The Peaceful Revolution

By ROBERT F. DRINAN, S.J.

Moratorium Day has become the catalyst and the instrument by which the righteous anger of seven million college students has coalesced into a world wide demonstration of indignation.

You have a right and a duty to be angry at the way your church, your elders, and your government have acted with respect to the war we protest today. Let us touch on the mistakes of these three central forces in your life. But more importantly let us review what you must do, both by reason and by faith, to create a world for your children which thirty years from today in the year 2000 will have faced and resolved the agonizing tragedies which press so heavily on our hearts today.

You have a right to be disappointed at the way the Catholic Church has avoided the crucial moral dilemmas involved in modern atomic and guerilla warfare. At Vatican II the late Cardinal Ritter of St. Louis proposed to the Sub-Commission on world peace that the 2200 Council Fathers condemn not merely every use of atomic weapons but also the mere possesion of these nuclear weapons. Vatican II did condemn the use of nuclear weapons whether they are used offensively or defensively, but Vatican II neither rejected nor ratified the traditional theory of a nuclear age.

If Christ Be Proclaimed

By JOHN GEORGE LYNCH, C.S.P.

At 12:20 p.m., Thursday, August 14, 1969, we arrived at the south parking lot of the Pentagon, alley 12, where we parked our car. I noticed that a policeman was ticketing some of the cars parked there. There were five or six of us in the car. Hank Bury and I took the bag filled with vestments and walked to the concourse. We placed the bag on a bench near a publicity exhibit on the Pentagon and began looking for the place where we were going to celebrate the liturgy. (Actually, we were within fifty feet of the spot, but we did not know that then.) I should add, too, that I noticed some guards noticing me. I was wearing a Roman collar.

Hank then disappeared, and I began talking with a girl who was in our group. I don't remember now what we were talking about, but I kept eyeing a near-by stage where, I surmised, the liturgy was to take place. There were some officers there, and soon some of our group arrived in that area. The girl and I had been talking about ten minutes when I turned around to notice a large crowd (over 100) gathered in a large semi-circle in front of the bench where the bag with the vestments lay. At that point, my stomach hit the floor and bounced up again. This was about 12:40 p.m. Soon a gentleman with a portable megaphone tried to clear the crowd with words like these: “Please disperse — the demonstration is not scheduled to begin until one o'clock — that hippie over there is probably one of them — but they are not worthy of all this attention.”

It was soon after that that things really began to move. Hank Bury returned together with several people cont. on pg. 2. col. 1
from our group. We learned that the stage area was indeed the place we sought, and we learned, too, that we would be arrested. The crowd had not dispersed; on the contrary, it had grown larger. We discussed whether or not we should begin early, and decided not to.

Father Barry Evans arrived, then, and as we talked there were cameras clicking and microphones humming all about us. I am sure that every word we said is recorded somewhere. Shortly before one, we picked up the bag with the vestments and proceeded to the stage area. An altar was standing against a nearby wall. We deposited our vestments there and began to vest. I knew there were people milling all about us, but I was more or less oblivious to them - I was trying to concentrate on what we were going to do. And I was scared. As we vested, I remember, brilliant photo-flod lights burned in our faces - for the TV or films, no doubt. As we moved toward the liturgy area a small table which had been located under the altar was moved in front of us. There was some kind of metal apparatus on it.

In front of the table, Hank began the prayer of Dan Berrigan. There were people hugging close around us. There were microphones and cameras. I could almost feel the electricity in the air. For me the experience was one of fear mixed with deep reverence for what we were doing. When Hank finished the opening prayer, a gentleman stood in front of him to ask whether we knew that this action was illegal. Hank replied that we were praying for peace. The gentleman said that we would be arrested if we did not stop. We did not. During this exchange of words, some of our group had begun singing our first hymn. As a gentleman with a megaphone was urging the crowd to disperse, someone behind me told me to begin the Epistle. This I did, reading from Philippians as we had planned to do. Someone told me to read it louder, but I didn't want to scream louder than the megaphone. I guess I thought that would break the spell of reverence — and I was afraid.

