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THE MILITANT CHRISTIAN VIRTUES

An Article by Very Reverend
Ignatius Smith, O.P., Dean
of the Faculty of Philosophy
at the Catholic University
of America.

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THE THOMIST



NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE
1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C.

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The Militant Christian Virtues



I. THE SENTIMENTAL REVOLT AGAINST HARSHNESS

PRINCIPLES and programs of many religious organizations in the United States are concerned with the attitudes of their communicants toward our enemies during the war and in post-bellum peace negotiations. In these Church pronouncements there is a manifest gentleness that approaches spiritual and religious flabbiness. This is a carryover from the prewar pacifistic activities, which are now necessarily quiescent but which did much to create among religionists the hopeful but spiritless quietism that left our nation unprepared to defend itself against the Axis powers. This current idealism about the gentle attitudes which Christians must take toward their savage enemies during and after the war is only a partial and disparate application of Christian principles to practical life. It pushes out of the picture basic and stern Christian virtues, and it leaves citizens and nations without the help of those vigorous and militant qualities demanded for an organized society in peace and war. Christianity itself is done no great service if, in the popular mind, it is identified exclusively with sentimental idealism to the neglect of the stern and rational realities of life. Christianity is done no service anywhere if persons with normal and God-given instincts of anger and indignation are made to feel that there is no place within the fold for them. There is need to open up to all a view of real and more complete Christianity as presented in the Catholic Church by the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas.)

The definite indictment which can be brought against incomplete and sentimental Christianity is that, in order to create horror for criminal hatred and barbaric vengeance in war and at the peace table, it has exiled from life Christian obligations like holy anger and vindictive justice. Furthermore such partial Christianity has so overemphasized the gentle virtues of meekness, forgiveness, and mercy as to have fallen into vicious extremes of flabbiness against which these very gentle qualities are supposed to protect individuals and nations. In order to protect society against relying on brute power, it has attempted to lead Christians into a groveling and supine inertia that is an apostasy from reason. There is no intention of questioning the fine and humanitarian spirit that lies behind the efforts of pacifistic and unaggressive Christian leaders. They are rather the victims of two tendencies characteristic of partial Christianity for four centuries. One tendency is that of whittling down the content of Christian teaching and discipline to the proportions of human convenience, through a disregard of the rights of God and the ultimate needs of human nature. This is an apostasy from divine Intelligence. The other tendency is that of failing to adhere to first principles despite the temporary discomfort they may occasion and the consistency of conduct they may demand. This is an apostasy from human intelligence. Both of these tendencies are evident in the contemporary life of partial Christianity.

The apostasy from divine Intelligence began with the neglect of some of the teachings of Divine Revelation, and was consummated in the open repudiation of these teachings. The Sacraments offer a striking example. First some of them were ignored, like Matrimony, Penance, Confirmation, and Extreme Unction; then they were dropped entirely. Now Baptism is the only remnant of sacramental life on which partial Christianity can present any semblance of loyalty and united action. The divine commandments suffered in a similar manner. Of the Ten Commandments, some were ignored, under the

pressure of economic change and consequent moral dissolution. The first three commandments are practically ignored by about seventy-five millions of partial Christians in the United States today. From neglect of these commandments our partial Christians pass on to the open repudiation of them and to the neglect of the others. A similar process of deterioration has taken place and is taking place in regard to the virtues of Christian living. Power politics found it convenient, with the help of Nietzsche, to scrap all the gentle Christian virtues and to make political capital of their opposite vices of hatred, revenge, and savage cruelty. Totalitarian ideology finds it convenient to repudiate Christianity in its entirety and to adopt controllable and kaleidoscopic paganism. Sentimentally partial Christianity finds it convenient for its pacifistic and selfish purposes to neglect the sterner Christian qualities of vindictive justice, punishment, courage, military prudence, and righteous anger. Already these dynamic qualities have been repudiated by some recognized Christian leaders. There is danger that they will be lost in the general apostasy from divine Intelligence.

The apostasy from human reason is seen in the manifold paradoxes into which truncated and disparate Christianity falls in adopting a pragmatic and sentimental policy of coasting into a chronic procrastination. These paradoxes of procrastination are not far removed from mental, moral, and social anarchy. Several favorite attitudes and policies of partial Christianity reveal this. In religious life the affair of baptism and the matter of selecting a church or creed are evaded by parents, turned over to children themselves, and postponed until the youngster is supposed to be capable of deciding. In the field of education the theory of self-activity is sovereign. Pedagogues hesitate to teach with authority because of fear of indoctrination. The reaching of conclusions is postponed until immature minds have completed their discussions and forums. Then the pedagogue must concur rather than demur. In social life at home, and elsewhere, the religious attitude which has negated the facts

of the last judgment and the punishments of Hell finds reflection in the theory that authority, parental and political, must rule all by love rather than by fear of punishment. Inexperienced, amateur individuals usurp parental authority in the home, religious authority in the church, pedagogical authority in the school, and political authority in the state. This makes the individual sovereign everywhere and launches anarchy. This procrastinates the fulfillment of duty and passes the responsibility from one refuge to another. This creates the concatenation of paradoxes that always results from the abdication of rational principles and the sovereignty of sentiment. One must avoid punishment and govern only through love, but society has only punishments to offer as sanctions for laws. One must avoid the indoctrination and yet teach the accumulated experiences of the past to the young. One must guard group interests and yet turn sovereignty over to individuals. One must preserve liberty and yet surrender the control necessary for the preservation of freedom. One must cultivate through religion the qualities that make for sound social living, and yet one must avoid the control that keeps many virtues from becoming vices. Partial Christianity with its apostasy from reason and its subsequent procrastination, anarchy, and paradox could not escape its present condition. Its historical antecedents have maneuvered it into its sentimental lack of sympathy for righteous anger, vindictive justice, and other stern virtues of Christianity, into its prewar pacifism and into its postwar program of softness. It is interesting to note the nonintellectual use made of Christ's teachings and life in overemphasizing some gentle virtues and in neglecting sterner qualities.

II. PARADOXES OF CHRISTIANITY

Frequent reference, in pacifistic and inferiority Christianity, is made to the meekness and mercy of Christ and to the obligations of Christian men and nations to be gentle and nonresistant. In fact these well-intentioned

persons make gentleness and mercy synonymous with nonresistance. They also make nonresistance and nonpunishment mandatory for every one and take away from all persons, public and private, the duty and the right of demanding justice. There is in this a sad confusion of the respective force of precept and counsel, a misunderstanding of the nature and functions of justice, a failure to see the full picture of Christ's life and a convenient neglect of some of His harsher words. About the meaning of meekness and mercy and about the difference between counsel and precept we shall ask Aquinas to speak later. Attention is directed now to the partial understanding of Christ's life and words presented by partial Christianity.

