FROM: Phyllis Schlafly
68 FAIRMOUNT, ALTON, ILLINOIS 62002 (618)462-5415

RELEASE: NOVEMBER 6, 1981

A COMMUNIST PRAISES AN ARCHBISHOP

Herbert Aptheker, chief theoretician of the Communist Party, doesn't often quote from or praise a speech by a Catholic clergyman. When he does, it is purposeful and newsworthy.

In the Sept. 3 issue of the Communist newspaper, the Daily World, Aptheker writes glowingly about a June speech given by the Catholic Archbishop of Seattle, Raymond Hunthausen, to the Pacific Northwest Synod of the Lutheran Church in America. Aptheker is so enthusiastic because "the Archbishop appeals in his address for disarmament -- unilateral disarmament."

Surely Aptheker took the Archbishop's words out of context! Alas, no. The full text of the remarkable speech, printed both in Christianity and Crisis of August 17 and in the August Catholic Worker, confirms that the Archbishop said this: "As followers of Christ, we need to take up our cross in the nuclear age. I believe that one obvious meaning of the cross is unilateral disarmament."

Apparently it was the launching of one of our Trident submarines that triggered the Archbishop's plea for us to lay down our arms in the face of the Soviet military threat. He called the Trident (which was built in Washington State) "the Auschwitz of Puget Sound."

Surely the Archbishop was merely indulging in spiritual rhetoric designed to exhort Christians to pray for peace! Alas, no. He recommended civil disobedience: he called on American citizens to promote disarmament by refusing to pay their income taxes.

Listen to the Archbishop's words (which Aptheker described as "radical"): "I would like to share a vision of still another action that could be taken, simply this -- a sizeable number of people in the State of Washington, 5,000, 10,000, 1/2 million people refusing to pay 50% of their taxes in nonviolent resistance to nuclear murder and suicide. I think that would be a definite step toward disarmament."

Aptheker correctly points out that the Archbishop's speech was notable for "a complete absence of the usual clap-trap about a Soviet menace." Instead, the Archbishop discovered

(more)

a new menace: "nuclear arms" (which he claims enable the United States to indulge in "exploitation" of other countries and "global terror"), and the "arms corporations" (which, he asserts, have "paralyzed" our government).

Before Archbishop Hunthausen sounds off with any more slurs on the United States, or calls for civil disobedience in order to induce a U.S. surrender to the Soviet Union, he should study the great work of one of the outstanding 20th century Catholic theologians, Charles Cardinal Journet of Switzerland. In his definitive 1964 article entitled "The Conscience of a Christian About Nuclear Arms," he declared: "If the non-Communist bloc unilaterally disarmed, it would give the world to the Soviet Empire and would betray all the holy values, temporal and spiritual, which we ought to defend: this would be the evil of betrayal."

Cardinal Journet eloquently defended the moral right of the West to work for peace by stockpiling nuclear weapons. He defended the right of the West to "produce atomic weapons in the hope never to have to use them, but just to build a deterrent against the threat of the enemy." He pointed out clearly that "we cannot hope not to use them unless we are actually ready to use them."

Cardinal Journet pointed out that if "the Christians succeed in imposing unilateral disarmament upon their bloc, the Soviets, by the threat of war, would hold the world in their hands. ... We face the moral risk of seeing our freedom destroyed if the moralists confine their condemnations only to things in the abstract and if they refuse to face up to actual conditions."

The Journet article is a classic on the immorality of unilateral disarmament. But the Hunthausen speech is wrong for other reasons, too.

It comes with exceedingly poor grace for an Archbishop, who is about as immune from being arrested as anyone in America, to counsel others to violate the law (non-payment of taxes) and thereby risk a prison term. It comes with exceedingly poor vision for a childless man to counsel those with children to forfeit their future and to lay down their weapons in the face of the Soviet nuclear arsenal.

The Bible tells us: "Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong." (Joel 3:10) If what is left of the Free World is to remain free, our government's goal must be, "let the Soviets say, America is strong."

(end)