Somewhere in this confusion I can remember speaking with a reporter from the WDVC. He was asking whether I thought this would advance the cause for peace. I replied in the affirmative. It was then that I heard a gentleman say, “Are you ready to come along now?” I replied that I was, and I was escorted away. I remember the bright lights blazing all around us as we were led down a nearby stairway to a waiting vehicle. Hank Bury was just ahead of me, and I didn’t know what had happened to Barry Evans. In the vehicle two people from our group were awaiting us — both Quakers. We waited about ten minutes, I think, before we moved out. Many people were milling about: tourists entering the pentagon, people from our group, reporters, photographers. We gave our names to a couple of reporters. There was singing and flowers which were (we had planned to use the flowers in the liturgy as symbols of life), but what impressed me most was the kindness of the WDVC reporter who brought our bag of vestments to us.

We sang most of the way to Alexandria. A small group of boys - blacks - responded with the black power sign, when we gave them the peace sign, and they cried out, “Soul brothers!” Sitting there in liturgical vestments, I heard Paul’s words ringing in my ears: “And my being in prison has given most of the brothers more confidence in the Lord...” (Phil. 1:14). These boys, I should add, were about 12-14 years of age.

When we arrived at the post office in Alexandria, we disembarked. Someone pointed to a tall man, elegant in a soft, quiet way. He was our magistrate. He looked like a tall mint Julep. We were assembled on the steps of the post office, where we raised our hands in the peace sign and sang, “We shall overcome.” This was a high moment: Over thirty of us — peace tested Quaker men and women distinguished by a certain wisdom in their eyes and a certain dignity in their greying hair, young and bouncy girls and guys sparkling with the enthusiasm of untrammeled youth, somber people, ebullient people, three priests, and a child of three.

I was not afraid any more. A bond was a delicate, calm bond — was knitting us together. We were led into the post office and up the stairs to the federal marshall’s office. We marched single file, Hank and I leading the way. We were treated courteously by the police, all of whom were black (there were no blacks among us). Once in the cell, I threw my arms around Tom Small, who had first planted the bug in my ear almost two weeks before at the Pax Tivoli Conference. I felt sheepishly proud, and I was happy.

We were singing all this time. It took but a matter of minutes to get
the men into one room and the women
into another (the small boy stayed with his mother). Hank, Barry, and I de-vested, and we continued the Mass — we had bread and wine with
us, as well as bibles and reading
matter of all kinds. We began with the
text of Saint Paul's letter to the
Philippines, written itself from pris-
on. Did he still know how to read it! Then Barry read the Gospel.
Hank began the homily — a beauti-

ful thing about life as unrequited
love. Comments followed — funny,
but jotting down my impressions
three days later, I couldn't remember
any. I do recall that the cells were
bathed in reverence. A prayer of the
faithful followed, and this went on
for a long time. I remember one of
the ladies praying for her son who
was choosing to be a C.O. I remember
praying for the Milwaukee 14. I re-
member--that I wanted- to pray for
the Army is wrong.

That was about ten in the morning.
I waited until nine that night and
nobody showed up. I had a fire going
to keep warm. A sergeant approached
me from the training grounds and
said that I could train or stay out
there all night. I told him that I re-
 fused to train. He made me put my
fire out by canceling in my
hands to douse it, and then he left.

I had made my statement and was
determined to stick to it. I stayed out
there for three more hours in freez-
ing temperatures and prayed for the
strength to carry me through. My

feet were prac tically numb and
I was shivering all over, but I couldn't
give in. The sergeant returned and
picked me up in a truck. With
the help of God I had won.

Then this morning I left formation
to notify the base that I was
not going to training. I was then
ordered by my commanding of-
ficer to take a last look at the trial
and asked for the right to consult a law-
yer, which has been denied me ever-
since I was first notified of my
change of companies on Monday. Once
again I couldn't see or call him.

