

By Jim Lackey

Washington (NC) — The second draft of a proposed pastoral letter on war and peace by the U.S. bishops shows there is continued disagreement between the Reagan administration and the committee drafting the letter over some basic issues in U.S. weapons policy.

After the first draft was issued several months ago, two top defense officials strongly criticized several aspects of the pastoral, including its elimination of deterrence and its views on the "flexible response" policy employed by the NATO.

If anything, though, the second draft, rather than moving closer to the administration, contrasts even more sharply with current defense policy. For example, while both drafts question the possibility of an extremely limited nuclear exchange between military forces, the second version goes further in raising questions challenging any presumption that such an exchange indeed could remain limited.

The disagreement, it must be noted, is not just with the current administration. Past U.S. governments, led by both Democrats and Republicans, have endorsed the flexible response option in Europe, which calls for meeting Soviet aggression with a continuum of options, including possible first use of nuclear weapons in a limited response.

The bishops' draft, though, clearly states that such a continuum is morally indefensible and a dangerous option that could lead to an escalating nuclear crisis. Conventional force must be met with conventional force, the

THE BOMB Administration Vs. U.S. Bishops

bishops say, lest the United States be guilty of firing the first shot in a nuclear conflagration.

The administration's criticism of the first draft came from both Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger and from the president's national security adviser, William P. Clark. They said a U.S. decision to renounce first-strike capability and to abandon the flexible response policy in Europe would be dangerous for the Western alliance.

According to Weinberger, abandoning a first-strike capability would give the Soviet Union and its allies reason to believe that there would be an acceptable risk in making a conventional attack on Western Europe. "Indeed," he said, "confidence that the NATO alliance would not respond with nuclear weapons would permit the Soviet Union to concentrate its forces in a way that would make victory in a conventional war achievable."

But the second draft of the bishops' letter reiterates the first view. It says there is only a "remote" chance that the use of nuclear weapons could be kept limited while "the consequences of escalation to mass destruction would be

appalling." Thus, the draft says, it is "an unacceptable moral risk to initiate nuclear war in any form."

Another criticism of Weinberger and Clark of the first draft was its examination of the policy of deterrence. Both officials seized on a passage calling the policy "marginally justifiable" and criticized the drafters of the pastoral for not recognizing what they called the Soviet advantage in nuclear weapons.

The second draft no longer characterizes possession of nuclear weapons for deterrence purposes as marginally justifiable but still questions some aspects of current deterrence policy. It recommends support for the bilateral nuclear freeze — strongly opposed by the Reagan administration — and says that "sufficiency," not "superiority," should be the guide to nuclear weapons policy.

Both Weinberger and Clark also faulted the bishops' draft for not calling attention to Reagan's arms control initiatives in the past year. Clark wrote several sentences recapping Reagan's proposals for both strategic and intermediate range warhead reductions and said such proposals "clearly conform with many of the most basic concerns and hopes of the letter's drafters."

Weinberger also contended that the "aging and vulnerable" U.S. systems need modernization. The new draft of the pastoral letter, though, condemns "the addition of weapons which are likely to invite attack and therefore give credence to the concept that the United States seeks a first strike." It adds that the MX missile might be an example of such a weapon.

John Paul II

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Last May 30, against the dramatic backdrop of the ruins of England's Coventry cathedral, which was leveled by bombs during World War II, the pope warned that "today, the scale and the horror of modern warfare — whether nuclear or not — makes it totally unacceptable as a means of settling differences between nations."

"War should belong to the tragic past, to history," the pontiff added. "It should find no place on humanity's agenda for the future."

Last November, as the United States and the Soviet Union were preparing for arms limitation talks, the pope dispatched to Washington and Moscow a delegation of experts from the Pontifical Academy of Sciences to present academy findings to both governments about the horrors of a nuclear war.

Such a move, coupled with the pope's efforts as mediator in the territorial dispute between Argentina and Chile and his traveling to Great Britain and Argentina in May and June during the time of the Falkland Islands war, indicate the increasingly active role this pope has taken to become an architect of peace.

There are few who believe that the pope is likely to change his opinion on theological issues: moral questions such as birth control and divorce or disciplinary ones such as celibacy and women priests. Even on matters such as clerical dress, the pope has opted strongly for the traditional, most recently in a September letter to Rome's vicar, Cardinal Ugo Poletti, asking him to restate the need for priests in Rome to wear a clerical suit or cassock as a model to the rest of the world.

Some people argue that Pope John Paul's traditional leanings in morality and discipline stem from his Polish background and the need of the Polish church to remain united for its own security during the Nazi occupation of World War II and under the subsequent communist government. According to this theory, unity consists of the hierarchy ruling over an obedient laity.

Others discount the "Polishness theory."

"To say that the pope's positions and his practices come from Poland is simplistic," says one priest, "and it is often a rationalization by someone with a pre-formed agenda. The pope takes the positions he does because he

feels that they are the theologically correct ones and because he feels that, today more than ever, the church must be a countercultural witness."

