

ChristianityImportance of study of religion in general, Christianity in particular

,Religion is one of the characteristics which can be used with advantage to describe differences among societies because no society is without sacred beliefs and because these beliefs and practices usually permeate all parts of a culture. Religion is a set of beliefs and explanations of those spheres of life which man cannot control or about which he does not have, or cannot obtain knowledge. Since every human being, in order to be happy, must have satisfactory explanations for his past, present existence and future, religion has an important function. In addition to being a group of ideas and concepts which give logic, consistency, and meaning to life, religion also includes rules of conduct which guide behavior.

"People from all civilized countries of the earth have consulted me. I have treated many hundreds of patients. Among my patients in the second half of life -- that is to say over thirty five, there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that everyone of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given their followers and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook" = Dr. Carl Jung.

We should know Christian religion better because it is the religion of about one third of the world's population.

It diagnoses man's disease more accurately, so it provides the remedy more adequately.

Sole Qualification

TOKYO, May 21 - A 37-year old Japanese has earned a doctor's degree for the study of human soles, writes AP. Ovaichiro Hirasawa of Shizuoka University has put in 15 year's study on the subject.

"You can judge a person's personality and health by looking at his sole", he says.

A person in top condition has his body weight equally distributed over his sole, while in a troubled person the distribution is unequal, Hirasawa theorizes.

Life of Jesus Christ

Ever since its birth almost 2,000 years ago, Christianity has enched its beliefs on two forceful convictions that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that God sent Christ to earth to live as humans live, suffer as humans suffer, die for mankind's redemption and gloriously rise again. These two interlocked ideas separate Christianity from all other religions.

To Christians Jesus is not just the 'founder' of Christianity but the essence of it. Adam and Eve, by disobeying God sinned. In his wrath God expelled them from Paradise and thus they and all posterity came to know death, which is not a condition of nature, but the result of sin. At the same time God foretold the coming of a Redeemer. This Redeemer and Saviour was Jesus, sent to bring salvation, to atone for the sins of all mankind, and thus to open to all mankind the door to eternal life. He was, as the Son of God, divine. But he was also truly human, though He had been conceived by the Holy Ghost and born to the Virgin Mary, and Himself was free of the stain of original sin. The early years of Jesus Christ which began in the stable at Bethlehem were in the main uneventful. Then when he was about 30, the carpenter of Nazareth emerged and began to unfold His message. In this climatic period of His earthly life, which may have lasted no more than three years, Christ revealed Himself as a man of simple speech but profound wisdom, as a story-teller, who could enthral multitudes and as a being of all embracing compassion and love. It was His lot as a Redeemer that He should suffer. He was born poor. He toiled. He was tempted by the devil. He knew hunger. He thirsted. He sank from pain, and in the Garden of Gethsemane He asked, "O My Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." As He suffered on the Cross, he cried: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He died in agony. Not until after His death and Resurrection did Christ's life reveal its true purpose. Then His Words, "Because I live, ye shall live also" took on their full significance. Ever since through changing times and succeeding generations, the impact of His Life and words has lifted men to unexpected heights and illumined their lives and works with beauty.

The most famous of all Christ's discourses was the Sermon on the Mount. Among many other notable passages, it includes the Beatitudes (Blessed are the poor in spirit, etc.) and the Lord's prayer. It is a wonderful exposition of the message of Jesus as Teacher and Saviour.

Throughout his relatively brief ministry on earth, Jesus worked an outstanding number of miracles. He did not perform them to win followers, or to impress important people but in compassion and in response to simple faith in Him. Even among Christians, attitudes toward His miracles have varied greatly, but these stories have played a large part in the spread of Christianity.

Christ, the founder of Christianity was of the Jewish race and was brought up under the teachings of Jewish laws. His teaching by parables was a Jewish inheritance; many of His Rules for human conduct had been uttered by the Hebrew Prophets, e.g. the Ten Commandments, before him. His great work was to reinterpret, humanize and illumine Jewish teachings; to reveal God to man as He had never been before revealed; to give an old and tired world new faith and hope, or in his own words, a mere 'abundant life'.

The Last Judgment

Jesus Christ in all his glamour will appear again on the day of the Last Judgment, seated on a heavenly throne, flanked by his apostles and saints, when the Cherubim will summon the dead to judgment.

Definition of Christianity

We may define Christianity as the ethical, historical, universal, monotheistic, redemptive religion, in which the relation of God and man is mediated by the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. This definition needs further clarification.

a) Christianity ethical, not natural religion: Religions may first/^{of}all be distinguished according to the goods, or good which they offer to man. Where prayers and offerings are made to spirits or Gods to obtain such earthly boons as Food, Health, safety, etc., the religion may be described as natural. Where, instead of these or along with these, the Gods or

Spirits are conceived as capable of bestowing the moral and religious blessings of forgiveness of sin, strength in temptation, their own fellowship with their worshippers, etc., the religion may be spoken of as 'ethical'.

As Christianity is above all concerned about the inner life of man in God, it is ethical.

b) Christianity historical, not spontaneous: Again religions may be distinguished as spontaneous or historical; spontaneous religion grow up along with the evolution of the tribe or the nation, without the predominant action of any individual teacher or law-giver. Historical religion begins in the life, teaching or work of a religious genius, who so impresses his personality on what he transmits as to give it a new character and influence. Confucius in China, Gautama Buddha in India, Zeroster in Persia, Mohammed in Arabia, may be mentioned as such founders of historical religions. In no religion are the person and work of the founder of such significance and value as in the Christian.

c) Christianity Universal, not national: Among the historical religions we may make a further distinction into: National and Universal. The beliefs and customs of a religion may be so bound up with characteristics and national peculiarities as to impose, by its very nature, a limitation in the practicable expansion of the religion, e.g. Hinduism in India and Confucianism in China.

Buddhism and Islam both claim to be universal in character, and so have shown themselves missionary in effort as rivals to Christianity. But on closer examination neither proves itself as suitable for a world religion as Christianity does. Buddhism, a monastic system, reflecting in its purpose and method alike the pessimism of the Indian temperament is unfitted for the role of inspiring and directing any progressive society. Islam too, is both in creed and code so bound up with the peculiarities of Arab thought and life, that unless it should undergo a thorough transformation, it could not be expected to win acceptance in any highly cultured and civilized society.

Christianity has shown that on the one hand, it meets the needs of the soul of man as no other religion does, and that on the other hand, it can adapt itself in so doing to varying conditions as no other can. It appears now as the only religion that can properly claim universality.

d) Christianity monotheistic: One reason for this universality of Christianity is its monotheistic character. This it shares with Judaism and Islam but with some reservations. Although in popular belief and speech the christian doctrine of the Trinity, or preferably tri-unity i.e. God as Father, Son and the Holy Ghost has often come previously near triethism, yet christianity is essentially monotheistic, maintaining the unity of God as a Cardinal Doctrine.

e) Christianity redemptive: Man is even in his earthly life conscious of the reality of physical evil in manifold forms, from which he desires protection and deliverance. As his moral development advances, he becomes aware of evil or sin in himself, and feels his need of being saved from it. Although this sense of his danger cannot be regarded as the sole motive of religion, yet there can be no doubt that no religion can satisfy the whole man unless it offers him redemption from evil-physical or moral, whichever he may feel most keenly.

Christianity emphasizes moral evil as the root of man's unhappiness, insists on loving fellowship with God as Life's highest good, promises an immortality of glory and blessedness with God, offers the forgiveness of sin and the renewal of the soul of man by the grace of God received by human faith, and reveals and realizes that Divine Grace in the sacrificial death of Christ and His continued living presence in His Spirit. It diagnoses man's disease more accurately, so it provides the remedy more adequately.

f) Christianity centers in Christ's mediation : In Christianity, on the one hand, God is conceived as moral perfection, and on the other hand man is regarded not only as morally weak but as morally blame-worthy. The fellowship between God and man is admitted to be interrupted by sin, and man must be redeemed to be restored to this fellowship. In this redemption, Christ alone is the Mediator. As Founder of the Christian

Community, He holds in this religion an unique position. He is not only teacher and example but in His death He offers the sacrifice by which men are saved, and in His life by the Spirit, He is Himself ever saving them who come to God by Him.

Characteristics of the Christian Religion

DOCTRINE - The Doctrine of God in Christianity is monotheistic.

The doctrine of man is that he is a reasonable, responsible being, free to choose right or wrong but sinful and guilty because he has chosen wrong. (Man as viewed by Christian theology is made in the image of God and as such is rational, moral and free).

The Christian gospel offers man salvation from sin and guilt through penitence, a renunciation of sin, and faith, accepting the Grace of God in Jesus Christ, in which not only is sin forgiven, but man is cleansed renewed and made holy by God's own spirit.

The Christian Doctrine of Christ is that He was truly Divine and really human (unity of Divine existence).

Evil - in the light of Christianity, is a multiform demoralizing, corrupting force, arising wilfully, "from within out of the heart of man" and becoming a sinister organized destructive power which assumes the guise of a personality (Satan) but will be overcome by the greater power of Good.

Morals - Christian morality has been influenced at least as much as, if not more than, Christian belief at each stage of the history of the Christian Church, by the total conditions, economic, social and political.

Morality is determined by the Christian conception of God and man. Men as children of God, and thus members of one another, have one duty - absolute love to God, and an equal love to self and neighbor. This love is grateful surrender to God, and sympathetic service of man, even unto sacrifice of self, hence the life for God, and others is found in losing the life for self. This makes morality, not a code of laws but an inward disposition. Morality had developed as tribal or national, now it

becomes universal. The neighbor is not fellow-countryman but fellow-man, and fellow-man conceived as the child of the one Father over all.

Worship - Love towards God expresses itself and must express itself through love to man in whatever form it can be most effectual. But this cannot be its only or full expression.

The relation of God and Man is personal and personal relationship involves mutual communion, the expression of affection. This communion with God may be individual or social.

The Sacraments make the key stages of a Christian's worship.

For an overwhelming majority of the world's Christians the essence of religious experience is summed up in the Sacraments. From infancy to death the sacraments mark the key stages of Christian Worship and sustain the individual worshipper. Sacrament is an outward act, derived from something Christ did or said by whose performance and observation the individual receives God's Grace. Sacraments are observed differently by various Christian groups. Catholics and many Anglicans count seven -- Baptism, Confirmation, Communion, Marriage, Unction, Penance and Ordination. Protestants accept only Baptism and Communion. A minority, e.g. Quakers accept no sacraments as such, saying no external act should come between God's will and the believer.

Baptism - The individual formally enters Christ's Church. It presents the individual's first act of faith and it seals him as a follower of Christ, washing away previous and original sin (derived from Adam's sin).

Confirmation - completes the work of Baptism and permits the individual who is usually between 7 and 14 years old to assume greater spiritual responsibilities. The soul receives the Holy Ghost.

Communion - Man partakes of the sacred presence and it commemorates His sacrifice for mankind. It is the noblest of sacraments.

Marriage - The union of man and woman is blessed. Whether it is performed as a sacrament or a simple religious ceremony, Marriage is one of the most beautiful of all Church occurrences.

Penance : A thorough confession helps sinful mankind to sanctify the soul. Mercy and compassion, stemming from the life and character of the Saviour himself, have always distinguished Christian faith. These qualities are embodied in the sacrament of Penance, in which the Christian confesses his sins and is granted absolution and forgiveness. Penance is compounded of two eternal acts -- (i) the confession which must be accompanied by contrition or sincere repentance, and (ii) the absolution. Catholics, confessions must be made individually to a priest because the priest has to know what sins have been committed before he can decide whether the Lord's forgiveness should be conferred and what restitution, in the form of extra prayers or contributions, the penitent should make. The priest hears the confession through the screened partition. Devout Catholics usually confess once a week. Under no circumstances may priest use knowledge gained in confession outside the confessional enclosure.

Unction: The sick and dying are reassured of salvation. Among Roman Catholic unction is administered only when there is danger of death and is called extreme Unction. This service has often helped to alleviate physical suffering.

Ordination: As a sacrament bestows something spiritual, the power to administer sacraments is sacred. This power is conferred through the sacrament of ordination by which bishops/prelates make ministers or priests.

Festivals : Christians observe the following religious festivals -

Christmas
Good Friday
Easter

HOLY SCRIPTURES

- 1) Bible $\begin{matrix} \swarrow \text{OT} \\ \searrow \text{NT} \end{matrix}$
 - a) The Old Testament deals with the creation of the world etc.
 - b) The New Testament tells the beginnings of Christianity.

- 2) The four Gospels, : Mathew, Mark, Luke, John - narrate the birth, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ
- 3) Acts of the Apostles - a history of the early Christian movement
- 4) The Epistles or letters to the Church groupes
- 5) The book of Revelation - a visionary Portrayal of the final triumph of God's purpose.

Church's view on Family Planning

Archbishop on Birth Control

London, May 22, - Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, retiring Archbishop of Canterbury, said in a BBC interview tonight, according to Reuter, that "family planning, properly interpreted, means that parents must not commit themselves to having as many children as they physically can produce".

He said: "They have got to exercise restraint and responsibility and, to that extent, plan their family. On that matter the Church of Rome and ourselves are completely agreed.

"Only, unfortunately, they by family planning, mean adopting a certain method of family planning. We think certain methods are legitimate, and can be used in a Christian manner and they think they can't be.

"Well, that's a dispute about ways and means. But if you analyse it there's no difference of principle between us....."

Dr. Fisher, an Anglican, was referring to the Catholic and Anglican differences on the question of birth control.

Retiring on May 31 after 16 years of Archbishop of Canterbury, he also described the moment when he came nearest to breaking down.

He said it was at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth at Westminster Abbey in 1953 when he performed the age-old rite of anointing her with oil.

Christian Church through the Ages

The Christian Church is about 2,000 years old. It was established by Peter, one of the Christ's apostles, the death of Jesus Christ. Jesus is reported to pun on the name and its meaning: "Thou art Peter, (a name derived from the Greek 'PETROS' meaning 'Rock') and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven". In subsequent career he preached and taught in many places, finally reaching, in some unknown fashion, Rome where he is believed to have laid the foundation of the Church and subsequently suffered martyrdom under Nero about AD 65. He was a fisher by profession. Jesus said unto him, 'Follow me and I will make you fisher of men'.

When the apostle Paul preached in Greece and then Rome, Christianity passed out of Asia the continent of its origin, into Europe; the continent of its destiny. Europe has been the main spring of world christianity ever since. Christianity was long anonymous with Europe. The spiritual impact of Christianity has powerfully influenced western civilization. The history of Europe is the history of Christianity. The History falls into three eras: The Ancient Era embraces the first eight centuries; the Mediaeval the next seven, and the Modern the last five centuries. In the first, the Christian Church spread from Jerusalem to Rome and from Rome to the borders of the Roman Empire, and, on its fall, to the Germanic Nations. In the second, the Papacy grew in power until it held full sway in Western Europe; but its decline already began in the 13th century and various movements towards reform anticipated the third era. This strictly speaking began in 1517 with Luther's posting of the Theses against indulgences and may be regarded as not yet closed, for no change of such importance has since occurred as to mark the commencement of a new era.

Reformation

At the Renaissance height of its ecclesiastical pomp and power, Roman Catholicism was challenged by a wide spread, urgent call for a return to early Christian simplicity. The Protest and Reformation, which resulted has more than 200 million followers - one fourth of the world's Christians.

The reformation began in 1517 when the German monk Martin Luther posted his 95 theses attacking papal authority. Luther felt the essence of Christianity lay not in an elaborate hierarchy headed by the Pope but in each believer's humble direct communion with God seeking that righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. Within 20 years Luther saw a strong German Lutheran Church established, the first Protestant University chartered and a host of other reformers flourishing, some of them far too radical for Luther's own taste.

Among these were the Ana Baptists who believed that only those old enough for a heartfelt experience of grace, i.e. adults, should be baptized.

John Calvin in Switzerland called his Church, "the most perfect school of Christ that ever was on earth since the days of the Apostles". It became a model for reformed and prebyterian churches in most Europe and later throughout the world. John Knox took it over and became Scotland's most dramatic Reformation figure.

The Church of England, broke with Pappy under Henry VIII declaring: "The Bishop of Rome hath not by scripture any greater authority in England than any other foreign Bishop". Its doctrines have remained Catholic as well as Protestant.

Equally defiant of authority was George Fox whose vision from Pendle Hell in 1652 led him to found the society of Friends also known as Quakers because a derisive judge thought Fox quaked before the Lord. Fox and his followers were persecuted in England.

The inspiration for the last large Church that emerged from the Reformation came from an Anglican Clergyman, John Welsley, who never intended to break at all. In 1738 attending a meeting he suddenly felt his heart "strangely warmed" whereupon he embarked on a preaching campaign throughout England that lasted until his death. Welsley remained an Anglican but his followers began a Church called 'Methodist' for its methodical organization, that stressed the personal approach to religion.

Counter Reformation

The reformation provoked the Roman Catholic Church, in self defence to a counter Reformation. Roman Catholicism set itself to remove the worst abuses which the reformers had exposed and condemned, but its main purpose was to define its doctrine and practice alike in antogonism to Protestantism. The old orders of monks, who had failed to give the Papy adequate support in the assault of the Reformation, had to give place in Pope's favor to a new order, the Jesuits, whose object was to strengthen the Papacy and to drive back the advances of Protestantism in Hungary and Poland. It won back to Papal allegiance much of Germany and most of France. All but wiped out the feeble beginnings of Protestantism in Italy, spread excellent schools over Europe and thrust Catholic missions into India, Japan, China and the New World. Ignatius Loyola is the founder of the Society of Jesus - the Jesuit order.

Christian Missionaries and Christianity in India

1) Foreign Missions : There has been, as a result of the missionary efforts of the last century, a great expansion of the Christian Church and an incalculable increase of its influence. The gospel has been carried throughout the whole world and multitudes of converts have been won. Dr. Zeller, of the Statistical Bureau of Stuttgart (West Germany) gives the following estimates for the number of adherents of the various religions: of the 1,544,510,000 people in the world, 534,940,000 are Christians, 175,290,000 are Muhammadans, 10,860,000 are Jews and 834,280,000 hold other beliefs. Of the last class 300,000,000 are confucianists, 214,000,000 Brahmins and 121,000,000

are Budhists. In every thousand there are 346 Christians, 144 Moham-medans, 7 Jews and 533 adherents of other religions. But the influence of Christinaity reaches much further than the bounds of the Christian Church. The ancient civilization of the East, as well as barbarism in all parts of the earth, have been brought into contact with Christendom by conquests, colonization, and commerce. European civilization, in the making of which Christianity has been a potent factor, is beginning to affect the thought and life of all mankind. In India, China and Japan especially the old religions are being undermined and the Christian leaven is working even where there is hostility to Christianity as to foreign religion.

On the other hand, the Church as an institution has not the same hold on the bulk of the population that it had a century ago. Probably the connection with the Church was in many cases only a tradition and custom and not due to any personal conviction. Secularism, Socialism, etc., are offering modern society a guidance which claims to be better than the cutdown Christian. To meet this situation, there have been attempts to adapt Christianity to its modern environments as by modernism in the Roman Catholic Church, and by Liberal Protestantism. In some circle of social reformers all the stress is thrown on the social aspects of Christ's teaching and example, and Christianity is represented as if it were exclusively socialism with a religious sanction in God's Fatherhood and a moral motive in devotion to Christ as the first and best socialist.

b) Christianity in India: Tradition says that after witnessing the risen Christ, Thomas, the Apostle preached in India and founded the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar which still exists there. The Jesuit Francis Xavier led a mission to India in 1542 and the first Protestants, two young men from Denmark arrived in 1706. The first missionaries from the United States reached India in 1812 and others from many countries have followed. Despite this long, devoted evangelism, Christians remain a tiny* minority of the Indian people. The ovangelism has been most successful among the Hindu 'untouchables'. India's national government

* Christianity constitutes only 2% of India's population today.

pressed by Hindu Extremists, has restricted entry of missionaries. Some State Governments have taken stern steps against Christianity and individual Hindus sometimes burn the homes of Christian Indians.

Future of Christianity

If the Christian Church is not only to hold its own, but to win the world for Christ, as its aim and hope, there are four main tasks which must be discharged. It must realize the present opportunity in the Foreign Mission Enterprise; it must recognize the urgent necessity of social reform; it must accept the sacred obligation to seek the unity of the Christian Churches; and it must venture on the theological restatement of the Christian Gospel which the age demands.

As a step towards unity the world council of Churches formed at Amsterdam in 1948. One hundred and sixty three churches from 48 countries belong to the World Council. Roman Catholic Church and Orthodox Church, Moscow are not its members.

Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury met John Pope XXIII at Vatican in Rome on 2nd December 1960. It was a historical meeting, a step to discuss unification of world churches. This was the first meeting between the two heads since King Henry VIII of England broke away from Papacy in the 16th Century.

The latest on the unity of the Christian Churches is Dr. Fisher's last sermon as Head of Anglican Church:

DR. FISHER'S LAST SERMON AS HEAD OF CHURCH

Canterbury (England), May 22 - Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, preaching his last sermon as Archbishop of Canterbury, said that the Anglican Church was "as catholic and apostolic as any particular church can even hope to be", reports Reuter.

Dr. Fisher added: "It has erred, and errs, as every particular church always must err in its applications of that faith to the life of its members and of the world.

"But taught by scripture and warned by the tradition of Church history, it is always reforming itself nearer to that robust holiness which Christ imparts in some manner to every part of his Church.

"It is always reaching out to promote in its own members, and now among all the churches, a true unity of spirit, faith and order in the one universal church of Christ".

The 74-year-old Archbishop, spiritual leader of the Anglican Church, is due to retire shortly.

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T H E O L O G Y O F L I B E R A T I O N

This is not an academic treatise on theology. A pragmatic and analytical approach will be used in this paper.

For an ordinary man in the street or in the village, theology is not a very respectable word today. This is not because there is any misgiving about God - Theos - but because the theological approach has come to mean a mere recitation of certain propositions, dogmas and faiths, with out any concern for their relationship to reality. Theology is not an experience to them, neither do they turn experience into theology.

The history of theology, and for that matter Christianity is well-known for its continued accomodation and adaptation of the changing historical circumstances and to a large scale social movements. But today the social transformation and situations are of a different order than it was in the past. Now, is it possible and up to us to accommodate and adapt?

In the socio political environment in which we exist today, the Church is called upon to fulfil its salvific mission. This environment is vastly different from what it was ten years ago.

Latin America:

The theology of liberation developed in Latin America during the 1960s, through an outgrowth of both the changing political climate on that continent, and of the liberalizing trends which took place in the Catholic Church as a result of Vat II. Vat II sharpened with in the Latin American Catholic community a concern for the poor. For the Christians here, the gospel became a revolutionary document. Jesus was the liberator, who placed himself squarely on the side of the poor and the oppressed against the forces of injustice and exploitation. To follow Jesus for those people was to identify as He did and to work with the poor for the Liberation of all, who suffered from injustice.

Although untill recently the church in Latin America was closely linked to the established order, it is beginning to take a different attitude regarding the exploitation, oppression and alienation, which prevails here. Individual Christians, small communities, and the church as a whole are becoming more politically aware and are acquiring a greater knowledge of the current Latin American reality, especially in its root causes. The Christian community is beginning to read politically the signs of the times in Latin America.

The Advocates of the Latin American Liberation theology vehemently asserts their right to evolve a theology out of their own experience. But the traditional and established theologians are sceptic about it on the ground that theology is made too much anthropological.

Situation in the Church

The church in the first centuries, with its minority status in society and the consequent pressures from the non-Christian world, was very sensitive to the action of Christ. (They shared everything in common..... Acts --4. 32-35)

But this situation of the Christian community changed in the fourth century. Instead of being marginated and attacked Christianity was now tolerated (Edict of Milan - AD 313), and quickly became the religion of the Roman State (Decree of Thessalonica, 381 AD). The proclamation of the gospel was then supported and protected by the political authority. This gradually changed the manner of conceiving the relationship of mankind to salvation. By the middle ages, when the church was co-extensive with the known world of that time and deeply pervaded it, Christians had the vital experience of security and tranquility, and that we proclaimed that outside the church, there was no salvation. To be for or against Christ came to be fully forgotten the "Mission aspect" of the church (To be the salt and light of the world) Today we are more aware of our self sufficiency, and that Christ is made to speak what we want him to speak.

The church was more concerned about the number of people saved; (New conversions without giving profound reflection on salvation) and naturally the church tried to work out the roles which it has to play in this process.

In the early centuries of the Church, theology was closely linked to the spiritual life (realm). This theology was monastic, and therefore characterized by a spiritual life in the early centuries was thus characterized by withdrawal from the world, (world, devil, body) (lack of love not a sin) and it was presented as the model way to sanctity.

But with St. Thomas Aquinas, theology began to be characterized as an intellectual discipline, born of the meeting of faith and reason, and it was considered as a rational knowledge.

But gradually, we are realising that salvation is not something other worldly in regard to which the present life is merely a test. (The kingdom is among you) Salvation in this real sense means communion of men with God and the communion of men among themselves. The church must cease considering itself as the exclusive place of salvation and orient itself towards a new and radical service of people.

All the same, can the church be a prophet in our day, if she herself is not turned to Christ. She doesn't have the right to talk against others, when she herself is a cause of scandal in her interpersonal relations and her internal structures? We cannot talk of the church of the poor without being a poor church; and that is just what we are refusing to be - in our life style, transport facilities, our homes and the property we own.

The church has for centuries devoted her attention to formulating truths and meanwhile, did almost nothing to better the world. In other words, the church focused on orthodoxy and left orthopraxis in the hands of non-members and to non-believers.

The fact that there is an interlocking of interests between the institutionalized church and the dominant class of society constrain her involvement in the work of genuine liberation. In order to be more responsive to people's aspirations, she needs to dissociate herself from the dominant class by giving up her interests. She is so much linked with such system, almost as partners in a marriage (Church the spouse of Christ)

In the 19th and 20th centuries, a new awakening is slightly visible in the attitude of the church. Pope Pius XII, John XXIII's 'Mater Et Magistra', 'Pacem In Terris', Paul VI's 'Populorum Progressio', in all these developments - of man - is considered. Gaudium Et Spes (Vat. II) uses the term 'Liberation' on two occasions. 'Populorum Progressio' speaks clearly of building a world where everyman, no matter what his race, religion or nationality, can live a fully human life, freed from servitude imposed on him by other men or by natural forces over which he had no sufficient control.

In the words of Congar, if the Church wishes to deal with the real questions of the modern world, it must begin a new chapter of theologico-pastoral Epistemology. Instead as classical theology has always done, it must start with facts and questions derived from the world and history. So theology itself has to be liberated from every form of religious alienation. A theology which is not up to date is a false theology.

Theology has to be linked to the praxis, and should fulfill a prophetic function, in so far as it interprets historical events, with the intention of revealing and proclaiming their profound meaning. It has to be a theology which is open in the protest against trampled human dignity, in the struggle against the plunder of the vast majority of people, in liberating love, and in the building of a new, and fraternal society (Kingdom of God).

We believe it to be our right and duty to denounce as evil and sinful; Inadequate wages, lack of food, exploitation of the poor, suppression of freedom etc. It is here that we often make the mistake, Many of us, of considering this a political attitude and therefore outside our sphere. Yet, Christ's own prophetic action and fidelity to truth certainly presuppose an inevitable involvement in politics.

The commitment to the creation of a just society and, ultimately to a new man presupposes faith, hope and love and confidence in the future. (example of Abraham, Moses..... Heb. 11)

We have to build a church which is both in its preaching and practice committed to the poor, to the weak, and to the exploited.

God in History.

The God whom we know in the Bible (history of Bible) is a Liberating God, a God who destroys myths and alienations a God who intervenes in history in order to break down the structures of injustice and who raises up prophets in order to point out the way of justice and mercy. He is the God who liberates slaves (Exodus & Egypt) who causes empires to fall down and raises up the oppressed.

