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THE SEARCH FOR PEACE IN A NUCLEAR AGE

(Summary of Remarks)

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- dicto*
- I. The Church must say: No! to atomic war, because "atomic war can no longer be a means of enforcing justice".(1)
  - II. For atomic East and atomic West (2) - tomorrow probably also for other regions and countries - there is no return to a world safe for conventional warfare. War between them means nuclear war - prevention of nuclear war therefore means prevention of war - tout court.
  - III. "The Church must take part with all seriousness in these deliberations".(3) In order to do so, the Church must come to grips with the problems posed by the socio-political structure which mould man's life.(4)
  - IV. Violence and war result from man's nature, and from the temporary or lasting inability of his socio-political structures to deal satisfactorily with vital problems; these: man's nature, and the shortcomings of the structures, he has developed, not armaments are the causes of war.
  - V. Man's nature<sup>5</sup> cannot be changed, but man's behaviour does change. Man does create and does change structures in order to be protected against the unpredictability of his own and his fellowman's nature; and in so doing man does thereby change man's behaviour towards man. A responsible society is a society whose structure - that is the sum of its rules, laws, customs and institutions - helps, enables, urges and forces man to act as his brother's keeper, and thereby changes man's behaviour, even if his nature does not change.
  - VI. International society is destructive to brotherhood - both of individuals and of collectives - because having no rules and institutions capable of binding and protecting, it is not an ordered structure, but a chaos in which there is only force to safeguard against the other collective's unpredictability.

(1) Helmut Gollwitzer, Vol II, p.51

(2) With atomic East and atomic West are meant the nations belonging to the Warsaw pact and to Nato.

(3) Helmut Gollwitzer, Vol II, p. 52.

(4) Ronald H. Preston, Vol III, P. 103, Roger Mehl, Vol. I, p. 45 p. 51, J.M. Lochman Vol. I, p. 231. John C. Bennet, Vol I, p. 370; and passages in the preparatory volumes.

(5) "Nature" in the sense that man remains "fallen man" until "paenitentia"

- VII Nations, insisting on their "libre arbitre" can maintain an armistice, a balance of power - or of terror. But only a process of gradual creation and acceptance of rules and institutions, capable of limiting and, if necessary, of overruling the "libre arbitre", that is, the arbitrariness of nations, can gradually change the irresponsibility of international society into a responsible community of nations.
- VIII. Armaments control and disarmament measures can only be achieved as part and parcel of changes in the structure of international society. To advocate such measures "per se", is advocating "not really love of our neighbour" but abstract idealism(1) because these measures "per se" presuppose the existence of the coming into being of man in which Cain exists no longer, a man who has become predictable, not through socio-political structures, but through his changed nature. This is idealism: "nostalgia for the unrealizable" (2)
- IX. In international affairs, as in social matters, a relevant participation of the Church in the discussion means attempting to transform the existing structures, to bring out their contradictions and their injustices and to look inside these structures for the cracks where a change might take root (3)
- X. Such cracks do exist - change is taking root. But it sometimes looks as if the church is repeating in vital international matters what it did in vital social matters: not waking up to the problem of structure until others - Marx, Keynes for example, had already done the work.
- XI. There is no short cut toward peace in a nuclear age; we must use the time of transition, created by the present balance of terror, to initiate and stimulate processes changing the international structure. In order to participate relevantly in the attempt to avoid nuclear war and to organize peace - the church must follow, study and critically accompany the process of integration - the only method of changing the international structure otherwise than through the imposition of force, that is through domination.
- XII. This implies taking a thoroughgoing practical and theoretical interest in the process of building communities among nations; helping to break the vicious circle: peace and community between nations impossible without binding and protecting law, binding and protecting law impossible without community.
- XIII. Peace between a developing European Community, establishing together with the United States a partnership based on equality before commonly established rules defining their respective rights and obligations, and a Communist bloc, developing from bloc to community nuclear East and nuclear West creating together in some vital fields an interdependence built not on mutual terror, but on mutual rights

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(1) H.D. Wendland, Vol I, p. 147

(2) André Dumas, Volume IV, p.57

(3) Roger Mehl, Vol.1, p.51

and obligations, on common rules and institutions, is a "realistic", not an "idealistic" utopia of man because it is an utopia based on a realistic acceptance of man's ambitious nature, which makes a political structure : rules and institutions, necessary to protect and to bind him.

XIV. The necessity to change the present international structure, destructive to brotherhood and peace has been discussed here only in relation to the prevention of nuclear war.

Just as the social problems inside our nations can not be solved by individual charity, but need - and still need constantly ! - changes in our socio-political structures, so the tension between North and South calls for the gradual development of new international structures. The process of community-building between nations is as relevant to peace as it is to the solution of the North-South problem. "For our civilization is undone if we cannot overcome the anarchy in which nations live" (1).

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(1) Reinhold Niebuhr : "The Nature and Destiny of Man" p.285