Students of the pope's speeches point to a difference in tone in those which he gave during his trip to Britain. There were no doctrinal changes, and none were expected, but there was a shift in emphasis. Birth control, for example, was mentioned only once, and that in the context of a "contraceptive mentality." The talks seemed more pastoral, positive, scriptural. There was much attention to local situations and to the glorification of local saints.

What happened in Britain was that the pope farmed out the preliminary drafts of his speeches to English Cardinal George Basil Hume of Westminster and a team selected by the cardinal. The pope redrafted them so that the style was his own, but their basic orientation and the decision to gear them around the seven sacraments belonged to the British hierarchy.

This, along with the fact that the pope entrusted the fundamental decision on whether to go to Britain at all during the Falklands war to a group of British and Latin

American bishops, indicates that the present pontiff may be opening his style to an expanded use of collegiality. It also signaled his belief, outlined later in speeches in Argentina, that Catholics in warring countries should be bridges of reconciliation between their nations based upon their universal citizenship in the church.

One of the questions which remain is whether the pontiff's program for future foreign trips will include "listening sessions" particularly with the laity. The absence of any real input from the people he visits, apart from meeting with the nation's bishops previous to and during the trips, has been a criticism of the style of the pope's frequent journeys.

What is unquestioned is the impact of Pope John Paul as a world leader.

"He's the only world leader, people feel, who has no ulterior motive. Also, he's always for the little man, the person society is constantly stepping on," said a U.S. priest living in Rome.

At the same time, the pope has not avoided controversial actions as a world leader.

The pontiff risked the sharp criticism of Jews, including Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, to meet Yasser Arafat, head of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, at the Vatican in mid-September. Jewish leaders criticized the meeting, saying it gave respectability to a man who uses terrorist

tactics, although at the meeting the pope urged the PLO leader to abandon violence and to recognize Israel's existence as a state.

In June, in the midst of Israel's invasion of Lebanon, the pope offered to go to Lebanon if it would help the cause of peace.

Pope John Paul II seems intent on carrying out what his Oct. 22, 1978, "inaugural address" proclaimed as his mission: "To open to the saving power of Christ the boundaries of states, economic and political systems, the vast fields of culture, of civilization, of development."

Villella

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dancer's discipline requiring two hours of warm-ups, followed by three to five hours of rehearsals, and then another couple of hours of warm-ups before every day's two-hour performance. Even on days off, these warm-ups and rehearsals are required.

"If you stop one day," said Villella, "it takes two or three days to get back." Proof of this are his nine broken toes, a stress fracture of the calf, and a bad back which resulted from his re-entering the physically demanding ballet world too fast after a four-year absence while attending college.

Villella, who has danced with Russia's Bolshoi Ballet and the Royal Danish Ballet, has a BS in marine transportation from the Maritime School on Long Island where he also was welterweight boxing

won his letters in baseball, so the artist, who first appeared with the New York City Ballet in 1957, is no stranger to sports.

He combined his athletic agility with his ballet artistry for his audience in performing difficult maneuvers to which his body instantly responded. "We are trained to make it look easy," he said, and then proceeded to work with Aquinas athletes in transforming their athletic warm-ups into artistic dance moves.

It isn't every day that people have the opportunity to be choreographed by a master in ballet, and although the AQ volunteers were a bit nervous at first, before the session ended, Villella had created a corps de ballet. And his proteges agreed with him that there is that link between artist and

"Athletes need the same discipline to perform as artists," said Mary Hanss, a senior who plays soccer. "You need the balance and coordination to perform on the field or the stage," she further explained.

Fellow classmate, Tim Lennon, a junior on the hockey team, agreed. "Artists have to be in as top physical shape as the athletes," he said.

But whether a person is athletically or artistically active, Villella stressed that being in top physical form results in "satisfaction with yourself and reaching a top level of excellence."

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Focus

Focus on the Eucharist, an evening of prayer centered on the Eucharist, will start with evening prayer at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 4, at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse Chapel, 4095 East Ave. Father Ronald Antinarelli will lead the rites which include Mass, directed meditation and benediction. The public is invited to attend.

VOCATIONS After Forty

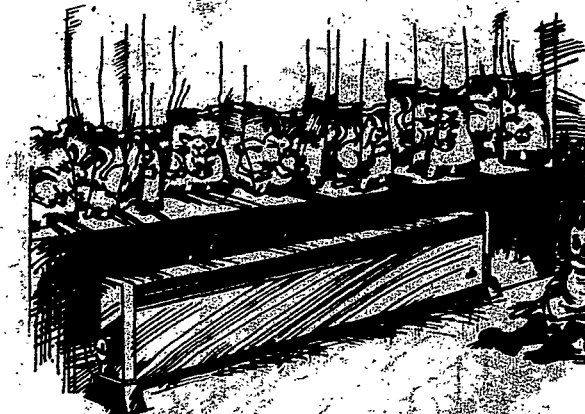
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