

ACOUSTICS NEWS

Behind the scenes of the Ramsey (NAS) Panel, there has been a major debate about the acoustics. It is now clear that the long-awaited Panel report will be controversial.

The debate seems to stem (at least primarily) from an observation made last fall by Steve Barber. He supplied an interpretation for some barely audible words on the Channel One DPD tape, starting just after the last shot. These words appear to be overheard traffic from Channel Two, where Sheriff Decker can be heard to say "... hold everything secure until the homicide and other investigators can get there." (23 WCH 913; Kimbrough transcript, #420)

From the Channel Two tape, one can infer that Decker's comment was made at least a minute after the first shot was fired. (That is, there is sixty seconds of voice traffic, obviously in reaction to the shooting, before the words "hold everything secure.") If, indeed, the words on Channel One were the very same words heard on Channel Two, and if Channel One was continuous (as it should have been), then the HSC's shot-like impulses could not be the shots fired at Kennedy, because they would be at least a minute too late.

We have all heard many objections to the acoustical analysis since James Barger of BB&N first testified in September 1978. Some have been simply silly; some have been serious, but of insufficient weight to compete with the BB&N/W&A analysis (such as McLain's recollections, and the unidentified carillon bell). This is the first evidence against the acoustics which I would characterize as a serious problem.

If you take the Barber observation at face value, you also have to believe that the assassination was followed by a burst of static in the DPD radio system which just happened to match the acoustical fingerprints of Dealey Plaza. Specifically, these bursts show a pattern consistent with a microphone moving at the speed of the motorcade, which Barger estimated would occur by chance with a probability of 5% or less. Also, the third burst of static matches a shot from the grassy knoll with a probability conservatively estimated at 95% or more by Weiss and Aschkenasy. In addition, the three apparent shots from the direction of the TSBD happen to correlate quite well with other evidence, notably the Zapruder film.

Recall that the impulses to be studied were selected by Barger from a five-minute segment of the tape, as the only signals which looked as if they might be caused by gunshots. Only after locating these signals did he establish that they occurred within 35 seconds of the estimated time of the assassination. (2 HSC 31, 42)

As far as I know, the Ramsey Panel has not found any major error in the BB&N/W&A analysis itself. Can one really believe that all these results are coincidental? Only with great difficulty!

Various explanations which might be able to reconcile the HSC analysis and the Barber observation are noted below. Direct acceptance of the Barber observation allegedly does lead to an anomaly in the timing; among other things, this suggests to me that the Channel One tape may in fact be discontinuous.

Possible explanations include the following: the Channel One message could be from a different utterance of the same words; perhaps the original Dictabelt was not recorded continuously (i.e., a physical disturbance of the machine caused the belt to move relative to the needle, recording the words over the previously recorded information); or the discontinuity could be an artifact of subsequent re-recording.

At the moment, it seems that any explanation which reconciles all the evidence is likely to be indirect and somewhat speculative, no matter how



persuasive it is. On the other hand, the straightforward interpretation of the Barber observation lends itself readily to a simple presentation on television - you just have to listen to both channels, and see a graph with the time of the shots indicated. The fact that this interpretation does not explain the shot-like impulses can be glossed over. The negative impact of the Ramsey Panel report is likely to be great, whether the full panel disputes the HSC analysis or some members present a vigorous dissent to a basically pro-HSC report. Unless further analysis changes his mind, panelist Luis Alvarez can be expected to argue against the HSC's conclusions.

If any of you have suggestions for checking out this conflicting evidence, I suggest that you put them on the record by writing to Prof. Norman Ramsey (at the Harvard physics department), with copies to James Barger at BB&N, Gary Mack, and me. I have sent Ramsey most of the information in this newsletter about possible explanations for the Barber observation. I do not think that we can simply assume that the Panel will check everything out with the enthusiasm we would want.

We should be prepared to rebut the absurd position taken by the Justice Department last October, that the acoustics is the "only indication of a conspiracy." (See EOC, Vol. 2, #10, p. 1.)

A point which particularly bears repeating is that all relevant information should be extracted from the tape. Specifically, the other three shots must be subjected to a detailed analysis, along the lines of what Weiss and Aschkenasy did with the knoll shot. I see no justification for anyone to reject the entire HSC analysis until all four shots have been studied as carefully as possible.

(What is on the tape?)

