

Papal Invitation to Work for Peace

At the beginning of this Year of the Lord 1972, Pope Paul offered for the fifth time an invitation to celebrate a Day of Peace. 'Day' to be interpreted in the Biblical sense—a period of time offered to us (not just 24 hours) as a grace to use our best efforts to achieve what has been man's universal hope but one which seems forever to elude his grasp.



The theme of this year's message is this: "If you want Peace, work for Justice." This is a paraphrasing of the words of Isaias 32, 17: "Justice will bring about peace." The invitation is offered to men of thought and action and to all mankind

who enjoy life in this Year of the Lord.

The Holy Father offers a challenge to those who speak of peace so glibly but whose ideas of its nature are distorted. He reminds youth that peace is not a stagnant condition of life but something which is acquired by effort. To those in positions of authority and responsibility he makes it clear that peace is never imposed by force on any group of people — be it a family, a school, or a nation. For force brings at best an inglorious victory which corrupts the normal development of man's spirit. Men stifled by such repression remain quiet in an apparent peace awaiting a moment to assert themselves in violent outbursts against the tyranny of power.

Peace is never violence, treachery, nor a lie made into a system. The obvious reference of the Holy Father is to the tyranny of totalitarian governments.

True peace, he explains, must always be based on a respect for the rights of man — and that is justice. Men today are more conscious of their personal dignity than ever before. They have a greater awareness of themselves. The emerging and developing countries cry for justice with a loud voice. Ours is the duty of enabling every country to promote its own development by assistance which is given without interest in dominating those we help.

It is my personal hope and prayer that we will respond generously to the Holy Father's invitation to work for peace. We begin by establishing the tranquility of order in our personal lives and by extending respect and love to those whom we meet in this year of grace. Let us proclaim by word and deed that Christ is our peace.

Guest Columnist

By Father Francis H. Turner

Council - Change - Confusion

Council-change-confusion are the three Cs of the present day Church. They are hooked together. Pope John called the Council to let fresh air (change) into the Church. The documents of the Council set the groundwork for that change. And change begot confusion, not because there was change, but for other reasons.

First there was the difference of mental attitudes. Some people are very impatient and for them change is too slow, while others find change entirely too rapid. Further, many Catholics have never been trained to make distinctions, and therefore they take either the attitude that nothing can be changed or the opposite, that if the Church can change one thing, she can change anything.

Second there is the problem of the com-

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munication media. Today we have almost instant worldwide information. An event can happen one place in the world, and almost instantly, it is making headlines all over. Catchy headlines and the desire for a quick scoop have often led to misunderstanding and confusion. We find people commenting on documents they have not even read, publicity seekers who suddenly are experts, speculation no longer just in academic journals, but headlines in the papers, a great desire to pass on all new speculation to others, with no attempt to indicate that it is still speculation. All this makes for confusion.

We must not treat the Church as a mere man-made thing, continually comparing it with the things around us that are man made. The Church is God made, even though made up of human persons. Made up of men, there

will be human weakness, pride, errors of judgment, misunderstandings and even abuses of power. We need a deep trust in the providence of God, and a willingness to admit that there are in the Church, things that can be changed and essentials that cannot be changed.

We should take time out to remember that not only is there time for talk and action, but also for meditation and prayer. We cannot afford to forget the words of Christ: "Without me, you can do nothing." Nor can we afford to forget the other words of Sacred Scripture, "Unless the Lord build the house, their labor in vain who build it."

Change by itself does not produce a better world or a better Church. Results can come only when man increases in the love of God and diminishes in love of self. Love of God and love of neighbor go hand in hand. One cannot exist without the other, for man has his worth and dignity only because he is a child of God.

Editorial

The Games Governments Play

The latest commotion over the publication of "secret" government papers once again brings into focus one of the most undermining practices of national administrations. And that is not so much not telling the whole truth as it is playing games with the people of America and of the world.

It would be naive to expect a government such as ours, embroiled in international skullduggery with some of the masters of deceit, to lay our strategy on the table. Out of self-defense a government must resort to certain evasions which some call mental reservations and others label lies.

There is little doubt that many bureau-

crats use secret labeling too much for a variety of reasons, most reprehensible of which is to conceal mistakes. Such deviancy is compounded through the use of "leaks" whereby such officials reveal to certain newsmen "secret" information for the two-fold purpose of making themselves look good and to curry favor with the media. Newsmen who play this game are simply hand-maidens to duplicity.

All this has been done so often that it has hardened into a system which allows the government to say one thing for public consumption and something quite different in its "secret" decisions.

The India-Pakistan war is a case at point. While ostensibly we maintained a

neutral stance, we secretly were sharpening knives which were not intended for India's good. The use of secrecy or even of "lies" may be justified when a country is in a direct fight for self-survival but in this situation such reasoning would be far-fetched. Certainly, if we had good reason for supporting West Pakistan or for opposing India it has not been made clear. Once again through the complicated system of managing news in official Washington the United States government stands embarrassed not only at home but abroad as well.

Such circuitous action can only detract from our stature. Leaders run boldly ahead to clear the way for their followers. They do not slink behind duplicity's twin veils.