So now I am under arrest for
refusing a lawful order. I am on my
third day of a hunger strike that I
will continue until I am finally al-


Continued singing after the
Mass, although some of us broke off
to speak with each other. I can re-
call speaking with one of the older
"Quakers," powerful men in their calm
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Two of us read out what struck us
most. Joe read a paragraph he had written
about an angry God — a damned
powerful thing; and Michael, a
Cuban, read Matthew 6:24-34: "Don't
worry about what you are to eat or
what you are to wear, is not life a
greater gift than all these?" He pre-

faced his reading by telling us.
with the slightest trace of well channeled

Note that Jim Forest has been transferred. His new address:

Box 147, Fox Lake, Wis. 53933.
"Almost the only time you ever heard the other 200 bishops," Father Sullivan continued, "was when they made their hostile or clapping or agreeing with a report, or laughing at one of McIntyre's or O'Boyle's corny comments. Many of the young and unknown bishops are protégés of the top men and are so happy to be there that all they can do is laugh and clap."

The chain of events which led to Father Charles Sullivan's and Mr. John Swinglish's "viát" began earlier in the week when a Coalition for The People's Agenda opened up a hospitali­ty suite in the Statler Hilton, where the bishops were meeting. The eleven organizations in the Coalition, including the Center for Christian Renewal and the Catholic Peace Fellowship, presented a People's Agenda, which they asked the bishops to consider. The Agenda had twelve categories which included Racism, Peace, Poverty, Financial Accountability, Birth Control, and Optional Celibacy for Catholic Priests.

On Monday night, November 10, at the National Shrine of the Imma­culate Conception the U.S. bishops were attending a Mass in honor of the military. Billed as a "Peace Mass," it featured military men carrying guns and swords around the Shrine as if it were one of their armories.

Outside, members of the Center for Christian Renewal and the Catholic Peace Fellowship were distributing leaflets and displaying large photographs depicting Viet Nam war atrocities. The leaflets protested "the prelates of the church which claims to have been founded by Jesus Christ walking hand in hand with the "Masters of War" through the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception." The Christian Peace Message being distributed further protested the corporatized and bishops acting as "the voice of Christ today," yet choosing to "lie low, safely refraining from any strong statement condemning the hate, killing, and total dehumanization of our war-programmed society."

The peace messengers had been displaying the photographs and distributing the leaflets for about a half an hour when they were told by a Shrine usher that he was authorized by the administrator of the Shrine to halt any demonstrating or leafleting on Shrine property. A police officer then read the D.C. Code stating that they were subject to arrest if they did not stop at the usher's request.

"Our argument was that we, as Catholics, have a right to speak out on moral issues on Catholic Church property," stated John Swinglish; "however, at his request, we did cease distributing literature, and we removed the photographs."

Police thought it necessary to get permission from the authorities before allowing Catholics who had stopped leafleting and had no more literature to attend the Mass inside the Shrine.

A short time later four members of the Center for Christian Renewal: Father George Malone, Administrator of the Center; Mr. James F. Colaianni, Executive Director of the National Liturgical Conference; Miss Diane Lattin, a paralytic in a wheel chair; and Miss Janet Fox, employed by one of the government agencies — were arrested for refusing to leave the sidewalk in front of the Shrine. The four were not distributing leaflets at the time of their arrests, but were told to leave merely because they were in possession of the Christian message which had been distributed.

The shrine usher and police first approached Miss Lattin, the woman in a wheel chair, who was alone, and told her to leave. When she was waiting for her friends. When her friends arrived, they were arrested with her.

Approximately fifteen minutes later, Joseph Coleman and John Swinglish, of the Catholic Peace Fellowship, were arrested while standing in front of the shrine talking to two other members. The Shrine usher and police officer approached them and told them to leave since they were in possession of the peace literature. They refused to leave, stating that they "are Catholics and have a right to be on church property."

The usher stated that he had the right to tell anyone whom he did not want on Shrine property to leave. The officer read the D.C. Code and asked Coleman and Swinglish if they were going to leave. When they refused, they were arrested.

The six were held in jail for seven hours while numerous forms were filled out and mug shots and fingerprints were taken. Bail was set at $500 each. The charge was unlawful entry: Their trial was set for January 16 in the D.C. Court of General Sessions.