The August 1981 TCI includes a long letter from Gary Mack to Ramsey, and the September TCI will include a major article on recent developments. Among other relevant information (about bells, and about other radio traffic on November 22), Mack's letter presents a different interpretation of the words on Channel One. Gary was able to interpret the words as logical post-shooting comments by two different policemen; when he wrote that letter, he did not hear any of the Decker message ("hold everything secure....")

Gary sent me an enhanced tape of both channels, on which I hear "hold everything secure" with complete certainty. I have played the tape to four other people - buffs and non-buffs - and each hears at least "hold everything secure."

I hear much more than that - I am convinced that the words are "hold everything secure until the homicide and other investigators can get there." That is, I think I hear all of that phrase, despite the fact that I would much rather not hear it. I am aware that the brain can play tricks in such a situation. I should mention that I was not able to make out any of the words in either interpretation (Barber's or Mack's) until I played the tape several times, alternating the Channel Two and Channel One excerpts. I do not think it is possible to interpret the words with any confidence unless you have something to compare them to.

What I hear, of course, is less important than what the Panel hears. I understand that voiceprints have been made, and that a quantitative comparison has been made between the two channels. That study was apparently sensitive enough to require a correction for the tape speed difference between the two channels; when that is done, a match is found to a very high degree of certainty (much greater than the 95% figure of W&A). I understand that earlier and later messages also appear on both tapes. (I think I can hear where the underlined words emerge from the noise: "... in an effort to try to determine just what and where it happened down there and hold everything secure....")



By one account, an (early) reference to going to Parkland and a (later) reference to the TSBD appear in corresponding places on the two channels. About three minutes after "hold everything secure," a message about holding the traffic on Stemmons can be heard quite clearly on both channels. (23 WCH 913; Kimbrough transcript, Channel One, p. 8)

An extensive match would preclude the otherwise plausible explanation that the words "hold everything secure" were spoken twice. In my own analysis, I am proceeding on the assumption that the words on Channel One are in fact from the Decker message a minute or more after the shooting, and not from a repetition of those words by Decker or someone else.

(Explanation required)

First, one has to ask if the straightforward interpretation of the Barber observation raises any problems (besides, as already noted, requiring that shot-like impulses occurred by chance). (We can refer to that interpretation as "Hypothesis A": the impulses studied by the HSC occurred about a minute after the shooting, and the Channel One recording is, as it should be, continuous.)

Gary Mack has been correlating the consequences of Hypothesis A with other information about timing, using evidence on the tape and from witnesses in the motorcade. I expect that we will see a full presentation of this analysis in TCI. While eyewitness testimony can be helpful, it will probably not suffice to convince the Ramsey Panel that its technical analysis of the recordings is inadequate.

Fragmentary information reaching me suggests that Hypothesis A does indeed have its own problems even if you just look at the information on the tapes. Specifically, it supposedly implies that some of the pre-assassination time checks (i.e., the messages such as "12:29") were wrong.

In 1978, Barger used the time checks to conclude that the shot-like impulses occurred within 35 seconds of the time of the assassination, as estimated from the pre- and post-assassination messages on Channel Two. (See 8 HSC 70-74, especially the graphs.) The Ramsey Panel can be expected to deal with this particular timing issue in detail.

Because of the possibility of human error, and uncertainty about how the clocks were actually set and used, this argument alone is probably not strong enough to cause the Panel to reject Hypothesis A conclusively. It does, however, preclude accepting Hypothesis A until there is a further explanation of the discrepancy. The following arguments, among others, will have to be dealt with.

(Coincidental match of "hold everything secure"?)

It is plausible that someone else said "hold everything secure" about ten seconds after the first shot. It is even possible that Decker first tried to get through on Channel One (if that could be done from his car), and then switched to Channel Two when he heard the static on Channel One.

As already noted, however, I do not think it will be possible to sustain the argument that "hold everything secure" was spoken twice - because it seems that too many words match, too well. If I am hearing things that are not on the tape, the issue is quite different, of course.

(Multiple recording on the original Dictabelt?)

Hypothesis A assumes that the Channel One recording is continuous. If it is not, the problem might go away. At the moment, the contrary hypothesis which I find the most plausible is that part of the Dictabelt in evidence was, as some point, recorded on twice.

Let us assume (arguendo) that the Dictabelt being studied is the original



one, recorded on November 22. Suppose something like the following happened: first, the shots were picked up by McLain's microphone and recorded on the Channel One Dictabelt. Then, a message was heard over Channel Two, directing the motorcade to Parkland. As the police in the dispatcher's office reacted to this sign of trouble, perhaps someone jostled the Dictaphone or pounded on the Dictaphone table in frustration. Somehow, some disturbance caused the stylus to move backwards (or the belt to move forward), and subsequent messages - including "hold everything secure" - were recorded over the earlier information, which included the shots.

