

# the catholic peace fellowship

An educational service conducted by Catholic members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation

5 BEEKMAN STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10038 WO 4-8367

December 22, 1965

Dear Tom:

## CO-CHAIRMEN

James H. Forest  
Rev. Philip Berrigan, S.S.J.  
Martin J. Corbin

## SPONSORS

Baron Antoine Allard  
Rev. Daniel Berrigan, S. J.  
Adé Bethune  
Herbert C. Burke  
Graham Carey  
Dorothy Day  
Leslie Dewart  
James W. Douglas  
Rev. William H. DuBay  
Hermene Evans  
Edward T. Gargan  
Carol Gorgen  
John Howard Griffin  
Dom Bede Griffiths  
Rev. Robert W. Hovda  
Rev. John J. Hugo  
Edward M. Keating  
Rev. David Kirk  
Robert Lax  
Justus George Lawler  
Rev. Robert McDole  
Rev. John L. McKenzie, S. J.  
Rev. Thomas Merton  
Ned O'Gorman  
Earl C. Neiman  
Edward Rice  
Rev. Peter J. Riga, S.T.D.  
Archbishop T. D. Roberts, S. J.  
Karl Stern  
Anna Taillefer  
Anton Wallich-Clifford  
Gordon Zahn

Thomas Cornell  
Publications Director

Christopher S. Kearns  
Editorial Assistant

Abraham Bassford  
Administrative Secretary

Merry Christmas, good monk, from all of us here. It has been a tough year, much good has happened, many have died a kind of death that leaves blood on our hands, but perhaps there is still something to hope for in the year coming up. I feel at the end of the year, however, as two men: one no longer able to weep for all that murder that has passed and is going on and being blessed; another who sees Schema 13, the Council and those other things as great steps out of the darkness. It is hard, perhaps impossible, to weigh one against the other. They seem to stand apart; the ugliness far more gross than the beauty.

This morning we put out a mailing to our press list and main contacts of the statement you wrote, as well as a covering letter/statement that I prepared to go with it. I took the liberty of making two or three very minor alterations of your text: I trust you will agree that there is no change of substance. (In one instance I removed the word politics in regard to the CPF's work; we are in no immediate way doing any work which could be described as political, nor can we as long as we have the tax exempt status we presently possess. A rhetorical "if" was removed in regard to your CPF sponsorship in order to make it thoroughly clear that you were in fact continuing to lend us your moral support in that manner.)

As I no doubt mentioned in my last letter, I think your statement will be of considerable value in bringing out the place, the vocation, of the CPF more concretely. I think the world of the CW -- believe it is playing a role of the utmost importance, certainly more significant than ours; they are the John the Baptist movement. They offer us a way and a vision of life which reaches into every crevice of man's existence. We are merely educators. We are also a platform for discussion of a particular key problem. It is necessary that the distinction be made more apparent to those outside so that the fact that Tom and I continue to see ourselves as members of the CW does not obliterate the CPF's purpose.

I will let you know what kind of pick-up of your statement takes place. I imagine it will be well covered.

I might add, looking at the last sentence or two of your statement, that I wonder whether witness isn't often provocative. I think of Jagerstatter. His simple no was considered highly provocative. Not that I want to compare draft card burning with the final acts in Jagerstatter's life. There is only slight comparison. What I think we should think about is merely that what defines the value of many acts of witness is not the provocative quality or lack of it, but the integrity and



[22 Dec. 65]

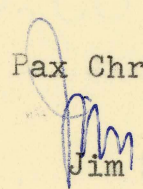
tone involved, the lack of self-seeking. If I am shy about draft card burnings, it is not because of those draft card burnings that have taken place here -- Dave Miller's, Tom's, etc. -- it is simply because I am afraid that it is an action that may provoke a kind of empty parroting: many who would just as soon light their grandmother afire as look 'cross the room (I exaggerate) may take up this easy-to-perform act, and (the way things work in society these days, the lumping together on superficial level that inevitably occurs) discredit the whole business, the organizations who have supported the sane examples of civil disobedience. I think we need a form of action, of witness, that isn't so clearly vulnerable.

On the other hand, I welcome the legal test of this absurd and patently undemocratic law. I continue to be outraged at the addition of this law to our books. I am not ready to pay such homage to a piece of paper. If I carry the damn thing, it is only because I want to counter-balance Tom's act, to keep the CPF image something other. It is an uncomfortable role.

I trust you have seen the full, unabridged text of Schema 13 by now, which is indeed something to rejoice about at this time. What is important now is where we go from here. I am hoping to help spark a Spring conference on the document. We Catholics are going to have to take this matter, this document and what it stands for, terribly seriously. I would welcome any suggestions or thoughts you might have in this regard.

Keep us in your prayers. I look forward to hearing from you. Much love.

Pax Christi,

  
Jim F.