

# Humankind

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instrument for the integral development of people, including the promotion of human rights and to insure that this humanitarian assistance to the needy transcends government priorities and national security policies.

7. We call all Christians to "live simply, so that others may simply live" (Elizabeth Seton). To this end we recommend:

a) That the bishops, through study groups and other means, educate Catholics to a sense of moral responsibility to share the world's goods.

b) That the Catholic community on all levels, examine its lifestyle and reduce its unnecessary consumption of goods. We call upon the leaders of the Catholic community to demonstrate, institutionally and personally, this simplicity and reduced consumption of goods.

8. That the NCCB, through the offices of justice and peace and other appropriate groups available to them, urge individual Catholics and other citizens to convince their local political representatives to urge the United States to ratify the UN Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Social and Economic Rights.

9. That the NCCB advocate adequate and accessible health care as a human right by the issuance of a pastoral letter.

10. That the church recognize that the issue of undocumented immigration into the United States is an international question and that undocumented immigrants have the basic human right to be free from economic and physical abuse by the U.S. government and private employers.

In particular, the church should condemn the physical abuse of undocumented immigrant women by supporting legislation which grants immunity to deportation where an abuse is alleged while the alleged abuse is being investigated. We further recommend that the church also recognize that undocumented immigrants in the United States have a basic human right to sustain themselves through employment. The church should encourage legislation granting amnesty to all undocumented workers in the United States.

11. Since economic development has often failed to promote human development, especially in the Third and Fourth World nations, we urge the NCCB, the USCC and other appropriate organizations to actively support and critically challenge both U.S. and corporate involvement in developing nations with regard to their promotion of human rights.

12. That in light of continuing violations of human rights guaranteed by the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), to which the Holy See was a signatory, we recommend that the Office of International Justice and Peace of the USCC encourage implementation of the U.S. Commission to monitor the Helsinki Accord, and focus attention of U.S. Catholics and other citizens on the continuing suppression of the religious, political, cultural and other human rights of the oppressed nations of Eastern Europe, including the right to emigrate.

13. That the NCCB and the USCC mobilize the international conscience on behalf of all political prisoners under repressive governments in any country of the world who are subject to torture, disappearance and assassination without respect for their basic human rights to life and liberty.

## RECOMMENDATION:

In the spirit of the biblical promise of liberty and justice, it is important to consider the words of Isaiah 24:

"He shall judge between the nations, and impose terms on many peoples. They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. One nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again."

Likewise in the gospel we are reminded that the message of Jesus is one of peace, nonviolence and reconciliation (Matt. 5, 43-46).

The teaching of John XIII in Páramo in Terris laid a solid foundation for this recommendation.

"Justice, then, right reason and consideration for human dignity and life urgently demand that the arms race should cease; that the stockpiles which exist in various countries should be reduced equally and simultaneously by the parties concerned; that the nuclear weapons should be banned; and finally that all come to an agreement on a fitting program of disarmament, employing mutual and effective controls."

The bishops of the world at Vatican II added a further note: "Any act of war aimed at the destruction of entire cities and of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation."

In speaking of atomic weapons, Pope Paul VI, on the 20th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, issued a challenge to the world: "Let these shameful weapons be banned and let this terrible art which consists in manufacturing, multiplying and storing bombs to terrorize the people be outlawed."

Finally, the April 1976 statement of the Holy See to the United Nations on the subject of disarmament opens with the assertion that the armaments race "is to be unreservedly condemned. It goes on to say that:

"The obvious contradiction between the waste involved in the overproduction of military devices and the extent of unsatisfied vital needs (developing countries and the marginal and the poor elements in rich societies) is in itself an act of aggression against those who are victims of it. It is an act of aggression which amounts to a crime, for even when they are not used, by their cost alone, armaments kill the poor by causing them to starve."

