

INTERVENTION BY CARDINAL GEORGE BASIL HUME, ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER

I speak in my own name, and in my own name alone. I have listened to many speeches intently and attentively - well, that is not quite true. I confess that I have from time to time fallen asleep. During one of these, I had a dream. I will speak of my dream.

I heard a voice speaking, and it spoke of the Church, and I saw in my dream a vision. It was a vision of the Church. I saw a fortress, strong and upstanding. Every stranger approaching seemed to those who defended it to be an enemy to be repelled; from that fortress the voices of those outside could not be heard. The soldiers within showed unquestioning obedience - and that was much to be admired: - "There is not to reason why, there is but to do or die". It seemed thus in my dream, and then I remembered, upon awakening, - it was only just to do so, - that dreams distort reality. They exaggerate.

Then I had another vision. It was of a pilgrim, a pilgrim through history and through life. That pilgrim was the Church. The pilgrim was hastening towards the vision, towards all Truth. But it had not yet reached it. It limped along the road. But meanwhile there were sign-posts to show the way, or rather they told you that this or that road was not the right one. The pilgrim is always in search, I reflected, and that can be painful. The leaders, too, of the pilgrimage are often themselves not always clear. They must sometimes co-agonize with the other pilgrims. Co-responsibility will always involve co-agonizing.

The fortress was a temple, but the pilgrims lived in a tent. It is sometimes better to know the uncertainties of Abraham's tent, than to sit secure in Solomon's temple.

Then I had another vision: I saw with great clarity that the insight of Paul VI in the Encyclical "*Humanae Vitae*", confirming the traditional teaching of the Church, was surely right. But alas we did not know how best to speak to the people.

The road-signs point the way, but sign-posts become weather-beaten, and new paint is needed. It takes time to get the work done. My dream became a nightmare, for I saw the wrong paint being put upon the sign-post, and the last state was worse than the first.

We must never fail to listen to the other pilgrims. And they need encouraging. We must speak gently, compassionately, co-agonize with them, lead them gradually and speak a language which enables them to say: "Yes, that is right; it is now clear, we accept the teaching." I saw the pilgrims happy because they had been led nearer to Him who is all Truth, and they sang their joy in praise and thanksgiving. I awoke, and I said,

"Vidi, gratias"