

## II

### THE MIDDLE AGES: THE APPROACH TO THE TRUCE OF GOD.

**T**HE more than one thousand years from Constantine's reign until the close of the Hundred Years' War records the decline of the nationalism of Rome, and the rise of Christian Civilization throughout Western Europe, and finally the return to nationalism. This long period of history cannot be represented as a period of peace but as one seeking peace, seeking limitation as to just cause in war and, with it, limitation consistent with the just peace.

The races of Western Europe were as diverse as they are today. They were as vigorous. Their primitive instincts for war had by no means disappeared. Their militant claim for justice and right was never silent. It was persistent. Feudal society sought to create order but often failed within itself. Still the story is one of creative and courageous continuity. When the invaders from beyond the Alps had been held in check, and the Saracens' thrust driven back to southern Spain and to Africa, there prevailed probably the longest period of continued progress, invention, and development our history reveals.

From the beginning of the ninth century well on to the close of the fourteenth century, Christian civilization with its architecture and its art came into completeness, slowly, steadily, and surely. Increasing because of like understanding of values and undertakings common to all the people, it grew up in many regions separate and remote from each

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other. Each region had its local nature, but an all-pervading clarity of purpose gave to each a similar directness. As one innovation, expressing form more beautifully or function more correctly, was completed in one region, it soon became inspiration to another region. They interacted by their creative suggestion, one upon another, bringing new advances constantly into the architecture of the early Middle Ages. With them came the enthusiasm which noble work engenders, an enthusiasm which extended throughout all Western Europe through the twelfth century and continued on to culminate in the glories of the Gothic of the thirteenth century.

We must recall once more that these years were not of all-pervading peace and quiet. Medieval architecture and art came by men and material and not by magic. The times were rich with rivalries of small and diverse type, controversies rather than wars, but not without casualties. These controversies were frankly recognized and justice was sought. The search for the just peace continued. I feel that it was because the progress and creative construction were paralleled by continual Christian effort to promote justice and to establish peace, that the devastation of war was avoided and that races never rose in fury against races within the boundaries of Christian Europe.

The history of the architecture of the Middle Ages has its beginning in the Rome of Constantine's time. The structural science of Rome remained the major influence for many years, and its strength, though in ruin, influenced by example the forms of the Romanesque. Even as Rome left to the succeeding ages its influence in architecture, so, too, it had suggested inquiry as to causes of war, though that inquiry was little recognized, and certainly played no part in the political history of the empire. In the first century B.C., Cicero had voiced opinion as to just causes for war. His

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opinion was that war to be a just war should be waged for defense or for revenge, and be accompanied by formal declaration. In the four centuries which elapsed from Cicero to Constantine, the Roman Empire did not avoid war, but by war became more extended. Defense was little indicated as necessary cause to begin war. The boundaries widened until after the reign of Trajan, and then began to shrink. Decay from within, rather than attack from without, continued after Trajan until it reached the dismal state which followed Diocletian's retirement and resulted in six rulers, three in the West and three in the East. Out of the wars which these rulers waged against each other Constantine emerged sole emperor of both Rome in the West and Rome in the East. As Constantine came to the last battle of his campaign for the mastery of the empire in the West, history records his vision of the symbol of the cross, high in the heavens, and bearing the legend "In hoc signo vinces." In the sign of the cross his victory was won. His first official edict after that victory was to grant tolerance to Christians and to the Christian Church throughout his empire. This act of 312 A.D. marked the beginning of more than a millennium of Christian progress which was to extend throughout all Western Europe.

Within a few years the early Christian churches of Rome were built and in a few more years Constantine chose the Greek city of Byzantium as his capital, leaving Rome in the West to decline amid invasion and decay. From the City of Rome, which for centuries had seemed to be eternal, Honorius, emperor in the West, took refuge in Ravenna. When Rome fell to the barbarian, Ravenna carried on the torch of classic culture under Christian canons. From that center for the next three centuries spread the forms which were to create the architecture and art of the Romanesque in

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Italy and to influence to a great degree the churches of Spain and France.

