

Władysław Piwowski

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WŁADYSŁAW PIWOWARSKI, LUBLIN

PEACE AS THE FUNDAMENTAL VALUE IN THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE CHURCH

The world peace constitutes one of the central fundamental values of the social teaching of the Church, especially since World War II. Addresses of Pius XII, the teachings of the Vatican Council II and the Popes — John XXIII, Paul VI and John Paul II, are marked by the anxiety to keep peace on the world-wide level. The contemporary world is pluralistic and full of conflicts. In this situation, co-existence between countries is possible only on the basis of dialogue, compromise and peace. A turning point in the Church when that fact was taken into consideration was the teaching of John XXIII and the Vatican Council II. Church opened herself to the world and assumed a dialogue on the world's scale. The testimony of this change of the Church in relation to the world was John's XXIII encyclical *Pacem in terris* (1963) called "The Great Chart of Catholic Declaration of Human Rights", and two conciliar documents, Constitution *Gaudium et spes* (1965) and Declaration *Dignitatis humanae* (1965). Social documents and personal testimonies of Paul VI and John Paul II furnish a confirmation of the change; they for instance personally spoke in support of peace at a session of the General Assembly of UNO (Paul VI in 1965, John Paul II in 1979).

Considering a wide range of problems related to peace as the fundamental social value, below only most important ones will be presented which provide a "key" to the social teaching of the Church in the range discussed here. These are the following: traditional and new philosophy of peace, dynamic and "open" notion of peace, realization of values conditioning preservation of peace and care for development and order in the world.

One should add that the term "value" is not unequivocally defined in the literature on the subject. One of more recent definitions runs as follows: "Values are internalized standards of behaviours inherited by persons in the process of secularization, in the cultural context of a definite society"¹. Standards of behaviours are on the one hand orientated on life goals and on the other on the needs of individuals. This is why some emphasize that values are of objective and subjective character which means that they are esteemed and

¹ G. Hepp, *Zerfall der politischen Kultur? Wertvorstellungen im Wandel*, Mönchengladbach 1984, p. 3.

may be desired². If values assume importance and approval on the social level, one speaks of social values. Certain values receive broader or even general social consent, then they are treated as fundamental values. These values now include peace³.

1. Traditional and New Philosophy of Peace

From sociological point of view, "philosophy of peace" agrees with an expression taken from Max Weber and generally recognized in the literature of the subject, namely "legitimization of peace". This notion comprises cognitive, valuation and emotional elements which explain and justify the whole of undertakings of social groups and societies in their attempts to make real those values treated as obvious and not subject to questioning at a longer time. As is clear, what is meant here is not only a scientific knowledge but any knowledge, and what is more, rational attitudes and activity in life. A function of legitimization is to provide sense (meaning) to social groups and societies and to create the morale among their members. Thanks to the latter, they realize their historical situation, the present and the future. Without such legitimization, or even worse with the spread of false legitimization, individuals, social groups and whole societies may be broken and undergo degeneration. It is so as social consciousness affects social practice.

When peace is concerned, creation of proper legitimization is a matter of particular significance. Here on the one hand the whole human family is involved, and on the other, the sense and morale of contemporary world where there is no more and there can not be an alternative to peace. On this background the words spoken by John Paul II in UNO are characteristic:

"This is quite a new view of the matter of peace. It is completely modern, to some extent different from the traditional one, and at the same time deeper and more thorough. It is a view which considers the origin of war and in some measure its very essence, in a more complex way..."⁴

The Pope sets the traditional view of the world peace against the new, deeper and more thorough one.

A traditional view of peace consists in former legitimization of peace within the frameworks of which peace was understood as a state without war or revolution, that is absence of manifest use of violence. In justified cases, *iusta revolutio* or *justum bellum* were

² Cf. V. Zsifkovits, *Der Friede als Wert. Zur Wertproblematik der Friedensforschung*, München-Wien 1973, p. 18.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁴ John Paul's II address to UNO in New York from 2 October, 1979, in: Jan Paweł II, *Nauczanie społeczne*, vol. II, Warszawa 1982, No. 11, p. 316.

permitted of. Moreover, within this legitimization revolution and war were treated as a means leading to peace.

Church was also familiar with older pro-pacific legitimization. An example may be furnished by a long-lasting discussion on *justum bellum*. However, since the time when encyclical *Pacem in terris* was published and the Vatican Council II took place, Church has excluded war as a means of solving international conflicts. In *Gaudium et spes*, the Council makes a statement that "peace is not simply absence of war..."⁵, and John Paul II in UNO repeats after Paul VI: "No more war, no more! No more will any people stand in opposition against others but they will always stand together"⁶.

