

position seems remarkably like performing an abortion on the whole human race (or something he acknowledges to be intrinsically as gross a wrong) in order that souls may be saved from atheism into heaven.

I would say that precisely because of their conviction regarding life after death, men ought never to do any such thing as engage in unlimited war against whole peoples. Conviction regarding life after death is the ground of a proper sense of the sacredness of human life. This is the source of a man's acknowledgement that man is *res sacra in temporalibus*, and this holds his hand back from self-slaughter or from mass slaughter.

Believing that no merely natural evil can prevail against any man's link with the eternal established in Christ, that principalities and powers, thrones or bombs or any other creature, cannot separate us from the love of God, the Christian (and not the unbeliever, as Davitt supposes) would "when all hope is gone hope on in faith." He it is who would certainly know that, rather than deliberately do massive evil, "better to allow earthly existence to go on and take a chance on something redemptive coming along that would work a saving change."

On love and justice, Christianity and morals, or "how to do Christian ethics," it is my opinion that Davitt has read me wrongly, or else I expressed myself very poorly. But here there are issues of the greatest importance for our understanding of the Christian moral life. There is a significant difference of emphasis between us: the Christian life, as I understand it, may be summarized by the expression "Christ (or divine charity) transforming natural justice"; and Davitt seems to understand it as "Christ (or divine charity) above and beyond natural justice." Of the two sides of St. Thomas' view, I stress one (grace perfecting nature, natural reason and its justice) while Davitt stresses the other (grace presupposing nature, reason and justice).

This means that I do not contend "that 'natural law' judgments should not be men's guide but judgments formed by the help of divine love," in any such sense that separates them. Nor do I believe that "divine love supersedes natural justice" if this means excluding the latter. Therefore, I must reject Davitt's suggestion that "taken at face value" my position "completely separates love from justice, Christianity from [natural] morals." His does, since in the end Davitt allowed the want of heaven to "supersede" the injustice of unlimited war; but I do not for a moment believe that he can consistently adhere to any such basis of Christian action.

While there is a "subtle and close relation between love and justice" that must be recognized, I do not see that Davitt's hierarchical (above and beyond) synthesis of these dimensions of the Christian understanding of the moral life comes close to exhibiting their true relationship. While stating that love is an "integral part" of justice, Davitt wants this not understood to "subordinate" love to justice. How not? Only because love is "the dynamic without which what is due in justice would not be done." I cannot believe that to reduce divine charity to the role of an engine—the dynamic—behind the performance of natural morality is at all an adequate account of the matter. If the Holy Spirit leads us into all truth, He does so by shedding love as well as faith abroad in our hearts; and this brings love directly into relation to moral wisdom from whatever source, sensitizing, enlarging and rectifying the justices of men.

Therefore, I must deny Davitt's severe distinction between love (which is "appetitive" only) and faith and natural rea-

son (which are "apprehensive" and "specifying" as to the content of the moral life). Surely, reason is needed to indicate a good toward which the will (love) acts. But pre-eminence for the Christian life is the reverse reality of faith-love indicating to human reason a good it never before saw so clearly. In the unity of human nature, reason and will are not to be so separated; nor in the unity of our life in Christ, is rectified appetite to be separated from greater discernment and apprehension of the good to be done. Let Davitt say, if he will, that reason is still the *organ* of apprehension; but that in it which enables the further specification of morality is love to God and man.

Therefore, I must deny Davitt's "added mile" view of the relation between love and justice (which, after all, is not so "subtle and close" a relation). His language is unobtrusively close to one side only of St. Thomas's view of the relation between nature and supernature. "The whole super-value of the *added mile*," he writes, "of the two-mile demand of faith *presupposes* and is directly related to the one-mile demand of justice that precedes it" (italics mine). To which it must be said, in reply, that if the Word of the Lord is a lamp unto our feet and a light upon our pathway, this has something to do with specifying what we should do for the first mile as well, and with the life we lead all along the way. By illuminating what Davitt calls "the exigencies" of personal relationships, Christian faith and love enable us more certainly to know what is just toward men, even if it has also to be said that reason is capable of discerning certain structures of human nature generally and the claim of nature and of nature's God (which has been called the natural law).

PAUL RAMSEY

PRE-EMPTIVE WARFARE

Sir: In my recent article, "Thermonuclear War and the Christian" [*worldview*, December, 1961], my comments on the moral permissibility of pre-emptive warfare have undoubtedly impressed some as being morally indefensible and provocative. I think it was made clear, both in the condensed version printed in *Worldview* and in the original talk at the Georgetown seminar, that I do not equate moral permissibility with advisability, nor do I consider any kind of warfare preferable to negotiation.

It is true that an ethical minimalism has characterized much speculation in moral theology, and it is rather obvious that the Christian conscience should be dominated by motives more noble than meeting minimum requirements. My main concern was to consider defensive warfare in a more flexible modern content.

A pre-emptive strike which I feel to be morally permissible would have to be limited to what Dr. Ramsey calls a "counter-force" strike, and would certainly have to be considered in the larger context of political and military advisability.

Although I do not believe in a foreign policy of calculated ambiguity, I do not feel that we are morally obliged to advertise to a potential enemy that he is entitled to one free—and possibly militarily decisive—strike.

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March 1962 9