During the following week, the Coalition for The People's Agenda asked the bishops to consider two points: (1) that the charges against the "Shrine Six" be dropped, and (2) that a member of the Coalition be allowed to address the bishops Con­ference. Father George Malone noted that the Shrine incident was the 15th arrest of Center members since July 20. "These people were trying in the most polite and restrained manner possible to communicate with their fellow Catholics about one of the most pressing moral issues of the day — peace."

The Catholic Peace Fellowship
3619 12 St., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20017
Latin passion in his voice, that he was from Cuba and that his mother was doing hard labor there. The Gospel made sense that day.

The police came to ask for Wayne and Steve, who had deposited their draft cards in Laird's office. They were questioned separately; no one else among us was questioned at all. Finally, the police came to take ten of us to court. The group was cut by ten, but — really — we all went with them, and they were still with us. Maybe an hour later, they came for ten more. It was after five, I think, when they came for the women and the three of us men still there. We took all the vestments, bibles, and magazines with us. Hank was waiting at the door of the post office, and I gave the things to him.

Things moved quickly at the court. After a short briefing by a lawyer, we were led into the courtroom. We were going to waive a jury trial. Larry, who had attended the jail, was our counsel: a young guy (Jewish, I think) who inspires confidence. The judge himself said he was “competent.”

The judge, whom I have described above, looked as tired as he doubtless was. There had been thirty-six arrests, and that's a lot of paper work. He asked one of the arresting officers to file the charge. He did so, and I waved “hello” to him silently as he passed me by. All through this thing I wanted to speak more with the arresting officers.

We left the courtroom about 6:30, scheduled to appear again on September 11. It was good to walk in the sunlight again. We re-assembled in Laird's office, not far from the court, where we “debriefed” a bit and bade one another farewell. The text of Saint Paul kept ringing in my ears: “I want you to know, my brothers, that the things that have happened to me have really helped the progress of the Gospel. As a result the whole palace guard and all the others here that I am in prison because I am a servant of Christ. And my being in prison has been a part of the heritage that was mine.” A group of Christians concerned about a burning issue of the day had called, and I had decided to answer “yes.”

I decided, too, that celibacy, as a renunciation to a constant readiness to service, was manifest in the Quakers and the Catholic Worker and Peace Fellowship people. Once again, I could not disassociate myself from these people into whose lives I had been led.

Finally, I decided that the Roman Church could itself stand side by side with the Quakers and the Episcopalians in a manifestation for peace. But the hardest part of this decision took me to the theology of the Eucharist. Was it a betrayal of tradition to celebrate the Eucharist when there was a good chance of arrest? (We did not know for sure that we would be stopped until shortly before the Mass began). I was looking for precedents as I mulled this one over. I thought of the Masses in the concentration camps, the Masses in anti-clerical Mexico, the Masses behind the Iron Curtain in repressive days. I thought of the Pope's “No More War” speech to the UN and his repeated appeals for “peace”—and “I thought of Paul's words etched in 1 Corinthians: the Mass as the “proclamation of the death of the Lord until he comes.” That's where I was theologically when I stepped up to join with Hank Bury, Barry Evans, and so many others in that celebration.

As a result, I spent some beautiful hours with thirty-five deeply committed people, commemorating the Lord's death in jail. I could have received a sentence of thirty days. Had the law been upheld, I would have been judged “offender.” Have I actually, by following this course of action, “offended”? If so, I can only ask pardon. If I have encouraged, on the other hand, I can only rejoice.

What does it matter, if Christ be proclaimed?

—5—
just war. But it is clear that theologians think the just war theory obsolete because no modern war can satisfy the requirement of proportionality — i.e., that the war brings about more good than the harm it produces.

The failure of the Church to speak clearly and courageously on war has been duplicated in the conduct of your elders and your parents. Those who created the world in which you have grown up, having seen Eastern Europe and China fall into the Communist sector, conceived the policy of containment based on massive retaliation. You have a right and a solemn duty to question whether the policy of massive retaliation can be morally justified. My own view is that it was condemned as immoral by the Second Vatican Council.