No time need be lost in proclaiming the mercy, the humility, the meekness, the charity, the patience, and all the other gentle and submissive virtues of the Master. But with equal readiness one must also proclaim that Christ was always just and also stern and rigorous when conditions demanded Him to be so. He violated none in the hierarchy and interlocked scale of virtues in order to be gentle. Negatively and positively He was stern. In a negative way Christ was stern in the punishments He failed to arrest and in the corrections He did not withhold when charity, justice, and truth demanded severity. Christ possessed all the virtues.¹ His most perfect grace perfected all the powers of His soul and all the acts of these faculties. He had the fine emotions of the nature He assumed, under perfect control and perfectly sublimated.² He was subject to sensible pain³ and also experienced sorrow and grief,⁴ that issued from His knowledge of the perils that beset Himself and His neighbors.⁵ But as much as Jesus grieved over the distressful punishments that would befall those whom He loved, His

¹ *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 7, a. 2. For the benefit of those who wish to make an extended study of these virtues in the works of St. Thomas, copious references will be given through this study.

² *Ibid.*, q. 15, a. 4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, a. 6.

³ *Ibid.*, a. 5, ad 3.

⁵ *Loc. cit.*

virtue demanded that justice take its course. He wept over the city of Jerusalem and lamented its coming destruction, but He did not prevent this calamity. He grieved over the teachery of Judas, but His virtues forbade the arresting of the just fate of the traitor. Jesus sorrowed in the garden over His coming crucifixion and death and over the punishment His murderers would bring on themselves, but He did not stop the divine tragedy by permitting the truthfulness of the prophecies to be gainsaid or the justice of God to be thwarted. Jesus found no pleasure in the denial by Peter, but He did not prevent Peter's denial and subsequent embarrassment. Positively, the conduct of Christ bristled with incidents which showed, side by side with His humility and meekness, His aggressive interest in charity, justice, and truth. Parabolic though he may be, Dives is an impressive indication of the devotion of Christ to drastic and punitive action. The cursed and blighted fig tree is also an indication of Christ's ire in the name of justice. That love of neighbor may demand aggressive action against enemies of human welfare is shown in the habitual aggressiveness of Jesus against the Scribes and Pharisees because they blockaded the boulevards between men and God. Actions speak more loudly than words when Christ chases the moneylenders out of the Temple. Gentleness is in the background while vigorous action in the name of justice and charity take the center of the stage. Jesus was capable of and manifested righteous, zealous, and intelligent anger.⁶

The sorrow which is caused by the knowledge of an injury done to oneself or to others is followed naturally and honorably by a desire to right and avenge the wrong. Anger is therefore a combination of sorrow and the desire for vindication. This combination existed in Christ in a perfect degree and under the perfect control of reason and justice. St. Thomas calls this type of anger with its concomitant and laudable desire for just vindication *ira per zelum*⁷ (anger inspired by zeal), and calls atten-

⁶ *Ibid.*, q. 15, a. 9; *III Sent.*, d. XV, q. 2, quaes. 2.

⁷ *Loc. cit.*

tion to the fact that in Christ such anger never impeded understanding.⁸ The divine as well as the human dignity of the Savior would not be demeaned by His voluntary and reasonable anger.⁹ The righteous indignation of Christ when He beheld the profanation of the Temple by cattle dealers and money-changers showed itself in vigorous action. He drove out the men with lashes, He drove out the cattle and birds, He poured out the money and He overturned the tables and stalls. He was angry because justice and religion had been violated and for their restoration as well as for the punishment of the culprits Christ took vigorous action.¹⁰ This is a phase of the character and the conduct of Jesus which partial Christianity is wont to conceal when it campaigns for quietistic pacifism.

The possibility of remaining a devout Christian even while seeking aggressive vindication of justice is founded on the words of Jesus. The Master surrendered and abdicated none of the gentler virtues when He poured vitriolic denunciation on the Scribes and Pharisees. It was essential for the triumph of truth, for the salvation and happiness of the people, for the sake of obedience to the Man God and for the vindication of justice that these false leaders be exposed in all their raw viciousness. And Jesus spoke with a plainness and force that must embarrass the sentimental and delicate partial Christians of this day who have a smug disdain for what they characterize as "name calling," even in the interests of justice and truth. In His denunciation of them Christ was not as concerned about excusing, condoning, and glossing over their crimes as some of His halfway followers in the United States are concerned in softening their words and their characterizations of the ugly rottenness of the ideology and the conduct of Axis paganism. Jesus called them, among other things, "brood of vipers,"¹¹ "an adulterous generation,"¹² "whited sepulchres,"¹³ "hypo-

⁸ *Ibid.*, quaes. 3, sol. 2, ad 3.

⁹ *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 3, a. 2, ad 2.

¹⁰ *In Joann.*, ii, 2.

¹¹ *Matt.*, iii, 7.

¹² *Ibid.*, xii, 39.

¹³ *Ibid.*, xxiii, 27.

crites,"¹⁴ "blind guides."¹⁵ The divine Preacher denounced them while they were present and while they were absent, and actively spread a contempt for the vices they lived and the havoc they wrought. His caustic condemnation of these enemies of human happiness, temporal and eternal, could be imitated with dignity and with service to truth and justice by contemporary semi-Christian preachers before whose pulpits and on whose horizon stands an army of satanic successors of the diabolical Scribes and Pharisees. Christ's vigorous preaching might be censored by some broadcasting companies and their editorial boards today, but He was the paradigm of the preacher who St. Thomas says ought to be a "soldier," a *titurator*,¹⁶ and a trumpet who calls all to a spiritual warfare.¹⁷ It is clear that ultra-pacifistic Christian leaders are disturbed by the belligerent denunciatory and punitive utterances of Christ. This pacifistic passion is not satisfied with trying to submerge the irate utterances of Christ; it attempts to interpret the Christian philosophy of meekness and forgiveness more abasingly than Christ Himself intended. Take as an example of this tendency the distorted meaning read into the passages: "You have heard that it hath been said: An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say not to resist evil: but if anyone strike thee on thy right cheek, turn to him also the other."¹⁸ This has been used often as the charter of universal nonresistance and supine pacifism, very contrary to the true Christian meaning disclosed by the Angelic Doctor.¹⁹ The meaning of this is that one is not allowed to repel injury by taking revenge (*ulciscendo*) or with the purpose of cruelty. But the question is asked by St. Thomas whether nonresistance to evil is a matter of precept or counsel and the following answer is given:

Injury can be private and particular, or public; if public, it should be fought against at the command of the ruler. Augustine remarks further that the courage which defends one's homeland, or the

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, xv, 8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, xxiii, 24.

¹⁶ *In I Cor.*, ix, lect. 1.

