

## Peace award for Focolare Movement founder

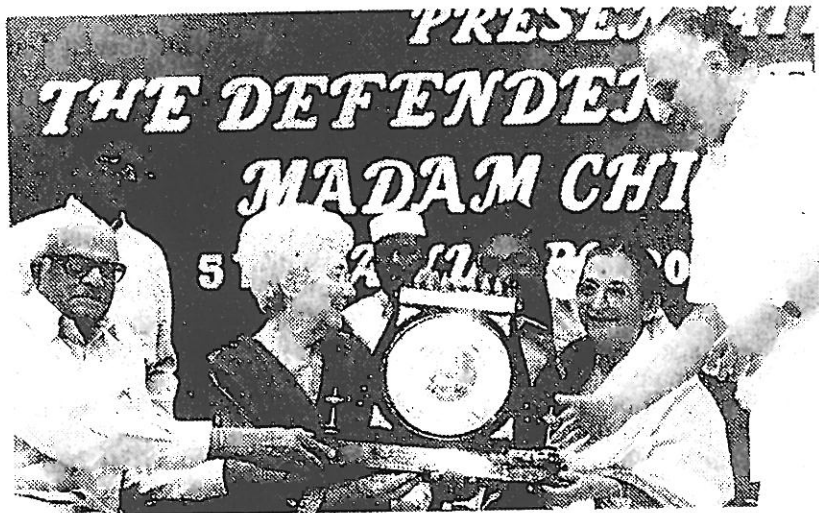
By Our Special Correspondent

**COIMBATORE, JAN. 5.** The Founder of the Focolare Movement, Madam Chiara Lubich, today lamented that the world was facing too many "tragic divisions" and facing decline and crises "immersed, as it is, in materialism, consumerism and indifference".

She was delivering her acceptance speech after receiving the "Defender of Peace Award" from the Shanti Ashram here. Madam Lubich said unity was the keynote of the 58-year-old movement, which aimed at a "more united world".

"The coming millennium might see the building of a civilization worthy of the human persons. We can and must do this and we shall see how the tears shed this century have prepared the ground for a new springtime of the human spirit."

She pleaded for a love "that must be given to every one. It does not admit exceptions". She said people of various cultures, including those who did not have any particular religious faith were



**The Focolare Movement founder, Madam Chiara Lubich, receiving the "Defender of Peace Award" from the president of Shanti Ashram, Mrs. Minoti Aram, in Coimbatore on Friday.**

involved in the movement to safeguard values that "we have in common: solidarity, peace, human rights and freedom".

The president, Makkal Sarvodaya Iyakkam, Dr. N. Markandan, reading out the citation said using the most powerful human force of love and strong faith in the unity

of all humankind as espoused in the teachings of Jesus Christ, Madam Lubich played a tireless role in sowing the seeds of peace and love among all.

He pointed out that since the World War II, she had worked ceaselessly for the cause of love and understanding.