Your government has likewise participated in the silence of your church and the short-sightedness of your elders. Your government has perpetuated an unjust and a bankrupt draft system, has fostered the illusion that military solutions can resolve social problems, and has tried by every device to conceal from you the fact that America has become a militaristic nation insanely and immorally relying on massive and brutal military strength.

The American government has helped to develop the totally indefensible world situation in which $150 billion is spent annually on arms and only $7 billion each year on development of the more than 100 nations which two-thirds of humanity live — plagued by malnutrition, disease, and illiteracy.

If you were not angry at such a tragic picture you would be blind or inhuman. Cherish your anger as a direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit who desires to re-create the Church and the world by transforming your anger into love.

How can we channel the anger which brings us here into a burning flame of light and love?

If I may be personal for a moment let me talk about Vietnam. I left South Vietnam 16 weeks ago today after a ten-day visit there as a member of an eight man study team on religious and political freedom. An overwhelming sense came to me in Vietnam that the pattern of domination in that tragic land cannot be justified as a moral or humane way to contain Communism. Can we continue to allow 200,000 civilians to be killed each year? Can we permit children, once tightly controlled, to continue to be nearly opimi

demic? Can we justify a war which has turned almost every fourth person out of a population of 17 million into a refugee?

On my last day in Saigon, a Vietnamese Catholic bishop related to me some of the deeds of Vietcong savagery and suppression in North Vietnam that he had emigrated.

But the Bishop went on to say that the United States could do infinitely more to stop Communism in Southeast Asia by spending the $50 billion we now spend each year to devastate Vietnam on programs to bring food, medicine, and education to the people of Asia. Who can deny that this bishop is correct?

It is your task to convince the leaders of America of the obvious truth of this bishop’s remark. It is the inescapable task of your generation to bring about a fundamental change in America’s foreign policy. That change must set aside the possibility of using military means to wage a genocidal war in the name of anti-Communism. America must develop an entirely new policy of giving massive aid of all types to nations whose peoples are struggling to enter the modern world.

This is the only possible way of deterring Communism. And, aside from that objective, it is a duty unmistakably compelled by the Gospel.

May I suggest that you as students and as future intellectuals must prayerfully reflect on the terrifying state of the world and with a view to developing ways by which somehow reason and faith can be applied to international differences?

I am not urging you, however, to sede your role as activists or militarists. I do urge you to be believers in rationality in whatever you do. That is your task. I urge you not to underestimate the innate persuasibility of mankind. I suggest to you that in the ultimate analysis you cast your vote in favor of politics over power; inquiry over involvement, and argument over anger.

We would all agree that the protest of this first moratorium day to the continuation of the way attempted in Vietnam of protecting the underdeveloped nations of the third world from domination by outside Communist forces, whether Russian or Chinese, does little to develop a foreign policy worthy of the most affluent nation in the world. Even if Vietnam were resolved before the two days of moratorium in November, the real underlying problems would remain. If you as students and future intellectuals do not accept solutions to these problems America will continue to drift into more wars it cannot win, and more mistakes it can never rectify.

Can rationality and the solutions born of an intense religious faith turn the tides of its present state in which it spends more than $100 billion each year on the military and where peace-time universal conscription is the law for the first time in our history?

I concede that you have many reasons to think that you can no longer rely on the operation of rational political processes to bring about any change in America’s foreign policy. You have reason to think that power is needed since politics have failed. Similarly you have reason to believe that force must be used since love has failed.

I can appreciate the crushing sense of voicelessness and powerlessness which American youth experience today. Will the profound anger and rage which come from that feeling of being the victims of the irrationalities of a previous generation culminate in some type of revolution?

Clearly a revolution against a military state is inevitable. The only question is whether that revolution will be peaceful or violent.

That is the question to which your church and your government have not given satisfactory answers. I plead with you and I pray with you to work for a peaceful revolution. I urge you to remember the words of President Kennedy that “those who make peaceful revolution impossible make violent revolution inevitable.”

Seize this moment of pause, this day of moratorium, to pray as never before. Recognize by your public prayer that Christianity is an utterly inerrant religious religion and that therefore its mission must permeate all of politics and all of life.