The period of the rise of Ravenna and the decline of Rome was contemporary with the writings of Saint Augustine. From those writings comes the earnest inquiry as to what is just war and what can be just peace. As to war, Saint Augustine held that failure of a city or nation to chastise its subjects for a wrongful act was cause to enter war to avenge the injustice; and equally true as a just cause of war was failure to restore that which had been taken unjustly. The just peace should follow when these punishments have been meted out in the first case, or the restoration has been made in the second case. Revenge does not appear in Saint Augustine's philosophy of war, as it did appear in Cicero's.

Two centuries after Saint Augustine the Christian position as to just war is confirmed by the Bishop of Seville, Isidore, with the addition of another just cause, that of invasion of territory, a defensive war. Possibly Isidore was more clear in refuting Cicero's purpose of revenge. He held that anger and fury are causes of unjust wars, implying that the just war must have valid reason.

With the opinions as to just war, we find the early churchmen expressing equally clear and simple opinions as to justice. Their opinion was that "justice is a quality of the will of God." From an old document, Professor A. T. Carlyle gives us this translation: "It is the Divine will which gives to each man his *Jus* (strict law), for it is the good and beneficial Creator who grants to men to seek to hold, and to use what they need, and it is He who commands men to give such things to each other and forbids men to hinder their fellows from enjoying them." It is upon such a foundation the early Middle Ages strove to build a civilization which would be consistently Christian. This was the background of the

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building of Western Europe throughout the five centuries from Constantine's time until the ninth century. Churches were built throughout northern Italy, northern and central Spain, throughout France and the Rhineland and England. They were small but strong. They were somewhat similar to the round arched forms remaining from Roman ruins spread over these countries. They were many rather than few, and were centers from which civilization could become stronger.

In Italy invasion by the Langobards interrupted progress throughout the latter part of the eighth century as in Spain and southern France the Saracen invasion had interrupted progress in the early part of that century. In Italy the Langobards built their capitol at Pavia, accepted Christianity, and became valiant defenders of the faith as well as able builders. The Saracens were defeated by the French under Charles Martel, driven to the south of Spain, and never again became a menace to medieval life. Even as today Christian Europe seeks shelter underground, so at Arles and at Montmajour, St. Trophime led his parishioners to the caves until the Saracens were driven out. Centuries later the church of St. Trophime became glorious in its beauty.

As the tenth century was reached, Western Europe entered a period in which a Christian culture, which had sustained itself well, could emerge from its dark ages with convictions more clear and capable of cementing unity of purpose. To reach such unity while all were engaged in building with enthusiasm and joy, a system of law or procedure for public order became a real need. Invasion and its consequences had interrupted the slowly maturing pattern of government. The last of the invasions was that of the Normans in the ninth century, when they spread ruin over north-

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western France, and its effects extended throughout all that land. The need for mutual protection, the need of the weak for the help of the strong and the need of the strong for the help and assistance of the weak, brought into being the feudal system and established the feudal society. Its foundation was that of loyalty one to the other. It consisted of a group of customs embracing the political and the economic side of life. It was a system of personal relationship, involving land holding, military defense, and justice.

Of the feudal system, Carlyle writes, "Human life in its deepest and largest terms cannot be lived on principles of utility and contract. Whether in the family or in the nation the actual working of human life is impossible without the sense of loyalty and devotion." Feudalism's first principle was that of personal loyalty and devotion. This was supported by a mutual bargain, a contract. They appear contradictory, but as a working system feudalism was fair; the vassal agreed to certain duties and was bound only on the condition that the feudal lord performed his obligation to the vassal. The principle was one of mutual obligation and justice. It was completely a Christian conception and the antithesis of monarchy, either absolute or autocratic. Over and above the mutual contract of service and loyalty there was the principle of justice as it came from the earlier Christian writers; that authority—political authority—was derived from God. Its duty was maintenance of justice; and justice was the will of God.