In the dawn of human history, God was seen as a transcendental being (Mountain) and then a universal being. Then the concept of God changes (Exodus - Arch) to localization and he was seen as linked to a particular people (Israel). And then it gradually extends to all the people of earth (Amos: 9/7; Is; 41: 1-7) Is. 40: 20-25, entire book of Joshua). To love Yehoa (or to know Yehoa) is to do justice to the poor and the oppressed.. Prophets criticize the worship that is devoid of the touch of reality. " Though you offer countless prayers and sacrifices, I will not listen. There is blood in your hand..... cease to do evil and learn to do right, pursue justice and champion the oppressed; give the right of orphan, plead the widow's cause. (Is. 1: 10-17)

Our encounter with God occurs in our encounter with men, especially in the encounter with those whose human features have been disfigured by oppression, despoliation and alienation, and who have 'no beauty, no majesty'. (Is. 53: 2-3)

This becomes more clear in New Testament. Through humanity, each man has become the temple of God. (St. Paul) We meet God in our encounter with men, we encounter him in the commitment to the historical process of mankind. In St. Mathew's Eschatological discourse, ' the least of my brethren (25:40) designates all the needy; whoever they may be, and not only Christians or a particular group of people.

The spirituality of liberation will centre on a conversion to the neighbour; the oppressed, and the exploited. Conversion to the Lord implies the conversion to the neighbour. This means a radical transformation of ourselves, ie. thinking, feeling, and living as Christ, present in exploited and alienated man. It means to commit oneself to the process of liberation with an analysis of the situation and a strategy of action. The Christian has not done enough of conversion - ie. commitment to the neighbour, to social justice, to history.

In the New Testament Christ is presented as the one who brings us liberation. Christ the saviour liberates man from sin, which is the ultimate root of all disruption of friendship, and of all injustice and oppression. Christ makes man truly free, that is to say, he enables man to live in communion with him, and this is the basis for all human brotherhood - the Kingdom of God.

In this perspective, sin is not only an impediment to salvation in the after life. In so far as it constitutes a break with God, sin is a historical reality. It is a breach of the communion of men with each other, it is a turning in of man on himself, which manifests in the withdrawal from others. Because sin is a personal and social infra-historical reality, a part of the daily events of human life, it is also and above all an obstacle to life's reaching the fullness we call salvation.

Christ came and proclaimed the Kingdom of God which meant a society where, fraternity, justice and love prevails, ie. complete communion of men with God and of men among themselves.

The poor of whom Jesus speaks and who surrounded him are the truly poor, the hungry, the afflicted, the oppressed, and all those for whom society has failed to provide a place. Through this solidarity with the poor, Jesus proclaimed his Father's love for all mankind - and he was persecuted!

Towards a New Theological approach for India:

The situation in India as we have seen, is so dehumanizing that no Christian can idly stand by and call himself a follower of Christ. All the same the traditional response of the church to this situation is still inadequate. The young people engaged in social action in India today are really surprised to find that the kind of Jesus they have met in homilies and catechism classes becomes irrelevant in the actual life situations of the people.

The picture of Jesus transmitted through monastic spectacles, who prefers order and quiet, lots of prayer, and minimum commitment to dangerous issues, and who feels at home amidst flowers and incense, and likes to dwell in well constructed monastic houses surrounded by high walls, is out-dated for India, and is irrelevant to committed people.

To start theologizing for the exploited, we have to move out of our institutions - church structure - which silences the prophetic voice of the Bible.

Theology as a function was always present in society, - India and elsewhere - but at a certain moment in history, there arose a professional class of theologians. It must have been because the society had reached a stage of surplus production when some no longer needed to work with their hands and could take some other pursuits. Some began to use this leisure to theologise. Without being conscious of it, their theology was bound to be a class theology, because such theologians depended on the upper class for their maintenance. This is true not only of theology, but of the social sciences as well. (In China professors doing manual work)

It is natural that every type of society produced a theology to legitimize the position of the new dominant class. So we had a feudal theology, a capitalist theology, and now we are trying to produce a socialist theology

The Church in India has become so much inward-looking (status, position, institutions) that it can never heal itself. The 'Mission' entrusted by Christ is not found here. We have to proclaim the gospel - also to the rich, hoping that some atleast may be converted. In addition, we have to realize that announcing the 'Good News' also means announcing the 'Bad News' to some. The 'blesseds' have to be accompanied by the 'woes'.

As Paulo Freire says, According to the oppressed, to be a man is to be like the oppressed. This is true in theology also. The oppressed have internalized the God of the oppressor - which in fact is not the real God (Death of God theology).

For an authentic theology for India, and Indian situation, it has to start from the daily day experiences of the common man in India. The imported western theology can only perpetuate and stabilize the situation in India today.

Conclusion:

God acts in history for human liberation, from every form of oppressive condition - including the oppression of poverty, racism, sexism, and colonialism. Liberation theology is thus a theology of salvation for the whole person. Liberation Theology takes roots in the lived historical experience of a people. It demands an adherence to it more than just an intellectual commitment. It demands a conversion to a new way of life.

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DEPARTMENT
of
CHRISTIANITY
in the University of Mysore

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Prospectus
of
B.A., M.A., and Ph.D.
in Christianity

For the Academic Year
1980-1981
(For private circulation only)

Published by

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University of Mysore.

1. Background History:

The University of Mysore is the most ancient in the State of Karnataka and the prestigious institution of higher learning and research founded by the Maharaja of Mysore.

It has Faculties of Arts, Sciences, Commerce, etc., with more than 30 departments. There also functions the open University system, called the Institute of Correspondence course and continuing education, for many subjects (departments). The sprawling campus of over 150 acres situated on the western part of the city is permeated by an atmosphere of serenity, an ambient most conducive to deep study and serious research. The relationship is on the whole good among the members of the academic community of teachers and students. The University follows a liberal policy and maintains its secular character in the academic pursuit.

I. A CHAIR IN CHRISTIANITY

2. An unprecedented event and an unique development:

It is such a university that took the singular decision to institute a 'Chair in Christianity'. This was mainly due to the broad-mindedness and genuine interest of the previous Vice-Chancellor, Mr. D.V. Urs and the continuity assured by the present Vice-Chancellor, Prof. K.S. Hegde who is a man of vision and high ideals. It is also a measure of the open attitude and secular outlook of the Government of Karnataka. The initiative taken by Bishop Mathias Fernandes of Mysore, his persevering efforts and the excellent public relations maintained by him, not excluding the sizeable endowment for this purpose made by the Mysore Diocesan Society with the help of a subsidy from the Pontifical Works, Rome are equally important.

3. Solemn Inauguration:

Thus everything converged towards the desired goal and the six-year effort culminated in the solemn and official inauguration of the Chair in the Crawford Hall, Mysore on the 2nd July, 1979. It was graced by the presence of two dignitaries among others: Shri Subbaiah Shetty, Minister for Education, Government of Karnataka and Archbishop D.S. Lourdasamy, Secretary, Sacred Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, Rome.

Fr. D.S. Amalorpavadass, Director of National Biblical Catechetical and Liturgical Centre, Bangalore was appointed Visiting Professor of the Chair in Christianity.

4. Vision of the Chair:

In a speech delivered by the Visiting Professor during the Inaugural Function he shared with the university authorities and the academic community a vision of the Chair in Christianity. This will be realised gradually but steadily by the programme of the Chair in the years to come.

The vision is that of the goal towards which all men, religions and nations tend in historical movement and spiritual pilgrimage: self-realisation through God-realisation, all-round liberation, and building up a just society through a process of humanization and universal brotherhood.

After the II Vatican Council, Christians all over India are engaged in assuring a new form of Christian presence to the Indian people. The Chair in Christianity in this context will be the Christian presence of humble service and selfless love at the highest level of the temple of learning, specially in the field of research.

The Chair aims at promoting inter-personal relationship among the members of the academic community. It will follow an inter-disciplinary approach, facilitate an inter-departmental collaboration, and do everything in a spirit of inter-religious dialogue.

In particular, the Chair will present Christianity not in its western form as often done hitherto, but as rooted in the heart of India expressing itself in Indian religious and cultural traditions.

5. The Method and Approach of the Chair:

The teaching of Christianity will take a three-fold form corresponding to three major realities of India:

- 1) A Dialogical study of Christianity i.e. a study of Christianity in living dialogue with other religions formerly called 'comparative study of religion'.
- 2) A Dia-critical study of Christianity, i.e. a study of Christianity in sociological dialogue. This will be in prophetic critique of both Christianity with reference to Indian reality, and of the socio-economic reality of India, in the light of the Gospel. The goal of this effort is promotion of social justice and liberation of the oppressed and the poor.
- 3) A Dia-chronic study of Christianity, i.e. a study of Christianity in dialogue with the cultures and ideologies of the country, chiefly in the form of inculturation.

While keeping to the secular character of studies and following a scientific approach and rationality in research, one cannot abandon or relegate to the background the religious dimension. The secularity will be permeated by the religious aspect and spirituality without violence to its autonomy. Scientific pursuit will include spiritual quest. Academic knowledge will be coupled with spiritual experience. The search for truth will also be a search for God.

Christianity is, above all, the spirit of Jesus Christ, and the values of the Gospel as lived and witnessed to by a community of persons, the disciples of Christ. Hence the Chair is associated with a Christian ashram, 'Anjali Ashram' which serves, as the dialogue and prayer centre of the Chair in Christianity, and where a group of Christians will lead a simple life according to Indian traditions.

6. The Main objectives of the Chair:

The tasks entrusted to the Chair are spelt out in the Statutes framed under Section 35 (8) of the Karnataka State Universities Act 1976. To study Christianity with comparative study of other religions (1) to promote the study of christian philosophy in all its various branches (2) to organise a Post-graduate department of studies in the field (3); to conduct research

in various branches of christianity (5) to hold seminars, symposia, etc., and to conduct such other academic activities as contributing to a deeper understanding of the different branches of christianity (7) to publish in different languages a research journal, monographs and dissertations pertaining to Christianity (6) and to serve as a clearing house and exchange centre for the knowledge and information about Christianity (8).

All this supposes material for research. Hence the Chair is expected:

- to develop a departmental library of its own which is equipped with up-to-date Christian publications as well as photostat copies, films, etc. of important manuscripts and rare articles (9)
- to collect historical and literary source material and up-to-date references for conducting research work as in different aspects of Christianity (4) and
- to arrange for a suitable number of scholarships for both Post-graduate and Research Students (10).

7. The Programme of the Chair:

In order to fulfil the 10 objectives of the Chair as spelt out in the Statutes, a programme of activities of the Chair was drawn up. However, they were mostly exploratory in character. Before offering a long-range programme, we should first assess the real needs of the academic community of the university and interests of the general public of Mysore City.

Some of these programmes were carried out in the first year (1979-80). The programme mostly took the form of evening lectures on special topics for a week every month. We have covered so far:

- Christianity's new relationships (with the world, with other religions, and with Indian culture) and
- Christianity as Jesus Christ and His Church;
- Indian and Christian forms of prayer and Meditation;
- Indian Christian arts.

Each of the programmes drew an audience of 80 to 120 persons: consisting of university teachers and students, members of the general public and christians. A full week National Seminar on Christian leadership in

Society was organised and 180 persons from 11 states of India attended.

Finally, a lecture-cum-exhibition of Indian Christian arts, recitation of Indian music and performance of Indian dance (fruit of healthy and dynamic interaction between Christianity and Indian Arts) was organised and this drew the largest number of persons.

8. Structural organisation of the Chair:

Much of the time during the first year was spent in attending to the basic task of establishing the Chair, in trying to build up a library and in seeking inter-departmental collaboration. Above all, much work was put in to pave the way for starting a full-fledged department in Christianity. This meant frequent discussions with University authorities, seeking the collaboration of other departments, drawing up of syllabus and eligibility conditions for Post-graduate and Under-graduate course in Christianity, getting the perusal and approval of various bodies for it, going through other formalities and putting up the minimum organisation required in this regard.

9. An Evaluation:

At the end of one year of presence and service in the University one has a feeling of genuine belonging to the University, of acceptance of christianity and appreciation for its new image and approach due to inculturation in all aspects. There is a genuine interest to know more about it and to study Christianity in depth. The establishment of the Chair is considered by all as an enrichment and a new dimension to the academic life of the University of Mysore.

II. DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIANITY

I. From Chair to Department

With the good work that has been done under the auspices of the Chair in Christianity during the last one year (1979-80) it has been possible to pave the way for the development of a '*department of Christianity*' in the University of Mysore. We have still to go through a few more formalities. But it is agreed that it will come into existence from the academic year 1980-81. The Syllabus for both B.A. Course and M.A. Course in Christianity presented by the Visiting Professor has been approved by the Board of Studies. Eligibility or Conditions for admission to B.A., M.A. and Ph.D., in Christianity have also been approved. They are now awaiting the approval of the Faculty Board and the Academic Council.

2. B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. Programme in the University itself:

Our plan is to start in July/August 1980, the first year of the post-graduate course (M.A. previous) It is also our wish to start at the same time the under-graduate course (the first year of B.A.) The under-graduate course or the three-year B.A. course in Christianity will be conducted in the University College called 'Maharaja's College', Mysore. The Post-graduate course of 2 years or the M.A. Course in Christianity will be held in the Post-graduate campus called 'Manasagangotri', Mysore. Research students who want to prepare for Ph.D will be equally welcome to enroll themselves for this academic year, at Manasagangotri, Mysore.

3. Conditions for Admission to under-graduate and Post-graduate course in Christianity in the proposed Department of Christianity:

I. ADMISSION FOR B.A. COURSE

The Candidates eligible for admission are:

- A. Those who have finished PUC or its equivalent
- B. Those who fulfil other conditions as for any other B.A. Course in the University of Mysore.

II. ADMISSION FOR M.A. COURSE

The candidates eligible for admission are any one of the five following:

- A. 1. Those who have a Bachelor's degree in Christianity either from a Secular University or from a Christian University/Faculty in India or abroad (normally Called B.Th., Bachelor in Theology or B.D., Bachelor in Divinity)—
 2. Those who have successfully completed the full integrated course of any Seminary (Philosophy, theology and allied subjects) for a period of 5 to 7 years.
 3. Those who have a Bachelor's degree in which one of the three main subjects is Christianity.
 4. (1) Those who have a Bachelor's degree in any subject from any recognised University.
AND
(2) Those who have had an interview with the Professor of Christianity.
 5. (1) Those who have successfully completed:
 - a) the 3-year Course of Christianity at the Pontifical Institute of Regina Mundi, Rome. or
 - b) the 2-year Course of 'Mater Dei' Institute, Goa. or
 - c) the 2-year Course of CRI Brothers' Institute, Bangalore. or
 - d) an equivalent Course in Christianity of 2 or 3 years, in any other Institute.AND
(2) a) Those who have a diploma of the Intensive Training Institute (ITI) of the National Biblical Catechetical & Liturgical Centre, Bangalore (60 Credits)
or
b) Those who have successfully completed a certain number of Courses and Seminars on Christianity the total of which is equal to 50 Credits.
(3) Those who have had an interview with the Professor of Christianity.
- B. Those who fulfil all the other conditions as for any other M.A. Course in the University of Mysore.

III. ADMISSION FOR Ph.D:

The Candidates eligible for admission are:

A. Those who have

(a) a Master's degree in Christianity from the University of Mysore.

or

(b) a Licentiate or a Master's degree in Christianity from any Christian Faculty or State University.

or

(c) a Licentiate or a Master's degree in Theology from any Catholic University of Europe, America and other countries.

B. Those who fulfil all the other conditions for Ph.D. as for other subjects in the University of Mysore.

N.B. These are only proposals. These have been approved only by the Board of Studies. They still await the approval of Faculty Board and Academic Council. Much will depend on their decisions.

4. Application to the Courses/Colleges:

a) *Application for B.A. Course in Christianity:*

All those who want to do B.A. Course in Christianity

may apply to: The Office,
 Maharaja's College,
 Mysore-570 005.

As all know, B.A. Course is of three years duration and comprises the study of two languages and three optional arts subjects. One of these three will be Christianity. The Maharaja's College will offer two or three combinations. This will be indicated in the prospectus to be published by the college in May/June, 1980.

Application forms may be got from the Office of Maharaja's College, Mysore-570005, by sending a Money Order for Rs. 5/- (Rupees five only).

According to the custom of the college, admission list will be put up on the college notice board. They do not communicate individually through post.

The medium of instruction for the course is English.

b) *Application for M.A. Course in Christianity:*

All those who want to do M.A. in Christianity may apply to:

Administrative Officer,
Manasagangotri,
Mysore-570 006.

As everyone knows, all the courses/papers for M.A. during the entire duration of 2 years will be on Christianity. The Courses available in the University of Mysore and the conditions for application and admission will be usually published by the Registrar in a Notification.

Application forms may be got from the administrative officer paying Rs. 7.50 (Rupees Seven and paise fifty only) by a demand draft drawn in favour of

Administrative Officer,
Manasagangotri,
Mysore.

Selection will be done by the respective faculties/ departments according to the guidelines given by the University. A maximum number of 50 students will be admitted to M.A. Course.

Selection and admission will be communicated by post individually to each applicant in the month of July.

The University follows a non-semester system.

c) **Application for Ph.D:**

All those who want to undertake research in view of Ph.D. in Christianity may apply to:

The Head of the Department
Office of Chair in Christianity
Manasagangotri,
Mysore-570 006.

5. Hostel:

a) For B.A. Students:

The Maharaja's College is an arts' college and a men's college. However even ladies will be admitted there (for courses which are not available in Maharani's college which is a women's college, and that is the case for Christianity).

However the hostel of Maharaja's College is exclusively meant for men. These may apply for accommodation in the hostel of Maharaja's College; but the ladies will have to look for accommodation elsewhere.

b) For M.A. and Ph.D. Students:

Those who apply for M.A. Course or Ph.D. may seek accommodation in any of the following hostels, by writing to their wardens:

Gentlemen's Hostel I	}	Manasagangotri, Mysore-570 006.
or		
Gentlemen's Hostel II		
or		
Ladies Hostel		

There are also other hostels for special categories of students.

Village Hostel (meant for students from each district of Karnataka).

SC Hostel in Saraswathipuram, Mysore.)

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

1. All those who encounter difficulties in getting accommodation may apply in the last instance to the Bishop of Mysore:

Rt. Rev. Dr. Mathias Fernandes,
Bishop of Mysore,
Bishop's House,
Mysore City-570 001. (Tel: 23545)

He will help the Candidates get residence.

2. All those who want additional/special information or clarification on application/admission to the Course or to the hostel or who do not get prompt reply or satisfactory answer from the University officers, may also seek the assistance of:

- a) 'The Office of the Chair in Christianity',
Administrative Building,
Manasagangotri,
Mysore-570 006.
- b) 'Anjali Ashram', c) Chair in Christianity,
35, Temple Rd., C/o. NBCLC,
Jayalakshmiipuram, Post Bag 577.
Mysore-570 012. Bangalore-560 005.

7. B.A. Course in some Affiliated Colleges of Mysore University:

There are several Catholic Colleges in the area of Mysore University who are all interested in the new department of Christianity to be started in the University of Mysore. However this year only a few colleges are making arrangements to offer the new course.

Two colleges are exploring the possibility.

They are: St. Philomena's College.

Mysore-570 007. (Tel: 20728)

Teresian College,
Manoranjan Mahal,
Nazarbad,

Mysore-570 019. (Tel: 21316)

Those who seek admission to the course and to the hostel may apply to the Principal of the above colleges.

These colleges have applied to the University for affiliation to start teaching the course in Christianity in their colleges from the Academic year 1980-81. Very probably affiliation will be granted to them. On that supposition, one may apply to these colleges.

But the M.A. Course in Christianity is available *only* in the Manasagangotri, of the University of Mysore, Mysore-570 006.

Likewise those who want to do research in view of Ph.D. should apply only to Manasagangotri, Mysore-570 006.

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RJS

JESUS' INVOLVEMENT IN PALASTINE

To understand Jesus and His involvement we have to understand the Socio-Political context in which He lived and worked.

We all know for certain that Jesus of history lived in Palastine. For about 600 years, Palastine was under the dominion of colonial powers. (Persia: B.C. 538-333; Greece: B.C. 333-63; Rome B.C. 63-A.D. 135). During the time of Jesus Palastine was subjected also to the internal domination of the Landlords and the Rich in Palastine itself.

Geographic Features:

Palastine had two distinct geographic regions.

1. JUDEA:

This region was situated around Jerusalem and the Temple. It was a mountaneous area, having mostly dry land. Predominantly, Olive and fruit were cultivated here. Sheep and goats were also reared here, since the region had lots of shurbs and forests.

2. GALILEE:

This was a fertile region. Wheat and Vine were grown here extensively. Fishing in the lake of Galilee and the costal regions gave occupation to many. The people in this region were hard working, and industrious. This was the region, which was most exploited during Jesus' period. Agriculture, business, handicrafts, fishing etc. were the livelihood of the people. There were two commercial routes that passed through Galilee. One from Egypt to Damaseus and the other from Damaseus to Jerusalem. Foreign merchants passed through these routes, and had great influence in this region. Galilee was called 'territory of gentiles' and 'Land of mixed blood' since there were many illegitimate children born from the business travellers. The 'zealot' movement originated here and there were peasant revolts in this region, especially during the time of Jesus. (Map of Palastine during Jasus Ministry - Appendix I)

As mentioned above, Palastine was under the Roman Empire since B.C 63 onwards. At the economic and political level the Roman domination manifested itself in the following way.

Economic level:

The wealth of Palastine was expropriated by the Romans mainly through two types of taxes. They were:-

- i. Tributum - This was personal tax, which amounted to 1/3 of the total harvest.
- ii. Annona - The tax in kind or through work, for the Army.

Apart from these, there were unofficial amounts which the Roman officials snatched away from the people.

Through official taxes of the Roman Empire alone, about 6 million Roman Denarii were extracted from Palastine every year. (One Denarius was equal to one day's work).

Along with the above mentioned two taxes, the Temple was also extracting taxes from the people. They were:

- i. PUBLICUM: This was something similar to the state tax we have today (eg. sales tax). This was meant for the state.
- ii. DIDRACHM - for the temple
- iii. TITHE - for the Clergy
(ii and iii were Religious taxes)

Political Level

The Roman Procurator of Judea, who lived in Casarea, personified the Roman colonial power. It was he who nominated the High Priest in Jerusalem (a very powerful position, religiously and politically) from among the 4 dominant and rich families of the time.

- In Galilee, Roman Political power manifested itself through King Herod Antipas.
- The Roman Empire indirectly controlled the land-owners through its arbitrary powers of dismissal of property rights. During the reign of Herod (B.C 37-4) he confiscated the land from small land holders and marginal farmers and handed it over to Zamindars and businessmen, to facilitate increased agricultural production and large scale export of the produce.
- The intermediary officials in Palastine were recruited by Rome, from among the Sanhedrin members and the great families. They remained docile to the Roman powers and perpetuated the imperial domination.
- Those responsible for collecting the taxes were chosen by the Romans from among the lower social classes in Palastine.
- The political power of the Roman Empire was manifested also through the continuous pressure of the Roman Army in Palastine who were normally recruited from among the non-Jews of Palastine and from Syria.
- Rome also controlled the Jewish autonomy. They reserved for themselves the power of capital punishment.

ANALYSIS OF THE VARIOUS SYSTEMS THAT EXISTED IN PALASTINE.

1. Economic System:

Originally, collective ownership of land prevailed among the Jews, since they believed that the land ultimately belongs to God. (Leviticus 25/23: 'Your land must not be sold on a permanent basis, because you do not own it; it belongs to God, and you are like foreigners who are allowed to make use of it'). But since the time of Herod feudal system emerged in the villages. Barter system was also not uncommon at the village level. Jerusalem Temple was the centre of intense trade and commerce. The Temple possessed the treasury and functioned the role of a national bank. Jerusalem had trade links with Rome, Greece and Phoenicia. The celebration of Annual Jewish feasts were an occasion for the Jewish people to come to Jerusalem. The Urban workers, and the lower middle class, especially the small farmers suffered very much during Jesus' period on account of the multiple tax system that existed at this time, due to which inflation, unemployment, poverty, birth of armed bands etc. resulted.

Social System:

Palastine was a highly stratified society, during the time of Jesus. There were different social groups. They were:

1. Saducees: They belonged to the Jewish Aristocracy, and represented the most conservative group. They were closely linked to the power for their economic interest. They were learned people and were specialists in 'Torah' the original law of Isreal. They upposed the escatological believes and denied the ressurection of the dead.
 2. Pharisees: They belonged to the urban middle class, and upheld the escatological beliefs and believed in life after death. They had a very pessimistic idea of man and stressed on the other world, which according to them had to be attained through strict observance of the law. They believed in individual salvation.
 3. Scribes: They were the specialists in religious legislation and of the penal code, and enjoyed a monopoly over it, since they knew Hebrew well. This group believed in escatology and exerted tremendous control over the masses and were very active in the synagogues on sabbaths. However, they could'nt get along well with the Priests.
 4. The Priests: They were a special ethnic group, belonging to the tribe of Aaron. Among the priests there were 'Higher Clergy' and 'Lower clergy'. The priests enjoyed the monopoly over the rituals and were responsible for law and order. The latter function was carried out through the intermediary of the levites.
 5. Levites: Law and order was maintained by them; i.e. the police function. They also assisted the clergy in their various functions.
 6. The Publicans: They had very low social status. Among those who had Jewish origin were entrusted with the task of Tax collection.
 7. Sinners: Those who had one way or other transgressed the law.
 8. Possessed: Those with illness, especially mental illnesses.
 9. Lepers: were considered unpure.
 10. The Essenes: A religious group that existed during Jesus' time, living a life secluded from the world and society.
- II. The Zealots: This group was essentially a political one engaged in guerrilla activities against Romans, to restore Jewish state in its theocratic dimension, in the line of Davidian Messianism. (The zealots took over power in A.D. 68, after killing the high priest in Jerusalem. They established a new high priest, from one of the traditional families. In 70, the Romans retaliated and the zealots tried to defend the temple (symbol of power and authority) to its last man, but in vein. And the Romans destroyed the Temple thoroughly).

Social Classes: At the Rural Level the upper class consisted of mainly the big land owners. Generally they lived in the cities. The different craftsmen belonged to the middle class. (those who made perfumes and religious costumes

These products were sold out during the Jewish feast in Jerusalem). The agricultural workers, the slaves (generally owned by the merchants), and the unemployed (Mt.20:6) belonged to the lower class.

At the Urban level, the upper class was constituted of the sacerdotal aristocracy, (composed of the four families, from among who the Roman procurator chose the High Priest) the big merchants and the high officials. The urban craftsmen, small merchants, middle level officials, the priests and the levites formed the middle class. To the lower class belonged the workers attached to the temple, slaves, sinners, publicans, unemployed, beggers etc.,

The social stratification was done also on ethnic factors, i.e. pure and impure Jews. Purity of Jewish blood had to be proved tracing one's origin, to one of the twelve tribes of Israel (Mt.1:1-17). Parental authority in the family was very much respected.

Political system: The political structure in the Palestinian society was in the following way. At the village level decisions were taken and power was exercised by the council of elders-composed of chosen heads of Jewish households-through regulating communal affairs, settling village disputes, punishing transgressors of law etc. There was also a priest in the council.

At the urban level, also there was a council composed of aristocratic families, large landowners etc. They monopolized the political and economic power.

At the state level: The Sanhedrin, which was the council of elders in Jerusalem, composed of 71 members (Pharisees, scribes, saducees, and priests) was the powerful body. Sanhedrin was located in the Temple, and was similar to the supreme court. This body generated ideology and exerted tremendous influence on the lives of the people. Thus the state power was located in the temple. Though the sanhedrin represented authority, the High Priest represented supreme authority at the social, economic, political and administrative levels. (See Appendix II)

Ideological system: *

Ideology means the explanation or moral justification of the social, political and economic life of a person or society of a given time. Ideology is the basis of all our actions. In Palestine it was essentially a religious ideology, which was very conservative and law oriented. The temple, symbolized the ideology, for Israel. Since God resided in the temple, it gave a divine guarantee to the ideological system.

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- * Reactionary ideology - Turned towards the past
 - Conservative ideology - Supporting the status quo
 - Liberal " " - Proposing minor and gradual changes.
 - Revolutionary " " - Aiming at radical changes

The producers of this powerful religious ideology were the religious elite. (The high priest, the pharisees, the scribes etc). The ideological system kept the social and political system completely under its control.

Apart from the above mentioned systems and structures, the natural calamities also added its share to make life miserable for the poor people. Roman historians and Jewish Rabbis have written about the famine of A.D.25, plague of A.D.29, earth quake of A.D. 31, the devastating cyclone of A.D. 64 and the draught of A.D. 65. Mention of these incidents are found in the Bible also. Ref. Acts 11:28-30; Mt. 24:7; Lk 21:11.

