

worldview

A JOURNAL OF RELIGION AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

A WORK OF THE INTELLIGENCE

When *Worldview* first appeared in January, 1958, it expressed the hope that it could make a special contribution to the discussion of religion and international affairs. Since that time the journal has attempted, month by month, to engage in a continuing examination of the relevance of religious principles to contemporary events. Now, with the current issue, this journal has a new editor, Mr. James Finn, who was until recently an associate editor of *The Commonweal*. Its concerns, however, will remain substantially the same as they were under the editorship of Mr. William Clancy, who has resigned his post as Education Director of The Church Peace Union to undertake special studies abroad.

These concerns of *Worldwide* specifically—and of The Church Peace Union in its several programs generally—were summed up by Mr. Clancy last June in some informal remarks before the Union's Board of Trustees. "If the work of The Church Peace Union can be described in any brief term," Mr. Clancy said, "I would describe it as a work of the intelligence. And this means it is a frustrating work, because it provides no easy answers, no speedy solutions, to any of the crises of our age. This is true of the seminars on religion and international affairs and the Washington consultations which the Union sponsors, and it certainly is true of the Union's publications, especially *Worldview*. If I think of one thing that is remarkable in our efforts in the five years that I have been with this organization it is that our programs have been remarkably integrated, in their approach, in their vision, and in the final ends which they seek, which are the ends of the intellect. Ours is an attempt to understand rather than an attempt to propagandize.

"The search for easy solutions and the temptation to propagandize are constant dangers for those of us who go into the public arena with a word to speak that we think is important. And the temptations to easy answers, to propaganda, to public relations are especially strong in a time of history like the present, when we hear the barbarians beat-

ing on the gates of the city. But it is precisely at this time more than at a more comfortable time that these temptations must be resisted. If we yield to them we will have betrayed the unique function that is ours—the high function of the work of the mind.

"At a time in history such as ours, for example, the temptation toward the slogans of the right—'Get rid of the Communists'—or of the left—'Get rid of the bomb'—are especially strong. Then too, men who have a religious commitment often think that religion somehow provides an easy answer, has a word to say that will solve all of the world's difficulties. The special function of this organization, I think, is to resist such simplisms. Even while the barbarians are beating on the gates of the city, we must cultivate patience. We must continue to make the frustrating but ultimately important attempt to understand. As I have said, this attempt is often difficult to explain to a public impatient for solutions, but it is indispensable for our civilization, and only the fool or the philistine can fail to see its value.

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"In *Worldview* and in our pamphlets, therefore, we should never be ambitious for mere quantity; we should be concerned, rather, for the intrinsic quality of the publications themselves, and secondly, for the type of people these publications reach. I hope that in the past, and certainly I hope that in the future, however many people *Worldview* reaches, every issue of the journal has made and will make some contribution to a continuing, long-range dialogue on religion and international affairs. This is the goal The Church Peace Union must pursue. And this goal is not topical; it is not a week-by-week or a month-by-month review of the news; it is not an attempt to lobby, nor to propagate a particular point of view; it is much more serious than any of these things. There are many people who can lobby and propagandize, but there are few organizations in America today to do the unique thing that The Church Peace Union does."

Under its new editor, *Worldview* will proceed with the attempt Mr. Clancy described. We are living through a time of crisis, and in this fearful autumn of 1961 the demands for "action" are increasingly clamorous. Action, of course, is needed, but it must be rooted in the principles which underlie whatever is good in our civilization, and it must be undertaken within the long-range context of historical consequences. The examination of these things rather than any political program is this journal's special work.

THE NEW ENCYCLICAL

With *Mater et Magistra* the present Pope has addressed himself to some of the most urgent and complex problems of the modern world. One measure of his success, of the relevance of the encyclical to our times, is the almost immediate widespread and enthusiastic response it received. Whatever else Pope John XXIII may accomplish during his reign, it is already clear that for many people — for Catholics, Protestants, Jews and for those without religious commitment; for laborers, farm workers, unions and management—this statement of social and economic principles will stand as a high achievement. *Mater et Magistra* has, thus, already been distinguished by the warm support it has received from prominent leaders of different faiths, in different countries, from different classes.

Praise for the encyclical was not unreserved however. Even among those who most welcomed the statement, there were some reservations on particular points. One Catholic journal regretted that the race question was not treated more explicitly, and more than one Protestant spokesman regretted the reiterated teaching on birth control. Criticism of *Mater et Magistra* in its entirety, however, was left to those who occupy extreme political opinions. *Il Paese*, a pro-Communist journal of Rome, described the encyclical as "long and verbose," "as poor in doctrine as it is in political effectiveness." This sentiment found its counterpart in a right wing journal in this country, *National Review*, which termed it a "large sprawling document," "a venture in triviality." The encyclical is, thus, further distinguished by the kinds of critic who would wholly reject it.

Even a cursory reading of the encyclical reveals reasons for both the acceptance and the rejection. For the Pope asserted the dignity and freedom of

man under God, and in showing how that dignity could be maintained and the range of freedom extended through a proper ordering of the social and economic spheres he said yes to much of the modern world. He did say that our times are "penetrated and shot through with radical errors," that they are "torn and upset by deep disorders." He also stressed the poverty and injustice that are visited upon many people and the vast inequalities of wealth that exist between different countries. But with a deep Christian optimism he saw in the present structure of society means to correct these abuses, means that are morally acceptable and politically feasible.