The feudal system prevailed until beyond the thirteenth century. It was the manner of political authority throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries. During these centuries the power of achievement of the people was great indeed. The reality of the constructive mind at work is revealed in all the countries of Western Europe. Everywhere appears

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the expression of increasing skill to create noble works. The churches of Lombardy, France, Spain, or England are vigorous works, impressive by their adequacy and abundant power. This is the quality in the cloisters of Le Puy, the nave of Mainz, the choir of Durham, the apse of Salamanca, and the portals of St. Trophime at Arles. The eleventh and the twelfth centuries mark a glorious period of transition, a period of action. Expressive as was the work at Santiago de Compostella and at St. Sernin, Toulouse, the glories of St. Gilles, and of the West Front of Chartres go further in complete revelation of religious allegories. In this civilization, intense in creative imagination, powerful in expressive masonry showing permanence of purpose, living under a system of loyalty and devotion cemented by justice, I think we can find human qualities of lasting value. Possibly in this civilization of the later Middle Ages lies pattern, long discarded, yet prophetic, for the post-war world after this war, when the problems of the just peace shall be pressing.

Again we must recall that the Middle Ages were not without controversies, not all peace and quiet. Feudalism was not without its failures. First among these was that the military part of the contract between vassal and lord led to many and diverse problems, not the least of which was its use in private quarrels. These controversies and contests became frequent and defeated the principles of justice. Once more the opinions of the just war and the just peace parallel the progress of the age. Concerning the just war, a new interpretation appears at the Council of Clermont near the close of the eleventh century. This council included, as a just war, a war waged against the infidel. Saint Augustine's causes for war were just and reasonable. Saint Isidore extended them only to include invasion of a people's territory by the enemy, but also limited them as to anger or fury.

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Such causes he held to be unjust. So the inclusion of wars against the infidel among the wars which had just cause was politic. Its purpose was to give sanction to the Crusades, those six religious wars which depleted Western Europe of its strength and accomplished little. The same Council of Clermont sought to find a way to feudal peace. One solution was the holy war, the Crusade, whereby the more gallant fight-loving men of Europe might honorably withdraw from local feuds to foreign wars. The other solution was to set up a practical procedure of peace at home among those who remained. This solution was the Truce of God.

The plans of peace in the earlier centuries had been the Church's peace, whose penalty had been penance, and later the Peace of God, which created sanctions for protection of persons, property, and animals, particularly of the property of the Church. The penalties under the Peace of God were restoration and penance and, in cases of extreme discipline, excommunication from the church. Lawlessness had not been eliminated entirely by either of these means to peace.

Both the Peace of the Church and the Peace of God proved inadequate for the problems of the twelfth century. They were followed by the Truce of God. The Truce of God, confirmed at Clermont in 1095, had its origin in Normandy at the City of Caen some years before. It declared permanent peace for all churches and their grounds, the monks, clerks, and chattels, all women, pilgrims, merchants and their servants, cattle and horses, and men at work in the fields. For all others, truce was required throughout the Advent season, the Lenten season and from the beginning of Rogation until eight days after Pentecost. By the middle of the twelfth century, as the practice of the Truce of God became more effective, the number of truce days was in-

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creased, until only some eighty days in the year were allowed for fighting.

Amid controversies such as those which had required the limitations set by the Truce of God, constructive progress would appear to be a paradox.

This was the age when John of Salisbury declared that the prince or the king is such, not because he can do unjust things, but because it is essential for him to do justice not out of fear but from love of justice. In the generation of John of Salisbury, Chartres was being built, and in the generation which followed, the cathedrals of Paris, Bourges, and Bayeux were being advanced, and in the following generation, Rheims and Amiens became the fulfillment of Gothic Art.

Still again we must recall that these were not years of peace, and also remember that medieval architecture came from men and material and not from magic. It is amazing that men chose to create it and to build it well. I have visited camps of our armed forces in recent months. I have found there a clarity which is apart from America's way of a year past. It is so far different from the city of today or of the city of yesterday, that it makes our pre-war cities seem Victorian. These camps and these forces work and act, not fearing death, but determined that it shall not dim nor defeat just solution of the problem of war. It is the Truce of God again in action.

