

comes the demonic possession of man by his own technology. The dialogue sets the boundaries of any use of force. *The paradox of our position is that this limitation on retaliation cannot be prescribed, legislated or imposed on the executive, since the possibility of retaliation is the power which restrains aggression.* However, this fact deepens the responsibility of our people to support the executive's restraint in this final moment—choosing life for others at the cost of our own life. To choose life in the moment of final opposition, of termination of dialogue, is to choose the life of others over our own—this is the message of the Cross.

However little we as Christian people may understand and appropriate this message in our day-by-day encounters or our reflections on the dialogue among the nations, this is the true work of love in a world of alienation. *As the work of love, this possibility can never be a human strategy but only a human hope.* To bear the burden of nuclear weapons without this possibility is to assume the destructive power of judgment without hope of redemption—to put ourselves in the position of choosing death for those who have chosen our death. Our Christian hope is that seriousness about history and respect for life may find their final testimony in the moment of retaliation, if it must come, in the choice of life and blessing.

The concept of dialogue is not introduced as trickery to conceal the deep moral crisis of our world. Dialogue is a term which expresses the depth of the humanity at stake in our world relations. Possibilities of disruptive conflict are always present in dialogue, and they are being multiplied as knowledge of nuclear weaponry spreads. In view of these dire possibilities, bans on testing, limitation of weapons, arrangements for inspection and consideration of limitations on use of nuclear weapons have to be discussed with utmost seriousness. Nevertheless, how we think about problems can deepen and strengthen our capacity to cope with them. We need to think in moral and human terms as well as tactically. The term dialogue is interjected into this discussion only to this end. Equality of humanity is the spiritual reality which underlies the dialogue among the nations; the nuclear umbrella provides a negative, external expression of this fundamental humanity and equality. *Our moral reflection on the limits and possibilities of human community have to be set in the full richness of this human framework if we are to exercise our responsibilities.*

correspondence

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Sir: It is good to have the late Pope "place the United Nations squarely in the main stream of the movement toward world community" (*worldview*, June, 1963). This is a more positive endorsement than many Protestant leaders have made. But the Pope might have gone further yet, had he stressed one fact, namely, that without the missionary movement, both Catholic and Protestant, there would have been no United Nations!

There are at least four basic ideas in the U.N. that came out of Christianity, that is, out of Christianity as taught in the missionary schools and colleges of the Orient and Africa. These are (1) *Direction*—no, rather union with a sense of direction, of going somewhere. A direction in history, a destiny, derives from the Old Testament; but there is no such thing in the cyclic cultures of Oriental nations, where life is subject to fate or else is simply illusion (*Buddhist mata*). (2) Secondly, no union without a *Common direction*, lest the units pull against each other. Again, brotherhood, internationalism, is Christian. (The Christ can tell us who our brothers are.) The Oriental religions are exclusive, isolationist, or, as with Buddhism, individualistic. (3) A third basic idea is that of the *rights of man*, which we are happy that the Pope stressed, "hoping for the day to come when man's rights shall be effectively guarded." No rights, however, if there are no "persons," no selves; and again with the ancient cultures of the Orient, there is no clear conception of a person, much less of the "sacredness of personality" or even of a self. (4) Lastly there is the idea of *hope*. No progress without hope of attainment. Love and faith are not absent from the non-Christian religions, but, hope, like destiny, is purely Judeo-Christian, and for the same reason: the historic cycles give no hint of a future different from the past. Says Emil Bruner, "It was by Christianity that men were taught to hope, that is, to look to the future for the meaning of life."

Of course now in 1963 and even in 1945 when the U.N. was organized, the Oriental leaders (like U Thant or Ayub Khan) talked as if these basic ideas were their own, *as indeed they are*, so well has our Christian missionary work been done. Here ready-made, then, are some of those universal ideas the Supreme Pontiff was calling for! RODERICK SCOTT