Obviously, such a scenario includes several assumptions - e.g., that the Dictaphone was located where it could be disturbed, and that the stylus could be moved backward relative to the belt.

Also, this shift-and-rerecord hypothesis requires that the information recorded the first time (i.e., the shots) can survive being recorded over.

Robert Ranftel and I have obtained some relevant information from a local Dictaphone employee. We were told that "mixed voices" can result when a section of a Dictabelt is recorded on twice. When this happens, it is apparent to the naked eye, as a change in the density (shading) of the groove pattern. Also, if the recording is discontinuous because it was stopped and restarted, a characteristic pattern (visible with a jeweler's loupe) is created.

Presumably these signs of discontinuity are harder to detect on a worn Dictabelt. (As early as 1964, the FBI noted that the belts were "badly worn from being played" (23 WCH 832).) In any case, a microscopic examination of the Dictabelt is essential.

The DPD recorder was reportedly a Dictaphone of type A-2TC, model 5. According to the FBI, it was originally set up in 1957 (23 WCH 832). (Detailed information is said to be in the report of DPD Captain Bowles, which I still have not been able to obtain.) This device consisted of two machines linked in tandem, so that an uninterrupted recording could be made. (When it came to the end of one belt, it switched automatically to the other machine, and then the first belt could be removed and replaced by a fresh one.) Each belt ran for 15 minutes (although the machine could be geared down to put 30 minutes on each belt).

The stylus was driven by a screw drive, which means that if it could skip backwards at all, a severe jolt would be required. However, the belt was not fixed in place - it just fit snugly over a pair of rollers. Thus, it could easily be moved relative to the stylus.

(Is the "original" Dictabelt a copy?)

While it is somewhat difficult (albeit quite possible) to argue that the original Dictabelt contains a section which was recorded over, it is relatively easy to see how a discontinuity might have been introduced into a duplicate Dictabelt.

Ranftel and I were told that the A-2TC, like some other Dictaphones (but not all), included record and playback mechanisms in the same unit. If you are recording something, stop, go back and listen to what you just recorded, and start recording again, it is quite likely that you will not position the recording stylus in exactly the right place. Thus, part of the belt will get recorded on twice, or there will be a gap.

Even if you copy a Dictabelt without stopping, there will be a discontinuity if the needle used for playback skips. I would guess that this needle is driven differently from the recording stylus; we do know that Dictaphones can skip backwards on playback. The FBI said in 1964 that skipping was observed on the recordings of both channels. (Such skipping, resulting in the repetition of a few seconds of the signal, is very obvious on the "critics' tape" of Channel Two, which was recorded on a quite different system (a Gray Audograph).)





It would not be surprising if the DPD made duplicate Dictabelts for their own investigative use. (On the contrary, isn't it surprising that the original belts were allowed to become badly worn?) During duplication, little attention may have been paid to avoiding discontinuity, especially in sections where there were no intelligible voices.

Of course, one cannot reject out of hand the possibility that duplicate Dictabelts were substituted for the originals, for a less innocent purpose. Many years ago, I became curious about the information which might have been lost when the belts became badly worn - especially in the few minutes after the shooting, when the first descriptions of the suspect were broadcast. Also, I shared Sylvia Meagher's doubts about the authenticity of the messages to Tippit at 12:45 and 12:54, especially the latter (where he was given the presumably superfluous order to "be at large for any emergency that comes in.") Meagher argued persuasively that various DPD officers who should have known seemed for some time to be unaware of these messages. (See "Accessories," pp. 260-266, reprinted in "The Assassinations," pp. 62-71.)

As far as I know, nobody has even looked at the later Dictabelts to study these messages. It is not clear from the HSC volumes if the HSC took all the Dictabelts for November 22, or even if McCaghren had them all. (If any of you have information about the chain of possession of all the Dictabelts, please let me know.) Certainly all the Dictabelts should be examined for evidence that they are not originals. Is there any visible discontinuity at the time of the Tippit messages? Is the background noise the same as that of adjacent messages from the dispatcher?