In the middle of the thirteenth century St. Thomas Aquinas challenged the Truce of God in that he held it was lawful to wage war for purpose of safeguarding the commonweal on holidays and feast days. At this point we are at the crux of the truth. We find men, especially those of the nations of Western Europe, still persist in fighting. We find that a manner of truce or limitation has been set up.

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We find civilization at one of its extreme high levels in philosophy, in religion, and in creative construction. No age has followed which approached it. No age which has followed has faced all three problems at once and honestly. War and peace, with creative construction and Christian civilization, required for solution the quality of justice, and justice was still understood as a quality of the will of God. The ages which have followed the thirteenth century have more and more omitted this third quantity in their attempted solutions.

The Middle Ages were terminated by the devastation resulting from the Hundred Years' War between France and England. It was not only a long war but one almost devoid of purpose. It was one of confused claims, largely personal, of repeated short periods of peace, and ended with the English losing possessions or territories claimed in France. Its outcome was far more important. It terminated the medieval manner of life. It set up national boundaries and Nationality in place of Christianity. For centuries even amid controversy Western Europe had found a creative civilization under Christian leadership sufficiently though loosely united. Under these conditions it had reached an amazing beauty. In its place came the principles of nationalism, race against race, and country against country. We find a corresponding change, developing at once following the close of the Hundred Years' War, in the fundamental principles of just war and just peace and justice. There arises the Machiavelian principle that a war which is necessary is a just war. This is the beginning of the centuries of confused thought which have controlled Western Europe since the sixteenth century. A prophecy very accurate concerning the course of Western Europe through the last four centuries occurs in Erasmus when he states, "It seems to be cause enough to commence a

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just and necessary war that a neighboring land is in a more prosperous, flourishing and free condition than your own.”

Professor Charles Howard McIlwain holds that a medieval king was sworn to treat the common law as beyond his competence to create or to abridge; therefore his powers were limited. This was the old principle that a king might do wrong, but in doing so he was no longer a king but a tyrant. At the end of the sixteenth century, Professor McIlwain explains, the power has changed. To kings belong authority over all men. This authority over all men, called absolute authority, gives rise to the final position of just cause for war. It makes it possible for war to be considered just on both sides. It leads to the further inclusion among just causes of war of the term, “Reasons of State.” Out of reasons of state have come the almost continual wars of the nations of Western Europe: wars for conquest in the continents of North and South America, wars for conquest in the continents of Asia and Africa, wars between the nations of Europe which became the outcome of such wars for colonial possession, wars between the colonial or conquered peoples and the European nations which had conquered them, and finally the wars between the nations of Europe based on a system of the balance of power, the outcome of reasons of state. These wars of balance of power have made European nations that were allies in one generation enemies in another, without reason or guidance that could compare with any medieval foundation of just war, just peace, or justice. At the close of the Middle Ages before the Hundred Years’ War, the Truce of God was the principle upon which civilization was maintained. Since the Hundred Years’ War the principle of reasons of state and all of its unfortunate progeny have produced continual conflict.

The tragic climax of the history of Western Europe

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seemed to be reached when in 1914 the World War began. Through the years from 1914 to 1918, the embattled forces involved many nations far from the boundaries of Western Europe. And so as we see it today, we call it the First World War, while we are now engaged in what we call the Second World War. This present one is still more extensive in its coverage of the entire globe and involves nations which know little of each other and, in many cases, lands which seem to be discovered or at least explored in time of battle. Among the many writings of the late Ralph Adams Cram, who was the architect of the Rice Institute, I know of no prophecy which seems to have been more amazingly accurate than the one which occurs in his *Heart of Europe*, which was written in 1915 and deals with that beautiful section of north central and northeastern France which was the principal battleground of the last war. It extended north from Amiens and Rheims into southern Belgium and eastward into the Rhineland beyond Aix-la-Chapelle and on to Cologne. At the close of the Middle Ages and for some two centuries afterwards, this beautiful land was rich in its churches, its villages and towns, and its industries which were the industries of peace. In the nineteenth century it became a land of coal and iron and of what coal and iron can produce. "Not happiness, not character, not culture; neither philosophy nor religion nor art. Machines—appalling and ingenious complications of wheels and cogs and valves and pistons, that made more of their kind, together with unheard-of engines of death and mutilation." It was this land that the nations fought for back and forth, England with France and Belgium against the troops of Germany and Austria to possess coal and iron and all that they meant. From this picture Cram derives his prophecy. "Suppose that the unestimated energy of a million years