Listen to the words and the profound faith of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry: “It is in such moments of unbroken silence that you hear war dying — all hatreds are relinquished and one instant of such calm is enough to change the face of the world.”

Pursue the moments and hours of today’s moratorium and resolve that things can never be the same. Resolve that you will develop what Vatican II demanded of all of us — an entirely new attitude towards war.

As an earnest of our resolve to make war on war let us pray for the souls of the 24 graduates of Boston College known to have died in the Vietnam war. Let their lives, lost in this awful tragedy, deepen our determination to end this war and to work for a humane and Christian policy which will prevent all further wars.

We cannot conclude more fittingly than to recite the names of our brothers, the sons of Alma Mater, who have given their lives in Vietnam. Our infinite compassion for their wives and their families is joined with the Mass and the prayers we offer here. Let their names quicken our conscience and our determination to end this war now. Let us read the names and pray for the souls.
of these graduates of Boston College who died in Vietnam:

- Robert N. Arnone
- Joseph T. Campbell
- John T. Coll
- Louis D. Dobbin
- Steven E. Donelson
- James E. Dooley
- John F. Fitzgerald
- Robert R. Fitzgibbon
- Michael C. Coughlan
- Joseph X. Grant
- Frederick E. Harrington
- Daniel M. Kellett
- Daniel J. Minahan
- Thomas R. Morris
- William J. Mulaney
- Edward J. Murphy
- Richard Loughlin O'Leary
- Frederick J. Rauscher, Jr.
- Robert F. Rumley, Jr.
- William D. Shea
- Richard J. Sullivan, Jr.
- Lucien C. Teasley
- Paul J. Sullivan
- Michael P. Vaughan

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Peacemakers

By JOSEPH R. BLASI

"Men of the Moratorium, I honor and love you, but I shall obey peace rather than you. While I have life and strength, I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of Peace."

After the Apology of Socrates.

It was very innocent, very novel. I called station WPGH on Tuesday evening to say that I would be there and I would march, but peace was more than this. I said it was a deep transformation in man, in us. He got upset. He said something about death and University research programs. He said it must end. I agree with him, but there is more...

It has been the stock in trade of many civilizations to throw their evil somewhere, far away. It may seem pleasant and relieving to project all that we hate away from ourselves in the tradition of our best medicine men and witch hunters. I believe that an experience like the recent Moratorium can be a narrow experience for us because of this. It is both difficult and decisive for some people to participate in a movement. For those who do and for those who do not or would not, it is enough. Much is lacking.

Peace is not wholly a matter of movements, marches, buttons, arm-bands, and moratoria; and it does not follow, if one has marched, that one is for peace. Note that the Man did not say, "Blessed are the arm-band, marches, and beads of the dissenters." He said, "Blessed are the peacemakers." This is our challenge. This must be integrated with protests over Vietnam.

When we survey the ruin we have made of half the world, we cannot feel peace within, and as we look to the path before us, we are chilled by the thought that there may be no peace ahead. Our extremity necessitates that we be radicals concerning peace, revolutionaries for peace, and dissenters to all that is dark and warring. There is nothing to sit back; there is hardly even time to wonder. But especially, this extremity allows no room for feelers, little concessions, and untouchable longings. We cannot settle the strife by making Vietnam the witch, and embarking on a wild hunt. We cannot afford to be so unrealistic and superstitious. Vietnam can end tomorrow, but so long as we tolerate these subtle seeds of war and hate within ourselves, more and more Vietnamese will spring up in places that we least expect.

Peace is a mystery. It can be attained only by trying to live it and going through the growth and pains to be filled with it. A deep transformation in man — and more. Confucius once said, "One who really hates inhumanity will practice humanity in such a way that inhumanity will have no room for him." I challenge anyone who would imagine himself sincere about peace to consider this.

