

'We Accuse'

These are excerpts from an editorial published jointly during Holy Week by four publications: Christian Century, Christianity and Crisis, National Catholic Reporter and Commonweal. The editors say that the joint declaration is unique in religious journalism in this country and this fact indicates the deep concern of these publications about the continuing involvement of the United States in Vietnam.

—We accuse U. S. leaders of a total lack of proportion between ends sought and means used in Vietnam, and of deliberately closing their eyes to the almost incalculable human suffering which has resulted.

—We accuse two successive Administrations of treating politics as though it were a mass confidence game and of so gulling the public that most citizens now doubt the credibility of their own Government.

—We accuse the United States of taking the leading role in killing 25,000-35,000 civilians in South Vietnam in 1970 alone, and many thousands more over the decade; of wounding four times as many, perhaps a third of whom have been children under 13; of turning some five million people—try to count that high!—into refugees. Such acts are the discordant accompaniment to genteel appeals for humane treatment of American prisoners.

—We accuse the present Administration of cruel deception in claiming to be "winding down" a war by boasting of troop withdrawals while shifting the death and bloodshed to other peoples, caring only for American casualties, uprooting Asians in the path of American policy, proclaiming that air power will know no limitations except the final restraint of avoiding nuclear bombing.

—We accuse of absurd inconsistency those agents of power who piously preach against isolating this nation from the moral judgment of the community of nations. The real isolationism we must fear is America's throwing its weight around in the world, seeking to shape the world's destiny without invitation or consent.