In 1971, Cardinal John Krol, speaking on behalf of the American Hierarchy, insisted that "current directions must be reversed" in the armaments race. Five years later, we recommend:

1. That in the light of consistent Church teaching on modern warfare, the U.S. Catholic community condemn, and be among those who lead in resisting the production, possession, proliferation and threatened use of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of indiscriminate effect, even in a policy of deterrence, and that we support adequate controls over the processing, handling and custody of all nuclear materials which can be converted to military or terrorist uses.

2. That the bishops of the United States take the lead in defending human life by bringing the moral questions relative to the production and use of such weapons before the people of the United States in order to help all persons of goodwill form correct consciences on these matters.

3. That peace education programs at every level of church life emphasize the dangers and evils of the arms race and an aggressive military posture because of the threat they pose to all humanity. Since the arms race has developed in irrational dynamic of its own in order to justify the proliferation of weapons, it will

require an immense moral commitment and a profound education effort if this dynamic is to be universally reversed, paving the way for initiatives for disarmament leading to general and complete disarmament. These education programs should also include the search for nonviolent alternatives to national defense.

4. That the church in the United States, respecting the decision of those who choose to serve in the military, give its support to those who on grounds of conscience refuse to serve in war or preparation for war; that Catholics support legal provision for selective and general conscientious objection to military service and to the payment of war or military taxes.

5. That the church support amnesty for those who refused service or offered nonviolent resistance to the Vietnam war. That this amnesty be extended to those veterans with less than honorable discharges for offenses which would not be crimes in civilian life, and that the U.S. armed forces adopt a policy of single-type discharge.

6. That the Catholic community do all in its power to the effect that governments and nongovernmental agencies pursue methods of promoting liberty and justice through reconciliation and economic development assistance rather than through arming combatants on any side; that the sale or transfers of arms overseas be halted; that the United States convert to a peace-based economy as more consistent with the needs of its citizens and its responsibility for world peace making and Third and Fourth World development.

7. That services of reconciliation between people and nations be encouraged so that the world community can face in prayer the

fact that large numbers of people have already perished through the use of indiscriminate weaponry. Joined to such reconciliation services should be petitions that these weapons never again be utilized.

8. That Pope Paul's theme for the 1977 World Day of Peace, "If you want peace, defend life," be explored throughout the Catholic community in various forums for study and discussion with the intent of linking the concern for the right to life with efforts to promote an end to the wanton destruction of life by modern warfare.

9. That the Catholic community continue to press all governments for full disclosure of information concerning prisoners of war and those missing in action in all conflicts and that such information not be withheld for political or economic reasons.

10. That the national Catholic Community Service explore forms of ministry to the military alternate to the current system in which chaplains are officers in the armed services; that special attention be given to church-paid salaries; that these recommendations be considered by the bishops at their meeting in Spring 1978.

11. That Catholics be encouraged to support movements for freedom, justice and reconciliation in other nations. There is a Christian imperative to identify with oppressed peoples in such countries as South Africa, Chile, those countries under Communist domination, Korea, the Philippines, Northern Ireland and Lebanon, to name a few.

Such identification and support, however, should take the form of nonviolent material and spiritual assistance with the intention of producing reconciliation among all sides in the conflict.

## Nationhood

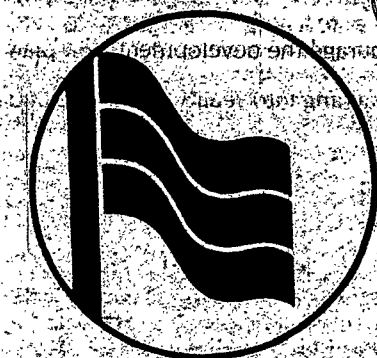
### RECOMMENDATION: POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY

We commend the bishops for their statement on political responsibility and for their past statements on the moral aspects of public issues. We urge the entire Catholic community, with the leadership of the bishops, to assume the prophetic role of the church for the development of Christian witness in public policy. Since public policy is formed not only by legislation but also by courts, administrative action, news media, schools, and ultimately, by public opinion, we recommend:

1. That parishes, dioceses, and other groups within the church such as educational and cultural societies and institutions, religious communities, professional and voluntary associations, continue to initiate programs of education aimed at greater understanding of: a) the way public policy is made; b) the relationship between public policy and the gospel of Jesus Christ and the traditions and experiences of the Catholic people themselves; and c) the duties of citizenship. Such programs would seek to develop awareness, to clarify issues, and to mobilize support for public policies that best express our moral concerns.