We so easily call cops pigs. We so casually accuse the Establishment of being smug, stunted, piecemeal, sham, maudlin — cynical, so biting, so right, so wonderful. We will walk miles for an end to the Vietnam war (and rightly so!), carry signs, and listen to speeches; yet how many of us can hold back the tears of joy which we aim at friend and foe alike? When do we declare a cease-fire between ourselves and those we so familiarly judge as worthless? Haven't we accused the Establishment of the very thing we so often do? So much more... "Insidious expression in our own equivo-cal lives? How many booby traps, we might ask ourselves, have we set in our own lives for the "VC" who opposes us? Who will stand up and give these scores with credibility?"

"Turn your eyes downward," Dante had Vergil say in his Paradiso: "It will be good for you to tranquilize your way, to see the imprint of your own footsteps." Peace addresses the same words to us now. It asks, "How close will you look at your own footprints? How much are you willing to pay for me? Will you try to be so radical and so revolutionary as to carry this movement to the heart of power the hearts of men?" (It is men, too, who run the Pentagon, the City, the University, the Nation...)

Peace challenges us to get at the Establishment within ourselves, our own hate and violence, our own waste of energy, our own lack of credibility, our own insensitivity and smugness. How many of us are men enough to even desire to desire this?

The time has come for our generation to stop hanging loose and floating along. Just one more thing: peace does not bring peace. If we refuse to widen our perspective of moratoria to include the Establishment within ourselves, we are hypocrites! It was once said that we are great because we are standing on the shoulders of giants. So too, we may be messed up because we are standing on the shoulders of a generation of hypocrites. Let us not get off theirs to stand on the shoulders of our own hypocrisy and narrowness.

Within our reach we have two things: the inauguration of a new hypocrisy and the rebirth of peace. If we are to be true radicals we shall carry our moratoria to all fronts. We will not hunt witches — to kill them — and find the evil remains. We must resist the Establishment within ourselves and our own groups, which insists it is right and true to set on the shoulders of giants. For if we do that we shall make war in the name of peace like the many who have gone before us. Let us remember that a man who believes that he has the Truth and the Beauty and the Light has already lost it. We must not smash, bomb, and burn the "villages" around us, refusing all the while to reform ourselves.

The rebirth of peace can come about only through continual openness and attention to the Invitation of Peace in every situation in our lives: military-industrial, personal, interpersonal, economic, political... The Invitation is to transform deeply, on every level — to cut ourselves away from evil and set on the straight road. We shall obey peace, love, hope, honesty, and beauty. It will be hard, and things to which we have grown accustomed will have to be left behind, for the man who gives himself to something bigger than himself is avant garde: an explorer, a pioneer. Denial will have to come, as strongly as we demand it on the military-industrial level.

This promise of rebirth weighs heavily upon us; yet it is joyful and full of wonder and life. It should make us uncomfortable as we make the Establishment uncomfortable. It should demand changes, for peace must be to us as a two-edged sword: one to defend and the other to cut out the phoniness and hypocrisy. We hope we can encourage one another not to hold on tightly to what is unreal, lest what is real in each of us prove to be our own betrayal and undoing; to put it positively, encourage one another to set our own hearts at peace and thus become true peacemakers.
"In the heat of composition I find that I have inadvertently allowed myself to assume the form of a large centipede. I am accordingly dictating the rest to my secretary...."

If I had not put rather a hard curb on my feelings of outrage, these words that C.S. Lewis put into the mouth of His Abysmal Sublimity Undersecretary Screwtape, Secretary to Our Father Below, would be mine as I think of the matter of Catholic chaplains and conscientious objectors in the armed forces.

Quite an amount of our work as counsellors has to do with Catholics and others who from within the forces are applying for discharge on the grounds of conscientious objection. There are, of course, regulations set down to be followed and obeyed in this matter. It is very difficult, however, for these men to get their discharges. Most of those who do (25% were successful last year) have to apply more than once; so you can understand that they need all the help they can possibly get throughout this nerve-wracking process, harassed and jeered at as they can be through it all. So some of them come to us, or write. The stories they tell of their experiences as they work at the applications is saddening beyond ordinary man's belief. Suddening to us particularly because of the astounding attitudes of the majority of their army priests, the chaplains. Again and again this is the sort of letter which arrives in our mail:

Yes, I am a Catholic. I went to see a priest recently. When I tried to express what I sincerely felt to be right I was repeatedly and angrily cut short. He wasn't interested in my problem.