#### (Other relevant tapes)

Perhaps it is no longer possible to determine if "hold everything secure" comes right after the shots on the original Dictabelt. (That is, wear on the belt in evidence may preclude a determination of continuity, or it may not be possible to tell if this belt is a copy.) Barger did compare the tape he used and the McCaghren Dictabelt, finding them "virtually identical" (8 HSC 62), but the comparison may not have been conclusive on the data now of interest. The comparison may have to be repeated, with special attention to possible skipping when the Dictabelt is played.

In any case, other tapes might provide evidence for the hypothesis that the timing anomaly was created (accidentally or not) when the recording was copied (either to another belt, or to tape).

The Secret Service copied both channels on or before November 29 - presumably before the Dictabelts became worn. That tape was sent to Washington for "filtering, rerecording and transcription." (SS 324) I tried to locate that tape in 1970, but neither the Archives nor the Secret Service could find it for me. For the Ramsey Panel, perhaps they would look harder.

It is always possible that a local radio station or police buff recorded the DPD traffic on November 22. I have heard vague rumors about such tapes, but nothing solid. Even if such a tape were fragmentary or of poor quality, it could be of value in settling the timing question.

Mack's letter in the August TCI discusses the indications that recordings with useful information may have been made of the Secret Service and Dallas Sheriff's radio channels.

#### (The Panel's handling of the Barber observation)

Barber made his observation in September 1980; it was soon made available to the Ramsey Panel and others. Bob Cutler's "Grassy Knoll Gazette" for March 1981 mentioned a 71-page paper, dated December 14, 1980, prepared by Todd Vaughan and Barber; it was based primarily on Barber's research. I have not yet seen this paper, but I gather that it covers much more than the basic "Hypothesis A" observation. Cutler indicated that he joined Barber and Vaughan in testing the hypothesis that the open microphone was on Hargis' cycle, not McLain's.



A chart drawn by Cutler and based on Barber's work was published in the January TCI. It obscured the simplicity of his basic observation by focusing on an apparent timing discrepancy, characterized as "coverup in extremis." As Mack pointed out in the February TCI, Cutler's timing analysis was obviously wrong, since it included the assumption that the 12:30 time check occurred at exactly 12:30:00.

I did not pay much attention to the Barber/Cutler analysis at that time. As early as December 1980, I had heard (from a source of uncertain reliability) that a researcher had been in contact with the NAS panel, and that the shots were "definitely not on the tape." On August 23, 1981, I ran into an acquaintance of mine who knows Alvarez well; he mentioned that Alvarez had proved that the "shots" were at the wrong time. Further inquiries established that the Barber observation was the basis for this claim.

There is nothing like the Barber observation in the FBI's rebuttal of the HSC analysis, released in December 1980. I now understand that the Ramsey Panel was aware of Barber's work by February 1981. Alvarez recently told me that the Panel was very much aware of Barber's observation, and was spending quite a bit of time on it.

I have not been able to determine what position the panel as a whole is likely to take. Alvarez is apparently not the only member leaning toward Hypothesis A. On the other hand, I expect that if there were no members who support the HSC conclusion, a report would have been released months ago. (The panel was originally supposed to file its report by January 31, 1981.)

Several people have already commented to me about Alvarez' participation on the panel, in light of his previous work on the case, and his public support of the Warren Commission's conclusions. (His 1976 paper summarizing his work, and mentioning my largely critical role in it, is reprinted at 1 HSC 428.)

Stephen White's book recounts the role of Alvarez and his work (notably the "jiggle analysis") in the preparation of the 1967 CBS special on the JFK case. The jiggle analysis was good, as far as it went, but Alvarez certainly knew that his own calculations were not the most refined that could be done, and that the technique was intrinsically incapable of distinguishing shots which came close together. It is almost impossible for any jiggle analysis to pick out both a shot from the knoll and a shot from the TSBD less than a second later.

Despite the limitations of his work, Alvarez gave CBS an on-camera summary of the meaning of what he had done which was certainly stronger than what was justified by the jiggle analysis:

"(Bill Stout, CBS) What does this finding mean to those of us who simply have followed the controversy over the assassination, and are not physicists?"

"(Alvarez) Well, to me, it means that there were indeed three shots fired, as the Commission said, [and that the shot that missed was the first one]." (White, p. 228) The support Alvarez expressed for the Warren Commission itself was certainly not a necessary consequence of his work as a physicist.