¹⁷ *In Is.*, lviii.

¹⁸ *Matt.*, v, 38, 39.

¹⁹ *In Matt.*, v, 9.

oppressed, against the oppressor, or one's friends against robbers, is in full accord with justice. Hence, the precept is for the ruled as well as for the rulers. If the injury should be private, it may be repelled in three ways; it may be impeded . . . or it may be forestalled by discussion. These failing, when necessary, that is, when there is no way of avoiding conflict, injury may be fought against either without arms (in which circumstances clerics might participate) or by attacking the oppressor, but always with the proper moderation. To refrain from the use of arms in resisting evil is of precept for clerics, but of counsel for layfolk. Of course, to fight with the intention of exacting revenge is forbidden by precept to all.²⁰

It would seem from this that under certain circumstances non-resistance would be criminal and that in all but a comparatively few cases it is more or less optional. This is a little bit different from the interpretation usually placed on the words by quietistic Christians. The same distortion of Christ's words and the same confusion of precept with counsel are found in the interpretations of similar passages. These facts make necessary the heeding of certain warnings in building up a nonresistant Christianity that neither does justice to Christ's teachings, nor makes intelligible traditional Catholic teaching, nor fully explains the duties of Christian citizenship in contemporary political society and especially in American democracy at war for peace. These warnings, which will be explained, are: (1) Counsels must not be confused with precepts; (2) virtues must not be abused and isolated one from another; (3) the freedom and rights of individuals must not be confused with the freedom and rights of the state; (4) utopian idealism must give place to sound realism in moral and political life.

III. INTELLIGENT WARNINGS

Counsels and precepts differ in the extent of their respective obligating power. To observe the counsels is more difficult than to observe the precepts or commandments especially in regard to external actions,²¹ because

²⁰ *Loc. cit.*

²¹ *Quaes. Quod.*, IV, a. 24, ad 9.

counsels are instruments for attaining the higher or contemplative life.²² The counsels reenforce the commandments and they protect the keeping of the precepts.²³ But the counsels do not obligate as many Christians as do the precepts which fall upon all.²⁴ The keeping of the commandments is essential for salvation while the observance of the counsels is essential only for a higher spiritual life.²⁵ In regard to counsels it is commanded that the soul be kept in readiness for them,²⁶ though under certain unusual conditions a counsel of Christ may become a precept for some. Thus resistance with arms to an invading enemy in the home *may* be refrained from by the laity; they may practice the counsel of nonresistance if the safety of no one else is involved. But a cleric must practice nonuse of arms.²⁷ A counsel, as opposed to a precept, is an amicable persuasion.²⁸ A counsel never obligates unless by some circumstance it passes over into the realm of precept.²⁹ A perpetually celibate life is counselled by Christ; it is not a matter of obligation unless one in the priesthood or with a solemn perpetual vow of chastity should adopt the counsel and make it preceptive.³⁰ A parallel situation is found in the case of meekness, mercy, gentleness, and other submissive Christian virtues. There are heroic degrees of these virtues which must be practiced by some exceptional souls called to and obligated to achieve high perfection and union with God by charity. Others, the majority of men, have no such call to an heroically perfect life and no corresponding obligation to live the counsels. There are grades of perfection³¹ and the

²² *Ibid.*, ad 5.

²³ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 189, a. 1, ad 5.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 108, a. 4, ad 4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 43, a. 7, ad 4.

²⁶ *De Virt.*, q. 3, a. 2; *III Cont. Gent.*, 130; *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 108, a. 3.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 40, a. 3.

²⁸ *Q. D. de Ver.*, q. 17, a. 3, ad 2.

²⁹ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 124, a. 3, ad 1; *IV Sent.*, d. XIX, q. 2, a. 2, quaes. 1.

³⁰ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 108, a. 4, ad 1.

³¹ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 184, a. 3; q. 186, a. 2.

perfection of life consists essentially in precepts and accidentally in counsels.³² The inequality of the perfection of charity is referred to by Aquinas when he says that the perfection of charity on the part of the one loving is threefold: in act, in seeking, in habit. The first is found in the blessed, the second in perfect wayfarers, the third—to which all are bound—is found in those having charity.³³ An unfair procedure not sanctioned by complete Christianity is the bigotry and intolerance of men who crusade for counsels by trying to change them into commandments and to make them obligatory for all. They try to dragoon into a life of heroic perfection persons whom neither nature nor grace has fitted for such a life. Heroic submission, meekness, and gentleness are not binding on all men. Some have neither the ability nor the right to practice them; justice and charity often make aggressiveness and vindication mandatory. Though a preacher should aim at the betterment of all, he must remember that while all are obliged to tend to the perfection of charity, not all are obliged to have it in that heroic degree.³⁴

The abuse of virtues and their dislocation are chargeable to many who, innocently or otherwise, insist on drafting Christ into the service of pacifism and in Christian condonation and encouragement of injustice. It is possible to be too generous and turn charity into a vice. It is possible to be too meek and turn abasement into a crime against justice. It is possible to isolate love of enemies from prudence and thus turn charity into a criminal mockery of truth. During the tensions created by war it is imperative that the real nature of virtue be respected and that the consolidation of virtues be maintained. This means that the mediety and rationality of real virtue must be protected against extremes and emotion and that unity must be preserved against dislocation.

Virtue must stand midway between extremes and it must be rational. In moral virtues, like the meekness

³² *De Regimine Principum*, 6.

³³ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 24, a. 8; q. 184, a. 2.

³⁴ *III Sent.*, d. XXIX, a. 8, quæ. 2.

and gentleness to which special reference is made here, it is essential that a golden mean be held.³⁵ This is particularly true where the departure from the golden mean is so subtle and gradual that the virtuous subject is unaware of the transition. Many of our hypersympathetic peacemakers would resent the insinuation that sentiment and emotion have made their virtues fictitious and false.³⁶ They fail to realize that control is necessary to keep virtue within moderation and that fear of ruining a virtue through the development of an erosive vice is necessary.³⁷ A defective virtue is likely to become, very rapidly, a vice,³⁸ and constant vigilance must be exercised to keep to the middle course or the formal element of a moral virtue.³⁹ Not the least of the difficulties of virtuous living is that of preserving from deteriorating, through excess, virtues already acquired.⁴⁰ One test that can be used to test the genuineness of a virtue is to see whether it really makes the possessor of the quality good,⁴¹ and whether at the same time it is not defeating other virtues,⁴² but is strengthening genuinely good inclinations of human nature.⁴³

The controls which keep virtue from going to extremes are found in the rational and not in the emotional nature of man. Emotion is too unsteady a guide to be entrusted with the direction of virtue and the appetency from which it springs is too unpredictable.⁴⁴ Whether a virtuous act be so called because it springs from a virtue or prepares the way for a virtuous habit,⁴⁵ it is inextricably involved with cold, calculating intelligence in its genesis and in

³⁵ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 66, a. 3, ad 3; *III Sent.*, d. XXIX, q. 1, a. 1.

