Ladies and Gentlemen, the award that has just been bestowed upon me is of course an honor to me personally—an honor greater than I know that I deserve. I'm not insensitive to that fact though and I appreciate it as anyone would. But what is at stake in the Pacem in Terris cause is something incomparably more important than the mere gratification of anybody's personal ego. It is for their dedication to this cause that my gratitude goes out to the Catholic Diocese of Davenport and to the Quad Cities Peace and Justice Coalition.

My own small contribution to this cause has, as most of you know, related primarily to two aspects of this problem. The first is the question presented by the phenomenon of nuclear weaponry as a major feature of the defense establishments of the two great world powers. The second is the relationship between this country and the Soviet Union. These problems are separate ones, in the sense that each could and would subsist without the other.

But they are also, of course, closely related, and each of them has religious connotations. Those connotations are something that I've not spoken much about in the past because I've seldom had occasion to do so. But perhaps this occasion would be a suitable one for finding out just what some of those are as I see them.

First of all the problem of nuclear weapons. Before I go on with this, I would like to say with what deep admiration and approval I have listened to the talk which we've just had from Professor Kanet. It was a thoughtful, penetrating, and constructive approach to this bitter problem. I hope it will see publication; and in any case, I deeply appreciate it.
The nuclear weapon and its adoption into the defense establishments of these two great powers—all this has religious connotations, partly, of course, because the intentional use or even the accidental detonation of any considerable number of such weapons could well mean, and would probably mean, the killing and maiming of hundreds of millions of innocent and harmless noncombatants, something incidentally that was ruled out by the rules of war to which we Americans have subscribed, as well as by other international agreements into which we've entered. But in addition to that, it could have these connotations because it would threaten the intactness and the survivability of man's natural habitat.

This habitat, the natural world around us, is, after all, the house that God gave us to live in. It's the house we were intended to live in. It's the house in which man's spiritual struggle was meant to take place and has taken place over the course of the ages. And it's the house in which accordingly, God's purposes were meant to be fulfilled. Now we did not create this habitation. It was not given to us to destroy or exploit for our pleasure, or in a mad effort to assure the safety of our own generation.

It is something placed at our disposal for us to cherish and to pass on with all its beauty and fertility and marvelousness to our children and to future generations—to those generations yet unborn who have just as much right as we have to the privilege of life and to the enjoyment of this habitat God gave us all to live in. We have no right to deny them either of those things.

Now all of this, of course, is placed in jeopardy by the very existence of nuclear weapons. And this is a situation to which, as I see it, no Christian can be indifferent.
But the problem of Soviet-American relations also has religious connotations. This is partly because it seems conducive in our country at least, to an effort on the part of a great many people to externalize evil, to attribute to the Soviet leadership and to the Soviet people every sort of iniquity and indeed a sort of monopoly on iniquity. And what is worse, to see in their supposed total iniquity the proof of our own total virtue.

I would submit that in this monstrous over-simplification, which is what it is, conducive as it is to the most egregious sort of self-righteousness and self-idealization, you have something which is profoundly unChristian. And it is something that we will not get away from until we learn to see both the Soviet side, Soviet leadership and the Soviet people, and ourselves, as we really are—as God's creatures, embodying both good and bad; each one of our hearts, if you will, the scene of a tiny part of the struggle between good and evil which is the fundamental mark of all humankind. That is true in Russia no less than it is true among us here.

And this has more than just a personal moral significance because beyond the great question of nuclear weaponry there lies the deeper question of peace itself, at least among the great industrial powers. It will, I am afraid, be a long time before we can ever hope to stop various primitive, underdeveloped peoples from squabbling with each other, attempting to settle their scores with whatever weapons they have at hand. But I find myself now, and only very recently, in my own older years, coming for the first time to the conclusion that it is not enough even just to eliminate nuclear weapons from the national arsenals; that the day has passed when war itself in any form, conventional or otherwise, is permissible among the great powers.
I do not believe that Europe—and perhaps this goes for ourselves as well—would be able to endure a third world war in this century. What would be left would not be worth survival.

Now we cannot, of course, alone preserve the peace. Our Russian friends or adversaries will have to make their contribution, too. But what we can do is to do all in our power to preserve it and promote it. This we owe to the very preservation of civilization.

And this means to me that we must find another tone, not only for our discourse with the Russians, but for the discourse among ourselves about the whole problem of our relations with them—a tone marked by less tough talk, less militarization of language, a tone less penetrated with the assumption of war as something inevitable between the two of us, which I assure you it is not; a tone which would involve less talk about what we could do to them and they could do to us with weapons in our hands. It would involve a greater willingness to talk soberly and realistically about how we could peacefully solve our various problems, accepting the fact that neither of us is apt to be entirely right or entirely wrong all the time, and that sometimes even apparently insoluble problems, if treated softly, quietly, and persistently, do eventually yield to the laws of change and to the exercise of human patience.

All of this, in addition to the purely secular considerations—the terms in which these problems are normally discussed in our country—all of this appears to me to be at stake in the problems of American-Soviet relations and of nuclear weaponry. For this reason I am particularly grateful to my Quad City hosts here and to the Diocese of Davenport for the opportunity to acknowledge my deep sense of gratitude to the Holy See, to its present incumbent and to his
predecessors for the immense contribution they have made to the clarification of these problems and to the general cause of peace and justice.

I deeply hope that they will not permit the disappointments and the frustrations of the past to dim their confidence in the immense resources of good will and common sense and faith that have been emerging among the American public as we have considered these problems during the past year or two. Thank you very much.