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stored in the bowels of the earth be applied to the dull iron and to the harnessing of the mysterious electrical force, under the stimulus of Will emancipated from the hampering influence of a discredited religion and a superstitious ethic, and given supreme direction over soul and mind and body and named Efficiency, and suppose for two generations the energy employed blindly and to no consistent end by dull nations, be applied by the highest and most self-sacrificing intelligence to the creation of a supreme, perfect, and absolutely coordinated engine that, at the well-conceived moment, shall be brought to bear without pity and without pause on the inferior nations of the globe. What then?"

Today to the powers of coal and iron there has been added the power of oil. The battle for possession has extended beyond the Heart of Europe to the vast outlying islands and barren lands of Asia. The "supreme, perfect and coordinated engine" that Cram prophesied has come into being in the airplane fortress of war. "The Will emancipated from the influence of discredited religion and superstitious ethic" appears with Hitler. When in 1939, Germany invaded Poland and later the neighboring nations to the southeast and in 1940 swept over Belgium, Holland, and France, it was "the well-conceived moment" and "without pity and without pause." It was made possible by the "coordinated engine" of hundreds of bombing planes with their death-dealing armament, wiping out defenses that had appeared adequate but proved totally inadequate. The possibility of war and the constant fear that there would be a return to war had hung as a menacing cloud over all Europe for more than ten years. Its reality rocked the foundations of the entire world when France fell.

Fearing that the Treaty of Versailles had not been broad enough nor just enough to prevent future wars in

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Western Europe, efforts were made to supplement it in the decade following its signing. The covenant of the League of Nations sought to provide that the principles of just cause of war be recognized and that peaceful solution be attempted in any future controversies. In principle the League of Nations' highest aim might be considered as trying to impose the observation of justice between nations as it had been written by Vattel in the middle of the eighteenth century. "All nations are then strictly obliged to cultivate justice with respect to each other, to observe it scrupulously, and carefully to abstain from everything that may violate it. Every one ought to render to others what belongs to them, to respect their rights, and to leave them in the peaceable enjoyment of them." Vattel's splendid avowal of justice between nations seems to repeat very clearly the opinion of the early churchmen as we have cited it before. However, the system of balance of power and its modern derivatives wrecked the League of Nations. A last effort was made to recover a way of peace by recalling the principle of the Truce of God. This was the solution sponsored by Secretary of State Kellogg and the French premier, Briand. The Kellogg-Briand pact had a noble purpose. It sought limitations as to time in war such as had been successful under the Truce of God. The pact sought the acceptance of all nations. It sought time for cooling off the hasty hatreds of men or nations into milder controversy with the view of reaching an approach to justice. The long prevailing reasons of state however were too strong in the philosophy of nations and as a result the Kellogg-Briand pact was not given support when it was so urgently needed to stem the tide toward what has become the Second World War.

So it is that amazing developments became possible within

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the heart of Europe, developments whereby mechanical skill directed by "the Will unhampered by religion" began to produce armaments and armies of amazing magnitude. Strange indeed is the degree to which the power and inventiveness in engines of war multiplied in the midst of a muddled Europe. Finally at the "well-conceived moment" they were directed "without pity and without pause" against Poland, Belgium, Holland, and France.