³⁶ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 23, a. 1; a. 7, ad 2.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, q. 123, a. 4, ad 2.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, q. 107, a. 2.

³⁹ *IV Sent.*, d. XV, q. 1, a. 1, quæs. 1.

⁴⁰ *De Virt.*, q. 1, a. 13, ad 1; *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 63, a. 4.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 47, a. 4; *De Virt.*, q. 1, a. 2.

⁴² *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 23, a. 7.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, q. 108, a. 2.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 59, a. 1.

⁴⁵ *II Sent.*, d. XLIV, q. 2, a. 16.

its endurance. Intellect and will must be sovereign if virtue is to remain virtuous. Right choice is paramount,⁴⁶ and right reason is basic in virtue.⁴⁷ The virtue remains a virtue only so long as it retains its relation with reason.⁴⁸ In fact the distinction and classification of the virtues rests on the correlation between the faculties of the soul and reason,⁴⁹ and reason becomes the taproot of all the virtues.⁵⁰ Apostasy from reason is incompatible with virtuous living,⁵¹ and volition and election radicated in intelligence are supreme.⁵² The very definitions of a moral virtue indicate these facts: "A moral virtue is only a certain participation of right reason in the appetite,"⁵³ and "A moral virtue is a certain disposition or form sealed and impressed on the appetite by reason."⁵⁴ Control by cool reason is particularly necessary during the stress of war if virtues are to remain such. "The seal of reason on the lower powers formally perfects the moral virtues,"⁵⁵ and "The habits of the moral virtues are caused in the appetitive powers in that they are moved by reason."⁵⁶

While intelligence must exercise power in the control of virtue,⁵⁷ special phases of rational life have priority in preserving the golden mean. "The end of any moral virtue is the attainment in its proper material of a mean determined according to the right reason of prudence."⁵⁸ Prudence is the well-spring of intelligence in which all the moral virtues share.⁵⁹ Discretion likewise is necessary to prevent sensile emotion from taking charge of and

⁴⁶ *IV Sent.*, d. XIV, q. 1, a. 1, quaes. 2.

⁴⁷ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 149, a. 2.

⁴⁸ *II Sent.*, d. XXVII, a. 2, ad 1.

⁴⁹ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 60, a. 5.

⁵⁰ *De Virt.*, q. 1, a. 4, ad 3.

⁵¹ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 47, a. 1.

⁵² *II Sent.*, d. XXIV, q. 3, a. 2, ad 3.

⁵³ *De Virt.*, q. 1, a. 12, ad 16.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, a. 9.

⁵⁵ *Q. D. de Ver.*, q. 24, a. 4, ad 8.

⁵⁶ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 51, a. 2.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 47, a. 6.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 66, a. 3, ad 3.

⁵⁹ *III Sent.*, d. XXVI, q. 2, a. 2, ad 3.

degrading a virtue. Discretion belongs to prudence; it is the cause, guardian, and moderator of the virtues.⁶⁰

The degradation of virtues, especially of the gentle virtues, is affected not only by apostasy from reason but also by dislocation and amputation. The virtues, moral and intellectual, are interlocked. The psychological unity of human personality, with a variety of faculties resident in the one soul indicates this fact. The consolidation of the virtues is discovered in more objective analysis. The object of one virtue frequently becomes the terminal of another,⁶¹ and frequently one virtue will emanate from another either as a cause or a predisposition.⁶² This means, concretely, that real mercy is displaced by the vice of softness unless justice and prudence are in control. It means too that patriotism is affected by religion and that love of country may disintegrate into jingoistic hatred unless charity is operative. It means also that prudence is likely to be debilitated into cunning under pressure of lust and greed. The moral virtues are so connected that they must stand or fall together.⁶³ This interlocking of the virtues is disclosed further by the fact that often one virtue will regulate many grades of emotion,⁶⁴ and that many forms of vice may ensue upon the collapse of one virtue.⁶⁵ There is an arresting fact, however, from the viewpoint of the solidarity and subsidiarism of the virtues. Despite inequalities of virtues in the same person,⁶⁶ they march to progressive perfection or dissolution together. All the virtues in the same person are equal by proportion because they have equal increase.⁶⁷ Neither the virtues of war nor the moral qualities of peace are safe when isolated from supporting virtues and they are slaves of vicious sentiment when they desert reason.

⁶⁰ *III Sent.*, d. XXIII, q. 2, a. 5.

⁶¹ *In I Tim.*, lect. 2.

⁶² *II Sent.*, d. XLIV, q. 2, a. 1, ad 6.

⁶³ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 65, a. 1; *De Virt.*, q. 5, a. 2, 3.

⁶⁴ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 60, a. 4.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 92, a. 1.

⁶⁶ *De Virt.*, q. 5, a. 3.

⁶⁷ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 66, a. 1, ad 1.

Public leaders looking toward the peace chamber must keep in mind the differences between the rights and duties of an individual as such and the rights and duties of a nation responsible for the protection of its people and responsible for orderly relations with other single units in the family of nations. It is conceivable that while an individual may have the right, and in some cases the duty, to practice heroically the virtues of the counsels where he alone is concerned with the consequences, a nation would have no such right either in regard to its own people or other nations. Surrender of the right of punishing criminals and abdication of the duty of punishing gangster nations might violate both distributive justice and commutative justice. Such right the state does not possess, and yet overkind persons will bring American Beauty roses to criminals in the death cell and are deeply worried that the war will produce, in our people, harsh feelings toward the Nazis, Fascists, and Japanese. Such mollifiers are dangerous diplomats to have at a peace table where fear of punishment may be the only sanction available for creating submission to international law. One set of virtues may come to the foreground when a man is acting as an independent individual, another set must be stressed when he is meeting the responsibilities of parental authority, and still another set of virtues assumes importance when he is acting in the capacity of a citizen.⁶⁸ In a parallel way public authority may have to vary the virtues in relation to the events with which it must deal. Turning the other cheek after an assault may be optional, as a counsel, to the average lay person. It would be forbidden to public authority where such submission would damage the commonweal of its own people and of society at large.⁶⁹ In this light one can understand the statement of St. Thomas: "A prince should rule his subjects with mercy, his captives with rigid justice."⁷⁰ Political authority is obligated to a new set of virtues on the assump-

⁶⁸ *De Virt.*, q. 1, a. 10; *Q. D. de Malo.*, q. 4, a. 1.

⁶⁹ *In Matt.*, vi.