It was into this Palastine, that Jesus, the Redeemer, Liberator and the Prophet, was born. As He lived mostly in Galilee, He was fully exposed and thus aware of the plight of the poor. He took a definite option for the poor and He chose to live with them and His associates were from among them.

Right in the beginning of His ministry itself, Jesus declared His mission in unambiguous terms; That is:

I have come...." To bring good news to the poor
To proclaim liberty to the captives
To bring sight to the blind
To set free the oppressed
To announce that the Lord will save His people"
(Lk 4:18:19)

To some extent, the word 'poor' used by Jesus is misinterpreted today. In the gospel according to St. Luke, whenever Jesus spoke this word He always meant those people who were economically and socially deprived, and those who were in the lower strata of the society. (and NOT the spiritually poor!) When Jesus spoke to the disciples of John the Baptist He mentioned who were the poor for Him.... The blind, deaf, lame, lepers..... (Lk 7:22) While speaking about the invitees for the banquet, he again speaks of the poor: the crippled, the lame, the blind.... (Lk 14:13) Talking about the rich man and Lazarus, (Lk 16:20) Jesus illustrates clearly what He meant by poverty. When Jesus asked the rich man to sell everything and give it to the poor, He meant material wealth, and He had in mind those who were deprived of it, and not the rich who have made the vow of poverty (Lk 18:22; Mt. 19:16-21). The economic dimension of richness or poverty is clear again, when Jesus spoke about the poor widow (Lk 23:3); and the rich fool (Lk 12:16-20). From all these it is very clear that Jesus' option was for those people who were poor in the literal and ordinary sense of the word

Well, does this mean that Jesus excluded the rich in His mission, or that He had no message for the rich? One thing that is clear from the Bible is that Jesus never overlooked the rich people because they were rich. Nevertheless, on many occasions, the good news of Jesus turned out to be a bad news to the rich. (Because He never rationalised or compromised!)

Many a time Jesus accepted the hospitality of the rich (Lk 14:1, 19:6) But He always had the guts to speak to their face about their greed and injustice and very often sitting under their own roofs! (Lk 6:24, 18:25 etc) The response of Zacheus (Lk 19:8) clearly indicates the radical change that occurred in him, probably after the long discussion that Jesus had with him. While eating a meal in the home of a leading pharisee, we see Jesus boldly exposing their attitudes and challenging their mentality, and making concrete suggestions. (Lk 14: 1-14, Lk 7:36-50). In those days, some at least would have really thought that to invite Jesus was to invite trouble!

Jesus situated Himself basically within the religious field. But He did not belong to the religious elite and was therefore not entitled to enter the ideological system (Mk 11:27-28); What right do you have.....?) He took upon the eschatology of the prophets, and severely criticized the Jewish religious practices, as made up of purely external laws and observances. This brought Him to the violent confrontation with the pharisees, who saw Him as a threat to their position and power. He was seen as one who defied religious authority and was accused as a disruptive element (Lk 23:5), that must be got rid of for the good of the nation.

Apart from upsetting the established order, the popularity which Jesus enjoyed through His presence and His teaching (Jn 11:47,48; Mk 11:18), increased the worry of the elite. And accordingly they concluded that it was better that one man die than the whole nation getting destroyed (Jn 11:50). But as capital was reserved to the Roman authorities, the only possibility that was open to the Sanhedrin was to make it appear that Jesus had defied the Roman authority. Punishment

The Sanhedrin condemned Jesus before the High Priest on the grounds of blasphemy, but played a clever role and changed their accusation from the religious order to the political order, in front of Pilate (Lk 23:2-5). When Pilate was not convinced of His culpability to deserve a death sentence, he was threatened of his own position (Jn 18:28-38; 19:12). The game played by the Sanhedrin to get Jesus killed is very clear from the passion narratives given in St. John and St. Luke.

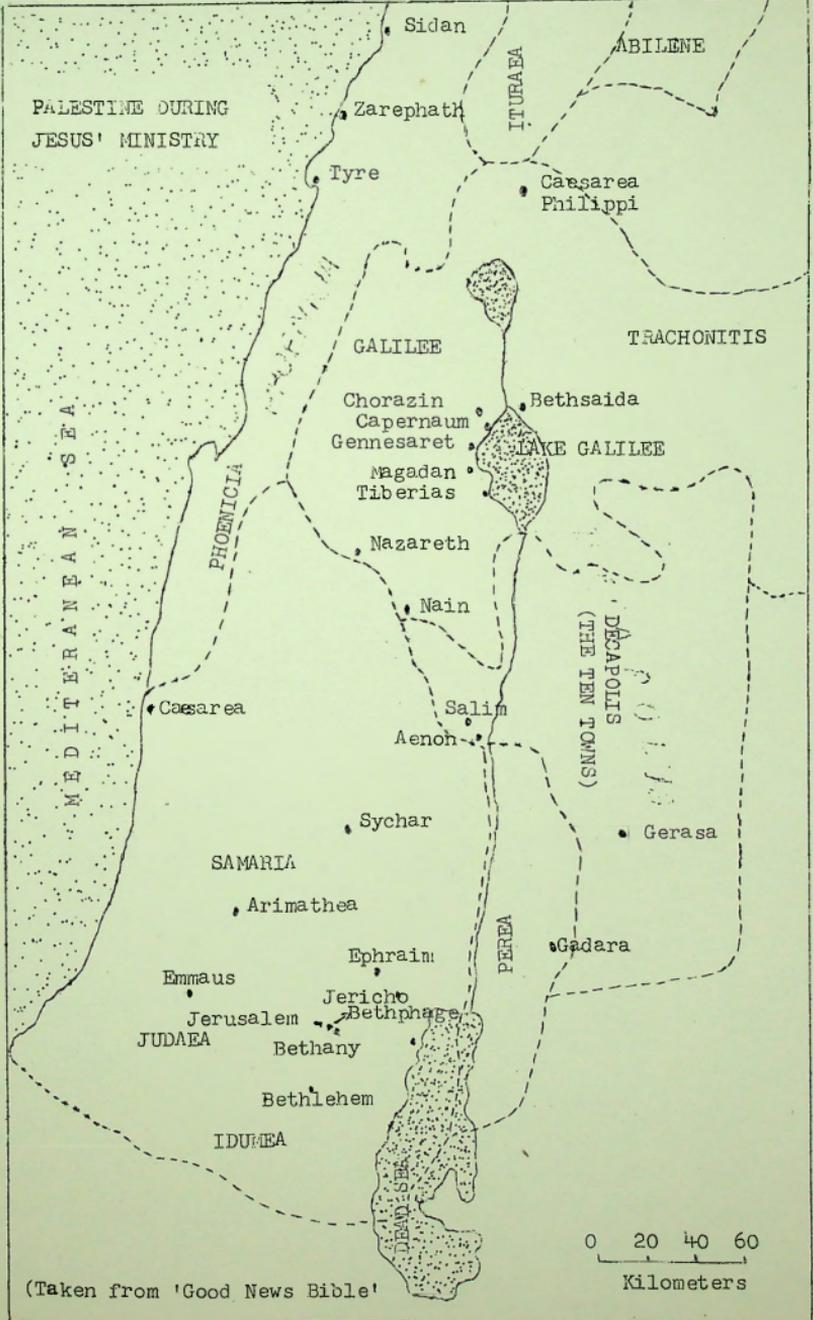
Lk 22:35-38; 47-54; 63-71

23:1-27 and

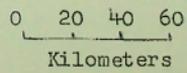
Jn 18:1-14; 19-40

19:1-16

It is important to note that the questioning of Jesus and the court procedure were conducted 'early in the morning' (Jn 18:28; Lk 22:66). This was shrewdly and cunningly planned by the Sanhedrin. Because it was easy, for them to handle Jesus in the absence of His supporters, who were already in Jerusalem in large numbers for the passover feast. They were the people from the countryside, who heard and loved Jesus. They were not staying in the Temple complex. The 'People' and the 'crowd' which St. John and St. Luke speak of were the many servants and the workers in the temple. Being the feast time their number was pretty large. Agreeing to what ever their masters told was a matter of their own daily bread, and they simply reflected and resounded what was in their masters' minds.



(Taken from 'Good News Bible')



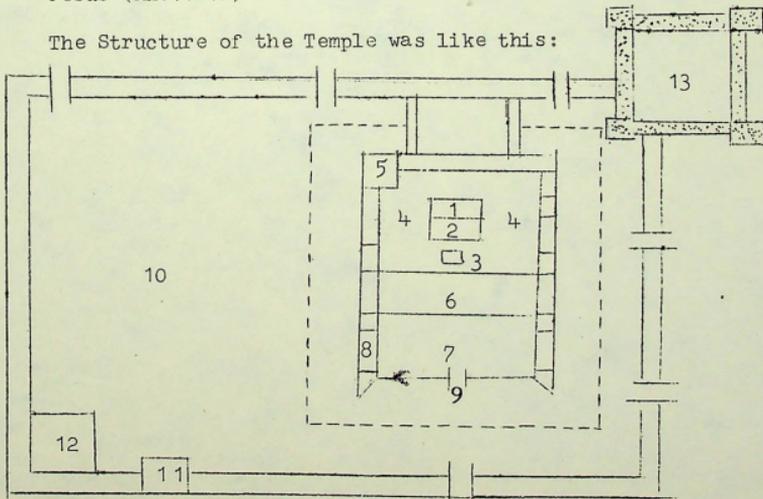
The Jerusalem Temple

The Jerusalem Temple played a very important role in the life of the Jewish people. The Temple exerted tremendous influence in the economic, social, political and religious fields. This was the only Temple for Jews and they came from all over the world to Jerusalem for offering prayers and sacrifices especially during the time of feasts. Though Synagogues existed in many places, they were only houses of prayer, and not for sacrifices.

The first Temple was built by Solomon (1 Kgs Chapter 5 to 8), but after 400 years in B.C. 587, it was robbed and destroyed by Nabukadener the emperor of Babylone. After 50 years, under Zerubabel, they started the construction again. In B.C. 515 it was almost completed. During the attacks of Greeks and Syrians the temple was partially damaged, but not destroyed. In B.C. 20-10, it was King Herod who expanded the Temple and constructed it in the way it existed during the time of Jesus. Renovation of the Temple was carried on and the entire work was completed in A.D.63; but only to be completely destroyed in 70, by the Roman Army. The foundation stones of the western side wall is still remaining to this day, as a monument of the great Jerusalem Temple.

The cleansing of the Temple (Mk 11:15-18) by Jesus was a symbolic attack on the vested interests and the powers that were concentrated in the Temple. As mentioned elsewhere in this paper, the Temple was the seat of all the power structures. According to St. Mark it was after this incident that the Jewish authorities started looking for ways and means to kill Jesus (Mk:11-18)

The Structure of the Temple was like this:



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|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Holy of Holies | 7. Place for female Jews |
| 2. Holy Place | 8. Store rooms, Class rooms etc. |
| 3. Main Alter | 9. Beautiful gate (Acts 3:2) |
| 4. Place for Priests and servers | 10. Courtyards for the gentiles |
| 5. Sanhedrin | 11. Solomon's Portico |
| 6. Place for male Jews. | 12. Tower |
| | 13. Pilate's Palace |

THE CHURCH AS A STABILIZING FACTOR

Our analysis of the Indian situation would not be complete if we do not analyse the social function of religion. To avoid any sort of ambiguity and possible emotional reactions, let us first define what we mean by the social function of religion. It means the role of a particular religion in the society and the influence of society on religion - social function of religion. It does not imply any judgement on faith, on the spiritual or the ascetic life, or on the sanctity of a person. These are the realities that do not enter into the field of a sociological analysis. In this sense a man of deep faith or a very hold man, can play a very bad social function. The social function of religion, does not take much into account our intentions, however good they may be. What matters is our social praxis, what is embodied in our institutions and in our projects; and, in a much broader way, in our whole pastoral work. We will, however, limit ourselves to our social involvement, although our social involvement is very much related to a broader perspective, including our vision of the Church and the understanding of salvation.

We operate in our society mostly through institutions. I assume that it is our concern for social problems and not our own interest or prestige, that is expressed in and through our institutions, or socio-economic projects. We can, therefore, justifiably ask ourselves a few questions about institutions: be they educational or health, or socio-economic projects.

Educational Institutions: We studied the allocation of credits, we realised that the Government has given top priority to college education and has neglected primary education. Have we really followed a different pattern? In 25 years the growth rate of our colleges has been 250%. The dropout rates in the primary education is 60%. The dropout pattern in our schools is different. Government has neglected training schools and mass education. How many mass education programmes do we have. We know why mass education is apowerful to make people aware of the real situation. As we neglect mass education, are we not unconsciously accomplices of the government in keeping the masses dormant? For evident political reasons, the content of our educational system is "neutral". Is our teaching committed? Does our teaching help our students to understand the mechanisms at work in our society? Can we say that we are preparing conscious citizens and adults? I have no doubt that the education in independent India has brought modernisation and change. But what kind of change? We mentioned above the main features of our society. We need therefore a school system that would create 'deviants' in the real and deep sense of the word: Youth groups that would have the guts to imagine and commit themselves for building a new society, in which justice, dignity of men and their equality, the collective promotion and the national integration would be the basic values. Is this the case? Again my personal view is that our school system creates little desire for change and much conformity. The basic assumption is individual hard work and individual promotion and competition. The reference society is the existing one. The counterpart of these assumptions, is that those who cannot afford hard work, individual promotion and competition are the ones left out of the system.

When we have to face the above question, priests and sisters used to often say that they need to follow the syllabus and submit themselves to the regulations. Certainly we have limitations from this side. But I wonder if it is not often an easy escape? It is evident that we cannot teach mathematics in ten different ways. But what about geography, history, psychology, sociology and economics? Behind every education system there are explicit or latent philosophy, ideology and especially a vision of man. Wouldn't it be better to ask plainly if we do not share also, consciously or unconsciously, the philosophy, the ideology and

Health Institutions: In this field we Christians invested good amount of energy and human and financial resources. We cannot deny the amount of dedication and selfless service. But we cannot but ask a few questions, given the importance of health in human life; given also the amount of freedom compared to the school system, we have to organise our health services. The following is a question we could ask: Are we maintaining the system or not? In answer it will be sufficient to compare the existing health system with our own services, we presume again that often the christian witness is simply to stress the priorities or to do some pioneering work. It is therefore important to see what are the main characteristics of our health system and how our christian medical services function in the general frame of national health, in order to ask ourselves if again we maintain, strengthen or weaken the existing system.

The first characteristic of our health service is that it is urban. We have said already that 50% of our rural population does not have basic health services. Are our medical services rural-oriented? Have we opted for village medical care? But the urban orientation is not only a problem of location. It implies an approach, an organisation and a particular type of training for health services. The other characteristics of our health services will help us to understand what I mean.

The second characteristic of our medical system is that it is curative and they remain curative inspite of the change in orientation that is noticeable during the past few years. When our health services are in the villages, what type of services do we provide? Are they curative or preventive? Even today it is not rare to see our "island hospitals", health institutions, receiving patients from long distances, but, situated in a human and physical environment with terrific health education.

Socio-economic projects: For the last few years, the number of socio-economic projects has been increasing very fast. Maybe 10 years ago the presence of the Church was envisioned like this: Church buildings, dispensaries or hospitals and schools. Today the emphasis has changed. We are undertaking more and more economic projects. Their purpose is to raise the income of the people by supplying job possibilities. Are there any risks? All the questions we asked about education and health could be summarised with one question: What is the vision of man behind our education and health system? The question we could ask about the projects, could be formulated in this way. What is the idea of development when we start a project? What do we want to achieve with a project?

When I ask these questions on my visits the reply that I received most of the time was: we want to help the poor; we want to uplift them; we want to give help for self help. These replies may suggest that we do not understand the real causes of poverty and underdevelopment, and that we look at the misery of the people as fate, and consequently assume that our mission is to "help" the poor and not to work for a better society. In other words, we ignore, consciously and unconsciously, the forces and mechanisms at work in our society. We ignore the fact that poverty in India is a dialectical process. That some people rot in misery because others can enjoy life. That our political system works in such a way, that only a tiny minority gets the benefits of our investments, while others stagnate even if they don't get poorer.

What are then the consequences of our projects? In every project we have objectives and goals that we want to achieve. But our projects are economic interventions in a particular socio-economic and political set-up. It is therefore natural that the project will have unforeseen consequences, that could maintain, strengthen, weaken or shake the existing system. These are what we could call the latent functions of our projects.

One of the most common negative latent functions of our projects is that they divert people from the real issues that are political. The second latent function is that in diverting the poor from the political issues the masses are diverted from the political and administrative instances, that finally are responsible for the development work. The third latent function is that the project, helping a small minority could divide and hence weaken the poor. The result would be that a small minority of poor will emerge, and the development as a collective process of liberation will be hindered, strengthening the individualistic mentality and the idea of private property and individual promotion.

To conclude, I would like to share with you my reflection and experience about our institutions. From my experience of analysing and evaluating projects for the last five years, I have come to believe that our approach to Indian problems has been "complementary" and "supplementary" to the government work. We have therefore followed more or less the same pattern. No doubt our institutions are better administered. Perhaps we may even be less corrupt. But, basically, the pattern of education, of health, of social work, is the same. Having followed the same pattern, we are caught up in the same policies. But, as we have admitted above, these are unjust policies!! These are policies for the rich, with some concessions for the poor. Having followed the same pattern, being caught in the same policies, we are maintaining the unjust system. In this sense the Church is a stabilizing factor, and not the powerful agent of change that our society requires.

This is my feeling and my deep conviction about our institutions, based on my studies. I may be wrong, and I would be very happy if empirical and sociological studies show that my analysis is wrong. My experience is not doubt limited. Also, not much evaluation of our institutions has been done. This evaluation work seems to be the most important task in the coming years. But, important as it may be, I find much hesitation, if not opposition, most of the time. We have a tremendous fear of serious evaluations. Maybe, that it is because we vaguely fear that something is wrong in our approach; also, perhaps, that our love of the people we want to serve, is not deep enough to overcome fears and insecurities, to destroy the vested interests that every institution is bound to create.....

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BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS ON LABOUR

INTRODUCTION: This paper was originally prepared for a small study-group in East Berlin, consisting of christians and marxists. The group had discussed issues of labour legislation etc., and felt the need of looking at them from a broader perspective. I was asked to give some information about the ways in which especially the Old Testament relates to labour. For the evaluation of the biblical material I made use of the insights of Karl Marx who spent a lifetime in analysing human labour. I found his approach to be very appropriate and congenial with the biblical outlook in spite of important differences.

With Marx we can view labour from different angles, namely,

- (1) as part of the process of interaction between man and nature; and
- (2) as part of the social process in which man interacts with man.

I. Necessity and freedom in the relation of man and nature:

1. Man and labour: According to Marx man emerges from the animal world as the one who starts wrestling with nature, trying to bring it under his control, Man is the tool-making animal. It is through purposeful labour that man becomes man, that he distinguishes himself from the instinctive ways of the animal world. Thus work is an essential part of human life. This is also the biblical view. Other religions and civilisations have developed a different attitude. The Greek civilisation and many oriental cultures considered labour to be something low and inferior, something below the dignity and true destiny of man. As far as possible it was left to slaves. Not-to-need-to-work was a status symbol, a sign of high standing, the privilege of a free man, of a lord. In such traditions paradise is conceived as the place where lazybones enjoy life in permanent leisure.

The outlook of the Old Testament is fundamentally different. According to it work is an essential part of human life even in paradise. God's law expects all without exception to work regularly. The same we find in the New Testament where Paul bluntly states: "If any one will not work, let him not eat", a sentence which was happily quoted by the workers movement as a powerful argument against the rich who led a luxurious life without labouring.

2. Man and nature: We also find the Old Testament reflecting on the peculiar dialectical relation of man and nature. Both visions of creation, in Genesis 1, 1-2, 4 and in Genesis 2 and 3, affirm the interdependence of man and nature. Man is created on the same sixth day together with the beasts. At the same time he has received dominion over them and over all the earth (1, 25-26). He is formed of dust from the field, "Adam" (man) of dust from "Adamah" (soil) (2, 7.) Man and field belong together and need each other. As is said in 2, 15: man is put in the garden of Eden to till it and to keep it. The word for tilling, 'abad', means to work, to serve. The word "to keep", to protect is an important supplement to the notion of dominion which is used in 1, 26. Ruling over nature cannot simply be a ruthless exploitation. It has also to be protecting it, so that it can renew itself. For we can never be without it. But chapter 2 also indicates the special status of man in nature and over against it. It implies the giving of names (vs. 20) and becomes visible in the taming of animals. Keeping in view the continuing dependence of man on nature we can appreciate the high status given to man as ruler over nature without taking it as a licence to ruthless exploitation of nature as it has happened in history. Man has been given dominion over the earth (1, 26). But he is responsible for it to the creator - and he himself remains "Adam" taken from the soil and returning to the soil (3, 19).

As Psalm 8 puts it:

"What is man that thou art mindful of him,
and the son of man that thou dost care for him?
Yet thou hast made him little less than God,
and dost crown him with glory and honour.
Thou hast given him dominion over the works of thy hands;
Thou hast put all things under his feet....
O Lord, our Lord
how majestic is thy name in all the earth."

3. Technology and wisdom: Genesis records the progress of man in the division of labour and in technological innovation. It mentions the invention of tents, of lyre and pipe and of instruments of bronze and iron (4, 20-22). And in job 28, we find a beautiful poem about man's venturing into mining. It is a song of admiration for the courage and skills of man digging out of the earth the hidden treasures of iron, copper and gold. It is something what no other creature is able to do. "But where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?" (vs. 12). Science and technology are great achievements of man. But they are not the same as wisdom. Wisdom is something different. It precedes technical abilities and scientific discoveries and it transcends them. Science and Technology are tools of man as he tries to bring the earth under control. But they can easily turn into tools of destruction. Actually, technological progress is mainly dictated by the demands of military establishments for more sophisticated means of destruction. Where is the wisdom? Wisdom decides about the direction, about the goal. Does our technology serve man or does it destroy him? Where do we find this wisdom? "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding". (vs 28)

4. Labour and Life: The modern world attaches high value to technology and the increase of production as its main articles of faith. In this connection labour, work is often emphasized as the main purpose in life. In a later stage affluent capitalism added ever-increasing consumption as equally important for the fulfilment of life (and for the functioning of capitalist society with its goal of increasing production for the sake of profit and power). In both cases, of production and of consumption, the basic point is that they are considered as ends-in-themselves. It is not related to any further reaching comprehensive meaning of life. This is no urgent problem as long as the first priority is to secure a minimum of decent living to all members of society. But afterwards the question arises which economists and technocrats don't like: "for what purpose after all we are toiling, apart from earning and living?".

The Bible raises this point. Labour is necessary. It is an essential part of life. It is a unique feature of man that he is able through labour to make nature cater to his needs. But life is more than labouring. That is why the Sabbath is not only a day of rest but a day of re-creation in the deep sense of the word. It is the time for the celebration of life which we have received; It is the day of freedom before God, where we re-discover the purpose of creation and see 'it was good' - and learn to judge and direct our life and work in this large framework which gives meaning and direction to it.

5. Sweat and Fruits of Labour: The Bible gives one more reason why labour is not all in life and why it should not be all. Labour is toilsome. It brings sweat and pain. There is no reason to idealize it. It is hard and full of suffering. There is a bitter disharmony between effort and fruit. In spite of your sweat the soil may bring forth not only plants to eat but also thorns and thistles (Genesis 3, 17). It is part of the disharmony which there is between human beings and God. Life is distorted in all its relations, also in that of man and nature. But, once more, labour is part of life. It is not labour which is cursed, but only the soil. And even that

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is not to be accepted as the last word. There is the vision of a future where "they shall not labour in vain" (is. 65, 23). The prophet speaks of new heavens and a new earth (vs. 17) and the Greek translators of the O.T. Therefore translated vs. 23: "work shall be outdated". They found it difficult to imagine that even on the new earth work would be part of life - with the decisive differences that all the relations would be in harmony. The new Testament sees the beginning of fulfilment in the life of Jesus Christ. He is the new Adam, the royal man, who is in the desert with the wild beasts as in the garden of Eden (Mark 1, 13). He commands the forces of nature to the service of man in his needs. His so called miracles are not meant as proofs of his divinity. But as signs of the coming Kingdom in which fallen man will be restored in all his relations, to God, to his fellowmen and to nature. When Simon, the fisherman complains "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing", Jesus directs him to an abundant catch. As the harmony between effort and result is restored Peter discovers that he is a sinful man (Luke 5, 1ff). In the same way, Jesus commands the evil spirits to leave, the wind to cease. Healing the sick and sharing the bread with the hungry the Son of Man restores creation to its original meaning. That is how the relation of man and nature was meant to be. Man not a victim of leprosy or going hungry in spite of hard work, but enjoying the fruit of his labour and enjoying life in good health.

6. The Goal of Freedom: Even then or all the more labour is not all in life. It is necessary for making a living. But making a living is not the purpose of life. As Marx puts it, the process of labour is determined by necessity. He distinguishes this realm of necessity from the realm of freedom in which man as a free subject finds the fulfilment of life. Labour is a matter of necessity. "Just as the savage must wrestle with nature to satisfy his wants, to maintain and reproduce life, so must civilized man, and he must do so in all social formations and under all possible modes of production."

Only beyond this sphere of material production man becomes a free subject. "Beyond it begins that development of human energy which is an end in itself, the true realm of freedom, which, however, can blossom forth only with this realm of necessity as its basis." (Capital III, p.820). It is a question for dialogue between marxists and Christians what the development of human energy as an end in itself may mean, on the one hand, and how Christians see the fulfilment of human life in the communion of God and men on the new earth, on the other hand. In any case, together they will differ from the bourgeois praise of restless productivity as meaningful in itself, a heritage from capitalism which is still very much alive in today's socialist countries. For Marx material production has only meaning as a means which should make possible the development of the human potential in freedom. In a way this realm of freedom is like the Sabbath, beyond the days of labour but based on it. The difference would be that in the Bible Human history starts with the Sabbath and not with the efforts of man.

II. Slavery and liberation in the relations of man and man

1. Marx and the Bible about class-struggle: The major problems of labour, causing suffering and death, stem not from the relation man-nature, but from the relation man-man. It is there where man is exploited by man that the sweat and pain of labour becomes unbearable. It is there where conquerors and owners appropriate the fruits of the labour of others that the experience of labouring in vain causes alienation between man and man. Marx has said: "History is the history class struggles. The key to the understanding of human history lies not in the ideas of man, not in his religion or art or culture. It lies even not in politics, not in the abilities and failures of the leaders of the nations." All these are important aspects of history. But they can be understood only in relation with the economic structure of society. It is the way in which economic life is organised, the mode of production, which determines in the

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last instance the development of history. And it is the mode of production, which determines in which classes society is divided, who are the exploiters and the exploited. As we have seen before, economics is not the final thing for Marx. He is a humanist. The goal is human freedom, not material production. But he is materialist in the sense that he sees economic production as the base of life and as such as the decisive factor in the manifold struggles of history.

The Bible gives, of course, no marxist theory. It does not give a scientific analysis of society. (That is why Christianity and marxism do not necessarily exclude each other. They do not operate on the same level.) The biblical story focuses also on human history. But it sees history in the framework and perspective of the relation between God and man. Even where it focuses on the same aspects of human life, on alienation and exploitation, it brings them into connection with the alienation in the relation between God and Man. In so far there is a basic difference in outlook and frame of reference between Marx and the Bible.

However, the surprising thing is, how much affinity there is between the two in spite of this. Many movements and ideologies raise questions which don't get attention in the Bible or only in a marginal way. But the key issues of marxism, the exploitation and alienation of man in society and the struggle for the humanisation of society, are very close to the core of the biblical message, as we shall see in the Exodus story. It is already remarkable that the Old Testament in its narrating gives importance to the economic aspects of reality. The story of the alienation between Abel and his brother Cain, f.i. which shows the distortion of the human relations as sin, explicitly mentions the difference in occupation between the two.

"Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground." (Genesis 4, 2). That refers to one of the basic divisions of labour in early history. There is nothing bad about division as labour as such. It is necessary. But it is a crucial factor which shapes life. And it can lead to inequality and can become the source from which murderous conflicts originate. Often we don't notice these elements in the Bible. Marxists like Ernst Bloch, Milan Machovec and others have helped us to discover them.