I know of no more vivid picture than that of Antoine de Saint Exupéry, the able flier of France, which he recounts in his *Flight to Arras*. It was written at the time that the German invasion was at its height and the French air force was approaching extinction. His was one of the last flights for reconnaissance. His plane was too poorly armed to give battle. He tells of his return from hours amid conflict and waves of anti-aircraft fire. From a devastated land of fire and ruin he returns to the still unharmed land of France far behind the battle lines, a land teeming with refugees seeking safety toward the south. "Already as I move in the direction of Arras, peace is beginning to take shape. Not that well-defined peace which, like a new period in history, follows upon a war decorously terminated by a treaty. This is a nameless peace that stands for the end of everything. For an end of things that go on endlessly ending. It is an impulse that little by little finds itself bogged down. There is no feeling that either a good or bad conclusion is on the way. Quite the contrary. Little by little the notion that this putrefaction is provisional gives way to the feeling that it may be eternal. The peace that is on its way is not the fruit of a decision reached by man. It spreads apace like a gray leprosy."

The mechanical forces unleashed in this Second World War in all the lands and seas of the globe and the airs over

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the globe have multiplied far beyond man's power to comprehend except as efficient means of death and destruction. These forces represent a misconceived direction of man's destiny and purpose amid the long confusion, social, political, and economic which has prevailed since the first World War. Man has become a transient, as it were, in no-man's land. The quality of justice as a quality of the will of God has become too distant to be a part of the programs of prime ministers or political leaders; for them the expedient seems the solution. But the expedient for one nation becomes the impairment of another.

In the field of creative construction the same mechanical nature produced a dull manner which became the embodiment of the temporary; that buildings were built to express noble purpose and noble aspiration seemed impossible. Haste to provide flow lines for the immediate year was the prize solution for architecture problems. Scarcely a single lasting quality worthy of measurement with the enduring work of the Middle Ages has risen among the myriad of works of recent years. In this field of creative construction, Charles Maginnis recently wrote an amazing parallel to the words of Saint Exupéry. Maginnis was describing the architecture of today. "It is too immediate—fit mostly for things that end tomorrow. It has no language for our dreams, for those higher flights of the spirit that are the signs of our eternal striving. Architecture has been freed from the tyranny of history to find another tyranny in the passing hour."

In conclusion it is appropriate to compare these opinions of Maginnis and Saint Exupéry and to repeat, in comparison with them, our findings concerning the civilization of the twelfth century. There we find that in creative imagination powerful in expressive masonry declaring permanence

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of purpose and with a system of loyalty and devotion cemented by justice there existed human qualities of lasting value. We further suggested that in this civilization of the later Middle Ages might lie pattern, long discarded, with prophetic meaning for the post-war world after this war, when the problems of the just peace shall be pressing. We began our history of the Middle Ages with the Rome of Constantine, and particularly at the end of a series of wars and campaigns which brought Constantine to his last victory under the vision of the symbol of the cross high in the heavens. It was not a world at peace, but a world at war, and at its end came the constructive act of tolerance to Christians and to the Christian church throughout the Roman world. Throughout the next thousand years there did not prevail peace, but there matured a civilization of rich and enduring value.

This, the Second World War, has proved the world to be round. It finds men fighting everywhere, men of all races and of all creeds. It finds men of every land and in the distant islands with their eyes lifted to the heavens both by day and by night, not seeking the cross or symbol of peace, but scanning for the friendly or the hostile plane which shall either protect or destroy the defense of life and property. For the day our thoughts are upon our ability or inability to produce more and more powerful planes with more power to destroy and certainly not with power to create. As I see the tradition of the Middle Ages with its pattern and promise of a way of life, much of its meaning appears to have passed from our manner of thought. In war or in peace a Christian civilization can find solution only by recalling that solution requires the quality of justice and that justice must be understood as a quality of the will of God. And so in a symbolic manner let us hope that when the problems of

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peace shall again arise there shall be seen by all men, those on the earth and those flying high in the distant stratosphere, a symbol still above all of them and visible to all of them. That symbol shall not be of narrow meaning, but in the simple geometry of the cross shall represent, not boundaries of creed, but universal understanding of justice. It shall be the symbol of justice which is the eternal quality of the will of God, a symbol which shall lead men to create and not to destroy. "In hoc signo vinces."

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