⁷⁰ *In Ps.*, ii, xxxii.

tion of office,⁷¹ and among these is the obligation of coercing to sound citizenship those who are inclined to crime.⁷²

A fourth danger to complete international thinking against which warning must be issued is that of over-optimistic idealism. Kindly and gentle persons are likely to believe that all others are like themselves. Their virtues are so Pollyannish and utopian that they become a vicious menace to public weal. They have urgent need of a realistic point of view which commands a vision of real facts, means, ends, and circumstances. Individuals and nations have tendencies to crime as well as to virtue. Not all individuals and not all nations can be won by love; many can be controlled by fear of reprisal. Christian nations must be astute in dealing with governments that are conducted on standards of pagan trickery and force. It is realism to recognize that Christian virtues are under a handicap when in competition with qualities adopted by pagans as virtuous strength and repudiated by the followers of Christ as vicious weakness. One of the reasons for the tardiness of the coming supremacy of the United Nations is that their diplomats have been dealing with low pagan power politics from the level of Christian idealistic presumptions, and have failed to see many traps into which they have been lured. These Christian diplomats have failed to realize, until too late, that trust can be carried too far, that justified suspicion can be a virtue,⁷³ and that doubt is not always rash and vicious. Appeasement, mercy, generosity, meekness are poor weapons for Christian nations to use when dealing with demoniac power governments that have only contempt for them. To the foreground, now and at the peace table, must come a galaxy of sturdy and tough Christian virtues. An understanding of some of them, in the thought of Aquinas, is timely, because these forms of honorable and virtuous hardness are repudiated with disdain by

⁷¹ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 47, a. 11, ad 1.

⁷² *In Rom.*, v, lect. 6.

⁷³ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 60, a. 3.

the satin-hearted borderline cowards of this day. Vindictive justice, just anger, righteous indignation, and virtuous disdain ought to be restored to an honorable place in American attitudes. In order to forestall an obvious objection, it should be noted here that, not superior sanctity, but rather the integrity of right reason, is required for the just judgment which is essential to righteous punishment.⁷⁴

IV. THE MILITANT VIRTUES

Vindictive justice brackets together a corps of firm and tough-souled qualities and unites them with charity. Justice, in a way, spreads itself over all the moral virtues,⁷⁵ but in its stricter sense it looks to the payment of debts,⁷⁶ and vindication is one of its subjective parts.⁷⁷ Vindictive justice has respect to an offense that has been committed, which has upset rational order and for which reason and order demand reparation.⁷⁸ In no other disorder is apostasy from reason so far-reaching and vicious as in that caused by violations of justice.⁷⁹ The cunning of smart men and the power of the mighty are weapons with which the structure of orderly justice is wrecked.⁸⁰ In its eternal perspective this sabotaged justice is adjusted by God in the endless punishments of the next world.⁸¹ The truth and the goodness of the Deity demand the restoration of order through the vindications of justice.⁸² Here on earth wise, just, and beneficent government is disclosed by the concern of earthly rulers for order established and protected by the vindication of justice.⁸³

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, q. 23, a. 5.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, q. 58, a. 6.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, a. 11.

⁷⁷ *III Sent.*, d. XXXIII, q. 3, a. 4, quaes. 1.

⁷⁸ *IV Sent.*, d. XV, q. 1, a. 1, quaes. 2.

⁷⁹ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 55, a. 8.

⁸⁰ *In Job*, vii, lect. 1.

⁸¹ *IV Sent.*, d. XLVL, q. 1, a. 1, quaes. 2.

⁸² *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 21, a. 2.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, a. 1.

The ordinary implement of vindictive justice is punishment, either medicinal or obliterating.⁸⁴ Punishments should have in mind both the restoration of the just order disrupted by sin and the correction of the sinner.⁸⁵ Medicinal punishment with this double intention should be distasteful to the culprit: it is of the nature of punishment to be against the will.⁸⁶ Given this condition, the action of the just punitive agent is good even though the culprit be indignant.⁸⁷ This principle might be kept in mind at the peace table by the delegates of the victorious United Nations in their negotiations. They will be there, not to barter, but to pass just and punitive sentence on the guilty instigators of total war. The vindication of justice and the future and peaceful health of society demand distasteful medicine⁸⁸ for the Axis governments and even for the civilian populations who have made them possible. Satisfaction must be demanded in the name of charity, justice, and order, which have been violated and which must be restored.⁸⁹ Correction is a function of charity,⁹⁰ and in its coactive phase it is an inescapable duty of justice,⁹¹ all the more difficult when the culprit is proud and stubborn.⁹² In such a situation severity, another virtue, will re-enforce the demands of vindictive justice. Severity will give that firmness which sentimental sympathy might abdicate but which right reason demands.⁹³

The desire for vindication, in itself, is a natural urge of human nature. It is more natural to demand reparation for injuries done us than not to demand such atonement.⁹⁴ Vindication, therefore, strengthening a natural

⁸⁴ *De Anima*, a. 21, ad 20.

⁸⁵ *III Cont. Gent.*, 144.

⁸⁶ *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 64, a. 3.

⁸⁷ *Q. D. de Malo*, q. 1, a. 4, ad 9.

⁸⁸ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 87, a. 7.

⁸⁹ *IV Sent.*, d. XV, q. 1, a. 1, quaes. 1.

⁹⁰ *IV Sent.*, d. XIX, q. 2, a. 1.

⁹¹ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 33, a. 1.

⁹² *IV Sent.*, d. XIX, q. 2, a. 3, quaes. 3.

⁹³ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 57, a. 2, ad 1.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, q. 157, a. 2, ad 2.

impulse, becomes a special virtue,⁹⁵ and is re-enforced by the noble virtues of courage, just anger, and charity.⁹⁶ Vindication remains a virtue as long as it keeps the golden mean between cruelty and savagery, at the one extreme, and unjust pardon at the other.⁹⁷ It remains a necessary virtue when reparation is demanded not merely for the purpose of inflicting evil on culprits but to reform them, to restrain their lawless impulses and to guarantee the peace of others.⁹⁸ Such vindication to be effective and rational will deprive culprits, individual and national, of those values which they prize most highly.⁹⁹ Vindication is a quality that cannot be scrapped in international relations or in national autonomy. The tendency to go soft on this phase of justice is too widespread even though it is explicable. In the religious field, the neglect or denial of eternal punishment on sentimental grounds has created a habit of mind that asserts itself in sentimental softness everywhere. In the ethical and juridical field, the eradication of objective norms of right and wrong and the annihilation of responsibility and culpability have anathematized vindictive justice and punishment. It is to be hoped that the contagion will be arrested by war and that at the peace conference vindictive justice will be restored to its honorable place in the hierarchy of fine moral qualities.

