

MESSAGE BY PABLO CASALS

Mr. Pablo Casals made the following personal statement to the Press yesterday in connection with his acceptance to participate in the United Nations Day Concert:

I CONSIDER it an honor to have been invited by the United Nations to take part in its anniversary celebrations, and I am grateful for this opportunity to address the people of the world on a subject that preoccupies each one of us.

If at my age I have come here for this day, it is not because anything has changed in my moral attitude or in the restrictions that I have imposed upon myself and my career as an artist for all these years, but because today all else becomes secondary in comparison to the great and perhaps mortal danger threatening all humanity. Never has the world been nearer to catastrophe than at this moment. The extraordinary scientific discoveries of our century which some great intellects, in their thirst for knowledge, have achieved, are now being exploited for the construction of instruments of monstrous destructiveness. Confusion and fear have invaded the whole world; misunderstood nationalism, fanaticism, political dogmas and lack of liberty and justice are feeding mistrust and hostility that make the collective danger greater every day; yet, the desire for peace is felt by every human being in the world. This desire has been manifested again and again in the face of the peril menacing all of us, by many distinguished personalities, in scientific writings, in the world Press, and above all by that great citizen of the world, Dr. Albert Schweitzer.

The anguish of the world caused by the continuation of nuclear danger is increasing every day; all realize the horrifying consequences of a nuclear war, which would cause not only irreparable material and physical destruction, but also moral and spiritual degradation. How I wish that there could be a tremendous movement of protest in all countries, and especially from the mothers, that would impress those who have the power to prevent this catastrophe.

All nuclear experiments ought to be stopped altogether and I profoundly hope that the negotiations in the near future will end in an agreement that will make this possible; only later, when calm and confidence have been re-established, then the work of the scientists could be taken up again, but only under such conditions as would benefit humanity.

In order to resolve their problems, the conflicting forces must regard as the basis for their discussions the inhumanity and uselessness of war that all people condemn. The biggest and most powerful nations have the greater duty and responsibility for keeping peace.

It is my deep conviction that the great masses in these countries, as in every other country, want the understanding and mutual co-operation of their fellow men. It is for the Governments and those in power to see to it that the achievement of this desire will not become impossible and thus cause the terrible frustration felt by all those who are not living in unconsciousness.

It seems to me that all those who believe in the dignity of man should act at this time in order to bring about a deeper understanding among peoples and a sincere "rapprochement" between conflicting

forces. The United Nations today represents the most important hope for peace. Let us give it all power to act for our benefit.

And let us fervently pray that the near future will disperse the clouds that darken our days now. Music, this marvelous universal language understood by everyone everywhere ought to be a source of better communication among men. This is why I make a special appeal to my fellow musicians everywhere, asking each one to put the purity of his art at the service of mankind in bringing about fraternal and enlightened relationships between men the world over.

The "Hymn to Joy" of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony has become a symbol of love. And I propose that every town which has an orchestra and chorus should perform it on the same day, and have it transmitted by radio to the smallest communities and to all corners of the world; and to perform it as another prayer through music for the Peace that we all desire and wait for.

New York, 24 October 1958.