2. Exodus as liberation from Slavery: The Exodus experience of liberation from slavery is at the heart of Israel's faith. "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." (ex. 20, 2). That is almost like a definition of the God of Israel. What sort of bondage is meant? Obviously it was the bondage of slavery, of ruthless economic exploitation. Accordingly Israel's basic experience of salvation, redemption was an experience of liberation from economic and political oppression. The problem of labour which was turned into slavery is at the heart of the matter:

"So they made the people of Israel serve with rigour, and made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field; in all their work they made them serve with rigour." (Ex. 1, 13-14)

Not less than five times the key-words 'abad', 'aboda' are repeated. It is the same word which can mean as well service, as work, as slavery. The same word occurs in Ex. 2, 23 where it is translated with 'bondage': "And the people of Israel groaned under their bondage, and cried out for help, and their cry under bondage came up to God". The word for 'crying' is a standing term for the crying out of the oppressed (see f.i. Habakuk 1, 2; James 5, 4).

3. The God of freedom cannot be served in slavery: The God of Israel is the one who hears this cry and who knows the condition of the people (2, 25; 3, 7ff). In the process of liberation he reveals his identity. His name "I am who I am" or rather "I shall be who I shall be", "I shall be with you" will be the answer, when the people will ask Moses who has sent him to lead them out. JHWH is the name beyond the grasp of magicians and theologians, the name of the one who will not be domesticated by religious or other manipulation. His name is the watchword of freedom, is the call to come out of bondage and to experience his presence on the march through the desert. Therefore, this God cannot be served in slavery, but only in freedom. Slavery and service to this God cannot go together. Moses is not sent to ask from the Pharaoh improvement of the working conditions and free time for worship. He is sent to say: "Thus says the Lord, Israel is my first-born son, and I say to you, 'Let my son go that he may serve me'". (Ex. 4, 22-23). The same word 'abad': It is a matter of choice: either slavery under Pharaoh or service of God. As the God of freedom he cannot be served in slavery. How could he be known and worshipped as the One who brings out from bondage by people who would continue to live and to be treated as slaves. Religious ceremonies do not serve him and his purpose, if the conditions of bondage remain the same. God wants his people to serve him in freedom, as son not as slaves.

Marxists and many Christians thought and still think that service of God and slavery can go together. Such Christians think that the two don't affect each other. Whatever the social-economic condition, the relation between God and the soul is not affected by it. Whether we are rich or poor, it makes no difference in the eyes of God and in the relation with him. And marxists say: that is typical for religion that is how it strengthens exploitation and oppression. That is why we reject religion, because in it serving Gâd and servicing slave-masters go together.

The Bible sees it differently, and marxists have helped christians to discover this.

1) It does not accept poverty as fate, but sees it as a result of sinful structures, of injustice and exploitation. That is why the prophets charge the rich and hold them responsible. That is not only a question of bad individuals, but of the set-up of society. The Egyptians must not have been particularly bad people. But they were slave-masters. That was their role in the system of exploitation. The living conditions may have been tolerable. The people in the desert longed back to the cucumber and the fleshpots of Egypt. But the system was one of slavery. Therefore Moses demands nothing less than "Let my people go!". No compromise possible. The people may get second thoughts faced with the hardships of the desert. The oppressed often tend to accept the ideology of the oppressors.

!Is not his what we said to you in Egypt, Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness. And Moses said to the people:

"Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you today". (Ex. 14, 12-13)

2) Exploitation and injustice directly and deeply affects the relation to God. a) Israel confesses its God as the liberator from slavery. That is the core of its creed. b) The deepest doubt and despair in faith occurs where people suffer from injustice and seem to wait in vain for God's action and liberation. (Psalm 10, Habakuk 1 etc.)

"Why dost thou stand afar off, O Lord?
Why dost thou hide thyself in times of trouble?
In arrogance the wicked hotly pursue the poor" (Ps. 10, 1-2)

c) The Godless, the atheists are in the Bible not those who propagate an atheist theory saying that God does not exist. They are those who deny his existence in practice. How? By denying him as liberator of the oppressed.

"For the wicked boasts of the desires of his heart, and the man greedy for gain curses and renounces the Lord, In the pride of his countenance the wicked does not seek him; all his thoughts are, 'there is no God.'" (Ps. 10, 3-4)

This corresponds with the despair of his victims:

"The hapless is crushed, sinks down, and falls by his might. He thinks in his heart, 'God has forgotten, He has hidden his face, he will never see it.'" (vs. 10-11)

Faith in the living God is at stake in the experience of oppression. Therefore:

"Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up thy hand; forget not the afflicted. Why does the wicked renounce God, and say in his heart, 'Thou wilt not call to account'" (vs. 12-13)

"O Lord, thou wilt hear the desire of the meek... to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more." (vs. 17-18)

d) It affects the relation to God so much that Jesus says that the rich cannot enter the Kingdom of God. Not as rich. The kingdom of God and its justice excludes the Kingdom of Mammon and its injustice. "You cannot serve God and Mammon" (Matthew 6, 24.) Mammon stands for the power of money which exploits man for its purposes. An economic system ruled by mammon, by the laws of profit, is godless, a-theistic anti the Kingdom of God. It is significant that Jesus puts forward only this alternative of masters, God and Mammon, and not God and Jupiter or so many other of the gods of that time. Obviously he saw the biggest challenge to his message and to faith coming from this side, from Mammon and its injustice.

3. All shall work - all shall rest: When liberation from slavery is so much the essence of the salvation which Israel experienced in the Exodus and confessed in its faith, the crucial question afterwards becomes: how to avoid new slavery. That is what nowadays many sceptical christians say: there is no point in trying to change the system even if it is bad. The same evils will return. Israel had to struggle indeed to build up a different type of society. But at least it tried. And in the process it gave to mankind the unique institution of the sabbath.

After liberation from bondage work, daily work had to go on. How to avoid that again in the process of work some people would become slave-masters and others slaves, as it was accepted in all societies of those days. It was difficult at all to imagine a society without slavery, just like we find it difficult to imagine a society without capitalist exploitation. Israel did not succeed in completely avoiding certain forms of slavery and of bonded labour. But it did a decisive step in the right direction. It did not only preach to the powerful and warn them to be nice to the weak, and to the trustees of their wealth etc. But it founded institutions which protected the weak against the strong, even when they did not listen to moral appeals. Such institutions were the Sabbath and the Sabbath year.

To keep the Sabbath is the most important commandment in the Old Testament. In the course of time it acquired several meanings.

a) In its oldest form it means to stop working. "Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest" (Ex. 34, 21). This commandment is revolutionary as it applies to all, high and low, master and servant, God and man. "That your ox and your ass may have rest, and the son of your bondmaid, and the alien may be refreshed" (Ex. 23, 12). Just like the Lord who made heaven and earth rested

on the seventh day, "and was refreshed" (Ex. 31, 17). That hits at the heart of the slave system. In it some have rest when they wish, the masters, whereas the others have to work any time, the slaves. The slaves have no time of their own. They are the property of their masters, who can do with them whatever they like. Rest for all means the limitation of the power of man over man. One day in the week the master has nothing to say over the servant. Even the most dependent one, the son of the bondmaid, cannot be bossed around. He is entitled to the same rest and refreshment which the creator of heaven and earth took on the seventh day. At least once in a week all are free. That is the way in which the liberation from slavery finds an institution which protects the human freedom of all and especially of the weakest members of society.

b) Sabbath is the day to celebrate, to remember, the liberation from slavery. It is not only a day of rest, but of celebration of freedom.

"You shall remember that you were a servant (ebed) in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out thence with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm: therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day. (Deut. 5, 15)

It is the day on which to remember that the purpose of liberation is a new society in the promised land. It is not just to get refreshed for the next round of daily labour, but also to renew the vision of the new society and to return to work for it with fresh inspiration.

Sabbath is a weekly day of strike - as Roman Writer Tacitus complained about the Jews. But it is not a strike just for higher wages or slight improvements, but for a different society. Remember the Exodus from Egypt.

c) Sabbath is a day for thanksgiving to the Lord who made heaven and earth. (Exodus 20, 11; cf. Genesis 2, 1-3). Here the Sabbath is placed in the widest horizon. Man free from his masters and from the pain of labour comes before the Giver of life, and finds rest, refreshment and new vision.

d) In and after the time of exile, the Sabbath becomes the sacrament of God's covenant with his people. It reminds the people that they are no slaves, as it did for so many generations of Jews in the ghetto's all over the world. At the same time it got the function of distinction and of separation from the others. Slowly it turned into an oppressive law with more and more prescriptions how to avoid doing any work, whereas the spirit of freedom got lost.

e) Jesus restores the meaning of Sabbath as the institution which is made for man in need, it is there to restore the hungry and the sick to their freedom. It is there "to do good" and "to save life". "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath". (Mark 2, 23-3, 6)

4. All shall share in the fruits of labour: The tribes of Israel that settled in the promised land of Palestine started from a more or less equal distribution of the land among the families. But inevitably inequalities developed. For one reason or the other, people got indebted, had to work as bonded labourers, and even lost their lands. If nothing was done against such 'natural' developments the rich would grow richer and the poor poorer. Israel tried to prevent such drift to inequality and the injustice and slavery which result from it. One such institution was that of the redeemer, as Boaz is in the story of Ruth and Naomi. The Sabbath year and jubilee year were other institutional measures to counteract with the trend to evergrowing inequality. The measures were the following:

i) Once in seven years the soil should rest; (ii) Once in seven years all debts among Hebrews should be cancelled; (iii) At the end of seven years Hebrew slaves should be released; (iv) Once in fifty years each family should get back its land and houses. (See Ex. 21, 2-6; 23, 10-12; Leviticus 25-26; Deuteronomy 15, 1-18; 31, 9-13)

This is Israel's institutional protest against an economy based on exploitation. It is part of the vision of the new society on the new earth that all shall enjoy the fruits of their toil. They shall not labour in vain: "They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat". They shall live to "enjoy the work of their hands" (Isaiah 65, 21 ff.) Whereas the main point here is that death shall not untimely interfere, still we can also hear the implicit assertion that labour and its fruits belong together and that neither death nor any other form of alienation will separate them in the new society.

It seems that Israel found it difficult to implement the Sabbath year and especially the year of jubilee. Or rather its possessing classes may have resisted it. Two attempts of implementing the year of jubilee are mentioned. According to Jeremiah 34 king Zedekiah made a proclamation of liberty to the people, "that every one should set free his Hebrew slaves". They obeyed and set them free. "But afterward they turned around and look back the male and female slaves they had set free, and brought them into subjection as slaves." The prophetic answer is "Therefore, thus says the Lord: You have not obeyed me by proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother and neighbour; behold I proclaim to you liberty to the sword, to pestilence and to famine, says the Lord," (34, 8-17). Obviously, liberty and the restoration of equality is a deadly serious matter in his eyes. Nehemiah 5 describes an other attempt to respond to the outcry of those who lost their lands and see their children becoming slaves. In this case the return of the fields is emphasized.

The underlying assumption of these institutions is that the land is not simply a commodity at the free disposal of private owners. Just like man and his life-time cannot be at the free disposal of slave-masters. The Sabbath reminds that the life-time is from God, and that is man's protection against slavery. And the Sabbath-year reminds that the land is from God, and that is man's protection against inequality. "The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with me." (Lev. 25, 23) They are not private owners who can do what they like. They are sharing the land of freedom, and that is why the restoration of equal shares should take place.

Jesus started his ministry with the call to practise the year of jubilee as a preparation for the coming kingdom. He called the people of Israel to cancel the debts - the main problem of the poor in his days - and to release the captives (Luke 4, 18-19). That was his "good news to the poor". His whole way of life is opposed to the laws of the market. Market means the freedom of inequality, the freedom of the strong. Jesus anticipates the economy of sharing instead. Sharing means freedom of all based on equality. The workers of the first hour may not like it that the workers of the last hour receive an equal share (Matthew 20, 1-16). But that is the revolutionary law of the kingdom.

Of course, we cannot offer the Sabbath and the Sabbath year as the institutional solutions for the problems of our society. Nor can we simply apply the economics of Jesus. Hard work needs to be done to find new answers to the different problems of today. But what we can learn from the Bible is the direction in which we have to look for answers. All shall work, all shall rest, all shall share in the fruits of labour that is the basic message of equality and of freedom before God. That should encourage us to fight for the transformation of a society based on inequality and exploitation into a society which comes closer to such a vision.

---D. WIELENGA

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DOMINATION WITHIN THE PALESTINIAN MILIEU DURING THE FIRST CENTURY A.D.

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How did Jesus see himself in the face of domination in the society of his time? That is not merely of historic or academic interest. Today one is becoming more and more conscious of the necessity of such a step for the comprehension in depth of the meaning of the sayings and practices of Jesus and as a source of inspiration for the faith and the actions of Christians. It is not a question of employing isolated passages from the Evangelic instead of arguments, but rather of adopting a general perspective which will enable Jesus and his transcending message to be resituated in all the dimensions of reality.

I. INTRODUCTION

Asia had a particular type of feudal system. The latter was characterized by the fact that the peasants lived in very organized communities, focused around kinship ties and with very strong internal cohesion, while the State, directed by Princes or Kings, appropriated the surplus while exploiting production through means of the organization of irrigation. This is a model which prevailed in the regions where rice was cultivated, in just about all cases.(1)

On the other hand, in Western Asia (the Middle East), where irrigation wasn't necessary, a somewhat different organization developed. These regions were characterized by perpetual wars, because they were the site of the great communication routes between the East and the West and between the great Empires (Babylonia, Egypt) and consequently most of the time it was a question of aristocratic warrior kingdoms. This led the State to deduct as well a large part of the surplus produced through the activities of people (with regard to both agricultural production and exchanges), in particular in order to be able to finance wars.

The Roman Empire developed according to another social pattern, the slave mode of production, due to the intensive development of sea-borne trade. As a result of the latter, society needed a very large number of productive agents, in order to be able to multiply the exchanges. This is what led to the birth of slavery, which particularly characterized a certain number of Empires bordering on the Mediterranean. This was, moreover, to a great extent, the source of the notion of private property, developed subsequently in Roman law.

Palestine, after the Exile of the population of Israel to Babylonia, was always subject to the neighboring Empires (Persia, Rome, etc...) at the same time that it was dominated from within by the class of rich landowners. During the second century B.C during the Hellenization process, the region saw the revolt of the Maccabees. It was the Roman Empire, under the command of Pompeii, which in 63 B.C. established a master over all the region and integrated the economic production of Palestine into the commerce of the Empire.

Palestine itself during this era was divided into two very distinct geographical regions. First of all there was Judea, an area situated around Jerusalem and its Temple, a mountainous area and economically characterized by a sub-asiatic mode of production. The lands were arid and dry. Olives, fruit were cultivated and the raising of sheep and goats was quite widespread. There likewise were forests.

On the other hand, the Galilee was crossed by two great commercial routes, one leading to Damascus by the sea and the other from Damascus to Jerusalem. It was a very fertile country, characterized by large properties where wheat was grown and where there was as well a lot of stock farming. There were fishermen along the sea and the lake. The foreign merchants had great influence there, a fact which was at the origin of one of the characteristics of the Galilee, that of its being a land of mixed blood and consequently falling into the category of impurity with regard to the Jewish race (Matew 4-13; a territory of gentiles; a people which lives in the shadows). The Galilee was also the place of origin of a great many peasant revolts and in particular that of the Zealots.

With regard to the social geography, there was an important difference between the villages, which subsisted in self-sufficient entities and according to a social model of a clannish nature and on the other hand, the particularly developed towns in Judea, notably Jerusalem with stratified societies.

II. THE HISTORIC FRAMEWORK OF PALESTINE DURING THE FIRST CENTURY

1. THE ROMAN EMPIRE

The Roman Empire established its domination, and this took on several aspects:

It was first of all of an economic nature and pursued through exactions whose aim was to drain off the surplus, produced in Palestine, towards the Roman center. This drainage took place first of all, officially, through diverse forms of taxes: about 6,000,000 Roman denaries (1 denarie = one day of work for a worker) were thus transferred each year, by means of the tributum (personal tax, coming to 1/4 of the harvest); the annona (tax in kind or in work for the army) and the publicum (other taxes). However, there was as well an unofficial amount deducted by the Roman officials or their Palestinian allies.

Domination was political as well and took place through the use of recruited in the dominating classes of Israel and among the "Romanized" officials. The following pyramid thus becomes clear:

From a political viewpoint there was first of all the Procurator of Judea, who was Roman, residing at Caesarea (probably in order not to be seen too much in Jerusalem) but who came to this town at the time of the big festivals. It was he who named the high priest, choosing him from one of the four dominating families in the society of the day. Over Galilee it was the Roman Legate of Syria who exercised power, but through the intermediary of King Herode Antipas.

Roman power indirectly controlled the large landowners and the aristocracy, by the fact it assumed the right to the possibility of an arbitrary dismissal of their property rights. It was in the interest therefore of this class to collaborate with the Roman power.

Finally there were a series of intermediate officials directly appointed by the Roman power and generally recruited among the elders of the sanhedrin (Higher Court) and in the great families. As for the publicans they were recruited in lower social classes and were responsible for collecting taxes.

The military domination was carried out through the presence of the Roman Army in Palestine, recruited generally in Syria and among the non-Jews of Palestine. This army was quartered along the coasts.

2. THE LOCAL SOCIAL HIERARCHY.

There was a meeting of interests between Roman exploitation and the local exploitation. The latter was carried out especially through very numerous contributions given to the Temple. The effect of the meeting of these two phenomena was a great poverty among the small peasants.

The urban workers and even the lower middle class also suffered from the economic consequences of the double Roman and local exploitation. This was seen notably in a high rate of inflation, unemployment, the birth of armed bands in the rural regions etc. On the other hand, the landowners benefited from the agricultural price rise, the urban bourgeoisie reaped advantage from the function of Jerusalem as a center of consumption. Thus the opposition between the three social groups, the working class, "grande bourgeoisie" and "petite bourgeoisie" was objectively and sometimes subjectively very great.

III. A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS.

A great difference existed between the rural and urban areas and it is because of this that we are dividing this part of the account in two.

a) The rural areas.

In the villages, the production was generally organized on the basis of small landed properties, combined with a part of communal lands, owned by the village communities. The latter were generally self-sufficient with regard to agricultural production. There were as well some small craftsmen and the exchanges generally were based on exchange in kind. One cannot therefore speak of a class society in life of the village. However, ever since the establishment of the domination of the Roman Empire, a progressive pauperization established itself. In fact, not only the Palestinian State (the Temple) canalized a part of the surplus: the didrachm for the Temple, the tithe for the clergy, the expenditures made by the families and individuals for the holidays in Jerusalem, but the Roman colonizer as well superimposed its absorption of the surplus.

Moreover, the large properties, of which production in Galilee was wheat or stock raising and in Judea olives, fruits, sheep and goat farming, were managed indirectly by the large land owners, who generally lived in town where they had ties with the urban economy and with the large international merchants. These landed properties subsisted within the monetary economic circuit and even the agricultural workers were at least partially paid in money.

b) The urban milieu.

We can distinguish three sectors of economic activity in the urban milieu: production, circulation and consumption. At the level of production, the craftsmen worked in textiles, food production, construction, perfume, jewellery etc. A certain number of these sectors were very important for the pilgrims who came to Jerusalem each year. There were then the workers, who worked essentially in the construction sector. It should not be forgotten that the Temple was constructed between 20 B.C. and 52 A.D. and that kings and local aristocrats as well as Roman officials had palaces constructed. It is estimated that in the year 60, there were about 13,000 workers, merely in Jerusalem.

At the level of goods circulation, there were on the one hand,

the big merchants, who possessed slaves and who dealt in raw materials and agricultural products. They were part of the commercial routes passing through these regions and connecting the great Empires. On the other hand the small merchants were often craftsmen themselves or belonged to the same social group.

Finally, at the level of consumption, one can say that the Temple was the center of this economic function. In fact, on the one hand, a part of the gifts of the Jews in the diaspora, the taxes, the revenues from the commerce of the victims for the sacrifices (monopolized by one of the four families from which the high priest was recruited) and the revenues from the landed properties flowed forth. Moreover, the Temple was also the pole of the economic circulation, given that it possessed the Treasury. As a matter of fact the Temple had at the same time the function of what one might call today the National Bank, the Commercial Stock Exchange and the State in its fiscal functions.

2. THE SOCIAL SYSTEM.

The social system of Palestine was rather complex, because it did not correspond solely to a class society, divided by economic factors, but was also crossed by other forms of social stratification, inherited from previous situations and notably from clannish societies.

The economic system of which we have spoken enabled a distinction to be made between the rural society and the urban society and this is illustrated in the plan of the social system, that is to say, in the position that the social groups occupied in the social relations of production as well as in the status scale. On the rural side there were the following groups: the large landowners (generally absent) the small landowners, the craftsmen, the agricultural workers and the slaves.

On the urban side, one can denote a triple classification within the upper middle class: the sacerdotal aristocracy, composed of the four families in which the Roman Procurator chose the high priest, the big merchants and the high officials. These two latter categories formed the laic aristocracy. There was then a "petite bourgeoisie", composed of craftsmen, of small merchants, of middle level officials, laics or priests or levites. Last there were some workers, generally attached to the Temple and a certain number of slaves. Finally, one must mention a marginal proletariat, not integrated into the economic circuit and often composed of people excluded from the organic social grouping for non-economic reasons.

And it is here that we must touch upon two other aspects of the social stratification. The first was an ethnic factor. There were some pure and unpure Jews, the character of legitimacy being notably assured by the ethnic grouping. Thus three categories existed: the legitimates, those marked by slight illegitimacy and those marked by great illegitimacy. The latter were excluded from any social participation. It must be said that the number of illegitimate Jews was greater in Galilee, which was at the origin of the bad reputation of this province.

In another connection there were also some taboos of a religious origin. Those who had in one way or another transgressed the law were considered sinners: this designation was generally temporary, but illustrated a sanction of a legalist, religious nature. Then people having certain illnesses, notably mental illnesses (considered as possessed by the Devil) and the lepers were considered unpure. This

is the reason why these people lived on the fringe of Palestinian social and cultural life.

3. THE POLITICAL SYSTEM.

Once again, we are going to distinguish between the rural society and the urban society.

In the rural society, the authority was tied to the "house" or to lineage. Thus the head of the family was the oldest male representative of the lineage and the latter was part of the council of the elders of the village, collectively exercising authority within the rural micro-society. However, in order to be part of the council of the elders, one had to be a pure Jew. There was also a priest in each council. There was consequently no division of classes, but a hierarchy of status, very like the society of a clannish nature.

At the urban level, the society was evidently more complex. There were first of all in most towns, some councils of elders, to which only the aristocratic families, the large landowners, etc., belonged. These councils monopolized the political and economic power and therefore already illustrated the establishment of a class society (even if the concept of class does not entirely apply to this type of stratification). At the level of the State, that is to say Jerusalem, the situation of the political system was even more complex.

The State was composed of two principal organs: the Sanhedrin and the high priest.

The Sanhedrin had different functions in Judea, Galilee and the Diaspora. In Judea, it constituted the supreme and overriding political power. On the other hand, in Galilee, King Herod governed under Roman control and the Jews of the Diaspora belonged to diverse States. In the last two cases, the Sanhedrin played the role of the Supreme Court and of the ideological power. As a result, the superstructure represented by the State was located in the Temple. The Sanhedrin was composed of 71 members, essentially belonging to two parties, that of the Sadducee (the families of the high priest and the elders of the aristocratic families) and the group of the "petite bourgeoisie" composed of scribes, Pharisees, priests.

The high priest replaced the King after the Babylonian exile. The office was hereditary, but ever since the establishment of the Roman colonization, the titular was appointed by the Roman procurator. While the Sanhedrin represented an authority, which occasionally exercised itself, the High Priest represented the permanent supreme authority, exercised at the outset of the Temple, at the political, administrative as well as economic level.

Around the Temple was the sacerdotal community, which was responsible for the organization of the worship and of the police, carrying out this latter function through the intermediary of the levites. It was a priest who was the treasurer and who exercised the financial office. There were then a series of officials, priests, levites and laics.

One cannot speak of the political system without referring to the political stratification of the groups. Here is a nomenclature which however, only takes the political aspect into account. It is evident that we will find these groups again in the religious system, for we cannot forget that the latter is dominant in the Palestinian society.

The sadducees constituted the Jewish aristocracy and they were linked through their economic interests to the colonial power.

The pharisees were members of the urban lower middle class: craftsmen, small merchants, scribes, etc... Their political power increased visibly after the Maccabees.

The zealots were a group which opted for a guerrilla solution against the Romans, but also against the exactions of certain large land owners. Their group seems to have had diverse sources of inspiration: Judas, the Galilean and one Saddoq, a pharisee, but also some currents of hellenist origin. The ideology which guided it was quite typical of that of the pharisees, because it envisaged the restoration of the Jewish State in its theocratic dimension, in the line of a Davidic messianism.

The recruitment of fighting men seems however to have taken place in the small peasant class, which precisely suffered in particular from the double colonial and local exaction. Already prior to the time of Jesus, Roman repression against similar movements was particularly brutal. Thus it was that Varius, the Roman legate of Syria, had 2,000 people crucified. The zealots, animated by the political religious ideology described above, arrived in power in the year 68, after having killed the practising high priest. They established a new high priest, whom they chose in one of the traditional families and when the Romans intervened against their taking of power, in 70, they defended the Temple, as a seat of all the religious symbolic, to the last man. This was what caused the fall of Jerusalem. The zealots movement, which is sometimes presented as a guerrilla movement destined to establish a society in which class divisions would be abolished, therefore hardly had this character. The small peasants dragged into the armed struggle were present owing to their desperate situation, but not as a result of an ideology representing their objective interests.

Finally it is necessary to add that the political ties with the colonising Roman Empire were established through means of the existing political hierarchy. Thus the high priest was named by the Roman procurator, the members of the high Roman Administration were recruited in the aristocracy or in Galilee among the Herodicians, and the publicans of Jewish origin, were responsible for the collection of taxes. The whole of this network therefore made a connection permissible between the two models of production, that of the Roman Empire and that of the Palestinian society.

4. THE IDEOLOGICAL AND RELIGIOUS SYSTEM.

We will treat the ideological and religious system as one, because in the societies of the kind we are acquainted with in Palestine, there was hardly any difference between the two. In fact, the ideology that we define as the explanation and the justification of the social and political relationships, was essentially religious. We have seen that the religious acts and the religious symbolic that the Temple represented played a very important role at the economic, social and political level. The justification and the mediation of this activity is found at the ideological level.

Obviously, it is difficult in several lines to describe the crux of the socio-religious ideology of Israel during the first century.

In short, one can say that the belief in a unique God, that is to say the monotheism of the people of Israel, itself the fruit of a long evolution, was at the base of the entire ideological system. God guided his people and Israel, had to be faithful to him. This was part of a very fundamental development of thought, which placed the origin of the world and of man, in God, and illustrated the relationship between

-the two, notably through the myth of the fall and the introduction of evil into the world. Combined with this as well was an interpretation of the origin of the people of Israel, tied to its ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The history of Israel appeared as the formation of a people, which was that of Yahveh the God become unique.

The conquest of Canaan was interpreted as the accomplishment and the continuation of the benediction of God of his people for the future, provided they obey the law.

From tribal societies one passed to the monarchy, which in the prophetic literature became one of the symbols of evil, of exploitation, and of what one could call in modern language the appearance of a class society. Whence the reaction of the prophets, exhibiting a messianic hope, the idea of a new alliance between God and his people, that of a new Jerusalem, including a collective destiny of the people, but inside of history.

What is interesting to bring into relief is the relationship which existed between the religious ideology and the different groups of which we have already spoken. Thus, the sadducees, representing the most conservative group, leaned mainly on the Torah, the original law of Israel and opposed the eschatological and apocalyptic currents, as well as the idea of the resurrection of the dead.

On the other hand, the pharisees formed the center of the eschatological and apocalyptic religious production. Certain of them developed a particular pessimistic idea of man, leading to the importance of the other world, which ought to be attained through a strict observance of the law. Their ideology was quite typical of an urban class, which centered its religious conviction on individual salvation.

Being the specialists of the religious legislation and of the penal code the scribes had practically the monopoly on the knowledge of hebrew and as a result they disposed of a rather important ideological control over the masses; They were often the ones who were active in the synagogues the day of the sabbath. They shared a great extent as well, the eschatological current and as a result they opposed themselves to the group of priests.