Two virtues that may be coupled and which need emphasis in any attempt to strengthen rational living are just anger and righteous indignation. These sturdy qualities have lost caste under the deluge of sentimentalism engulfing us today. One kind of anger must be suppressed; it is vicious anger that has escaped the control of reason¹⁰⁰ and which results in reprehensible hatred.¹⁰¹ To this kind of anger is opposed the virtue of meek-

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, q. 108, a. 2.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 105, a. 2.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 108, a. 2, ad 3.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, a. 1; *Q. D. de Malo*, q. 12, a. 1.

⁹⁹ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 108, a. 3.

¹⁰⁰ *Q. D. de Malo*, q. 12, a. 1.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, q. 10, a. 3, ad 3.

ness.¹⁰² There is another kind of anger which is honorable, anger inspired by zeal (*ira per zelum*),¹⁰³ and which counteracts the vice of cowardly and unjust pardon.¹⁰⁴ It is this just anger, with which righteous indignation is associated, which needs exaltation and defense today.

Just anger is correlative with vindictive justice¹⁰⁵ and an angry deed has a threefold relation. Directly and essentially it seeks redress; antecedently it is a manifestation of grief; consequently it involves delight over the punishment merited and inflicted.¹⁰⁶ In all of these relations anger remains just if it remains under the control of reason.¹⁰⁷ Reason is usually operative at least in making known the injury that should be avenged, though frequently reason loses control when vindication is begun.¹⁰⁸ One reason for this is that the physical reverberations of anger often impair the correct use of reason.¹⁰⁹ It is interesting to recall some of the explanations of the interplay of anger with other emotions and virtues given by St. Thomas. These reflections are important in view of the contemporary eclipse of just anger today.

Three important elements or causes of just anger are sadness, daring, and hope.¹¹⁰ This is why just anger is not usually manifested toward persons in dominating position;¹¹¹ one or more of those elements is missing. Grief may be present but the hope and the courage to render punishment are absent.¹¹² These elements of anger also account for the fact that the perfidy of false friends arouses very deep anger;¹¹³ the Japanese should be kept

¹⁰² *In Ps.* xxxvi.

¹⁰³ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 158, a. 1.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, a. 8; *Q. D. de Malo*, q. 12, a. 5, ad 3.

¹⁰⁵ *III Sent.*, d. XV, q. 2, a. 2.

¹⁰⁶ *Q. D. de Malo*, q. 8, a. 3, ad 7.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, q. 12, a. 1, ad 2.

¹⁰⁸ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 46, a. 4, ad 3.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, q. 48, a. 3, ad 1.

¹¹⁰ *Q. D. de Malo*, q. 12, a. 3, ad 10.

¹¹¹ *Q. D. de Ver.*, q. 26, a. 5, ad 3.

¹¹² *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 25, a. 3.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, q. 47, a. 4, ad 3.

informed about this. They might also be made aware of the fact that anger does not cause but rather follows the destruction of love.¹¹⁴ If anger be kept alive by the vivid memory of the injury done,¹¹⁵ then our enemies should be deeply detested and our people must be confronted constantly with the slogan, "Remember Pearl Harbor." There are some to whom anger under any guise or under any control is undignified. For this reason it must be kept in mind that while just anger desires to inflict evil on another it operates in the name of vindictive justice.¹¹⁶ Hatred, on the other hand, wishes evil for the sake of evil, and envy wishes evil for the sake of one's own glory.¹¹⁷ Anger is not found in those who have low-grade intelligence and poor memories, and who are therefore slow to realize, to anticipate, or to remember injuries.¹¹⁸ What has been said about just anger controlled by reason applies also to righteous indignation which is one of the phases or *filiae* of anger.¹¹⁹

Another virtue which needs rehabilitation in national and international relations is virtuous disdain and hatred of crime, even though one is compelled to cherish a degree of charity for criminals themselves. The contemporary tendency is to declare truce with crime or to condone it because of sympathy for or admiration of the wicked. There is a tendency to gloss over the intrinsic viciousness of atheistic communism because of admiration of the successful winter defense of their country put up by the citizens of Russia. There is a tendency to forget the perfidious treason of the Japanese in the admiration of their successful bombings and invasions. There is a tendency among some to condone the ruthless injustice of the Nazis because of respect for their military might. There is too little openly expressed contempt of injustice, lies, arrogant pride, and other vicious sins. No

¹¹⁴ *III Sent.*, d. XXVII, q. 1, a. 3, ad 4.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, d. XXVI, q. 1, a. 2.

¹¹⁶ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 48, a. 2, ad 2.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, q. 46, a. 6.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, q. 23, a. 3.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 41, a. 2.

just anger can be aroused for the prosecution of a successful war unless there burn in the hearts of the United Nations a love of human rights and a contempt of the crimes which have violated them. No permanent order can be established where the United Nations cherish a secret love for the vices which have made the Axis powers temporarily successful. The American people have been noble in basing their patriotism on the love of their own nation and its freedoms rather than on the hatred of other governments and their peoples. The Axis powers are less fortunate in selecting class, race, and national hatreds as the motives for love of country. But America will lose none of its nobility, and will conserve its dignity in promoting among our people a hatred of current international vices. Such hatred of vice is not incompatible with the love of enemies demanded by Christian living.

Hatred is a repugnance of the will to something that has been apprehended as unbecoming.¹²⁰ As a person (*quoad naturam*) an enemy may not be hated but the defect in him which is sin must be hated.¹²¹ Everything like sin interfering with genuine happiness should be detested, whether it exists in friend or enemy.¹²² Even God hates sinners in the sense that He withholds eternal happiness from them.¹²³ Even saintly people may wish evil to those whom they love in charity, for their correction, for the common good, and for the justice of God.¹²⁴ Sinners may be loved only because of their humanity and in spite of their crimes which one must hate.¹²⁵ The evil, the sin, or the crime in friend or foe may not be loved.¹²⁶

Incidental perhaps to the logic of this situation but not irrelevant is the hatred of Americans evidenced especially by the Japanese. Recent writers, after years of observation, trace this hatred to long years of jingoistic

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 29, a. 1.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 25, a. 6.

¹²⁴ *De Virt.*, q. 2, a. 8, ad 10.

¹²⁵ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 25, a. 6.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, a. 8, ad 3.

¹²² *Ibid.*, q. 26, a. 7, ad 1.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, I, q. 20, a. 2, ad 4.

