

the twentieth year since the first military use of the atomic bomb. And if the U.N. has grown since its beginning, so has our armaments system. Is our thermonuclear deterrence composed of offensive weapons (which the Pope said we should forego) or is it, they ask, based on defensive weapons (which the Pope acknowledged to be presently necessary)?

Such questions, which could be extended and developed, are not lightly to be dismissed.¹ They constitute the rough, seemingly intractable material with which the statesmen, politician and technician must work. But speaking from a long historical experience, the Pope is not unaware of the practical problems that must be overcome along the path he marked out. Nor is he unaware that man is often a "weak, changeable and even wicked being." Nevertheless, in full possession of this knowledge, the Pope spoke of peace as a goal that it is possible for man to attain. "Peace,"

he said, "is not built up only by means of politics, by the balance of forces and of interests. It is constructed with the mind, with ideas, with works of peace."

It is worth noting that he did not here slight political action and the balancing of forces; he simply said that these are not enough. The cruel, simplistic choices which others would impose upon any approach to the political order, he rejected. His approach, at least as it is stated in his message to the U.N., parallels that of John XXIII. If changes cannot be made suddenly, yet they can be made. But in order to work for them with full effectiveness one must be convinced that such changes are possible. In this context resolute hope is a sturdy virtue. The full measure of Pope Paul's speech will be the extent to which he persuaded and supported the best realistic hopes of those who attended to his message.

J. F.

in the magazines

"Can War Be Just in a Nuclear Age?" Thomas Corbishley, S.J., takes a look at the development of traditional Catholic teaching on the just war and finds that any discussion of the subject must include consideration of both "practical possibility" and the "Christian ideal" (*New Blackfriars*, September).

"It seems to me fair to suggest that the just war doctrine arose precisely because Christians felt almost instinctively that war needed to be 'justified,'" Father Corbishley writes: "In other words, Christians believed that the Christian ideal demands that men should live at peace with one another, since only so will Christ's own teaching about brotherly love be fully realized. To this extent the primitive Christian attitude was a reaction both against the Jewish tradition of a militant religion and, of course, against the Roman tradition of wars of conquest. In this, as in other matters, the Constantinian settlement was something of a mixed blessing. *In hoc signo vinces* can hardly be taken as an authentic interpretation of Christ's attitude to warfare. It seems necessary to maintain that the pure theory of the Christian ideal can be maintained in its perfection only by keeping alive the teaching of the complete pacifist."

But "on the other hand," Father Corbishley con-

tinues, "the insistent question poses itself: what is to be done in practice? The Christian living in this only partially Christian world is faced with the sort of dilemma which faced the Jews at the time of the Maccabean revolt. Their law taught them that fighting on the Sabbath was wrong. Yet, this put them at such a disadvantage in face of their unbelieving enemies, that they found it necessary to depart from the requirements of their law in order that they might survive. And indeed, Christ himself whilst teaching the ideal of non-violence, turning the other cheek and so on, nevertheless implicitly, and indeed explicitly, recognized the practical necessity of the use of power. 'The strong man armed,' the soldier and the centurion were not held up to reprobation" by Him.

"In a sense then," the author says, "the doctrine of the just war represents a compromise, a compromise, if you like, with something which is of its nature un-Christian. It should be seen as representing a genuine attempt to *limit* the degree of evil to be found in *any* human situation. Clearly the purpose of the Christian is to bring about in this world a state of good will, justice and peace. The end is clear. The debate is about the means to that end.

The pacifist believes that any form of violence is, of its nature, evil and, therefore, intolerable. In fact, presumably, he would say that it is the greatest of all evils and, therefore, any other evil must be tolerated rather than that. On the other hand, it seems necessary to admit that Christianity as a visible and effective force in the world, would not have survived but for the achievements of Christian men who went to war in the conviction that this was God's will."

Father Corbishley remarks at one point that the pacifist solution to nuclear weapons "is clearly an important, indeed an essential part of our Christian witness. But it does not seem to me that it is a specialized vocation, analogous to that of the religious. Roman Catholic theologians have always asserted that the ideal of virginity/celebracy is superior to the married state. I must frankly confess here that this has always puzzled me. It would be intolerable to suggest that those who are married are, somehow, as Christians, an inferior race. Nor can it mean that Christians, as a body, are required to practice this way of life. If this were so, it would logically follow that Christians could only fulfill themselves, as Christians, by committing suicide. Similarly, if Christians as a body were required to opt out of a society which possessed nuclear weapons, this might well make things worse than better."

William Henry Harris of the Philosophy Department of Southern Illinois University, who examines "Morality, Moralism and Vietnam," in the September 22 issue of *The Christian Century*, views the war in Vietnam as "a crucible in which the capacity of all Americans for moral discrimination is being tested." He himself can cite "at least five reasons for believing that American intervention" in this war "is morally wrong," and he seeks to identify the people who fail to condemn U.S. policy on the same grounds.

In one group Harris finds those who "see that authoritarian moral sanctions are untenable," but who "have never discovered an alternate basis for moral decision." Still other people, he observes, "conceal their lack of a coherent moral perspective by a sophisticated description of behavior and the operations of power, leaving their own values unacknowledged and uncriticized."

But "even those who acknowledge a moral dimension" to problems in Vietnam, Harris contends, "are inhibited by the feeling that a clear judgment is somehow unreasonable or in bad taste. There is a widespread superstition that all truth must be in the middle of the road. It is inevitable that persons of such 'instinctive fairness' vaguely regret 'mistakes' which Americans have made in Vietnam but shrink from any suggestion that it is wholly wrong for us

to be there and that removal of our military presence is a first step to doing anything that is right."

In *World Justice* for June, James V. Schall, an American Jesuit priest who was co-author of the symposium *American Society and Politics* (1964), discusses "what is meant by an ethical, moral decision in international life."

He notes at one point that "in politics, even though most choices are for the most part good, still there are probably few choices which do not involve some degree of derangement which contributes to some presence of evil results." Even so, Father Schall maintains, "the political choice is a moral choice, the political order is not corrupt because of its involvement with actual evil except in the case of the government which chooses it positively and wants to promote it actively." And "the reason that the political order is not corrupt is because the nature of the political complexus, what it is in itself, must take all things that really exist into account, among these will be some degree of evil in human society. In other words, the idealist choice to ignore the presence of evil is politically and morally fatal. On the other hand, the choice to allow the lesser evil, which is what political choice can involve, will not, *ipso facto*, prevent the lesser evil that must be allowed from having its bad effects; these effects too will sooner or later have to be faced."

"For international politics this is especially important, and tragic," Schall recognizes, "simply because the complexity and difficulty caused by evil is so cumbersome to comprehend and control. Indeed, it seems possible to maintain legitimately, by virtue of the expansion of evil caused by its lack, that a real government authority on a world scale is now imperative, that there is a relation between the growth of evil and the lack of government in the world, though it still may be, in virtue of other factors, a legitimate choice to delay its full implementation."

In other periodicals:

"The Politics of Strategy," by Bernard Brodie, *The Reporter* (September 23). In a review-article Mr. Brodie, a staff member of the RAND Corporation, comments briefly upon politics as "the basic stuff of strategy, especially of nuclear and even more clearly 'pre-nuclear' strategy."

"The Scribblers and International Relations," by Charles Frankel, *Foreign Affairs* (October). The role of "the scribbling set" (the Duke of Wellington's epithet for intellectuals) in international affairs and some special aspects of the relationship between American and foreign intellectuals, receive the attention of the newly appointed Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

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