for lack of parental company."

## Lauds Pope's Critique of Racism

Durban, South Africa—(RNS) — Archbishop Denis Hurley of Durban has published an article in his diocesan weekly newspaper, "The Southern Cross," commenting on the "enormous" significance of the papal message, Africae Terrarum, addressed to the people of Africa.

Noting that it emphasizes the religious and spiritual values of African culture, Archbishop Hurley signaled out for special comment the letter's remarks on the problem of race relations.

"The Pope has stated that racism is unacceptable to a Christian conscience," he said. "He forcefully calls our attention to the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World and the encyclical Populorum Progressio and he insists that the dignity and fundamental equality of all men be recognized."

## Recent Film Ratings

Films recently reviewed by the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures include:

**Class B: (Morally objectionable in part for all)**

**Pretty Polly**  
Objection: A self-conscious film whose definition of "growing up" is sex, alcohol and larceny.

**P. J.**  
Objection: In this private-eye melodrama, gratuitous brutality and suggestiveness abound. Moreover, the exploitation of the homosexual for purposes of entertainment is seriously questionable.

**Valley of the Dolls**  
Objection: A filmic failure on every level (direction, script, acting) this screen adaptation of a shoddy novel unravels a decadent picture of show business life but appears to have no purpose in telling the story except to wallow in it.

**Wicked Dreams of Paul Schultz**  
Objection: Suggestive costuming.

**Two Weeks in September**  
Objection: Suggestive treatment.

**Class C (Condemned)**

**Carmen, Baby**  
Objection: This is a blatantly pornographic film. Any exhibitor who books it stands guilty of the dissemination of what the average viewer would judge to be obscene.

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