Japanese effort to trade on Oriental "face." Natural envy of our nobility and success as a nation has been lashed into a fury. Aquinas thought that hatred differs from anger in that hatred desires infinite punishment,¹²⁷ that it is more universal,¹²⁸ that it is more insane and more permanent,¹²⁹ and that it is less merciful.¹³⁰ The Japanese along with the Nazis, had and still have delusions of grandeur which respected justice nowhere and based right on might. We of Western and Christian civilization could not recognize them in the importance they thought they were fated to enjoy. They became more angry whether we ignored them or whether we thwarted them. Forgetfulness and opposition to another's will provoke wrath in so far as they are signs of contempt.¹³¹ Anger grew into hatred¹³² which was what the jingoistic party in Japan desired. Their hatred is not necessarily, as some of the softer Americans would have us believe, an indication of basic faults in our own nation. Vicious men usually hate the saints because of dissimilarity, because of envy, and because they dislike the rebuke which living virtue always offers to vicious men.¹³³ Even God is hated not because of Himself but because some of the effects of His government are not acceptable to some individuals and nations.¹³⁴ While American democracy is neither saintly nor divine, it has enough superior qualities to make the totalitarian Axis powers feel inferior. It must be emphasized that American purity of intention and nobility will depend in no small degree on its ability to hate the vices against the consequences of which in the Axis powers it is warring.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 46, a. 6.

¹²⁸ *Q. D. de Malo*, q. 12, a. 4, ad 3.

¹²⁹ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 46, a. 6, ad 3.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, ad 1.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, q. 47, a. 2, ad 3.

¹³² *Ibid.*, q. 46, a. 3, ad 3.

¹³³ *In Joann.*, xv, lect. 4.

¹³⁴ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 13, a. 4; I, q. 60, a. 5, ad 5.

V. MILITANT AND GENTILITARIAN VICES

Other rugged virtues essential to the sovereignty of justice, truth, and charity might be introduced and analyzed from the works of the Angelic Doctor. But further elaboration of these rugged and rational qualities is not necessary since his attitudes toward vindictive justice, just anger, righteous indignation, and virtuous contempt of crime are typical. It is advisable, however, to present in rapid survey some observations about a few detestable vices which soft Christians have begun to look upon as desirable qualities of civilized persons. These counterfeit virtues can be bracketed by way of introduction with vices that are genuinely degrading. Most of these have been referred to in the course of this presentation.

One must not conclude, because of St. Thomas' insistence on justice, that he can be drafted as a protagonist of savagery, cruelty, or unreasonable anger. He decries as sinful cruelty or excessive punishment of the guilty, and says that savagery is bestial.¹³⁵ But the inflexibility demanded by right reason in the infliction of punishment is a virtue called severity¹³⁶ which is a part of legal justice.¹³⁷ The gentle virtues of clemency and meekness do not restrict severity.¹³⁸ They prevent despicable cruelty, savagery and ferocity.¹³⁹ and eradicate sinful anger.¹⁴⁰ Clemency is gentleness of a superior to an inferior reasonably moderating the external act of punishment, while meekness controls the passion or anger from which punitive action proceeds.¹⁴¹ Ferocity is reprehensible; it is not mollified by gifts; it does not bend before mercy; it refuses mercy even to sucklings, and does not spare the young and defenseless.¹⁴² Merciless-

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 157, a. 1, ad 2.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, a. 2, ad 1; q. 159, a. 2, ad 2.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, q. 157, a. 1, ad 2.

¹³⁸ *III Sent.*, d. XXVI, q. 2, a. 2, ad 4.

¹³⁹ *Summa Theol.*, q. 157, a. 1, ad 3.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, q. 158, a. 8.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, q. 157, a. 1.

¹⁴² *In Is.*, xiii.

ness withdraws benefits and is not a stranger to cruelty or excessive punishment.¹⁴³ Inhumanity is cold hard-heartedness to the suffering, and stubborn refusal to help. It is a pet vice of the avaricious.¹⁴⁴ Complete Christian living demands that these bestial qualities of ferocity, cruelty, savagery, mercilessness, and sinful anger be neutralized by the virtues of clemency, mildness, meekness, and mercy. But complete Christian living demands also that these gentle virtues be kept from going to extremes of mildness by truth, justice, vindication, and severity. An example of this latter correlation is given by Aquinas when he says that vindictiveness is a mean between the vices of cruelty and remissness in punishment, one vice an excess and the other a defect.¹⁴⁵ Again in analyzing meekness he shows that it stands midway between anger which is just and anger which is unreasonable.¹⁴⁶ Also, excess in inflicting punishment is injustice, the savagery of soul that inspires such excess is cruelty; ¹⁴⁷ ordinate infliction of punishment is virtuous vindictiveness, and failure to impose just punishment introduces the vices of injustice, criminal pardon, and others.¹⁴⁸

It is evident that viciousness can be incurred both by an excess of gentleness and by the defect of it. This excessive gentleness takes many forms and is thrown into opposition to several virtues. One of the commonest forms of contemporary overgentleness is *mollities*, sometimes called softness and effeminacy. With it is closely associated delicacy, a kindred vice.¹⁴⁹ Softness and delicacy are vices opposed to perseverance, and they emerge either from natural disposition or from custom.¹⁵⁰ This flabbiness of spirit recoils from sustained effort because of the lack of pleasure.¹⁵¹ A "softy" refrains from doing

¹⁴³ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 159, a. 1, ad 2.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, q. 118, a. 8.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, q. 108, a. 2, ad 3.

¹⁴⁶ *II Sent.*, d. XLIV, q. 2, a. 1, ad 3.

¹⁴⁷ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 159, a. 1, ad 1.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, q. 108, a. 2, ad 2.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, a. 1.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, q. 138, a. 1, ad 2.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, ad 2.

even good and necessary works because of difficulties he cannot endure.¹⁵² The fear of danger is more impelling than the desire of pleasure. A "softy" is so accustomed to enjoy pleasures that it is difficult for him to endure the lack of them. The "softy" avoids vindictive punishment and other unpleasant duties because they are toilsome and unenjoyable. Softness is not only opposed to perseverance,¹⁵³ but it is also a species of luxury and is often a consequence of carnal delectation that softens the spirit and destroys manliness.¹⁵⁴ It is opposed to perseverance because this virtue urges one to sustained laborious work.¹⁵⁵ There may be a close connection in the United States between the increase of softness and the decrease of pioneer regard for rigid control in matters of food, drink, and sex, all superinduced by the widespread collapse of religion.

The overgentleness of so many of our citizens and of their religious leaders cannot be divorced from a defect of courage. Courage is firmness or toughness of spirit, especially in the face of danger.¹⁵⁶ It seeks to remove any obstacle that withdraws the will from following reason,¹⁵⁷ and stands midway between fear and daring.¹⁵⁸ While the virtue of courage is spiritual, it is advanced in war time by several other conditions like health, strength, an abundance of food, determination of spirit, and experience in war.¹⁵⁹ Real meekness and humility are the results of the same courage¹⁶⁰ which in just circumstances produces endurance of hardships and vigorous action against difficulties.¹⁶¹ This courage shows itself in a disregard for the danger of death in war,¹⁶² and thus connects with justice.¹⁶³ The courageous man is not rash, because he knows when, where, and of what he ought to be reasonably fearful.¹⁶⁴ He knows how to call moderate

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, ad 1.