My impression is that a Catholic seeking discharge must be able to perform miracles in order to be taken seriously. Yesterday, in my scheduled interview with the Catholic chaplain I pointed out the obvious evidences for pacifism in the New Testament and I was accused of private interpretation." I came out of the interview pondering whether my greater challenge is to prove my conscientious objection or my Roman Catholicism.

I am a conscientious objector, a Catholic, and I will not bear arms. The chaplain believes my case and sincerity is merely personal moral code.

I would like to present evidence to support the fact that my application is in conformity with as well as belief in the Catholic teaching. Father... claims that my objection is incompatible with Catholic doctrine.

As a last example I will quote from a letter forwarded to us (with the writer's permission) from the Catholic Peace Fellowship of Northern California:

The chaplain with whom I consulted as required by AR 636-20, which states that I need a letter from a Catholic chaplain attesting to my beliefs and sincerity, has recommended disapproval on the grounds that my beliefs are a 'personal moral code'... the chaplain said he could not recommend approval as a C.O. application because he felt a Catholic could not be a C.O. He made the statement without discussing my beliefs or reading my application.

Because I could not arrange for an interview with any other Catholic Chaplain, I was forced to see this chaplain again. On the second interview he read my application and said that he thought I was a 'sincere and well educated Catholic,' which he put in his letter. He also wrote that my beliefs were a 'personal moral code.' I questioned him as to the difference between a personal moral code and a religious belief, and what distinguishes the two. He admitted that a personal moral code would be based on a religious belief, but since Catholicism does not support conscientious objection such as the so-called Peace Churches, that my claim cannot be a religious belief and therefore it is a 'personal moral code.'

I would like to add that the chaplain with whom I'm having the trouble has never written a letter of approval or recommendation to the best of my knowledge or the Staff Judge Advocate's knowledge. Perhaps my hearing will affect future Catholics who must depend on this chaplain for support.

I made these quotations so that you can really feel something of the shock and bitterness these young C.O.'s often experience when they must make such futile appeals to a priest in the armed forces. ("Thank you, man of God," one of them said when he was thrust from the chaplain's office.) These are appeals made to priests — to men who, one has the right to expect, would at least know their Church's 20th-century teaching about conscientious objection even if they disagree with it personally. And in some instances the mere sight of a C.O. suffices to revolve the sensibilities of such a priest. Perhaps many, whose task it is to have those who have studied them, do not know the relevant sections of the Second Vatican Council's statements to do with peace and conscientious objection. Many passages could be quoted; I will write down just two of them:

In the depths of his conscience, man detects a law which he does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience. Always summoning him to love good and to avoid evil, the voice of conscience when necessary speaks to his heart: Do this, shun that. For man has in his heart a law written by God; to obey it is the very dignity of man; according to it he will be judged (Rom. 2:15-16) [§ 16].

It seems right that laws make humane provisions for those who for reasons of conscience refuse to bear arms. Provided, however, that they agree to serve the human community in some other way [§ 79].

Since this is a changing world, in the religious as well as the political sphere, it would be good for a chaplain to know what the law of his country has said about conscientious objectors. He would know, we hope, how broadly interpreted now is the condition that conscientious objection be based on "religious training and belief." He would know of the famous Supreme Court decision of March 8, 1965, in which it was ruled that a "sincere and meaningful belief which occupies the life of its possessor in a place parallel to that filled by the God of those admittedly qualifying for the exemption comes within the statutory definition... we believe this construction embraces the ever-broadening understanding of the modern religious community."

Members of the CPF are not often asked to do very much (though many do do amazing things for the Fellowship). However, we do ask this of you now. In season and out of season, we ask you to do what others have failed to do: that is, let it be known, get it known, by talking and by the printed word, that a man has a right, under God and according to law, to be a conscientious objector, out of the army, in the army. We work in the CPF for the day when the war in Vietnam will be only a ghastly, sickening memory, and when, as John Kennedy hoped, the heroes of the world will be not soldiers, but the conscientious objectors who showed the way to the truest glory and the brightest honour.