The priests, part of an ethnic group, the 24 lineages of the tribe of Aaron, were divided into high clergy and low clergy and had the monopoly on the ritual language, that is to say the worship. They were aided, as has already been said, by the levites, also belonging to a tribe.

The essenes formed a group of a monachal type, which resolved the problem through a life of recluse from the world and a retreat from society.

The zealots, lastly, formed an essentially political group, engaging in guerrilla activities, but ideologically centered upon the restoration of the Davidic messianism.

As one sees it, these traits which ought to be studied thoroughly, show that the diverse social groups adapted themselves in a different manner to the religious ideology.

It is necessary to finally recall that God resided in the Temple, making of the latter the sign and the reality of the divine guarantee given to the whole of the society of Israel.

IV. SOME CONCLUSIONS.

This rapid analysis of the Palestinian society enables one to

realize that in a society such as that of Palestine of this epoch, the function of the religious obviously went beyond what we today call religious reality. In fact, the supernatural was present everywhere, and the Temple, symbol and place of the divine presence, was equally the center of political power and of economic power. As a result, it is necessary to place oneself again in this position in order to understand the events of the time. We cannot judge the Palestinian society, and the social and religious actors who played a role in it, without keeping that in mind. It is not possible to act at the religious level, without also acting at other levels. The distinctions with which we are acquainted with between temporal and spiritual levels, between the political and the religious, between specialized institutions in the various areas of human activity, did not exist in the same way in societies of a pre-capitalist type. To interpret the activity of an actor, such as Jesus, in relation to a purely religious reference, in the sense that we understand it today, would consequently be wrong.

This is not to say that it is necessary in the words and acts of Jesus to seek immediate justifications for an activity of a political nature in contemporary societies. But that means that the interpretation of the Evangile can only take place in taking into account anthropological and sociological knowledge of the society in which the actor Jesus lived and the type of domination which existed during this epoch and against which he committed himself.

Thus for example, when he took a position in favour of the poor, it is necessary to know who were the poor in Palestine at the time. A purely spiritual interpretation of their position would be very dangerous. The opposition to the group of sadducees and pharisees, had more than a purely religious meaning. The choice of the Apostles was equally significant symbolically, in relation to the society of the time.

The act of announcing a messianism, which was not that of the restoration of the era of David, was evidently full of social significance. The radical condemnation of the religious power also had political and economic dimensions.

The subversion of the symbolic and ideological system was also important. It was notably a question of overturning fundamental ideological codes of the pure and impure, of the rich and of the poor, of the crowd and of the powerful. All that when put back in its place within a traditional society of a pre-capitalist nature, has a very precise social and political dimension. The act of reading the religious imperatives from the bottom rather than from the top of the socio-religious scale, as was the case in the attitude of Jesus with regard to the Sabbath, the fast, the new wine that one could not put into the old skins, ought also to be placed within its general context.

The idea expressed of the destruction of the Temple, its significance as a fundamental symbol of all the society and not only as a religious symbol, can not be passed over in silence.

It is evident that Christ situated himself basically within the religious field, but this religious field within the Palestinian society had a reverberation very different from that of the religious field in our contemporary societies.

It is necessary finally to note that the death of Jesus was the result of a coalition, between the forces of the Roman Empire, the Jewish social elite (high priest, sadducees), the pharisees and even the crowd that chose Barrabas. It therefore seem that the message of Jesus went beyond all of the projects that these different social groups could have had and that the subversion of the social order that his message and his practise signified, well understood by the different groups which put him to death, went much further, not only as a reference to some religious beliefs, but even as a reorganization of the existing order. Could one not say that in regard to this subject the fundamental project of Christ went in the direction of a utopia, which might be represented, in modern language, through the creation of a classless society?

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JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT, LIBERATION AND THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

By Fr. Philip Land, S.J.

PART I = First Principle and Foundation

We reproduce here serially an article by Fr. Philip Land, S.J. on the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. In this article the author makes an attempt at integrating into the Exercises of St. Ignatius the new insights gained from Vatican II, the Synod statement on "Justice in the World", the Jesuit 32nd General Congregation and the theology of Liberation.

Fr. Philip Land was professor of economics and social sciences at the Gregorian University in Rome before undertaking responsibilities as senior staff researcher for the Pontifical Commission Justice and Peace at the Vatican. He also was a leading figure in Sodepax, the joint Vatican-World Council of Churches' committee on society, development and peace (in Geneva). He has become staff associate at Centre of Concern in Washington.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE FIRST PRINCIPLE AND FOUNDATION

"God created man to praise, love and serve Him and by this means to save his soul". The limitations of this formula have often been pointed out. God cannot receive from humanity and surely does not need

praise, love or service. Praise, love and service are, however, appropriate attitudes and acts of human beings once God decided to create them.

The temptation is to conceive this praise, love and service as interiorized with God in a prayer closet. That is the kind of "service" that provoked Metz to dub it "Privatized" -- wholly without reference to the world beyond the prayer closet, the world where people -- the other other -- are and live and act. In short, it is a service divorced from the public sphere, scene of political processes and action.

Rather, these attitudes of praise, love and service ought to be expressed most fundamentally first in being what God intended people to be, to be fully men and women. The greater praise of God is a person fully alive, fully human.

Secondly praise and service ought to be through responsible engagement in the life of society. The measurement of this is in large degree fulfillment of the Creator's command to subdue the earth and bring forth its fruits. Adam, because the world was his to organize and administer, assumed the task of giving the animals their names. He cultivated the Garden of Eden.

To organize, to administer, to exercise governance and providence under God, to give the cosmos a shape and the world meaning -- all this is humanity's task. Through it we praise, love and serve our Maker.

THE TEMPORAL ENGAGEMENT IN VATICAN II

One may quarrel with those Christians who opt for witness to eschatological waiting, but it is beyond dispute that the Church from Vatican II until the present strongly urges on Christian the option

TEMPORAL ENGAGEMENT IN VATICAN II

of witnessing to the final kingdom through their work of constructing its materiality here and now. To create a better world is to make an agreeable offering to God under the sign of the kingdom. No, the church does not today thank those who continue to insist on opposing world and church. It acknowledges their interpenetration from the opening chapter of the Pastoral Constitution of Vatican II. That it also learns from the world is its explicit admission in that same Council: "The Church knows how richly it has profited by the history and development of mankind" (GS 44), and from the world "It understands better the structures of its own life." (Ibid. 3)

The Council had its own word on the kind of spirituality this option of witnessing through engagement would require. First of all, "no one may be content with a merely individualistic morality", but on the contrary, must "promote and assist the public and private institutions dedicated to bettering the conditions of human life" (Ibid.30). Still more to the point, there are "in our times special obligations... to make ourselves the neighbor of absolutely every person..." (Ibid.)27)

The Council's next point is that the fulfilment of such demanding obligations will require a spiritual formation that cultivates "the moral and social virtues and promotes them in society". People so formed with the help of grace will prove "truly new and artisans of a new humanity will be forthcoming" (Ibid.30). Later in another context, we shall see how the 1971 Synod in its document Justice in the World reinforces this point, as does also the Synod of 1974.

THE EXERCISES TOO INDIVIDUALISTIC?

It has rightly been charged that the Exercises, as given, have often failed to do this, but rather have produced an inversion, a narcissism, a turning inward and away from mission as we have defined it.

What Pedro Arrupe, S.J., has warned about Jesuit education is an equally relevant warning on the way the Exercises are at times presented: "The church is engaged in a massive effort to ... re-educate ... so that we may all 'lead our lives in their entirety... in accord with the evangelical principles of personal and social morality...' to form persons-for-others; who cannot conceive a love of God that does not include love for our least neighbor and that does not issue in justice" (Men for Others).

Elsewhere, again speaking of Jesuit education, but equally applicable to the Exercises, Fr. Arrupe adds: "This education must not be confined to person-to-person service, but must also include that most fundamental and, today, most necessary service to contemporary society, namely contributing to changing those structures and actual conditions which are oppressive and unjust. Therefore we have to form, as it were, agents of change and liberation in modern society. This means a creative education, forming from our students men and women able to anticipate the new order of human existence and capable of collaborating in reshaping the new society which is already emerging from the debris of our times."

For their part, the Jesuits have responded to the leadership of their General -- and to the Council (as well as to the Synod of 1971 and 1974) -- in their Thirtieth-Second General Congregation, which finished in February 1975. An introductory statement on "Jesuits Today" maintain that to be a Jesuit today requires engagement under the Cross in the crucial struggles of our times, the struggle for faith and the struggle for justice which the first includes. Still more, this must be the main focus of Jesuit activity. "Jesuits choose participation in this struggle as a focus that identifies in our times what Jesuits are and do". Further on, this emphasis is reasserted: "Service of the faith and Justice is not one ministry among others, but the integrating factor of all our work and also of our inner life..." It should be added that the Jesuits are not alone in focussing mission on Justice. Many other religious congregations have anticipated the Jesuits in arriving at that conviction.

ENGAGEMENT CONSTITUTIVE TO HUMANITY

"Man was created". Our reflection on the Ignatian Principle and Foundation evokes another consideration: engagement in this world is a constitutive dimension of humanity. Humanity was created in time and space. The world is the stage; there is no other. It is the fundamental horizon of reflective life. It is there that thought begins. Without that world we should have no art, and to that world and cosmos we are inseparably joined, spirits linked through bodies into an organum of space and time which is neither alien nor hostile territory but our natural ambience. Our link is even as Jesus is so linked now and forever through His body.

The world is our stage and we cannot leave it to play out our life roles elsewhere. Moreover, the Ignatian meditation suggests the additional reflection that as creation is the continuous work of God so is the making of a better world our ongoing task as co-creators. We are never-endingly responsible for our part in creation. We must be engaged in our world as God was and is, revealing Himself in the events that make up the succeeding epochs of humanity's history. In moments of the Jews' acting, doing, suffering, God came to them and gave them His name. In that series of events (to take the first, the liberation from the bondage of Egypt) God brought salvation and made an alliance with His people. His naming of Himself was in terms of a power joined to their struggle to free themselves.

But we are created in order of grace, and the Council both in Lumen Gentium as well as in Gaudium and Spes underscores the significance of Christian action for humanity. This is the sign-value of our lives. For the church as ecclesial community is a sign to the world. The people of God are the sign -- a sign, as said above, of community among people and, by design, in Christ; sign of God's action in the world for its humanization, for justice, a sign of that action which is almost exercised through a grace not directly under the hierarchical church's administration, but which flows in other fashion through Christ's humanity as revelation of grace, as guarantor of the ultimate meaning of human existence.

But the point I want to make is that the church cannot be this sign if it is not in the world, if its views itself rather as a superstructure above and outside of the life of men and women. Christians working in and for the world, in daily options of moral value are signs of salvation. They show that eschatological faith has meaning for here and now, for those seeking to build an earthly future. Christian spirituality may not abandon people to their works in order to live separately a life of prayer. The eucharist, celebrative of the eschaton, must in the bread that human hands bring to it, seal the eschaton as operative also in human history.

All this co-creativity of man is summed up succinctly by the Council: "When people develop the earth by the work of their hands ... in order that it might bear fruit and become a dwelling worthy of the whole human family and when they consciously take part in the life of social groups, they carry out the design of God manifested at the beginning of time... that they should subdue the earth, perfect creation and develop themselves" (GS 57).

INSTITUTIONAL CREATION

The human race co-creates even itself, for through civilization and culture it becomes a second nature. It also recreates the original resources of the earth, by renewing them, prolonging them, substituting for them when they disappear. But humanity's creative energies and the exercise of the creation mandate extend beyond the dosmos and nature to the creation of the city, the polis. Humanity is political; and the creation of the good city is another road of praise and service of the Creator, for the Maker cannot but want all that is essential to the fullness of the human race in this life.

Feeding into that fullness is the network of interpersonal relationships that extends the person outward in openness to the other, in roundness through exchange of personal gifts, in extension of individual potential through communal life, in self-expression through participation.

Through such creative exchanges, crude nature takes on cultivated forms, work becomes organized, common possessions are born, the political community takes on structure. Gaudium et Spes devotes several chapters to these cultural achievements, and finds orientation for them in Christ, the New Man.

In separate chapters, the Pastoral Constitution dwells on two essential aspects.

First, the cornerstone of that polis must be a free people. God created humans free, to glorify God in the exercise of that freedom. As they multiplied and differentiated into diverse races and peoples, their understanding of the good city would have its legitimate differences and their options would be distinct. But this freedom, expressed in a variety of political choices, God saw as good, as humans becoming more human, as imaging forth more the Maker.

Secondly, the human city must also be a place where people dwell in community, in justice, in peace and in love.

Community is demanded, for even the life of God is relational with the Father related to Son in Fatherhood, and the Son reciprocally related to the Father in Sonship, while the Holy Spirit draws origin from the mutual love of Father and Son and lives a life of reciprocity. If God's own life is relational, sharing, communal -- and so a life of union -- we who are God's image must have a like life. It is to this likeness that Vatican II calls our attention: "Indeed the Lord Jesus, when He prayed to the Father, 'that all may be one ... as we are one' (Jn 17: 21-22), opened up vistas, closed to human reason. For He implied a certain likeness between the union of divine persons and the unity of God's children in truth and charity" (Gaudium et Spes 24)

Chapter two of Gaudium et Spes on " the community of mankind" spells out in some detail the obligations this unity entails. "The progress of the human person and the advance of society itself hinge on one another ... " (Gaudium et Spes 25). The paragraphs that follow employ the language of "social ties", " reciprocal ties", "socialization". The document next affirms the tightening of human interdependence in a "social life which greatly aids the person in responding to his destiny even in its religious dimensions ... (Ibid).

SUMMING UP THE COUNCIL'S ANTHROPOLOGY

What Vatican II had to say on Christian anthropology and cosmology can be summed up in four propositions :

- 1) The transformation of this world is the autonomous task of humanity.
- 2) It (the transformation) is salvific
- 3) It prepares for the coming of Christ
- 4) It is a sign of ultimate transformation.

It is autonomous : " Human activity takes its significance from its relationship to humans. Just as it proceeds from humans, so it is ordered to humans. And if by the autonomy of earthly affairs we mean that created things and societies themselves enjoy their own laws and values ... then it is entirely right to demand that autonomy" (Gaudium et Spes, 35,36)

It is salvific : " They can justly consider that by their labor they are unfolding the Creator's work ... " (Gaudium et Spes 34)

It prepares for Christ's coming : " All temporal activity continues the earthly task of the Savior ... and anticipates ... the victory of the resurrection. When we work to overcome sin, disease, famine, pollution ... all this contributes to the growth of the Body of Christ on earth ... to the church " (Gaudium et Spes)

Rightly autonomous, these activities as aiding people to become more fully human, are also religious for the reasons discussed above. Paul VI was explicit on this in his address for the Mission Sunday of 1970 : " These activities can become one with evangelical activity when, raised on the level of charity they become ends, as it were, in themselves." This means that the efforts to advance science for

human purposes, to spread technological control over the discovery and management of the resources of nature, the efforts at social liberation -- all efforts to bring about a more human life -- are salvific, are evangelization. They will be recapitulated in the Headship of Jesus. Indeed, in some mysterious fashion, as we have learned from the council, people, thus, though unaware of it, approach Jesus.

Transformation of this world is a sign. " Sincere efforts prepare in some way and anticipate 'in signo' the transfiguration of nature and the perfect communion that will be achieved at the end of time " (Gaudium et spes)

LINKING BACK TO THE EXERCISES

These reflections may seem distant from the initial Ignatian contemplation on the First Principle and Foundation. To me, they are not. They are the theological heart of the act of creation, which was (and is) carried out through the redemptive Word of God's Son. They are implicit anthropology and cosmology for understanding the mandate to "fill the earth and subdue it ; and have dominion..." These, I submit, are reflections that could set the exercitant off on a new course, or confirm his present concern for evangelizing this world.

There is one further link to the First Principle and Foundation to which I have already alluded ; i.e., the fact that work to humanize and transform this life is that "praise, love, service" that Ignatius places as cornerstone. To make people more human is to show reverence for the Creator and His work. To do justice is to love God, for without justice to our neighbour, we do not -- as I show in a later section -- love God.

We praise God by establishing on earth conditions of decency for all; adequacy of food, clothing, shelter, health, education, security together with freedom, and peace for all people, everywhere. This sums up what Paul VI calls humanity's right to development", understood as integrally human and rooted in human dignity. Yes, this humanization of life is praise of God, but it has never been and never will be easy. And one can surmise that even in the absence of sin, it would have its problems, as billions filled the earth. It is then a task that requires the social and public exercise of intelligence, prudence and fortitude ; of the sparing and loving care of nature, of all that may be summed up as stewardship.

TOO WORLDLY A THEOLOGY ?

One encounters frequently enough those who cry scandal at a theology that so inexorably leads to commitment to this world. The objections take different forms though virtually playing variations on the same theme.

One argues that this is too secularist a theology. But secularism is quite different ~~thing~~ from the secularity this theology supports. Secularism in principle is opposed to religion ; secularity simply states the rightful autonomy of created things in their order. It affirms that they have value in themselves -- a value, of course, given them by God their Creator.

But, the contenders return to object, this leaves the world too independent of the sanctification that should be imposed on it.

The answer first recognizes that the world should indeed be sanctified, but that sanctification must leave things in their proper "profane" secular nature. The Christian makes use of this secularity for God and according to God's design. The secular thus enters into real, if mysterious relation to the eschatological order. What sanctification may not mean is a "consecration" that intends to sacralize the temporal order or to place the world under the church which as sacred institution places its seal upon all that is outside it -- the secular order.

The objectors have still another arrow in their kit. This emphasis (they say) on humanity's role in making its own history takes away from Christ's role as Lord of secular as well as sacred history. God

is both Creator and Savior, Lord of the one and other history. His over-arching design embraces creation -- and He creates at every moment, so our history is His -- and covenant. The only consequence that can properly be drawn from this admittedly correct premise is that made abundantly above. To restate it briefly, the humanization of life is related eschatologically to the religious mission of the covenant God makes with His people. We work this field of mother earth for the Lord and the fruits of our work are charity. The making of our history does not remove all this from its constituted state of being created, but God does not see this activity as in opposition. Vatican II assures us that God is not jealous: "Thus, far from thinking that works produced by humanity's own talent and energy are in opposition to God's power, and that the rational creature exists as a kind of rival to the Creator, Christians are convinced that the triumphs of the human race are a sign of God's grace and flowering of his own mysterious design. For the greater one's power becomes, the father his individual and community responsibility extends. Hence it is clear that people are not deterred by the Christian message from building up the world, or impelled to neglect the welfare of their fellows. They are, rather, more stringently bound to do these very things" (Gaudium et Spes)34)

Congar has recently pointed out that the element of the sacred in divinization (in the sense just described) is better named "experience of the transcendent". He makes the further point that where in other times subordination of ends was assured by subordination of temporal (political) power to priestly power, the Second Vatican Council rightly established that guarantee, not in subordination of political power to ecclesial, but in the temporal's order's eschatological relationship. The temporal -- total dynamic of humanity's work in and on the cosmos -- is not under the church. The church -- but mainly through the community of the People of God -- assures subordination of ends and spiritualization of temporal activity by its evangelical message which enlightens values and strengthens their exercise through the sacraments, grace, the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Christian is a ferment, an animator.

It is thus that the church is *Sacramentum Mundi*, sign of union of all people among themselves and with God; for the church communion shows that human solidarity must have its source in a union of hearts, just as the union of the Christian people is rooted in common belief and love.

The church as sign brings me to add to what I earlier said on the sociological side of the "signs of the times" -- a word about their value as indicators that we can discover God in the events and aspirations which make up life and history. *Gaudium et spes* 11 sees in them the possibility of being "authentic signs of God's presence ... purpose ... and values", insofar as they stem from endowment endowments conferred by God on humanity. Pope John in his inauguration of the Council, reviewing some of the "signs of the times", argued that "in the present order of things Divine Providence is leading us to a new order of human relations". That new order was for him fulfillment of God's design as it was also a sign of eschatological community.

But as *Gaudium et Spes* indicates, the signs are bearers of God's presence in a second sense, that of revealing Christian values and meaning. In His creation, God's definitive Word is the Word incarnated in Jesus, but God permitted our humanity itself to be a partial revelation. Durwell has written with great intuition of what Mary in herself tells us about God, Jesus Himself, as he grows in the unfolding of His humanity reveals the potentiality the Creator placed in the Humanum -- even as lived by people other than the Son of the Carpenter. We should not therefore be astonished that the aspirations of men and women and other developments we have been reflecting on are signs in the sense that they reveal something of God's truth imprinted in-humanity.

JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT, LIBERATION AND THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

PART II = THE TWO STANDARDS

The following is a continuation of Part I, "First Principle and Foundation", in the series "Theology and Christian reflection".

INTRODUCTION

Ignatius, as a preliminary to his meditation and examination on personal sin and reform of life, bids us reflect on the Standard or platform of the two opposed camps in the battlefield for men and women -- that of Satan and that of Christ. One could lump under this title all the examinations to follow, those on reformation of values and those on transformation of sinful structures of injustices. But there is a logic that justifies separating the two and taking here -- under the platform or programme of Christ and Satan -- the first task, that of reforming values.

THE CAMP OF SATAN

Here stand those who have opted to follow the banner of the devil. Satan proposes to them success in this world if they are prepared to set aside religion, the enemy of human progress by its affirmation of the future hope; if they will only accord to the temporal order an autonomy that frees it from all dependence on a Lord God Creator; if they will only look exclusively to scientific reasoning for the meaning of the human race and its cosmos, and affirm humanity as sole artisan of history in a practical repudiation of God (Gaudium et Spes, 19-21)

This is the great temptation of the people of our times and exercitants ought on occasion reflect on their responsibilities of mission here. (The Thirty-second General Congregation of the Jesuits has reaffirmed the mission to fight atheism asked of its preceding Congregation by Pope Paul). In our post-Christian Western World, but especially in Asia, the world of evangelical effort will be to understand these forms of atheism, reflect on our possible responsibility for any of them (Gaudium and Spes, 19), and learn -- learn because we do not yet possess answers that can open the goodness to the Word of Christ.

Satan's call is also to a practical atheism -- one that Christians can be guilty of. It is a call to serve self, to turn away from the Creator to creatures. Satan is a false god, and those who follow under that banner set up their own false gods: self, greed, pride, prestige, money, power, worldly success. Because of these, they are led to use other people to serve their own egoistic ends. In consequence, they are led to abuse the rights of others, to subjugate them, to deny them opportunities for work, for pay, housing, education, security, opportunity of advancement, and rightful participation in society.

All this constitutes that practical atheism which is the alienation of men and women from God in a world of false values, in a social order of oppression and violence.

Clearly, the theoretical and practical atheism of Stan's camp is a challenge to the retreatant not just to cease his or personal abuse of creatures, thus turning back to the Creator "to save his or her soul" but even more, it is to ask what is the retreatant's mission

in this battlefield of atheism.

This requires that the exercitant be induced to reflect also on the extent to which he or she and all other people are caught up in the determinism of the established mores, the social conscience of society -- a conscience that supports established interests and is propagated in turn by these same interests.

Agere contra must embrace working to upset and transform the network of values, norms and behavior patterns that are embedded in the social structures which constitute the context of the exercitant's election. To choose for Christ will mean choosing against uncritical acceptance of the day's accepted values. It will mean examining whether the exercitant in effect supports and perpetuates a social system that has godless elements, that is unjust. The call of Christ must be seen as a call to do battle also on this field.

THE CAMP OF CHRIST

To do battle is the challenge, and under the banner of Christ. In contrast to the strategy of the evil one, that of Christ is the program of the beatitudes.

It is the strategy of the eschatological prophet announced by Isaiah (42 : 1 - 4) , called to bring the Good News to the poor, to proclaim liberation to captives, to bring justice among humans (Lk 4)

This, according to Fr. Juan Alfaro, S.J. (Theology of Justice in the World, p. 24) is the context in which the beatitudes proclaimed by the eschatological prophet must be understood : "How happy are you who are poor : yours is the Kingdom of God. Happy you who are hungry now : you shall be satisfied " (Lk 6 : 20-21)

Modern exegesis recognizes that this text of Luke offers the original version, whereas the rendering by Mathew ("the poor in spirit", "those who hunger and thirst for what is right") includes a later addition. It is also recognized that the Lukan text clearly alludes to Isaiah 61 : 1 - 2 . The poor are those dominated by the powerful. They are the hungry, the afflicted.

They are proclaimed happy because they are to be the beneficiaries of the liberating intervention of God, because God is about to inaugurate His kingdom, in which they will be the privileged. Jesus is the messenger of the reign. He who brings the news of the liberation of the afflicted. "The poor and the hungry must not be thought of as other than the words indicate -- unfortunate people. The explanation of their privilege lies, not in themselves, but in God and in the way God wishes the exercise His sovereignty in favour of the weak and the destitute".

According to Alfaro : " The presupposition of the Beatitudes lies in the concept of the Kingdom of God and of his justice in Deutero-Isaiah and in the whole of biblical revelation ... God would not be the ideal King were he not the defender and protector of the oppressed ... His justice is at stake." The poor, the hungry, the oppressed are those who suffer actual poverty, hunger, oppression; "they are 'blessed' because, through Jesus, God intervenes in their favour as their liberator".

This brings Alfaro to the inescapable conclusion : " In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus makes his own the Old Testament's vision of God as defender of the poor and of the oppressed. He presents the Kingdom of God, about to be realized in His own person, as the fulfillment of God's justice for the helpless. He is the Messiah, through whom God will free the oppressed".

One could add to the Sermon on the Mount rich reflections from Luke's writings : renunciation of the rich to join the blessed ; salvation to those (Zacchaeus) prepared to part with their goods ; the sharing in common (Acts) ; the rich man called to judgment at the moment of filling his barns ; the judgment of Dives.

But the most richly interpretative of the mystery of poverty is Mary's magnificat. Her God feeds the hungry. He lifts up the humble even as He throws down the rich in the pride of their hearts. The God of Mary turns humanity's values upside down. He blesses the humble

class of people who, free of riches, can be poor in spirit and open to God -- the poor in spirit represented by the Lord's humble handmaid.

THE MYSTERY OF POVERTY

Poverty is a mystery, not in the sense that it is un-understandable, but rather in that there are layers within layers of meaning to be discovered for Christian life. The mystery is highlighted, to begin with, in Christ's deliberate choice to be poor (relative poverty, for His father was an artisan), to identify with the poor, to preach His Gospel to the poor, to associate in His ministry with the poor, the foolish, the rejected of this world.

The mystery, then, is one of voluntary poverty -- of the self-emptying of the Son of God in His taking upon Himself the poverty of our flesh. Voluntary poverty is a sign to a world that believes only in riches, comfort, material things and the power of money. It is a sign that fallen humanity can achieve that liberation from these attachments which purifies and prepares for love of God and our neighbor. It is a sign that people must be free of that attachment to the good life that makes it intolerable for them to contemplate sharing with the poor of the world, or the sharing of rich lands with poor lands. It is a sign that poverty forced on some people must be ended by the voluntary assumption of poverty by others.

JESUIT 32ND CONGREGATION AND POVERTY

To return once again to the Jesuits' Thirtieth-second General Congregation, they together with so many other congregations, have sensed how the mystery of poverty has in different epochs renewed the Church, and now must renew Jesuit spirit; hence their call to "new experiential knowledge of poverty"; hence, too, their repetition that "the charism of the Society is to serve Christ poor and humble" and to find in that imitation of Christ's poor, not only ascetic moral perfection but also and even more evangelical motive force.

This leads the General Congregation to propose questions for examination that any religious could well reflect on (they can be adapted for lay persons):

- This leads to the General Congregation
- In a world of mass starvation do I perhaps too lightly call myself poor?
 - Is my standard of living much above that of "family of slender means whose providers must work hard for its support" (examining therefore my use of food, drink, lodging, clothing, travel, recreation, vocation, independence in use of money)?
 - Do our ministries identify us too much with the rich and powerful?
 - Are they too much based on security of possession, power? Can we witness to Christ who frees if we are excessively attached to our institutions?
 - Do I resolve the tension between apostolic efficiency and apostolic poverty generally in favor of the former?

The apostolic emphasis which religious congregations are giving their understanding of poverty is squarely within the main thrust of this paper. Equally, as this paper, they stress that the poor ought to be viewed not just as individuals but as a class of people. The political implications drawn are that the evangelizer must take his or her place on their under-privileged side. He or she joins the struggle to overthrow structures, laws, values that may be the cause of their poverty. Such commitment in the eyes of the poor is sign of the ~~great~~ truth of the mystery of Christ the poor man.