Such an emphatic attitude of Church seeking new legitimization for the world peace finds comprehensive motivation, included especially in messages of Paul VI and John Paul II addressed on the World Day of Peace⁷. Firstly, one can observe an increasing desire for peace and growing consciousness of peace on all continents. Regardless of divisions concerning one's outlook, religion and politics, people are more aware of the fact that nowadays peace constitutes the essential problem. On the one hand, this is connected with quantitative and qualitative increase of the means of mass extermination, whereas on the other, with loss of faith and trust in the efforts of states and international organizations with the aim of preserving peace in the world. Secondly, the objective situation which was created after World War II is indicative of a new quality in international relations. It consists in absurdity of war as a means of solving conflicts in the world. For the first time in history mankind as a whole has been threatened and what is more there is a possibility that both sides taking part in the war may be destroyed. In this situation war is not possible and peace has become a *sine qua non* condition of the human family existing and developing⁸.

In the face of general will to have peace and a possibility of mass extermination, it is not enough to accept the statement that problem of peace comes down to survival in the situation of conflicts and tensions, eg. through control over armaments or through disarmament. It is necessary to seek more permanent bases of world peace. It is obvious for Christians that it is impossible to build up real peace between nations without establishing such legitimization in people's consciousness which assumes the existence of God, mo-

⁵ Sobór Watykański II, *Konstytucja duszpasterska o Kościele w świecie współczesnym*, in: *Nauczanie społeczne Kościoła*, Warszawa 1984, No. 78, p. 245.

⁶ John Paul's II address to UNO, *ibid.*, No. 10, p. 314.

⁷ The World Day of Peace was initiated by Paul VI in 1967. Since that year, Popes announce special addresses on that great day.

⁸ Cf. J. Kondziela, *Normatywne aspekty wychowania dla pokoju* (Normative Aspects of Peace-Biased Education), *Roczniki Nauk Społecznych*, vol. VII, Lublin 1979, pp. 27—33.

ral order and world-wide order. The question is of fundamental and normative consensus concerning values which would find general approval regardless of the differences dividing peoples, nations and states. R. Bellah defines it as "civil religion" which is necessary for the integration of each society⁹.

However, religion, understood even in most general terms, is not a formal principle of contemporary world which is secularized and pluralistic. Secularization leads among other things to rejecting the transcendent foundation of activities on the international level, whereas pluralism as a consequence of secularization becomes manifest in the numerosity of competing ideologies, outlooks, systems of values and attitudes. In this situation it is difficult to find a common foundation of peace for all mankind. Nevertheless, it is a necessity now to find such a foundation. In search of new legitimization for world peace in secularized and pluralistic world, the Church has concentrated on man, as a whole, and on each man, regardless of his outlook, nationality and political views. This has found its expression in humanistic and personalistic attitude of the Church as regards the question of world peace.

2. Positive, Dynamic, "Open" Peace

In interdisciplinary investigations on the complex process of peace, one observes a lack of adequate definition of peace¹⁰ which would gain general acceptance among representatives of different sciences. Ambiguity of the term "peace" occurs not only in science but also in everyday language. Having this in mind, K. Blokesch says that the expression "peace" is an "empty formula", a notion which is manipulated and provided with different contents¹¹.

Despite the existing problems, politologists tried to define the notion of peace, first *ex negativo* and then also *ex positivo*. Here, a big role was played by J. Galtung who worked out the following definition: "peace is such a state of affairs within a system of broader groups of people, especially nations, where there is no organized use or threat of violence"¹². The definition cited here concerns

⁹ R. N. Bellah, *Beyond belief. Essays on religion in a post-traditional world*, New York 1970, p. 168.

¹⁰ Cf. for instance J. Kondziela, *Badania nad pokojem. Teoria i jej zastosowanie* (Research on Peace. Theory and Its Application), Warszawa 1974, p. 47; H. E. Tödt, *Frieden*, in: *Christlicher Glaube in moderner Gesellschaft*, vol. 13, Freiburg-Basel-Wien, 1976, p. 85; V. Zsifkovits, *ibid.*, p. 14; B. Sutor, *Friedenserziehung als Aufgabe politischer Bildung*, Mönchengladbach 1983, pp. 4—6.

¹¹ K. Blokesch, *Irrlichter in der Friedensdiskussion*, Mönchengladbach 1982, pp. 3—4.

¹² J. Galtung, *Friedensforschung*, in: E. Krippendorf (ed.), *Friedensforschung*, Köln-Berlin 1968, p. 531.