In speaking of the relation between private enterprise and the state, of the merits of socialization, of the mutual obligation of worker and employer, of prosperous and poor nations—in speaking of all of these things the Pope commended systems which have been associated with the Welfare State, with principles which in this country have been termed liberal. Government intervention, for example, should safeguard the right of the person, but in the modern world there is need and justification for increased state intervention. Again, the worker should not only get a fair return for his work but should share in the ownership and direction of the production enterprise. Further, social insurance and social security were recommended as instruments for redistributing a community's income according to standards of justice and equity.

Appropriately, the longest section of the encyclical was devoted to the "most difficult problem of the modern world," the relation between wealthy nations and those that are impoverished. "The solidarity which binds all men and makes them members, in a sense, of the same family requires that nations enjoying an abundance of material goods should not remain indifferent to those nations whose citizens suffer from internal problems that result in poverty, hunger and an inability to enjoy even the more elementary human rights. This obligation is all the more urgent since, given the growing interdependence among nations, it is impossible to preserve a lasting and beneficial peace while glaring socio-economic inequalities persist among them."

In order to stress this point the Pope repeated words he had addressed to directors of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization. "We are all equally responsible for the undernourished peoples," he said; "it is necessary to awaken men's consciences to a sense of the responsibility which

weighs upon everyone, especially upon those who are more richly blessed with this world's goods."

While advocating such measures John XXIII indicated a sharp awareness of the strongest temptation to which the more powerful countries were exposed — a new form of colonialism. Not only should the stronger countries respect the individuality of the developing nations, they must take care that they do not deliberately "turn the political situation that prevails there to their own profit or imperialistic aggrandizement." To succumb to this temptation would be to introduce a form of colonialism that "would be only a repetition of that old, outdated type from which many people have recently escaped," and would constitute a threat to world peace.

The reasons for the almost total rejection of the encyclical in some quarters is clear. For it asserts once again the inviolable freedom and dignity of man against those who would make the good of the state the end toward which man is directed and in whose service he is reduced to an object. But it also stands in opposition to those who see the state only as an enemy, those who would like to return to some imagined happy period when free enterprise unhampered by government intervention brought us ever nearer to a desired Utopia. The reasons for its widespread acceptance are equally clear, for it speaks to those who, acknowledging the human solidarity that derives from a single Creator, acknowledging also the obligations of justice and charity, are attempting to convert principles of social justice into realities appropriate to the conditions of our time and our world.

DAG HAMMARSKJOLD

In the true sense of a much abused phrase the death of Dag Hammarskjold was a tragic event. It deprived the United Nations of an effective, experienced leader at a time when the agenda for the UN was an imposing list of imminent crises. Perhaps not the greatest of these crises, but yet a matter of serious concern, was the severe Soviet attack on Mr. Hammarskjold's office of Secretary General. The strength of that attack and the subsequent strong support he received form one measure of the man and his high accomplishment.

When Mr. Hammarskjold was tendered the office of Secretary General there was a general assumption on the part of those who agreed to his selection that he would be an excellent administrator, a neutral and uncontroversial office holder.

It became gradually clear that Mr. Hammarskjold did not totally share this assumption. Within the natural and inescapable limitations imposed upon him, he extended the force and sway of his position as Secretary General. "While it may be said that no man is neutral in the sense that he is without opinion or ideals," he declared on one occasion, "it is just as true that in spite of this a neutral Secretariat is possible."

While he insisted, with compelling reason, that during his appointed term the Secretariat was neutral, he revealed himself to be a man of strong opinions and high ideals, and there can be no dispute that during his term the Secretariat reached heights of controversy. In 1956, for example, he drew sharp criticism from the Soviet Union for the comments he made on the Hungarian uprising. In the same year he surprised the governments of Israel, France and England by his forceful attack on their invasion of Egypt. If these remained high points in Mr. Hammarskjold's tenure, they were not isolated. He continued to shape the office of Secretary General, to set precedents where there were none to follow, to ask for authority where it had not been provided, to make decisions which few could have anticipated. And, in the face of the censure and praise which followed upon these actions, he maintained a rare decorum and firm sense of purpose.

It would be foolish to suggest that Mr. Hammarskjold's years as Secretary General saw an uninterrupted series of personal and organizational triumphs. He not only spoke but sometimes acted as if he believed that "a man's reach should exceed his grasp," and even friendly critics charged that the mission which brought him to the Congo, during which he lost his life, was an example of such an act. Yet even in his failures he performed a unique service for the United Nations.

It has been a time of trial and testing for the UN since the days of its creation. Immediately dismissed as hopeless by some and made a haven of false hopes by others, it has had to work out through many trials and a number of errors its proper role in the world's affairs. Dag Hammarskjold, with the tools of patience, reason and unremitting effort, has helped more clearly to define both the powers and the limitations inherent in an organization which is neither a mere forum for debate nor an international parliament. This is no small task for any man. No matter what the future holds for the UN or the office of Secretary General, both of which he strove mightily to uphold, for this accomplishment he deserves high honor.