I feel that it is perfectly proper to have Alvarez on the Ramsey Panel, just as it was proper to have Cyril Wecht on the HSC's Forensic Pathology Panel. When I was a graduate student in Alvarez' high-energy physics group, the group as a whole - and Alvarez in particular - had a reputation for enthusiasm in finding errors in the work of others. We took that as a compliment, although it was not intended as one; the adversary method really does work in science. Alvarez should have been balanced on the panel by someone with a strong inclination to support the HSC's work; I do not know if that was done. However, I heard that someone in Washington offered the chair of the panel to Alvarez. That would really have been improper (although it would reflect poorly not on Alvarez but on the person making the offer). Even though I personally think that Alvarez is capable of changing his prior anti-conspiracy conclusion if the facts demand it, the appearance of a conflict of interest would have been great.



Alvarez seems to be one of the more active members of the panel. Although he is involved in much other work, he is an emeritus professor at Berkeley and presumably can devote as much time to the acoustics as he wants. Ramsey just reached the age of 66, and I don't know how much of his time is committed to other matters. I do not know the names of any of the other panel members.

I appreciate the benefits to the panelists of working with some privacy - without having to deal with, say, David Belin calling up to ask who they think shot Tippit. On the other hand, scientific work on a controversial topic like this should not be done in complete secrecy.

I would like to know who the other panelists are. If they are younger, some of them may have teaching and other commitments which have kept them from being active enough in the work of the panel - especially now that it has dragged on long past the original duration of four months (and, presumably, the original budget of \$23,360).

Also, I do not know how much expert time and money has been committed to the defense of the HSC's work. Barger's time is probably quite limited, since he works for a business, not a university. We can not simply assume that the panel members or the FBI will adequately check out all the technical points which can be raised in favor of the HSC's analysis.

(Possible future developments)

By some accounts, the panel has not yet voted on a conclusion or a final draft, and is actively pursuing the investigation without a firm deadline. On the other hand, there was a report a couple of weeks ago that the Panel report would be out "by mid-October, hopefully." More recently, I have heard "the end of October." In light of the constantly receding deadlines of the past year, I don't give much weight to any such reports; "October" might have been an estimate provided to the administrative people in Washington which did not accurately reflect the uncertainty of the Panel's current knowledge. It is not definitely known if the HSC's experts will be given the opportunity to comment on the Panel's report before it is released. Such a review might slow things down considerably.

I think that the critics should familiarize ourselves, and our friends in the press, with the technical, procedural, and political questions involved. Relevant factual information and technical suggestions should be brought to the attention of the Ramsey Panel, made public, and circulated.

Federal agencies have been required to solicit and consider public comments before changing even obscure regulations. Surely the Ramsey Panel should make its work public, solicit technical comments, and reconvene before reaching a final conclusion.

When the Panel was set up, the NSF said that it would submit its report to the Speaker of the House and to the Justice Department. The Justice Department has indicated that it will then perform a final review, and (in accordance with the HSC's recommendation) advise the House Judiciary Committee of its decision on further official investigation of the JFK case. I gather that there is a good possibility that there will be Congressional hearings on the Ramsey Panel report.

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Other news:

You may have heard about the exhumation of Oswald. (Out here, you couldn't avoid hearing about it!) Thanks to Gary Shaw, I have a good collection of the Dallas newspaper coverage. The only thing that really surprised me is that Eddowes did not charge that the KGB had fiddled with the dental records, or that they had killed the real Lee Harvey Oswald and sneaked his body back into the grave.

Other things have been happening too. I've got lots of clippings, documents, and other information to report, and I hope to have another issue of this newsletter out within a few weeks.

For example, Harold Weisberg has obtained and sent me the memo by Sheffield Edwards of the CIA on the now-famous briefing of RFK (on May 7, 1962), about the CIA's use of the Mafia. There is, I think, some interesting information which is new - e.g., that there was "reasonable monitoring" of Rosselli's activities, and information from "other sources" about what the "Cuban principals involved" knew. This memo was originally so sensitive that only one copy was retained by the CIA; now it has been released with no substantive deletions. (Weisberg has some related documents also.)

Thanks to everyone who has sent me material. Because of some major remodeling of our house, I have been extremely busy. I've gotten way behind on my correspondence, but hope to catch up soon.

For useful discussions on the acoustics, special thanks to Gary Mack, Robert Ranftel, Peter Dale Scott, and various others who (I am assuming) would prefer not to be named.

Feel free to distribute this newsletter. Some of the long-time readers may not have heard that I'll send EOC to anyone who covers my copying costs (at 5¢ per page) and postage - \$10 for a year should be about right.

