

## A WORD FOR THE COMMON GOOD

After one day last week of shocking violence the town of Asbestos is quiet again. The Riot Act provisions have been lifted and the townspeople are free to move about again and to discuss together the happenings of Thursday, the arrest of some of their sons, and the future of the town.

These are obvious subjects of conversation in the circumstances. More important, however, are conversations looking to an end of the disastrous strike, conversations that will get men back to work, turn the wheels of industry and start Asbestos back on the road to prosperity. These do not seem to be taking place, or, if they are being held, are being held in secret. But surely the workers in Asbestos, the companies concerned, the Government and the Church, which intervened actively a week or more ago, are under some obligation to let the public know whether any steps are being taken to end this deadlock.

We should have thought that Thursday's violence would have shocked the whole community into awareness of the need for settling this dispute quickly by compromise. It can only be settled by compromise and we should look now for proposals from labor, industry, Government and Church leading to compromise. None seems to have been made and Asbestos is right back where it was before the outbreak of violence.

This dispute has been a startling example of what happens when parties to a dispute just sit tight, refuse to negotiate, stand on assumed rights and let the common good go hang. The method is socially wrong if only that it gets nowhere.

Listen to the voice of Pope Pius on this issue of the common good. Yesterday in Rome, His Holiness addressed a gathering of Roman Catholic employers from Britain, Canada, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Italy. What he said might have been said deliberately in the context of the asbestos strike:

“The doctrine of the church demands of all foresight and clairvoyance, a strong measure of common sense, above all a strong reaction to the temptation for each to look to his own advantage at the expense of others and to the detriment of the common good.

“With equal solicitude we see come to us, one by one, the workers and the representatives of industrial organizations. The opinion, unhappily too widely spread, that between them there is an irreparable opposition of divergent interests is erroneous and sad in its consequences.”

The application to the Asbestos situation of a little of the common sense about which His Holiness speaks would promote the common good.

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