¹⁵³ *Loc. cit.*

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, q. 154, a. 11.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, q. 137, a. 1.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, q. 123, a. 2.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, a. 3.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, a. 2.

¹⁵⁹ *In Is.*, iii.

¹⁶⁰ *Q. D. de Ver.*, q. 1, a. 12, ad 26.

¹⁶¹ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 123, a. 3.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, a. 5.

¹⁶³ *III Sent.*, d. IX, q. 1, quaes. 1.

¹⁶⁴ *De Virt.*, q. 1, a. 13, ad 5.

and virtuous anger into the service of courage.¹⁶⁵ It ought to be a consolation to our men in the service that they have St. Thomas Aquinas on their side in their indignant determination to avenge the atrocities of the Axis powers despite the dangers entailed. Their tough and rational courage will probably inspire some of our soft civilians to desert their fears,¹⁶⁶ to shake off their despair of winning this war,¹⁶⁷ and to quit dodging the difficulties of war and the benefits of peace that will follow.¹⁶⁸ The nonresistance, the overgentleness, the sentimental appeasement, the emotional dread of even rational disdain are too often the manifestations of a timidity that is more wicked than the wickedness of war.¹⁶⁹

With the vices of softness, delicacy, and timidity, contemporary "gentilitarians" try to glorify into virtues the vices of insensibility and unjust pardon. Insensibility is a dullness and inanition which, against the dictates of reason, neglects necessary things of life.¹⁷⁰ Unjust pardon (*remissio*), another attempted escape from reason and from the arduous and unpleasant, is the assassin of vindictive justice.¹⁷¹ The insensible person is so blasé and impervious to pleasure that he cannot be decoyed into the fulfillment of ordinary duty by the allurements of the pleasure which God and nature hold out. Struggle for justice gives no pleasure. Anticipation of victory gives no pleasure. Nothing gives pleasure. Nothing is done. Only blind and dull submission to the "wave of the future" is possible. The unjust pardoner will forgive anything, whether justice, truth, and charity allow it or not. It is, at least for the present, the easiest way out of personal inconvenience. These counterfeit virtues are really vices in disguise, and all the popularity they enjoy

¹⁶⁵ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 123, a. 10.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 41, a. 4.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, q. 25, a. 3.

¹⁶⁸ *In Rom.*, viii, lect. 3.

¹⁶⁹ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 142, a. 2.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, a. 1.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, q. 159, a. 2, ad 3.

among partial Christians cannot condone the damage they have done both to Christianity and to social order in the United States. There can be no real social order where there is apostasy from right and sound reason. These species of "gentilitarianism" enslave reason.

VI. DOUBLE STANDARD DIFFICULTIES

Other problems of procedure with our enemies have emerged out of the war, and will need to be decided before peace negotiations are begun. They might be named the problems of the double standards. They are represented in the patent conflict between the ethical standards for international relations articulated by Pope Pius XII—akin to the aims of real democracies—and the standards preached and practiced by totalitarian ideologies of the Axis powers. These problems are ultimately reducible to the fact that real democracy is theistic and totalitarianism is godless. The liberties of American democracy have an affinity with the basic teachings of Christianity; the tenets of totalitarianism are pagan. The peace program of the Pope is based on love, trust, God-given rights, wide ownership, and sacrifice. The objectives of the totalitarian powers are wrapped in hatred, suspicion, state worship, state ownership, and selfishness. Standards of life and conduct are so diametrically opposed that the problems of double standard are tremendous. There will be little hope, after the victory of the United Nations, of winning the Axis governments over to democratic and Christian standards. The United Nations will have to destroy these governments and deal with the representatives of the people in whom there is left some regard for the worth of individual persons and some respect for the rights of God. On the part of the representatives of the United Nations this will call for a principled severity that must not be vitiated by "gentilitarianism." Otherwise there can be no sanctions sufficiently respected to guarantee the observance of natural and international law. Furthermore, Christian gentility

will always be looked upon by pagan diplomats and military men as weakness. They will appreciate and respect only the sterner and more rugged virtues sanctioned by Christianity. Christian principles of kindness in competition with power politics have usually suffered at least temporary defeat, just as sincerely Christian business men often take a beating when they are in competition with unprincipled and godless business rivals. At the peace table, the severity of justice will make reasonable the memory that our enemies have declared total war, with all their resources and against all of ours. Civilian populations of the Axis powers seem to have been drafted, more or less willingly, to such a totalitarian conflict. Civilian populations of Poland, Holland, Russia, and other conquered countries know that they have been decimated like front-line combatants. Savage reprisals on Axis civilians are forms of cruelty to be eschewed. But medicinal punishment for them will be necessary to convince them that there are laws for nations that are sacred and that totalitarian governments can never again be permitted to exist by the consent, explicit or implicit, of the people. Christian charity, justice, truth, and the continued peace of the world demands severity with peoples as well as with the Nazis, the Fascists, and the Japanese leaders.

VII. CONCLUSION

The sentimental protest of partial Christianity against the virile virtues is repugnant to the teachings of the Angelic Doctor. Thomas Aquinas with his cosmic philosophy of reality and with his complete synthesis of revealed and philosophical truth is most likely to be right. His realism supports his idealism and his practicality neglects no phase of life. His continued value to public life rests on his refusal to desert reason and intelligence. His loyalty to the intelligence of man and the Omniscience of God will be a bulwark of protection against totalitarianism, latitudinarianism, and "gentilitarianism."

DISCUSSION OUTLINE

I

1. What is "partial Christianity"?
2. Cite the evidences of partial Christianity regarding modern attitudes on Baptism, education, social life, political life.

II

1. What is "inferiority Christianity"?
2. Cite instances of righteous indignation in the life of Christ.

III

1. Are precepts and counsels simply degrees of fidelity to the Christian ideal or are they distinct categories of duty?
2. Cite instances in modern life of confusion between counsel and precept.
3. Are virtues evaluated by reason or sentiment?

IV

1. What is vindictive justice? Why is it necessary in dealing with "power governments"?
2. What has been the effect in political life of popular neglect or denial of eternal punishment based on sentimental grounds?
3. Does it make any difference in political life when people cease to believe in objective right and wrong and in personal responsibility and culpability?
4. What is just anger? Analyze its three elements.
5. Is all hatred sinful by its very nature?

V

1. Discuss: "There may be a close connection in the U. S. between the increase of softness and the decrease in the pioneer regard for rigid control in matters of food, drink, sex, all superinduced by the widespread collapse of religion."
2. What is "gentilitarianism"?