

Response

Reconciliation in Europe (Nov. 1990)

The last sentences in the November 1990 Preface to the *New Blackfriars* issue on Reconciliation in Europe prompt me to write. You rightly say that political commentators have done most of the writing in this area (i.e. on reconciliation in Europe) and that it is high time a little more was done by theologians. This is exactly what the Catholic Theological Association of Great Britain is proposing to do in its 1991 annual conference, under the title *Christianity in Europe's Future*. This conference will take place at Trinity and All Saints College, Leeds from August 29th—September 1st 1991, and is being organised by the Association in co-operation with Pax Christi and CIIR. It is open to all.

The idea of the conference is to bring into creative tension two seemingly opposing forces. On the one hand, institutional Christianity in Europe is being profoundly affected by changes which are tending towards diversification, plurality and even disintegration. Nationalism, cultural differences and ancient religious and tribal loyalties are pushing the various European expressions of Catholicism apart from each other. On the other hand, economic, political and security considerations are tending in the opposite direction: that is, towards ever greater European integration and centralisation.

What does this struggle between opposing forces portend for Europe? And where does the Catholic Church fit into the picture? What sort of role should it be playing? And how should Europe, and the Church in Europe, be relating to the outside world, in this new era of disturbing and unpredictable tensions?

These are the questions we shall be addressing, with speakers coming from various European regions, including theologians as well as experts in the relevant secular disciplines. Many of the speakers are likely to be well known to readers of *New Blackfriars*: they include the President of the Catholic Theological Association, Fergus Kerr OP, who will sum up much of the discussion by asking how far the Church is, or ought to be, the focus of European integration. We hope that you, Sir, will be prepared to publish the conference papers in due course. Meanwhile, I hope to see as many *New Blackfriars* readers as possible at the conference itself. They can write to the Secretary for details: Rev. T. Cooper, Hon. Secretary, C.T.A.G.B., 1, Meeting Lane, Towcester, Northants NN12 7JX. Tel: 0327 51127.

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Vice-Chair of Pax Christi & Conference Organiser**

We shall be publishing these papers in our November issue. Editor.