True, it can never be said enough that to fight for the cause of Christ requires an interior person, a person of the interior freedom which is the indifference of the Exercises, a person of agere contra, a contemplative. But the temptation is to believe that such formation necessarily transforms the world and brings about justice, that spiritual people necessarily stamp their cultures and change social symptoms. Experience does not generally support this latter view. True, without change of

heart or metanoia, there will be no true justice or humanization of life. It is true that contemplation can be subversive in the sense that it prepares hearts and minds for the radical upheaval that may be called for. Still everyone knows men and women of intensely interior life who, if they do not altogether dismiss contact with the reality of change and its political implications, can never bring themselves to enter into effective engagement in the fight for justice and freedom, justifying their aversion on the grounds that such action is horizontalism, neo-pelagianism, or inimical to the Spirit.

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Source = "Studies in the International Apostolate of Jesuits"
June 1976

JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT?, LIBERATION AND THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

By Philip Land, S.J.

PART III - SIN IN THE EXERCISES

P.V

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF SIN

The Two Standards meditation proposes two cities born of two cities opposed loves. Love of self leads from idolatry of creatures to the rejection of God; love of God, to self-forgetfulness. The Exercises here propose a reflection on sin to bring conversion to God. This begins with the "Triple Sin", "the great corruption of the whole human race". Here, the aim will be to ask for a new, fuller understanding of this corruption that touches humanity. There is original sin, of course, but there is the personal sin as well on the part of individuals and of groups and the acquiescence in sin of even larger collectivities -- even the totality of a society. What were the human options, motivations, ideals that imbedded sin in structures, value systems, ideologies, mass behavior?

Sin is and must be of a person, i.e., personal. Evil is from the heart (see Mt. 15). It can be only in one capable of loving, for it is false love, rejection of "right-ordered" love, abandonment of freedom for slavery.

But sin cannot be separated from its relation to the other. First of all, sin is against people, against humanity's good, and therefore against God Himself. It distorts relations between people, between people and nature, between humanity and the cosmos, its total environment -- and so between humanity and God. Thus, conversion to God must in some sense mean conversion to people -- to the good of the people.

That is what Aquinas meant when he said that Adultery is not evil because God forbids it. God commands not to do it because it is against humanity's good. Sin is not a conversion to creatures and to the world, as is often said. If it turns from God, it equally and antecedently turns away from people -- people as created by God in His image. It rejects implicitly God's covenant with people by putting up false gods -- those we contemplated in the preceding section: false values, possessions, power. It thus sins against the righteousness that is (on our side) faithfulness to the covenant.

Every time people or nations turn the resources of the earth away from the service of the human community to the satisfaction of their egoism, individual or collective, they sin in the radical sense of injuring the human community, and so turn from God. It is on this same score that advertizing which narrows a person to a consumer, technology that threatens survival, urban planning and housing that is indifferent to the human habitat, politics that is self-serving against community good, use of power to gain privileges (e.g., by turning the law or its administration to one's advantage), refusing one's fair share of community burdens (tax or other) -- it is on this score that all these are sin, social sin in their consequence.

SIN IN SINFUL STRUCTURES

The Sybd of 1971 says in Justice in the World that "society is marked by grave sins of injustice"; that "sin (has) individual and social manifestations"; that "Unjust structures place obstacles in the way of conversion of the heart"; that "the practice of penance (must) emphasize the social dimension of sin".

That view is reflected in the carefully thought out statement

SIN IN SINFUL STRUCTURES (Contnd)

of the Jesuits' 32nd General Congregation : "In the light of the Gospel men see that injustice springs from sin personal and collective, and made all the more oppressive by being built into economic, social, political and cultural institutions of world-wide scope and overwhelming power ". Here the decree refers to *Gaudium et Spes*, *Populorum Progressio* (21-55) and *Octogesima Adversus*(45).

True, to repeat, there is no sin that is not of a person. So sinful structures are the result of personal sin ; They are the crystallization of someone 's evil. An institution does not formally sin, but it can represent mass collectivization of responsibility. Structures can and do perpetuate sin, give it a state of permanency.

Nevertheless, the Synod gives full recognition to a social reality of sin, as exemplified in institutionalized violence ; war and strife for egoistic ends ; and cultural, economic political domination either of one people by another or of one's own people by the powerful few.

These sinful structures are, as the Synod declared, obstacles to the moral life. On this Vatican II agreed :

"But if by this social life the human person is greatly aided in responding to his destiny, even in its religious dimension, it cannot be denied that people are often diverted from doing good and spurred toward evil by the social circumstances in which they live and are immersed ... To be sure, the disturbances which so frequently occur in the social order result in part from the natural tensions of economic political and social life. But at a deeper level they flow from humanity's pride and selfishness, which contaminate even the social sphere. When the structure of affairs is flawed by the consequences of sin, people, already born with a bent toward evil, find there new incentives to sin ... " (*Gaudium et Spes* 85)

In another passage the Pastoral Constitution with slight variation makes the same point :

"Now a person can scarcely arrive at the needed sense of responsibility unless his living conditions allow him to become conscious of his dignity ... But human freedom is often crippled when a person falls into extreme poverty, just as it withers when he indulges in too many of life's comforts and imprisons himself in ... splendid isolation" (*Gaudium et Spes* 31)

It is true that, though conditioned, the human will is not absolutely determined by social structures, as Marxists contend. Still, in our thinking, loving and living we are affected by our moral environment, by the value system we live in. Thus, freedom can be limited. The humanization and liberation of life can be impeded, the world's encounter with its God halted. Injustices and strife can force us to excessive preoccupation with the temporal, thus depriving us of contemplation. Those, therefore, who believe in maximizing the interior life, should be the first to be concerned in combatting injustice.

Insofar as we fail to do anything to change these evil social situation, we share complicity -- at least to the extent of serious sins of omission. We do still worse insofar as we use these structures, for in so doing we are using our sisters and brothers. Nor can we easily extricate ourselves from responsibility by assuring ourselves that we move within these exploitative power structures more unconsciously than less.

At this point, the challenge to the way in which the Exercises are often made is that their reflection on inordinate affections is too narrow. Excluded are our obstinate clinging to our society's values, myths, ideologies, structures, power organizations and positions of privilege (including those of an ecclesiastical nature). Instead of challenging only our individual, personal manifestations of attachment to riches and honors, let us question ourselves on all these other social forms of disordered affections.

THEOLOGY AND
CHRISTIAN REFLECTION

JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT, LIBERATION AND THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

by Philip Land, S.J.

PART IV = LIBERATION IN THE EXERCISES

INTRODUCTION

It is this context of social sin that provides the basis for theology of liberation, in whatever form it be presented. No matter where they may end up or what route they may take to get there, all the various types of this theology propose as their objective the creation of the conditions of interior freedom so that people may become more fully human even to final consummation in transcendental communion with the Triune God. Their goal is interior freedom -- a heart freed from all egoism and sin and open both to Christ, the guarantor of freedom, and to the creative forces of His Spirit and His Lordship active in society.

But this salvation and liberation, this newness of life and the unfolding of humanity in Christ (Col 2 : 9) must be integral -- humanity as body and spirit, as individual and collective, within its cosmos and history first and then beyond time.

On a second point all liberation theology agrees. If liberation begins with the heart of humankind, it also includes liberation from sinful and unjust structures. Still more, if at its ultimate root liberation is the work of Christ on the interior of a person, this does not preclude God's (and our) direct attack on sinful structures exterior to people. God the Father through Christ, according to the Magnificat, scattered the proud in the conceit of their hearts, put down the mighty, exalted the lowly, sent the rich away empty. So even now the same Father, through Christ, liberates also the social order by the movement of His Spirit dwelling in that order and by His Eucharistic presence as a social force against the powers and principalities.

COUNTER-REVOLUTION / THE STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE

Idols, false values, undisclosed controlling ideologies, structures of injustice -- do these have names for us? Are they represented by capitalism, the affluent society, consumerism, domination of the poor nations of the Third World ?

In the mind of liberation theologians, there is no doubt about it : here is the enemy. Hence, justice demands a Christian to enlist on the side of the oppressed in the class struggle -- first in the poor lands dominated by Western capitalism, abetted by the privileged class within the poor nations themselves. But it is a class struggle that must extend to the victims of capitalism within the capitalist countries themselves and to their masses of poor, their oppressed, even their classes just above the absolute poverty line which receive enough of a trickle-down of the good life to trick them into the belief that the future holds more and thus reduces them to submissive acceptance of the system.

To enter very deeply into this discussion would extend this paper unduly. But it is not necessary to establish the Latin America and Marxist thesis in all its starkness in order to be able to recognize that in our socio-economic system -- call it capitalism or what you will -- there is plenty of injustice, plenty of domination, plenty of the inhuman, plenty of the promotion of un-Christian values. We can not be

THE STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE (Contnd)

defenders of the status quo, for in any absolute sense it is altogether indefensible.

Neither can we be passive in acceptance of the situation, shrugging our shoulders, and dismissing our responsibilities. In the confession of the Eucharist we ask to be pardoned also for our sins of omission, and objectively speaking, these can be grave enough.

In some degree or other, at some point or other -- idols, ideology, dehumanizing aspects of our system, the shocking persistence of the thick layer of poverty, the harrowing question of the degree to which massive wealth is at the expense of the poor -- at some point, I must accept challenge. I must become part of a counter-cultural revolution in the name of Christianity and join the dispossessed in their struggle for justice.

Obvious cautions have to be raised at this point for freedom-fighters. First of all, not everything that appears to be unjust is so. One needs only read Myrdal's *Asian Drama* to see how such a balanced supporter of the Third World's cause (Gunnar Myrdal is a principal architect of Sweden's socialism) place large responsibility for Asian poverty on the unwillingness of leaders and privileged classes in the Third World to make the changes in mentality and structures required for development. Myrdal, needless to say, raises even more powerful challenges to the persistent domination by the rich nations.

Secondly, objectively unjust situations in cases go unchanged mainly because economists are hopelessly, if honestly, divided on how to remedy them. This is true on a dozen measures before the world community in the so-called New International Economic Order -- to cite a few: linking development aid to special drawing rights, price stabilization schemes, cost-benefit analysis or buffer stocks. Unhappily, the state of human knowledge is often plainly not up to the complexity of the problems we are trying to solve.

In this same line there is still a third caution. I have heard this third labelled "the tragic side of life". In addition to the inadequacy of science, there are failures of nature: disastrous changes in weather patterns, and ocean currents, the scarcity of resources in the face of rapid population increase in the poorest regions, the staggering capital costs of desired urban renewal in the hopeless and dangerously explosive mega-city growth of a Lima or Calcutta.

PRAXIS OF LIBERATION

Not all that is labelled injustice is such, and not all that is objectively unjust is due to subjective injustice. This was the theme of the last paragraphs. But there is still a world of injustices that do have names and authors, that must be attacked, that call for a praxis of liberation. Ruling over ~~xxx~~ all such praxis must be two theological principles seen earlier at length -- change of structures must begin with change of heart; change of heart and ultimately the "new order", is the work of Christ.

With these general considerations, we can draw up a list of some more concrete principles of praxis:

We must beware of the Pelagian temptation to believe that we produce justice or to believe that once certain evil structures have been removed we shall have ushered in the kingdom. No, even then, all the ingredients remain for new forms of exploitation or the rise of new exploiters, and even for exploitation by the victorious former victims of exploitation. No political process guarantee Christ's liberation.

Change for a more just world today requires more than traditional social action. In Octagesima Adveniens Paul VI insists on the need for Christian communities to go beyond social action to political engagement for justice. Hence, political is not one

PRAXIS OF LIBERATION (Contnd)

possible field of life engagement. It is a dimension of most of life, one that conditions all the rest. Therefore such engagement is an obligation for all Christians whatever may be the particular form of political action appropriate to their state of life.

- Patience is a necessity against the disordered, if wholly understandable, "affection" (Ignatian terminology) of demanding instant results. The cross must be part of an activist's hope -- as it is in any case the only hope for those who will never see the desired changes in their lifetime.

-Nevertheless, there are victims of injustice ; there is a struggle going on. We cannot be neutral. We cannot not choose sides, except where -- as said above -- the facts, the analysis, the solutions are open to doubt.

One will have to choose as Christ chose, for He chose to be on the side of the poor. He sent the rich away. He put down the powerful. I too must opt for those who struggle for justice. That puts me on one side and against the oppressing class. To the extent that the powerful are the enemies of the poor and powerless, they are in some sense my enemies as well. This should not scandalize, For Christ told us to love our enemies. How can I love enemies if I have none ? But to whatever extent oppressors of the weak are my enemies, this does not preclude extending to them the love of Christ ; for when did the Lord ever refuse His love to sinners ?

STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE
IN JESUIT 32ND GENERAL CONGREGATION

The pertinence of this Congregation to our liberation theme forces me to return once more to it, for the central decree on Our Mission Today is virtually a cultural counter-revolution. At the outset, Jesuits place their mission "in service of the faith for which the promotion of justice is absolutely required since reconciliation among men demanded by reconciliation with God must be based on justice". Their mission is to be exercised in a world where ~~justice~~ injustice is "institutionalized in economic, social, political structures." Against this situation their call is to be free of egoism, to respect the poor and the powerless, to exemplify openness to the neighbor in need. There is a cultural counter-revolution against "erosion of values", against a secularist world, against "an unacceptable social order". Unjust structures must be attacked. If Ignatius were here what would he counsel ? He always insisted that Jesuits "go where most needed, where the most universal good lies". Where then ? "Structures of our society are among the principal formative influences..." So "to work to transform these according to the Gospel is to work for the spiritual as well as material liberation of men, and so to evangelize..."

As in its decree on poverty so here again the Congregation insists that "the promotion of Justice is not just one ministry among others. It is the concern of the whole of our lives". It recognizes that "to promote justice, proclaim the faith, lead men to personal encounter with Christ are three inseparable elements"... of our apostolate. In this promotion of justice and of liberation from false values and sinful structures, the Congregation -- as the last-mentioned text already indicates -- did not fail to give spiritual formation its proper place. Elsewhere the decree insists on prayers as preparation. It asserts that God alone can effect ultimate liberation, that reconciliation is the fruit of the Spirit and that human beings hunger also for the bread of life. For this reason we must preach the gospel and help men and women seek God in their lives; It is a question of "religious revival". There is call for "conversion , a conversion that calls for love of men and the doing of justice". But in this context, the decree returns to insist that "there can be no love without justice. Justice is the acid test of our preaching". That said, the decree warns that this work begins with change of heart and is in view of ultimate destination.

JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT, LIBERATION AND THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

PART V = IGNATIAN ELECTION

By Philip Land, S.J.

SOME CONSIDERATIONS

In the spiritual exercises, the election holds centrality. The meditation and examination of conscience that proceed prepare the ground for it. They build the theological foundations for a choice that for Ignatius ought to be fundamental enough to stamp one's life. They detach the heart from any "inordinate attachment" which thwarts that "indifference" or liberty of spirit which opens us fully to God's mandate and mission, which encourages us to seek only the greater good of God's Kingdom. The contemplations that follow shore up the decision with supporting motivation from contemplation of the life of Christ and His paschal mysteries. The considerations which I have elaborated up to the present and which follow change nothing of the logic and psychology of the Ignatian election. They only provide it with a new sense of mandate and mission, a new reading of the context of decision, and in light of those two a new set of options to be faced.

We need not review our theology of mission or our reading of context. We can go directly to the new set of options. Here I feel we need to do no more than to pass schematically over questions broached at a half dozen points in these pages.

Take first the mandate to openness to the Lord's call. Jesuits will put this in terms of the greater glory of God.

1. Indifference or apostolic openness will suggest that the Lord is not bound by my own or by my institute's accepted formulation of work. That may indeed give God glory. But what about his greater glory? There is the challenge. Christian hope -- precisely because it is a hope beyond hope -- is openness to the pull of God forward, coupled with a free freedom of spirit that precludes a security-motivated clinging to what we are presently doing. This is not to sanctify change for the sake of change, but it is to have the freedom of Abraham to abandon, at God's call, the home of one's parents.

2. In the case that one is moved to make one's election turn on the mission to justice, he or she will not misunderstand the guidelines suggested in these pages: he or she will not read them as invitation to abandon the interior life. The Christian lives a covenant which lifts him to sonship and communion with God, but it is this God who commissions us to commitment to this world. Prayer and contemplation must strongly be affirmed; hence, commitment to action may never be permitted to end in exhaustion of spiritual forces and the sterility and discouragement that follow a reliance on one's own efforts. Such reliance virtually dismisses the Lord from a place in His own kingdom. Contemplation if it is also a force for social understanding and engagement -- indeed it can even be subversive -- best achieves its social efficacy when it is what Ignatius so exemplifies -- contemplation in action.

Hence, I must ask: Do I allow my professional concern for the transcendent to cause me to fly from the engagement for justice? Or worse, worse, does my interior life conceal a desire for security, for a comfortable life, serene and untainted by contamination with the world of brutality, injustice, ambiguity?

3. How do I use God's gifts? Do I respect them? Do I work with them as a good steward? Do I show my respect for them by returning them to the Lord through my effort to build on and improve them? Do I use them to serve others?

SOME CONSIDERATIONS (Continued)

Do I respect these other gifts of God -- nature and environment -- using them in respectful partnership? Or am I destructive of what should be the common inheritance of the human family?

On the other hand, am I prepared in my commitment to the humanization of life to work, not at personally transforming the entire world, but my little corner of it in doing what I can, where I am, and in accepting my responsibility to act here and now, without waiting for others or for ideal conditions of action?

4. Turning from the adventure of God's mission to transform this world, the Exorcitant might look at society's idols, its sinful social structures and his or her own involvement in them.

ATTITUDE MOTIVATION

All participants but perhaps especially laypeople, will ask themselves whether they measure success by material acquisition, whether their standard of living precludes others from having enough to live in decency -- especially those in poor countries. They can question whether they fail to bear their fair share of public expenses by avoiding fair tax burdens. Lay members of religious congregations, and clergy should scrutinize their investments as to their social morality, e.g. investment in corporation implicated in exploitation of weak nations.

STRUCTURES OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL POLICY

All should ask themselves whether their government's programs of aid, trade, debt, are fair to the developing nations; And if they are against justice, what one's personal responsibility is to change them, to denounce injustices, to investigate situations, to join organized efforts, and pressure-groups. They must ask whether they are willing to pay a price for their morning coffee that permits a Colombian field worker to bring up his or her children in decency; whether their clothing comes to them cheap only because the material is unfairly priced against cotton growers etc. Similar questions can be asked from those living in developing countries where forms of exploitation are many.

Those possessing the power that supports privilege could ask what their attitude is to the powerless, the exposed, the poor (poverty is so widely an index of powerlessness).

QUESTIONS ESPECIALLY FOR RELIGIOUS AND CLERGY

Most of the preceding examination questions have their application to religious and clergy, but there are also motivational questions that touch these in a special way because of their consecration to service. What are one's real motives? Are they as selfless as one supposes? Or do they conceal pursuit of a career, success in the eyes of others, the mere satisfaction of accomplishment? Does one stick to where one is or what one does out of security-mindedness?

The same questioning must be raised by a community about the community's work. What is it that motivates what we are doing? Are our institutions tied to structures of injustice, to power, to the privileged class of society, to the "right people"? Christ's option was for the poor, the powerless. But we must be careful. It is not easy to say that I identify with the poor when what I really mean is only that I have a vague general sense of sympathy with them coupled with a willingness to do something for them. I can express sympathy without any desire to be with them in their weakness and insecurity, to work with them, or better -- to let them work with me. Whatever degree of identification we work out -- and these can be different in different situations -- let us beware of hypocrisy.

JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT, LIBERATION AND THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

By Philip Land, S.J.
PART VI = SECOND WEEK, LIFE OF CHRIST

KENOSIS AND JUSTICE

The theological reality here is that the Trinity decided to work the redemption of mankind and sent the Word into this world. It was He who took upon Himself our nature and was born of the virgin Mary. Traditional meditation here fixes on the kenosis, the emptying out of self to Him who became the Suffering Servant. That is offered as a motive and model of imitation, and so the life of Jesus is unfolded for loving imitation.

Herein lies profound meaning for the struggle for justice. First, Jesus took our human nature and lived it integrally some thirty years, sin alone excepted. In that union with human nature, He worked our salvation and in that nature, we are recreated through grace. Yet that human nature remains, however graced, what God gave us in creation and what He assumed. Here, too, is hope that we are destined by God to bring forth the good fruits of interior change of heart, liberation, humanization of life, justice and love. Here is the hope that our nature, our intelligence, imagination, creativity -- all charred and lived by Christ -- are instruments designed by God to bring good into this world. Jesus living our nature is a sign of the purposefulness of the Father's original act of creating.

The second consideration is that Jesus Himself announces His coming as having meaning also for this world, in this time. Jesus makes His own the Lordship of the Jubilee Year, which according to Leviticus would bring a new justice to the people of Israel. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim the release of captives and the recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty the oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable Year of the Lord" (Lk 4: 18-19).

The 1971 Synod's Justice in the world draws for itself the consequences: "Listening to the cry of those who suffer violence and are oppressed by unjust systems and structures ... we have shared our awareness of the Church's vocation to be present in the heart of the World by proclaiming the Good News to the poor, freedom to the oppressed, and joy to the afflicted".

In that moment of revealing Himself to the congregation of a Galilean synagogue as Lord of the Jubilee Year, Jesus, "after closing the scroll" added: Today this scripture is being fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:12). Jesus lived His message. He went about doing good. He healed; he fed the hungry; He identified with His least brothers (Mt 25: 20). In His resurrection He came to His disciples in their sense of abandonment, doubt, fear. He made the test of fitness for entry into the kingdom of His Father the giving of a cup of cold water in His name.

HE WENT AROUND DOING GOOD

Occasionally, a theologian maintains that Jesus performed miracles only to show His power or to manifest His divinity. But are we to deny the man Jesus the love and service Vatican II proclaims the duty of all? Are we to suppose that Jesus in His humanity is indifferent to this human effort and to our human hopes for something of justice and transformation of life to be realized here and now? Are we to suppose that He is satisfied to put off to the end of time all conquest of peace on earth? Is Jesus indifferent to

HE WENT AROUND DOING GOOD (Contnd)

millions dying of starvation? Are we to say that when Jesus made the blind blind to see and the lame to walk He was only making a symbolic gesture and not doing it because it was also a good thing to do in itself? Would that not be a condemned spiritualism and misreading of the parousia?

In a letter to the Federation of Asian Bishops Conferences, Paul VI spells out the meaning of this for our times: "It is our earnest and constant prayer that the increasing pace of evangelization may help to preserve your peoples from the dangers of materialism. Let it do so, not by ignoring material needs, but by responding to the hunger for bread, for responsibility, for freedom and for justice. Let evangelization respond to these needs by demonstrating that practical and all-embracing brotherly solidarity with one another under the common fatherhood of God will typifies our Christian Religion."

One other social aspect of the life of Christ can be fitted into our reflection. This is the consideration that the communitarian character of human life is developed and consummated in the work of Jesus. Here is how the Pastoral Constitution of Vatican II (*Gaudium et Spes*) puts it:

"For the very Word made flesh willed to share in the human fellowship. He was present at the wedding of Cana, visited the house of Zacchaeus, ate with publicans and sinners. He revealed the love of the Father and the sublime vocation of humanity in terms of the most common of social realities and by making use of the speech and the imagery of plain everyday life. Willingly obeying the laws of His country, He sanctified those human ties, especially family ones from which social relationships arise. He chose to lead the life proper to an artisan of His time and place.

"In his preaching He clearly taught the children of God to treat one another as brothers and sisters. In His prayers He pleaded all His disciples might be "one". Indeed, as the Redeemer of all, He offered Himself for all even to the point of death. 'Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends' (John 15: 13). He commanded His apostles to preach to all peoples the Gospel message so that the human race might become the family of God, in which the fulness of the law would be love.

"As the first-born of many brethren and through the gift of His Spirit, He founded after His death and resurrection a new brotherly community composed of all those who receive Him in faith and love. This He did through His Body, which is the Church. There everyone, as members one of the other, would render mutual service according to the different gifts bestowed on each.

"This solidarity must be constantly increased until that day on which it will be brought to perfection. Then, saved by grace, humanity will offer flawless glory to God as a family beloved of God and of Christ their brother" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 32)

JESUS EVANGELIZES THROUGH HIS OWN HUMANIZATION

Christ Jesus saves through His passion, death and resurrection. But He also saves and evangelizes through what He is. This we have seen in the preceding sections, but it is worthwhile also to draw out the implications of the fact that Jesus grew in grace, wisdom and strength. Jesus became more full man, and His evangelization became more effective as He grew. This has obvious application for our own work of evangelizers. We say that certain spiritualities dehumanize, narrow, confine. People soured on life, timid, out of touch cannot effectively proclaim or witness to the Good News. On the contrary, the great evangelizers are people who are mature, integrated persons, open to other men and women, deep in understanding and empathy, joyful in service.

JESUS EVANGELIZES THROUGH HIS OWN HUMANIZATION (Contnd)

But that is Jesus. We know that the Word became flesh. We know that that person grew in wisdom, grace and strength. What does not generally occur to us is that this growth was a continuous incarnation, a gathering up of fullness in the human life of Jesus, a progressive humanization.

Secondly, it also usually escapes us that Jesus as evangelizer proclaims His Good News most directly by communication of Himself, of His Kingdom, of His Goodness by his love working for humanity. It is a goodness, kindness and love that grew as He grew more fully human through understanding, suffering, occasional deprivation, loss of friends in death, disappointment over His disciples, realization of a widow's loneliness, dying to self, openness to the call of the Father and abandonment. We must not think of Jesus' growth as a person as something that happened to Him from outside, as it were not through conscious effort, interiorization, growth, and questioning of Himself as to what God asked of Him and indeed what His neighbors had a right to expect of Him. We must not think that the only crisis or doubt came in the garden of Gethsemane.

Jesus was and revealed Himself as a person among people. By His incarnation He evangelized. His contemporaries did not see the eternal Word but the person Jesus. They did not hear the interior Word but the word spoken by this Jesus as He tramped the roads from Jerusalem to Galilee and back, as he ate at the table of the carpenter, wept over a friend or thundered hunger against hypocrites and the unjust. Even though He could xxx banquet with the rich, He stood at the side of the poor and gave joy through wine replenished. It was not God that was visibly and immediately communicated but the goodness and love the effective love of the person before them. It was the sort of goodness that straightened up the bent back of an old woman who had lived most of her life in bondage of a face turned to the earth and away from skies. Jesus evangelized by goodness and love ; by the preaching of justice (Luko) ; by ministering to human needs ; by acting as the loving servant ; by bringing comfort, understanding, food, the joy of wine at a wedding , challenge (rich young man) and friendship -- wherever dwellest thou.

Source = "Studies in the International Apostolate of Jesuits" , June 1976

JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT, LIBERATION AND THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

By Philip Land, S.J.

PART VII = THIRD WEEK OF THE EXERCISES

REMARK

Some paragraphs back, I noted that the election is the peak-point of the exercises. What precedes prepares; what follows provides motivation. The third week draws motivation from the Passion.

LIBERATION OF GOD-'S PEOPLE

The theological core of the Passion of Jesus is the liberation of God's people as fulfillment of the Lord's covenant. Since this theme has already been explored, we can be brief here. All through the Old Testament, prophets and psalmists remind the Israelites that the God who drew their ancestors out of the bondage of Egyptian slavery and made a covenant with them is faithful to that promise. Yahweh reveals Himself as God in the very act of liberating an oppressed people. "I have seen the misery of my people in Egypt... that day Yahweh rescued Israel... and the people venerated God ..." (Ex. 3 : 7 ; 14:30-31)

"Yahweh gives justice to those denied it, gives food to the hungry, liberty to prisoners" (Ps 146 : 7) . "And men will know that I am Yahweh when I break their yokes and release them from their captors" (Ezek 34 : 27).

The 1971 Synod sums up the evidence : "In the Old Testament God reveals Himself to us as the liberator of the oppressed and the defender of the poor, demanding from us faith in Him and justice toward our neighbor. It is only in the observance of the duties of justice that God is truly recognized as the liberator of the oppressed".