2. That committees for political responsibility be designated at parish, diocesan, state and national levels. These committees should establish priorities for public policy, define the major issues at stake in elections, be representative of the poor and powerless, educate church members and the public regarding the moral dimensions of public issues and, where appropriate, work with other churches and civic groups to implement these goals.

These committees should be composed primarily of lay people, including the poor and powerless, and should work in cooperation with parish and diocesan pastoral councils and collaborate with appropriate local, state and national church organizations and agencies.



### RECOMMENDATION: GOALS FOR PUBLIC POLICY

This assembly recognizes and calls to the attention of our Catholic people the leadership of our bishops on the various issues of human life and rights, such as world hunger and world peace, housing, economic justice, racism, and the aged.

We urge the entire Catholic community, working as church and in cooperation with the total community, to promote a critical reordering of national priorities and policies to give primary consideration to human rights and human needs. Therefore, as one body of concerned Americans, speaking on behalf of the participants in the national Catholic bicentennial program, we recommend to the nation the following goals for public policy.

1. A national commitment to a policy of peace and to programs of disarmament that will release resources now committed to preparation for war to meet the basic social needs of peoples.

2. A national commitment to a policy that provides for the protection of human life from the moment of its conception and at every stage of its existence, a national policy which respects human life by providing alternatives to abortion and by working to eliminate its causes.

3. A national commitment to economic and social justice and the elimination of poverty and of racism as an effective means of

reducing crime. This policy should include programs to involve citizens, neighborhoods and organizations in preventing crime and in monitoring the criminal justice system, especially aimed at humanizing the penal system; knowledge of the rights of the accused; adequate legal representation; representative juries, competent judges, speedy trials, due process and judicial integrity; just compensation to victims of crime; abolition of capital punishment; development of alternatives to prisons; rehabilitative services and reintegration of offenders into the community.

4. A national commitment to income security by providing opportunities for employment with sufficient compensation for all who can work and by providing adequate income for those unable to support themselves.

5. Reform of public policies to effect more equitable taxation at all levels of government by shifting the burden of taxation to those most able to pay.

6. A public policy of comprehensive health care, as a fundamental and essential human right for every person regardless of income, age, social status or place of residence.

7. Measures to limit speculation in land and excessive ownership of the land by individual and corporate interests; to promote conservation of natural resources and to protect the environment through stewardship of the land, water and air; to involve local communities in policy decisions about land use.

8. Speedy public action to insure decent housing at reasonable cost to all Americans.

9. A national foreign policy more resolutely and more explicitly supportive of the human rights and dignity of all peoples, a policy that restructures its activities in the areas of trade, investment and assistance in line with principles of justice and with the developmental needs and priorities of Third and Fourth World countries through, among other things:

a) Denial of military and economic aid or preference to any Nation violating internationally recognized standards of human and civil rights;

b) Support for international commodity price agreements;

c) Opening of the United States markets to exports from the Third and Fourth World;

d) A code of behavior for United States multinational corporations.

10. A national commitment to end racism in the United States by guaranteeing equal opportunity in education, housing, and employment for racial and ethnic minorities. As part of this commitment to racial justice, we urge cooperation with federal court decisions to desegregate school systems and we oppose the redlining and disinvestment of neighborhoods that accompany racial change.

11. A commitment to quality education for all students so that they might enjoy meaningful work and lifestyles. This goal would include full recognition of student rights.

12. We promote full equality under the law for men and women in the United States and in every state of the Union. We endorse the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

13. A revision of immigration laws and policies to respond more fairly to present and future needs including:

a) Amnesty for undocumented aliens;

b) Acceptance of refugees, both economic and political;

c) Prompt reunification of families;

d) That any persons entering this nation over 30 years of age be extended the right to take the

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