Finally, an essay for your contemplation, on micro-assassination and macro-assassination:

**Peace, It's Wonderful!**

THAT JOYOUS phrase, the trademark of the late Father Divine, has been rattling around in my head since Sunday, certain one of the most beautiful days ever in this city of beautiful days. The clichés tumbled one upon the other: crisp, touch of autumn, brisk, bracing, "like wine" (yes) and also, best of all, "warm in the sun, cool in the shade." Peace, it's wonderful, and the signs are everywhere: a benign armada of sailboats heading back through the Gate, an outbound freighter (white superstructure shining like a castle) picking its way through butterfly wings, joggers gasping, bikers straining, children screaming with excitement as a great wave crashes against the sea wall at Fort Point, lashing them, with icy fingers.

A CITY at peace in a world prickly with weapons, like a cocktail olive studded with deadly toothpicks. You can forget this is the nuclear age, but not for long. The dread, the fear is always there, simmering in your subconscious, as you walk along the Golden Gate Promenade, listening to the gulls, looking back at the familiar soft curves of San Francisco. From Fort Point, "the new city" of downtown fortresses is invisible, save for Black Rock and the pyramid, and you remember, with a pang, the lovely profile that has largely disappeared. The rich and beautiful city of St. Francis, unspoiled, never attacked, targeted by Soviet missiles as we target the peaceful Russian cities.

FRANKLY, being mildly obsessed with Father Divine's happy phrase, I had planned to drone along today in some elegiac style or other, praising peace, decrying war as unthinkable, but then several things happened. Anwar Sadat, a courageous man of peace, was assassinated - "a sign," pontificated a radio commentator, "of the inherent instability of the Middle East" (we have had our share of assassinations, commentator; how unstable are we?). Peace, it's wonderful, and Anwar Sadat did his best to sustain it, but he was a marked man once he held out his hand to the enemy and said in the finest tradition of humanity, "Come, let us be friends."

OTHER THINGS happened: for one, the rising swell of revulsion at The Trillion-Dollar Follies going on in Washington in the fake name of "defense." Let's use the right word. War. Let us even suggest that the Reaganites are whipping up a fever in the honored ploy of "getting people's minds" off their domestic problems. We have seen it all before: the Yellow Peril, the Red Scare, the Missile Gap that wasn't. Now we are back on the merry-go-round, "catching up" with the Russians as they try to catch up with us. There is Caspar Weinberger on the tube, gaunt, harried, a crusading light in his eyes, trying to sound rational about madness.

IT IS TIME for somebody of stature to stand up and say "Stop." I have this feeling that the people are waiting for leadership - and a major step in that direction came Sunday, when a large part of San Francisco was frolicking on and along the bay. The call for sanity came from an unusual yet logical place: St. Mary's Cathedral, where the 800th anniversary of the birth of San Francisco's patron saint, Francis of Assisi, was being observed. The courageous words came from Archbishop John R. Quinn. This newspaper found them worthy of page six. What he said belongs on front pages everywhere.

"THE TEACHING of the Church is clear: nuclear weapons and the arms race must be condemned as immoral," said the Archbishop. He quoted from the Second Vatican Council: "Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and humankind." He remembered the warning of the German theologian, Romano Guardini, that "the preeminent human question for the last half of the 20th century would be whether we could develop the moral capacity to control the power we had created." Underlined Msgr. Quinn: "The faring here is important: our dilemma arises from the fact that we have created a vast military technology without thinking through its moral implications."

THE ARCHBISHOP is unflinching about the \$1.6 trillion budgeted for the Pentagon over the next five years: "In human terms, excessive spending on arms production takes lives just as surely as if the weapons produced had actually been put to use. The extreme poverty that is endured by one-third of the human race is in large part a direct by-product of an arms race out of control. The billions of dollars presently being spent on arms each year throughout the world is surely an appalling form of theft in a world where so many persons die each day of starvation and privation." A sentence deep from the heart: "My brothers and sisters, not only the peace of the world but the very survival of the human experiment is at stake."

AND SO we do have heroes. Archbishop Quinn, standing tall and speaking strong on a beautiful San Francisco Sunday, is one. Anwar Sadat, signing his own death warrant by going to Jerusalem, was another; it is impossible not to feel a great sense of personal loss - he seemed a good friend. Like Father Divine, he knew that peace is wonderful, and he died for it. Others will die for it, too, as surely as the waves crash against the sea wall at Fort Point, but it is now the only war worth fighting - the last battle.