

Editorial Comment

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

It has long been the practice of *The Catholic Lawyer* to publish the papers presented at the various Congresses of the International Movement of Catholic Jurists.

The tenth and most recent Congress was scheduled to take place last December 1979, in Manila. Due, however, to severe political unrest in the Phillipines, the Congress was cancelled, and the papers were presented instead under the auspices of the Catholic Lawyers Guild of the Phillipines.

In this issue of *The Catholic Lawyer* we present those Manila Congress papers which deal primarily with the dignity of man as their common theme.

God created man in His own image and invested him with human rights, the essence of which are the right to life, liberty and security of person. These rights inhere in man by his very nature, endowed as he is with intelligence and free will. It is a fundamental truth that man is born to be free and it is man's nature to strive for dignity, to struggle for justice and to hunger for freedom.

As enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights after the holocaust of World War II when disregard and contempt for human rights resulted in barbarous acts which outraged the conscience of mankind, the peoples of the world reaffirmed in the United Nations Charter their faith in these fundamental human rights.

They were termed by Pope John XXIII as "universal, inviolable and inalienable." Indeed, the rights of none are safe unless the rights of all are protected, because it is in the nature of power to consume all competing forces, and the Rule of Law and the Law of God must therefore prevail to restrain and order power so that power will serve human rights and not destroy them and make the citizen the servant of the State.

The deepest issue of our time is whether civilized peoples can maintain and develop a free society or whether they are to fall back into the ancient order of things, when the whole of men's existence, their consciences, their science, their arts, their labor, and their integrity as individuals were at the disposal of the State. These papers serve in part to bring these points in focus.


Editor