In His covenant, God promises the freedom that ultimately worked in Christ's paschal mysteries, but from His people He demands in a return of trust in His promises and the doing of justice to the neighbor. "I have seen the misery of my people..." But once freed from slavery they must themselves observe justice . "For Yahweh your God ... sees justice done for the widow and orphan, and loves the stranger....Love the stranger, tehn, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Deut 10 : 17-19)

The literature of Liberation theology (Gustavo Gutierrez, Theology of liberation, chapter 9, "Liberation and Salvation", is representative) at this point notes that the covenant and Israel's hope will find fulfillment only in the Messiah who is announced. He is prefigured as bringing a kingdom of Justice : "On him the spirit of Yahweh rests... he judges the wretched with integrity , and with equity gives verdict for the poor of the land" (Is, 11 : 2-4). "The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me ... he has sent me to bring good news to the poor ... to proclaim liberty to the captives ..." (Is 61 : 1) .

To sum up this first reflection we note that because the justice of the Messiah is covenant justice, we may not confuse justice as realized in Christ's coming to an interior justification. Christ's justice is, as the covenant justice of which it is the fulfillment, not only received

LIBERATION OF GOD'S PEOPLE (Contind)

liation with the Father but also reconciliation, peace and justice among people.

LIBERATION THROUGH THE CROSS

A second thought for our theme originates in the theology of the cross. The death of Jesus is not a liturgy performed on an artist's canvas, in abstract space; rather the cross is planted in history. It was erected because Jesus had come into the conflict with the judges of His people and ultimately with the power of the eagles of Rome.

That suggests two reflections. First, the cross was according to all accounts the most shameful punishment which the society Jesus lived in could inflict. In their sight, the person hanging there was obliterated in shame and dishonor. Yet that cross has subverted and turned upside down the world's values. Dishonor becomes honor. Christ on His cross is a loving contestation of systems that victimize the innocent, the poor, the powerless.

The soldiers who raised the cross represented power and priesthood that believed only in a God of power. Jesus presents us a God who bows his head in death at the word of the powerful.

Our second consideration is that from the cross ~~xxxxx~~, as Jesus there works our salvation, so He begins our liberation. (Some would prefer to use the word liberation to designate salvation as well and thus refuse to find any distinction between these two eschatological stages.) Jesus inaugurated our liberation from false idols by His radical love for men and women, by His demonstration of what the Father's love means, and of the radicalness of the love He calls us to show others.

CONSEQUENCES FOR LIBERATION PRAKIS.

There are also consequences for liberation prakis that flow from the cross and death of Christ. Here are a few:

The details of the passion invite tender and compassionate meditation for sinful people. All this my Savior suffers for me, sinful and unworthy as I am, but we should not let this loving contemplation keep us from also meditating on the fullness of Christ's liberation.

Similarly, while the passion properly invites the asceticism and to live the cross (I die daily with Him, with Him who emptied Himself and became obedient even to the cross), our moral reflections must also dwell on the implications of redemption/liberation. These consist in my freeing myself from the egoism that is at the root of my injustice toward other people, and my joining the Lord in His work of liberation and justice.

The Third week demands that in imitation of Christ we become "fools for Christ's sake." Traditionally, this meant "accepting the meanest things in the house" and that was reduced to mean wearing old clothes that made one shemefaced. It would have been something else if its motive had been that the poor have to wear hand-me-downs. We were taught that "fools for Christ" eagerly chose to wash toilet bowls; never that it meant looking foolish by admitting my mistakes and limitations, by being prepared to rethink my confidently possessed positions, much less by looking foolish and being seen standing in the ranks of the few taking an unpopular stand in the name of justice.

To die with Christ may mean dying, as He did, at the hands of the Establishment -- ecclesiastical as well as civil -- because one denounces sins of injustice.

The helplessness and powerlessness of the crucified Christ can be a call to me to renounce power as a solution to world justice, to stand with the powerlessness, to share in their powerlessness, to be prepared to work within it and find in it the salvific power it demonstrated on Calvary.

CONSEQUENCES FOR LIBERATION PRAXIS

The cross is an eschatological message. The Christ who died to rise again liberates. Christ frees! But when? How? Redemption was won for us at no cheap price. Accordingly we must not live on a cheap hope of restoring peace and justice to the world without patient suffering; we must be crucified for justice. The social activist's temptation is to want easy, quick victories and to become discouraged when results come slowly. In such moments, let that person turn to the Christ abandoned on the cross by God and humankind.

After the revolution, sin will remain. New structures will replace the old and we are capable of corrupting these too. Thus Christ's work of liberation will never end. There will be no moment when the triumph of justice will be fully accomplished, no moment in which we who struggle for justice will not have to live the cross.

Many will never see Justice in their lifetimes. For these, the cross is their only hope, with its promise: "This day thou shalt be with me" (Lk 23 : 43)

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Source = "Studies in the International Apostolate of Jesuits", June 1976

THEOLOGY AND
CHRISTIAN REFLECTION

JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT, LIBERATION AND THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

By Philip Land, S.J.

PART VIII = IGNATIUS FOURTH WEEK

REMARK

Here I set aside the typical contemplations reserved for the resurrection and ascension. Thus we shall not consider "Christ's great glory and happiness", or the Lord at His work as consoler, or such tender scenes as Jesus preparing breakfast for the fishermen, tired and discouraged after a fruitless night of fishing. We go straight to the heart of the resurrection. He is risen as He said He would; the promise is fulfilled; salvation is achieved.

LORD OF HISTORY

Now we want to grasp the fullness of Christ's entry into our history. First we reflect on our new dimension of received sonship, of grace shared in Christ, the head of a graced people. But there remain fruitful considerations of a human history for the making. Hopefully it will be a history of transformation of nature and cosmos to serve people better, of the ever fuller humanization of life, of liberation from all forms of injustice, of peace for all.

The heart of our theme is that the risen Christ is Lord. The main line of New Testament thought on this runs in terms of the Lord who is in His second coming will reveal that He is indeed Savior of a redeemed people, head of a body joined to Him in the parousia. Other Pauline texts on Lordship, uninteresting to a millenarist epoch, had to await another theological day for adequate exploration. That came in the years immediately before, during, and after the Second Vatican Council.

Thus, the Fathers of the Council dwelt long on the implications of Colossians 1: 13-20. That text is too central to be treated in mere citation, for it shows Christ entering decisively into the whole of our history:

"He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities -- all things were created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things are held together. He is the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything He might be pre-eminent. For in Him all fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross."

This first-born of all creation, who is before all things head of the body, in everything pre-eminent, reconciler of all things is clearly Lord of kingdom which cannot be identified exclusively with the glorification of His church. It includes the whole of creation. His Kingdom is not the success of snatching souls from hell-fire; It is the crowning achievement of the whole of creation as it receives fulfillment in Christ -- the Teilhardian vision.

CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR HISTORY

In its pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Vatican II explores the consequences of Collossians (as well as Ephesians 1 : 10-22) for the meaning and consequences of Christ's Lordship.

1. Lordship

For God's Word, by whom all things were made, was Himself made flesh so that as perfect human He might save all people and sum up all things in Himself. The Lord is the goal of human history, the focal point of the longings of history and civilization, the center of the human race, the joy of every heart and the answer to all its yearnings. He it is whom the Father raised from the dead, lifted on high and stationed at His right hand, making Him judge on the living and the dead. Enlivened and united in His Spirit, we journey toward the consummation of human history, one which fully accords with the summation of human history, one which fully accords with the counsel of God's love : "To reestablish all things in Christ, both those in the heavens and those on the earth (See Gaudium et Spes 38).

2. Consequences of Christ's Lordship for the Human Enterprise

The two passages of the Council have already been cited but they are so central to an understanding of the resurrection that we must repeat them :

"They can justly consider that by their labor they are unfolding the Creator's work, consulting the advantages of their brother men, and contributing by their personal industry to the realization of the divine plan" (Gaudium et Spes 34 b) . "When man develops the earth by the work of his hand or with the aid of technology in order that it might bear fruit and become ~~xxxxx~~ a dwelling worthy of the whole family and when he consciously takes part in the life of social groups, he carries out the design of God manifested at the beginning of time, that he should subdue the earth, perfect creation and develops himself. At the same time he obeys the commandment of Christ that he place himself at the service of his brethron" (Gaudium et Spes 57b)

HOPE OF THIS TIME

What else can one say at this point about the Lordship of the risen Christ ? He is Lord of human history as well as of salvation history. In terms of Him all things --all created things, all that we create or co-create -- receive their definition, their ultimate meaning. In Christ, highest expression of humanity in its search for God and at the same time total communication in His humanity of God for humanity, is the point of encounter -- to express it in Teilhardian language. This what "recapitulation in Christ" means, the summing up in one head, the cosmos and history arrived at omega point.

Mediator of all creation in this sense of historical process, and cosmic events, Christ achieves this mediation through people. Effectively, we become His mediators, or co-mediators.

There should be no surprise for us in the strong affirmation of the consequences of Christ's Lordship if we reflect on Christ's earthly life before and even after the resurrection. Treating the life of Christ in the Second Week I made some points worth recalling here : Jesus as person was not and could not be indifferent to human hopes and efforts for some justice, some humanization of life here and now ; a person loving His nature and those sharing it, He could not be satisfied to put off to the end of time all conquest of peace on earth ; He could not watch with indifference as millions die of hunger ; His miracles were not merely symbolic testimonials and not performed also because giving sight was good for humanity itself.

HOPE OF THIS TIME (Contnd)

It is perfectly true that, while the doing of justice is constitutive of the Gospel, the Gospel provides no guarantee that Justice will be done on this earth at any time or ever. This we must not claim. Though we are permitted utopian dreams, we cannot dream of building an earthly paradise, nor do we propose an earthly messianism. Failure can be written at the end of the book of human history, but it need not be so. We are not doomed to failure in this life due to the simple fact that we have a Savior who can right all injustice in the end. If perfect communion among people can be had only in the accomplished final union with God One and Three, some communion can still be established here. We can anticipate 'in signo' at least in some measure, that perfect communion to come but already existing in Christ.

Though we fail to achieve the fulness of justice on earth together with peace and a harmonious equilibrium between earth's resources and the needs of all people, this does not mean that the attempt to achieve this is not worth the candle or doomed from the outset. Nor is it un-Christian to seek and hope for success in the human project.

Those who shrug off concern for this world remind us at this point that the face and figure of this world passes away, that God prepares a new dwelling place, a new earth; the only true hope is in the eschaton achieved; only there can humanity possess the world without being contaminated by it.

I have already said that Christian hope relativizes hopes for transformation of this world. I have adduced the witness of Vatican II that what will remain of our effort will be "the fruit of our charity". But to say that "what is mortal becomes immortal", that "our peace will be transfigured into the final peace of the kingdom realized" is not to negate what the Council equally insists on; namely, that our efforts at justice and peace "in ^{the} degree that they contribute to a better organization of the human community" (*Gaudium et Spes* 39), are traces of the anticipated image of the final kingdom -- in signo. The kingdom is present in mystery (*ibid*/) in all these human efforts.

Where is the power for potential accomplishment? Its ultimate root is in Christ's resurrection. As He said He would, He rose by His own power. The risen Lord brings victory over sin, evil, death. In that resurrection is power -- and the promise of the Spirit. Here in the risen Lord is our transcendent hope of final victory over sin and death. But grounded in that transcendent hope is found the Christian hope for this time, too, for a new earth, for liberation, humanization, development, peace, justice, love sharing, and communion among all people. All this is based on the final hope and in view of and oriented to that final hope.

It is finally and implicitly in that hope that humanity mandated by the Creator and in imitation of the Lord in His humanity, can use intelligence, creativity, technology, science to better this world in the historical future. Yet we remain sinful people under the judgment; hence, we turn always in our hope to the abiding presence of the Spirit, to His grace and to the Lord's Eucharistic presence.

UTOPIAN VISION

The last line of Justice in the World concludes: "... to build a world which will reach the fulness of creation only when it becomes the work of man for man."

In this vision of hope as operative toward a world of justice now, only the language differs from that of Paul VI in "Octogesima Adveniens" where upheld by hope the Christian involves himself in the building of the human city..." (§ 37); and similarly: " The expectation of a new earth must not weaken but rather stimulate our concern for cultivating this one ..." (*Ibid*. Quoted from GS 39)

Our reflection at this point inevitably evokes that intriguing passage of Octogesima Adveniens, where utopias are favorably contrasted with ideologies. The latter, once affirmed in concrete systems, are seen to be fraught with ambiguities. The rebirth of utopias is today's challenge to ideologies. While recognizing that projection of the future can be "an alibi for rejecting immediate responsibilities," Paul VI

UTOPIAN VISION (Contnd)

still recognizes approvingly that this kind of social criticism "often provokes the forward-looking imagination both to perceive in the present the disregarded possibilities hidden within it, and to direct itself toward a fresh future " (§ 37)

What is pertinent to our reflection on hope is that two visions here reach out to each other, two worlds, meet in the one and the other document, *Gaudium et Spes* and *Octogesima Adveniens*. On the one side there is the "new earth" of the utopian imagination ; on the other, the "new earth" of evangelical inspiration, of the Lord's kingdom.

What must encourage dreamers of a better world to exercise their creative social imagination is that as long as their vision "refuses no overtures" it will carry " beyond every system and every ideology to the heart of the world where (is) the mystery of man discovering himself to be God's son ..." (§ 37)

It is at this point , where the mystery of humanity can be finally seized only in the new world of the kingdom, where there will be temptation to reject all humanly-made projects that *Octogesima Adveniens* warns precisely against such temptation : "Christians, while fixing their vision on that new earth, must not allow that blinding sight to blot out the new earth of utopian imagination as it reaches for inspiration down into the mystery of human life. No, for the utopian can provide the body of a new human family, a body which even now is able to give some foreshadowing of the new age to come." (*Ibid.*).

It is to the achievement of this that the Synod for its part issues its parallel call -- the call to hope , for every person and all peoples of the human race.

Source = "Studies in the International Apostolate of Jesuits", June 1976

CHRISTIAN FAITH & MARXISM

'Man, Religion & Society'

for private circulationCHRISTIAN FAITH AND MARXISM

Shortly after June 20, 1976 Italian elections, during which large numbers of Christians voted for Independent Marxist supported candidates, the Bishop of Ivrea, Monsignor Luigi Bettazzi, Secretary of the Communist Party of Italy (PCI) Berlinger answered on October 7, 1977 with a long letter touching on questions of principle and more concrete problems of relations between communists and Catholics. We reproduce here large extracts dealing mainly with questions of principle.

MARXIST IDEOLOGY AS A MATERIALISTIC AND ATHEISTIC PHILOSOPHY ?

I would ask whether it is quite accurate to say that the Italian Communist Party as such, that is to say as a Party, as a political organisation, profess explicitly the Marxist ideology, as a materialistic and atheistic philosophy. I would answer no.

In saying this, I do not mean to imply that the political elaboration of our Party - that is to say its research, the determination of the objectives to aim for and the forces to move, in each historical situation, in order to achieve the progressive transformation of our society - has been or is based on mere empiricism, on an unprincipled "practicism", without a scientific analysis of society and historical development and devoid of any cultural elevation.

In reality this analysis and this elaboration, and the practical political conduct that has accompanied them, with the characteristic features that mark the life and struggles of Italian Communists, could not have developed outside the great and living lesson (which is not the same thing as an "ideological creed") left to us by the masters of

revolutionary political thinking, by the founders of the Communist movement. The discoveries and inventions of these masters constitute an invaluable patrimony, upon which not only our Party, but the working-class and revolutionary movement in all parts of the world, has drawn and continues to draw: a patrimony which has given life to a multiplicity of liberation movements and to a great variety of experiences in the construction of anti-capitalist societies moving along the road to socialism. Without this patrimony, indeed, without a Marxist analysis - that is to say, without a Marxism understood and used critically as a lesson, not accepted and read dogmatically as an unchangeable text - the positions the P.C.I. holds today, and even the growth of its organizational and electoral strength, would be completely unexplainable.

Now, is the conception that springs from this great patrimony of ideas and culture that of a political party that professes a philosophy and, in particular, a materialistic metaphysics and an atheistic doctrine? Is it the conception of a party that seeks to impose, or even to privilege, one particular ideology and atheism in the political sphere and in the State? Again, I would answer no, definitely not.

The proof, for that matter, lies in the results we have recently obtained on the political and programmatic level, on the basis of conviction that is similarly derived from the doctrine that inspires us: the conviction that while the real historical and social process is undoubtedly influenced by ideas (and also by ideologies), in the course of this process, ideas and ideologies are in turn conditioned by the real movements, to the point that they undergo modification and through an organic development, take on new meanings and new forms.

The proof, in other words, lies in the support that our initiatives and our concrete actions in internal and international policy receive, in the esteem that surrounds the P.C.I. both here and abroad and among all strata of our people, something you yourself, albeit with some reservations acknowledge. How would such results have been possible had the Communist Party not sought and received the consensus and convinced participation of great masses of citizens who are certainly not atheists, but believers, Christians and Catholics?

At the same time, it must be observed that the results obtained by the P.C.I. are the product not only of its general, rigorously secular and consistently unity-oriented, policy, but also, within the framework of this policy and given the peculiarities of Italian society, of the specific and very particular importance that, from Gramsci onwards, we have attributed to the question of relations with the Catholic world.

Around this question we have never ceased to develop and perfect positions and initiatives, with the aim of uniting all the working people, all the major popular currents and all the democratic forces of our country, and, therefore, especially, with an openness towards the Catholic world.

SOCIALISM AND RELIGIOUS FAITH

And, in fact, despite the campaign of unrestrained anti-communism launched from 1947 onwards by the leadership of the party that describes itself as being inspired by Christian principles, and also by organizations and authorities in the Catholic world, the P.C.I. remained true to its policy of understanding and collaboration with the popular Catholic masses and with their organizations and institutions. Over twenty years ago, in 1954, in the midst of the Cold War, Togliatti appealed for an understanding with the Catholic world to save mankind from the terrible threat of nuclear war. Eight years afterwards, in December 1962, our 10th Congress took an important step as concerns the P.C.I.'s position with regard to believers, approving a "thesis" proposed by Togliatti himself:

"Today, the problem is no longer simply one of overcoming the prejudices and sectarian attitudes that impede collaboration between socialist and Catholic forces, in order to obtain immediate economic and political results. The problem is to grasp that the aspiration to a socialist society not only may grow in men who profess a religious faith, but that this aspiration may even find stimulation in a deeply-felt religious conscience, faced with the dramatic problems of the contemporary world. Therefore, as well as confirming respect for religious rights, which is a matter of principle in a socialist society, the workers' movement must come to see the problem of relations with the Catholic masses and their organizations in a new way".

Here we find a really new concept: that the possession of a faith and the inspiration of a religious conscience, far from being considered fact in itself incompatible with the aspiration to socialism, are actually seen as something that can stimulate the believer to join in the pursuit of a renewal of society in the socialist direction.

To me, it is therefore quite understandable that citizens of Christian faith, practicing Catholics, publicly committed to remaining so, as you point out, should have accepted our invitation to run as independents in our electoral lists and to be elected by Communists. In extending this invitation, we were not motivated by tacticalism or electoralism, and, I am sure I can say, neither were they in accepting it. Indeed, short-term motives of opportunity and tactics might well have counselled against such a decision. With this gesture, the P.C.I. intended not only to confirm explicitly its respect for the religious faith of these friends (as it has already done in the past towards the many Christians who for years have been P.C.I. members) but also and above all, to enhance the contribution that they can make, with their religiously-based human and civil experience, to the common work for renewal, at the same time underlining the secular nature of politics and political commitment. I need not point out that this secularity does not in any way imply that we abandon our respective ideas and traditions or the impoverishment and relegation of these ideas and traditions to the exclusively private sphere; on the contrary, it encourages us all to give them their proper place and to seek mutual enrichment, at a time when the country's forces must unite in solidarity to overhaul society and the State and to give Italy a new political leadership.

These considerations lead me to recall, as you yourself do, that excellent passage from John XXIII's Encyclical, PACEM IN TERRIS, where a clear distinction is made between philosophical doctrines and the real historical movements that have grown out of them, and where, to some extent, the judgement on the latter takes priority over the judgement on the original philosophies, considered fallacious. This is a particularly important passage, revealing understanding of the fundamental positivity of history and thus, if I may so express it, truly non-manichean. But permit me in turn to recall another passage from that same Encyclical, where it is written: "Points of meeting and agreement in the various sectors of the temporal order between believers and non-believers or those who do not believe adequately because they subscribe to errors, can be occasions for discovering the truth and paying it homage".

At this point, I think, the positions the P.C.I. has adopted and its conduct over the course of some decades should be sufficient to convince you that taken together they form a valid guarantee that the Italian Communist Party is not only determined to build here in Italy a Party that is secular and democratic and, as such, neither theist, nor atheist, nor anti-theist, but also, as a direct consequence, desires a secular, democratic STATE which is likewise neither theist, nor atheist, nor anti-theist.

In other places, such as in Eastern Europe, in countries where Socialism is being built, States have been created in which under the influence of certain theoretical traditions and also for particular histo

rical reasons and conditions, discriminatory practices based on ideological criteria, even of a serious nature, have developed. This situation is beginning to change, although slowly, with difficulty and contradictions, since in some countries in Eastern Europe there are still manifestations of ideological intolerance on the part of the State.

CAPITALISM AND THE CHURCH

At the same time, it must be recognized that in Western Europe, where capitalism - the modern discriminatory system par excellence on the economic, social and political level - still exists, there are countries which enact legislation openly based on ideological discrimination (such as the Federal Republic of Germany). And it must be recognized that, for example, in Italy, the Concordate of 1929 which regulates relations between Church and State and which still awaits a necessary thorough-going revision, considers the Catholic religion as the State religion. I shall not dwell on how much "constantinism" and "temporalism" can still be seen in certain political and ecclesiastical attitudes in some European countries and in our own; nor will I remind you how tenaciously certain old integralist trends and attitudes are maintained in Italy, in the Christian Democrat Party and in some parts of the Church hierarchy, despite the Second Vatican Council, the papacy of Angelo Roncalli and the Encyclicals *ECCLESIAM SUAM* and *POPULORUM PROGRESSIO* of the present Pope, which raised great hopes for renewal in the conscience of Catholics in Italy and in the world.

Our State, to whose construction we Communists gave so much through the Resistance and the Constitution, is a democratic State, above all, by reason of the unprecedented breadth of the social forces that took part in its founding. Our State was born as a result of the entrance into national political life of the working-class, peasant and popular masses of Communist, Socialist and Catholic orientation. It was born out of the coming-together and solid participation of these masses and their parties, which, while preserving the best from the traditions of Cavour and the Liberals, worked together for a democratic renewal of our institutions and society and its organization. If this State of ours is to survive and develop in harmony with these social and political features and ideas that stamped it at its birth, it must of necessity be secular, in other words, non-ideological: only in this way, only through full secularity, can it really fulfill, in all its wealth, the democratic nature of its origins. These are the principles that inspire our conception of relations between the Italian Republic and the Catholic Church, between the State and citizens of Catholic faith, and, in general, between the State and believers.

MUTUAL COMPREHENSION, MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF VALUES

Speaking in Bergamo in 1963, Togliatti renewed his appeal for mutual understanding between the Catholic and Communist worlds, and urged us to recognize the need to "consider the Catholic world as a complex of real forces - States, governments, organizations, individual consciences, movements of various nature - and study if and to what extent, in the face of the revolutions of the present time and the prospects for the future, it is possible to achieve a mutual comprehension, a mutual recognition of values and, therefore, an understanding and even an agreement to reach ends that are common, because they are necessary, indispensable for all mankind.... From all points of view - Togliatti added - the problem of relations between the Catholic and Communist worlds is central. It must be solved in a positive manner, and we are working to see that it is. Even when faced with the most outrageous anti-Communist attacks - Togliatti concluded - we shall reply with the necessary vigor, but we repeat at the same time that we do not want a brawl between Catholics and Communists, because this would harm everyone, and above all, it would harm the cause for which we are fighting, which is the cause of peace, of the salvation of our civilization, the rise to power of the working people and the construction of a new society".

II. LIBERATION, LEADERSHIP AND THE CULTURAL
AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND OF THE PEOPLE
(ACTS 14, 8 - 18)

1. The present interest to read this text: Today's Bible study deals with the healing of a man who has been tied down and powerless throughout his life. It deals with the reaction of the masses to this act of healing, their enthusiastic response, their eagerness to treat their leaders as gods. And it deals with Paul's and Barnabas' effort to witness to the living God in a cultural and religious environment which has not been shaped by any biblical tradition.

To me this text of Acts 14, 8 - 18 is particularly striking because in a way the same story has happened and is happening in a somewhat modernised version in Indian villages, and I'm sure it happens in other countries in Asia and Africa. There is this problem of entering a village where one has never been before. One has to gain the confidence of the people. One may be rejected. But someone does something which is experienced as a tremendous step towards liberation or even salvation. And at once the problem of leadership arises. If the people are unprepared, they are eager to say: You be our leader. You have our loyalty. Do whatever you want, take from us whatever we can offer you. God has sent you. To us you are God. India as you may know, is a land full of godmen, a land in which miracles are performed, a nation in which politicians like Gandhi who had the halo of saintliness, could command the loyalty of the masses like nobody else. There is the problem of how to renounce this offer of leadership. And there is the problem of how to get a message across, how to convey something to people taking their own cultural and religious background seriously, respecting it, even integrating into it and yet to try to say something which is radically new.

In India we have droughts every few years. Friends of ours were working in drought relief. And as it happens, they were not only able to organise the labourers at the relief site, but after a while it started raining and incidentally the rains seemed to move with these friends, they fell wherever they happened to be. And the people started to believe that these friends could command rain. Last summer when the monsoon seemed to falter and fail, the government ordered all the religious communities to hold prayer meetings and when the P.M. came to visit the South, she happened to bring rains with her and the people were awed. Whoever thinks that this is a problem of countries with a low literacy rate and a high dose of religiosity, is kindly requested to remember that the times when the highly literate and rather secular people of Germany ascribed absolute and nearly divine powers to a leader, who was all too willing to play the divine role, are only forty years ago.

2. The Text and its parallels: Let me simply go through the text verse by verse. In the beginning of the chapter, we hear of Paul and Barnabas travelling and teaching and trying to encourage the people to organize themselves in parishes, to appoint elders, to live a new life of sharing and to spread the message of the promised new life. They had been preaching in Asia Minor in Iconium and had tried to convert the Jews there, but the Jews and Gentiles together mobilised their local leaders in order to get rid of them. And the local leaders hired goondas to use violence against them, and they threw stones on Paul and Barnabas and so Paul and Barnabas had to flee to Lycaonia, entering the cities of Lystra and Derbe.

The first thing which we hear of Lystra is that there is a man sitting who was lame from birth and had never been able to walk. There is a similar event told taking place in Jerusalem and there Peter and John are involved in the process of healing (Chapter 3). So many commentaries tend to say these are just parallel stories about miracle healing and the reaction of the people is certainly exaggerated and the story of the people trying to worship Paul and Barnabas as Gods is only an exaggeration, trying to introduce and to prepare for the short piece of preaching to the Gentiles which the author of the text had to put somewhere. This preaching again is seen as parallel to another preaching of Paul to the Gentiles namely his preaching of the Areopagus in Athens which is described in Chapter 17, v. 16-31. While there is no doubt that these parallels do exist, I would like to emphasise my conviction that our text here in chapter 13 has a special message to convey which really comes out of this connection between healing and preaching, no matter whether the story has literally happened in this way. The events which are described here have happened a hundred times and are happening even now, they are happening to many of us if we start to be involved with people and therefore it is more fruitful to try to find out what the author tries to convey to us in this story than to ask which pieces of a prefabricated tradition he may have used.

3. Healing and wholeness of Life: The man in Lystra is crippled, lame, he is powerless (advvatos) with respect to his feet, he has no command over them since his birth. So he has never experienced walking, he has never experienced the first exploring steps of a child, the sense of discovery, the capacity to satisfy one's curiosity, the ability to go somewhere where one longs to go. He has been dependent and tied down throughout his life, relying on the mercy of others for his livelihood and for his barest physical needs. He was sitting in a public place where Paul was speaking. It is not reported what Paul was saying. But since this was a "Gentile city" a city with Greek traditions, we can assume from other talks of Paul which have come upon us that he may have witnessed of the one God who has given life and breath to people and also wants them to live a full, a fulfilled life. And when Paul looks up, he sees this cripple and there is something in this attitude of listening of this man which commands Paul's attention so that he looks at him in a concentrated way and can see that this man believes that he can be saved. The text here uses a rather strong word which has the same root as the word 'saviour'. It means that this man believes that he can be healed from his handicap but it also means that this healing has a much more comprehensive connotation of wholeness also.

So Paul says to this man: "Rise up, on your feet, upright" and he sprang up and walked. Again, strong words are used. "Rise up". The same verb is used with respect to Christ's resurrection in Acts. 17,3. This scene described here is a prototype of an experience of liberation. The rise up and to walk upright, this has been used as an image by the Marxist philosopher of Hope and Utopia, Ernst Bloch and it has been taken up by Helmut Gollwitzer in his book Krummes Holz, anfrechter Gang, an untranslatable title which means that people grow like a crippled tree under oppression but that they are meant to walk upright.

4. The difference between Godmen and the Incarnation: Of course one can argue that this has nothing to do with liberation but is just an ordinary miracle. It is quite normal and human to argue like this, because this is obviously how the people understood the event when they witnessed it. But the whole preaching as well in Chapter 3 as here in Chapter 13 precisely discourages this understanding. In Chapter 3, the whole point is that people should change their life and accept Christ whom they had formerly rejected, and in Chapter 14 the witness is to the living God who has not left himself without a witness among the Gentiles.

The masses, the crowds () seeing what Paul and Barnabas had done, cried out: "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men". So they gave them the names of their gods, Zeus and Hermes, mobilised the priest, brought oxen and garlands and wanted to offer sacrifice. This is the sort of event in which godmen are born. Something exciting happens, the people offer worship, the god-man accepts. I think this also gives us an important key to the understanding of the incarnation. In a religion like the Greek or like Hindus it is not particularly difficult to think of gods being present among people. It is frequent that men and women become Gods to people. God becoming man even to the point of dying as a criminal is something different.

5. The Vanity of Personality Cult: Barnabas and Paul do not succumb to the temptation of becoming godmen. They tear their garments as a sign of distress and cry out against the people's devotion: "Men why are you doing this? We are men of the same nature like you. We bring you good news so that you may turn away from these vain things."

It is interesting to look at this word which means idle, empty, fruitless. If we look where it is used in the Septuaginta, the Greek version of the O.T. we get the fuller meaning of this word, comparing it with the Heberroots for which it is used.

The most frequent root for which it is used has the meaning evil, wickedness, destruction, falsehood, lie, emptiness, vanity, nothingness, spoken of that which deceives hopes. The second root for which it frequently stands indicates breath, vanity, transient, frail, vain, empty, worthless. So obviously Paul and Barnabas say: Leave this empty nonsense which will only deceive hope. Of course many people have tried to read this as a reference to gentile religion in general. But the further text shows clearly that this is not the case. The vanity which deceives hopes is the personality cult which leads to the worship of leaders and makes people dependent. I would like to illustrate this point. Three years ago I did a survey among the landless labourers, untouchables in East Thanjavoor.

several and different ways, seek to make an active contribution in this regard. And it is bearing all that in mind that I repeat my welcome to you all and my personal pleasure that it has been possible for this meeting to take place. (Applause)

The Rev. SAM REID (President of the Council of Churches of Jamaica) - Honourable Prime Minister, brothers and sisters: I was going to begin with an apology for the late start. The Honourable Prime Minister, Mr Manley, has already explained the reason for the false start that, inasmuch as there have been one or two speculations previous to this false start, I think it would be appropriate to say that it was not the beginning of another apparent boycott. (Laughter)

In the first place there seemed to have been some belief that, because the president of the Council of Churches in his capacity was not present at the welcoming party on Sunday, then there was no welcome from the Church. I would like to say that the Christian community is pleased to welcome so distinguished a guest as President Castro, and that as a guest in our house, in humble Jamaica, it is our desire that you should be not just welcome but at home, and in a Christian country as we like to call ourselves, we would like to feel that you yourself felt something of the warmth of the welcome of a Christian people here in Jamaica. (Applause)

I would like to compliment you, Mr. President, on proving this morning what a powerful man you are. Because I don't think any of us would have been able to bring together this morning as wide a cross-section of the Christian community (laughter and applause) as you have been able to do, and maybe in one single stroke you have done the whole Christian community a favour. (laughter)

Jamaicans, Mr President, have a way when they leave their country of distorting the picture that they present of Jamaica. For example, in the 1950s, many of our countrymen left Jamaica, and they went to Britain. And it is an interesting fact that they managed many of them, to marry some very attractive, wide-eyed English girls who were convinced that they were taking the vows of marriage beside some wonderful African princes (laughter) and whose fathers held broad acres either in Jamaica or some other undefined country of Africa.

On the other hand, I am told that recently there are many Jamaicans in Miami who are describing themselves as refugees from Jamaica.

Between the false picture of the African prince and the false picture of the refugee from oppression in Jamaica, one might be tempted to say that we are not very good at describing what our country is like.

I am not going to question all those things, but I would like you to know that in Jamaica we do have yet a free and open society; (Applause) a society that is so free and open that we are yet able to criticize even as powerful a leader as the Honourable Michael Manley. And your humble servant, who has shown such temerity from time to time, has still survived to sit on his left hand today. (Laughter)

Dr FIDEL CASTRO - And me on his right. (Laughter)

Church in Jamaica accepts social responsibility

Rev. SAM REID - We are satisfied, Mr President, that whatever might be our inability to convey the right picture about Jamaica, you yourself, as the distinguished leader and ruler of Cuba, are the best person to talk to us about your great country, and we here do appreciate the opportunity that has been provided. Indeed I ought to say that it has been volunteered to us to discuss with you your country and in particular the state and status of the religious community and the freedoms in general in Cuba. It is our understanding that you are not about to attempt to proselytize among this group, and we are assuring you that at this point we are not about to attempt to baptize you, sir. (Laughter)

Dr CASTRO - You can't. I've already been baptized. (Laughter)

Rev. SAM REID - In that event then, I think that we are well on the way, and before this meeting ends I am sure what we did not do at the beginning, we may do at the end; a prayer for a blessing would be in order.

Just a last thing, sir. The Honourable Prime Minister in his opening statement did correctly place before you what is not only his view but ours of the role of the Church; we accept our total responsibility. The Church in Jamaica today, our responsibilities which, if I may say so, we do conceive as being somewhat more than the responsibility of our temporary rulers inasmuch as we accept a spiritual responsibility for the development and care of persons and we also accept a physical responsibility, understanding that man is a whole unit and that it is not possible to speak of his spiritual welfare without accepting responsibility for his physical welfare.

Therefore, sir, we are at one with our prime minister, and we would like you to know that we do support and encourage all efforts in all parts of the world by well-meaning leaders and rulers to provide for their people a better life, circumstances in which they may develop and discover themselves fully as human beings under God.

I am sure, sir, that in the discussions that will ensue when I cease speaking you will be able to enlighten us about your own country and the state of the Church there and we, perhaps in the process of discussion, might discover ways in which we will be able to cooperate in the service of the Christian community and the Caribbean community; that is for us to see.

For the moment, sir, on our behalf, welcome and thank you for the opportunity... (Applause)

Cuban revolution not anti-religious

Mr MANLEY - Would you like to say a few words, sir?

Dr CASTRO - Esteemed Comrade Manley, esteemed Friend Reid - I was about to say comrade, but he told me he didn't want any proselytizing here; (Laughter) esteemed representatives of the Jamaican churches:

I listened with great attention to the profound and wise words spoken by Comrade Manley and also to the warm and respectful words spoken by friend Reid... (turning to the interpreter) you said comrade. (Laughter)

INTERPRETER - He says there's no problem.

Dr CASTRO - And I'm grateful to you, really, for your interest in holding this conversation with us.

It was stated here that I'd give a general outline of relations between the Church and the state in Cuba. It seems to me it would be convenient if I were brief in my opening remarks. I'd like to start by saying the following: in our country a very profound revolution took place which brought about a radical change in the relations of production and in social relations.

History shows that whenever such revolutionary events have taken place all sorts of conflicts have arisen, including conflicts between the Church and the state. This happened during the French Revolution, as you know; it happened during the Mexican Revolution, many problems of that nature arose; and it also happened during the Russian Revolution.

Well, also in our case, in Cuba, some conflicts arose in the beginning. Actually, in my opinion, this was due on many occasions to the leadership body of a given religious congregation or to the social group most closely connected with such a religious congregation.

I can indeed assure you that at no time was the Cuban Revolution moved by anti-religious feelings. We were deeply convinced that contradictions didn't have to exist between the social revolution and the religious beliefs of the population. Even during our struggle, there was broad participation in it by all the people, and believers participated as well.

Some priests, for instance, joined our guerrilla forces in the mountains; we met several persons in the Sierra Maestra - I couldn't say many, but some persons - who lived up there who professed non-Catholic religions. I do not remember, I couldn't say now which one they belonged to, I think it was many. For instance, some persons were banned from eating animal fat, pig's fat, and I admired how they would abide rigorously by their standards. When in the midst of the blockade levelled throughout the zone of operations no vegetable oil could be obtained, they would refrain from eating animal fat. They were friendly, respectful people. I'd say they were our friends. I keep remembering them as very kind people with noble spirits. There never arose the slightest conflict with them. Actually, during the war, we would say that they cooperated with us.

Urban elitist church

Some problems arose mainly with the Catholic Church. And I must be sincere here as I am anywhere else. There's nothing to be gained by our gathering here to create an idyllic image of the world and things. I will not try to fool you, just as I know you will not try to fool us either.

Problems actually arose with the Catholic Church when the nature of the Revolution was revealed as a profound social change, when the first revolutionary laws - the Agrarian Reform Law, the Urban Reform Law, and several other laws which affected the interests of the rich in Cuba - were enacted.

The Church was served in Cuba by a clergy of foreign origin, most of the clergymen coming from Spain, it being the Church of the rich people. That wasn't the same as in Latin America. In Latin America, in many countries, the Catholic Church exerts a broad influence on popular sectors. In Cuba, the Catholic Church relied mainly on the religious schools to exert its influence. In Cuba, unlike in France, for example, we had no priests who worked with the industrial

workers or who went out into the fields and became one of them. That was not the situation that prevailed in Cuba. Suffice to say that in Cuba there wasn't a single Catholic church in the whole of the countryside. The churches were mainly in the large cities.

In the cities, religious education was given at private schools. Generally, they were expensive schools only within the reach of the moneyed classes. I myself was born into a family of landowners, and I was sent to a private school right from the first grade, although I learned to read in a public school when I was very little. That's why I said I was already baptized, (Laughter) although I wasn't baptized at the school.

Cuba was generally considered to be a Catholic country, but I don't agree with that, because there appears to be some confusion. The Catholic Church had baptized many people. Generally speaking, whenever a priest went out into the countryside he did so to baptize people without previous instruction of any kind being imparted.

I believe religion is not a question of imposition. I can only conceive of it as a question of awareness, as a person's own decision. It was customary in our country to baptize a three or four-month old baby. They'd simply baptize him, have his name entered in the church register and thereafter no concern was shown for that child, for that youngster, during the rest of his life.

Rural population neglected

I was born in the countryside, and I can say that, although nearly everyone had been baptized, a Catholic religious feeling was lacking there. On the other hand, the immense majority of the people in the countryside were believers. Yet what did they believe in? Well, I think it was a kind of cocktail with all beliefs thrown in. (Laughter)

For instance, I recall this very well because my family were also believers - when St Lazarus Day came around, a whole series of activities would be held in the countryside in his honour. I had by then a certain notion of the Catholic religion and was aware that St Lazarus, depicted as a sick man covered by festering sores, was not a saint recognized by the Church, and that truly such adoration of St Lazarus amounted to what could have officially been termed as superstition: an incorrect practice from the Catholic standpoint, so to speak. Yet everybody lighted a candle to St Lazarus, prayed to him, offered him sacrifices and so on.

Other times it was the festivities in honour of the Virgin of Charity, whom the Church officially recognized. Many people believed in her, confided in her, made promises to her and so forth.

But really our countryside was characterized, generally speaking, by people living there believing in everything. Some also professed forms of animism, many believed in spirits. In short, there was a definitive atmosphere of that sort, yet no given religion was systematically, officially professed.

The other, non-Catholic religions did not have much influence in our country. However, I for one could see that the persons who claimed that they belonged to such other evangelical religions were generally more disciplined and engaged

in systematic observance of their standards and beliefs. That much I could see.

In the capital and in the larger cities the main Catholic churches were located in residential areas where the rich people lived. They went to mass, of course, on Sundays; that was compulsory. But there was no religious practice. That was the situation in our country.

It might be hard for you to understand that because your customs are different, your experiences are different.

Conflict between revolution and a social class

In the United States, I noticed how a Catholic was a Catholic and how he consistently observed his beliefs. In Cuba it wasn't like that. Many people called themselves Catholics. Those rich people went to church but they did not abide in the least by the Church's standards and principles. They led a dissolute, luxurious, carefree existence, and I'd say that they broke all the commandments and committed all the capital sins. (Laughter)

Then a conflict did arise but not between the Revolution and religious beliefs; the conflict was between the Revolution and a social class that tried to use the Church as a weapon to oppose the Revolution. That's what happened.

Notwithstanding my having mentioned the conflicts between revolutions and the Church throughout history, I think that in Cuba such conflicts were reduced to the minimum. And this was due to the fact that before the world, before our people, before other peoples, we took special care in never making the Cuban Revolution seem to be the enemy of religion, because if that had happened we would have really been doing a service to the reactionaries, to the exploiters, not only in Cuba but above all in Latin America.

That's why we acted like that, not only because of the principle involved - and I say this in all frankness, because to us respect for religious beliefs is a principle - but also for strategic reasons: for reasons of political strategy and tactics because we could not allow... above all in Latin America; I'm not talking about Cuba, since in our country religion did not constitute a political force. I'm talking about Mexico or Colombia or Chile or Argentina or other countries where religion is a political force.

We were not thinking of Cuba; we were thinking above all of Latin America. For we asked ourselves, why do the ideas of social justice have to collide with religious beliefs? Why do they have to collide with Christianity? Why? I know quite a lot about Christian principles and the teachings of Christ. In my opinion, Christ was a great revolutionary. That's my opinion! (Applause) He was a man whose whole doctrine was in favour of the humble, the poor and aimed at preventing abuse, injustice, the humiliation of the human being. I'd say that there's a lot in common between the spirit of essence of his teachings and socialism.

Only Foreign Priests Sent Home

Besides, I've said on occasion that He condemned the rich, the merchants and the pharisees with very strong words. He washed the feet of his disciples. What worthier example can one find? I've even said that the miracle of the fish and the bread and turning water to wine is what we socialists also wish to do. (Laughter and Applause) I

say this very seriously, I say it very seriously because this is what I believe, think and feel.

We've all read the history of the first years of Christendom and we know what it meant to be a Catholic, a Christian better said, to be a Christian in Rome and in many other places. To be a Christian in the era of the emperors was worse than being a Communist in Pinochet's Chile (Laughter) worse than being a Communist in Brazil or Argentina.

Of course, just as Communists have been much persecuted during the last decades - thousands of Communists were shot during the Paris Commune uprising, Hitler had Communists shot and they were shot in Spain, they were murdered and bombed in Vietnam; everywhere in the world, from the time of the Chicago Martyrs, workers have been murdered and tortured for allegedly being Communists - so was that the history of Christians for many centuries. Why? Because the ruling classes, the slave owners, the ones who ordered the gladiators to kill each other in the circus, the ones who enjoyed all the social privileges, all were the sworn enemies of the Christians because the Christians opposed all that.

Who were the first Christians? The poor, the poorest people, the humblest people, the slaves were the first Christians. And they were persecuted for centuries until at last one emperor became a Christian himself. That's the truth. Christianity's whole first stage reminds me of this stage the fighters for social justice are going through.

In effect, such conflicts did arise in our country but we abided by the principles and ideas I mentioned before. One step we had to take, I guess the strongest step, was when we had to ask the Spanish priests to return to Spain. Yet no church was ever closed down, nobody was persecuted on account of his religious beliefs. Nobody!

There's something more: there were priests who plotted and acted against the Revolution to the extent that, when the CIA-organized mercenary invasion at Playa Giron was launched from Central America - which cost many Cubans their lives - several priests came with the invaders. And no severe punishment was ever inflicted upon a priest, never was a priest or any other citizen for that matter - physically mistreated in our country. To us the principle of not laying a finger on a man or subjecting prisoners to mistreatment is a sacred principle that we haven't broken even once. We have a number of severe penalties, including the death sentence for certain crimes, but never was such punishment meted out to a priest.

I'm going to tell you something more. When it became necessary to send some priests to jail for serious counter-revolutionary crimes, they were always set free after a short period of time. We did that deliberately.

Such was the attitude adopted by the Revolutionary Government during the initial period of conflict.

The situation improved gradually and progressively as a different spirit began to unfold in the top echelons of the Catholic Church. And I'd say that the papal nuncio then appointed - Monsignor Zacchi, a very intelligent man, very capable, who really worked very intelligently - contributed a lot to that. He really worked to improve relations between the Church and the state and he also tried to guide the Catholic Church into doing its religious duty instead of engaging in counter-revolutionary activities, because that was not an intelligent thing to do. (Laughter)

Majority supported the revolution

I'll tell you why. The immense majority of the people supported the Revolution: the peasants, the workers, the poor. The people opposed to the Revolution, very rich people, left for the United States. Nobody threw them out of Cuba; they left voluntarily.

The Revolution carried out extraordinary social changes. I will not detail here how millions of persons benefited from the measures adopted by the Revolution- from wiping out illiteracy, eradicating many diseases to bringing about full employment throughout the country; but, above all, the Revolution brought man dignity. Millions of people had felt as if they were inferior beings for they were humiliated, exploited and despised; blacks were mercilessly discriminated against; women were forced to prostitute themselves since no other employment was available to them; a lot of people pinned their hopes on gambling, a deceitful hope that left them open to exploitation. In addition, drugs were available anywhere in the country.

It was at this juncture that the Revolution wiped out racial discrimination, opened up the doors of society and of life to all the citizens of the country: no more aristocratic clubs where blacks couldn't go, hotels blacks couldn't stay in, beaches blacks couldn't swim at, schools black children were barred from. Who can tell me anything new about all that, after I myself attended schools black children were barred from for many years? I used to ask, in all innocence - so to speak- at that age, why are there no black children in the school? Mind you, it was a religious school. The answer I got in the religious school was: "No, no black children can come here because they're very few and they would feel awful." That's the philosophical answer I got to explain why no black children could attend the school.

The Revolution wiped all that away. The Revolution eradicated prostitution, and it did so in a humane way: it trained, fed, clothed and sheltered those women while helping them adapt to another type of activity and another type of work.

There used to be 100,000 prostitutes in Cuba out of a population of six and a half million. I mean straight prostitution, since indirectly prostitution reached even greater figures. Take the case of a man with plenty of money who perhaps used to go to mass every Sunday but kept five or six women in five or six different homes and all that sort of thing.

The Revolution wiped out prostitution, gambling, drug addiction, all those things. So millions of people were in agreement with those measures.

"We must work together" for change

To oppose the Revolution was to earn the hatred of the people, and that's a fact. Both the nuncio and the Church understood that. But not only that, some changes were introduced by the Catholic Church itself, new guidelines were issued by the Church, specifically by John XXIII. Also, stemming from Latin America's Catholic Church, there emerged progressive currents that accounted for a change which allowed for harmonious relations to develop between the Church and the Cuban state.

I can assure you that no revolutionary process as radical and profound as the Cuban Revolution has had less conflicts, so to speak, with religion than our Revolution. At present, relations are normal. We hardly ever hear of conflict with the Church at present. I'm not denying that there are indeed some conflicts of another type. In the beginning we had conflicts not only with the Catholic Church. We also had them with Jehovah's witnesses, this being a religious group very much influenced by the United States - it gets all sorts of support and aid from the United States - and it had a militant attitude against the Revolution. Except for this, I can say that at present relations between the Revolution, between the Cuban state and the churches are really excellent.

In our recently enacted Constitution, freedom of worship, freedom of religious belief is expressly and very specially guaranteed.

Let me say something else. When I was in Chile in 1972, I had an extensive meeting with Church representatives. It wasn't like this meeting; in 19 years of revolution this is the first time I have had a meeting like this one. (Applause) I met with progressive Church representatives, a broad movement in Chile at that time, and I took advantage of that occasion to set forth our opinions on how relations between religion and the revolution should be conducted, because to me it isn't enough to respect each other, we must cooperate with each other in order to change the world. (Applause) We must cooperate to change the world, we must work together.

I maintain that the basis for this cooperation must be established before the revolution takes place. Why? Because I believe that revolutions will happen anyway, I believe that socialism will finally succeed in the world not because I want it so, or because Manley wants it so, or many of you want it so. It's not because of that or because Marx and Engels said so or because Lenin said so. By now it's not only a question of doctrine, it's not only a question of political theory but a necessity which can be mathematically proved.

For how else can the world solve its present and future problems? How can the world solve them! We're now 4,000 million, later we'll be 7,000 million, still later 15,000 million. I don't see how the world's problems can be solved unless everybody behaves like a single family and unless the effort, the talent and the energy of mankind are truly dedicated to solving the world's problems.

We can't go on being selfish as nations, we can't go on being selfish as human beings. We must give up individualism, that makes people want to have everything for themselves while others starve. I even think that, unless we have economic development planning on a worldwide scale, we're going to deplete all natural resources and poison the environment, and human beings will end up eating each other. I'm not merely thinking about this very minute or about 30 years from now, but I'm not thinking about three centuries from now either. Twenty-three years from now there'll be 7,000 million people in the world. I ask myself, what will man live on?

Observing Jamaica by helicopter or by plane, I've seen rocky, arid, trouble-some mountains and I've seen a lot of people scattered all over the country. There are two million Jamaicans, and 23 years from now there'll be 3.5 million. I ask, can a single country live by itself? Can Jamaica? Can Cuba? There are other countries, on the other hand, that

country which did everything possible to destroy us economically and militarily. It organized acts of sabotage and crimes of every nature and attempted assassinations. And we have given the media over to a political struggle. That's the way it has been. We've been dedicated to shaping political awareness; we've been dedicated to nothing else.

I believe that it would be perfectly in line with our Constitution for religion to make use of the media. Yet in actual practice it has not been so, quite honestly it hasn't been so. I think when a peaceful climate prevails in our country, when this imperialist war against us is stopped, then these questions can be looked upon with different criteria. As a matter of fact, we have few newspapers and use very little newsprint. You use up more newsprint per capita than we do in all of our newspapers put together. (Laughter) We use a lot of paper to print books and other things. We only have two dailies, one is the Party paper and the other, the Communist Youth paper. I wouldn't think they're appropriate vehicles for religious teachings. We also have magazines and other things. At any rate, there's no formal ban established on religious dissemination.

Upon analyzing the wording and the spirit of our Constitution, both presuppose the right to propagate religious beliefs.

Rev. SAM REID - In effect you are saying that, because you are still to some degree on a war footing, the media is pre-empted by the government, the state?

At this point, sir, I think it would be fair to say to you that the Church in the Caribbean countries has been aware of the injustice and the dangers inherent in this isolation of Cuba and the war, as you call it, against her and that in this room there are many Church leaders who in Trinidad in '71 did move a resolution calling upon Caribbean Governments to begin to break the isolation of Cuba, and we are very pleased that the heads of government of the Caribbean countries did take the decision to open diplomatic relations with Cuba, one result of which is your presence here today. (Applause)

Dr CASTRO- Both in Jamaica and in the congregation. (Laughter)

Bibles welcome

Rev. SAM REID - We would like to know that one result of the loosening up of the relationships generally would be the possibility for the churches, including the churches in Jamaica, to be able to relate to our Christian friends in Cuba, the Church, and that perhaps material for worship and for study, which might be in short supply, we might be able to share. For example, I think that if we were to be told that it was acceptable to you; then the churches meeting here, represented here, would like to make available as many copies, say, of the Bible in Spanish as we could put together, make them available to churches in Cuba, because we know that the feeding of the spiritual life of people depends a lot upon their being able to have available reading matter and certainly the Bible, which is the foundation of all.

Dr CASTRO- Well, he raised two questions. The first one concerns relations between the Cuban churches and the Caribbean and Jamaican churches.

Rev. SAM REID - Well, we are really speaking for Jamaica. The mention of Caribbean churches was...

Dr CASTRO - Look, I can say offhand that there's no objection on our part, we'd even be happy. I can add that the Catholics recently asked us to hold some kind of religious event in Cuba - I don't recall what sort of event it was but it was an important one - with representatives from all over Latin America attending. We agreed and authorized them to hold that event.

As to the Bibles, I recall that when I visited Chile they took me to a meeting with the cardinal. I hadn't requested the meeting, really, (Laughter) but Allende wanted me to hold that meeting anyway, so I went to have a chat with the Cardinal. And he said to me, "Well, you asked for a meeting. What's the purpose of this interview?" I replied, "Well, I don't know because they arranged for an interview to be included on my schedule, but I suppose we could find a few things to talk about."

I didn't like that very much. I mean it sincerely. There was no reason for me to object to having a meeting with the cardinal, nor did I feel I had to explain to the rest of my revolutionary comrades why I had met with the cardinal. Yet the cardinal needed to inform the reactionaries there that I had requested the meeting. (Laughter)

Anyway, we talked. He raised the question of Bibles, whether he could send 10,000 Bibles to Cuba. I told him "Yes, send the 10,000 Bibles, for the Bible is a fine book. I hope those Bibles go to the libraries. I like the Bible. It is a sign of culture to read it, and it's one of the best books ever written." Thus, we did agree, and a boat arrived home loaded with Bibles. (Laughter) How could we ever object to your sending Bibles to the Cubans? Not at all. (Laughter)

Counter-revolutionaries punished

QUERY - I would like to ask a question. I will try to speak in Spanish. My question concerns human rights.

I, as a Christian, believe in the sanctity of life in the human being, in the same way that I believe you also believe in it. And therefore it is impossible for me to feel satisfied knowing that at this moment in Cuba, as in other countries, there are brothers who are imprisoned because of their politics, and I know that you, Mr President, being a kind man, I would like to ask you what will be the fate of these brothers who are still in jail, and I ask this question not because of political reasons, but because I honestly feel something toward these human beings who are still in prison.

Dr CASTRO - Very good, very good. When you talk about brothers, do you mean religious brothers or political brothers? What do you mean? Could you explain?

_____ I believe that among those imprisoned, there are some who are believers.

Dr CASTRO - Why should they get special treatment because they are believers?

_____ My question ...

Dr CASTRO - Yes, go on, explain your question and I will answer with pleasure. I will answer everything. Ask whatever you want, ask for details, ask whatever you want.

_____ The question is that the Revolution....

Dr CASTRO - You are trying to say that we have some prisoners in Cuba, is that it? And you are concerned about their situation?

Yes.

Dr CASTRO - Fine. Now, I will tell you this. First, I disagree with what you said. Nobody is in jail because of his political views. That's the first thing, that's point one.

Point two: we make a distinction between political prisoners and counter-revolutionary prisoners. According to our concept of penal law, a political prisoner is one who is arrested and sentenced for trying to improve society for struggling for the good of man and for progress in society. We don't view in the same light those who struggle to make society regress, and we call them counter-revolutionary prisoners. However, they go to jail concretely for having committed serious crimes.

What were we expected to do with someone who took up arms in the Escambray Mountains at the instigation of the United States? This doesn't happen anymore, but it is one of the reasons why there were prisoners. They killed workers, peasants, teachers, people who were teaching others to read and write and committed all kinds of other crimes. Were we supposed to let them go free to do such things?

What were we expected to do with people who organized acts of sabotage or with the spies of the CIA or with people who tried to organize the assassination of leaders of the Revolution? What were we expected to do with those who invaded our country, with those who infiltrated weapons and explosives in our country and who actively worked at the service of the United States to overthrow the Revolution in what constituted flagrant treason punished by all the penal codes in the world? We had no choice but to punish them by sending them to jail. We had to do this. Those are the reasons why such people are in jail. There were quite a few of them, quite a few. At one time there were 15,000. Don't think that there were only a few, because there weren't.

Of course, what was also happening at that time was that those people, the reactionaries, thought that the United States would destroy the Revolution and that they would leave jail as heroes. Going to jail sometimes served to further a political career; there are many people in Cuba who did this. Therefore, being a prisoner was frequently a merit.

Well, we did put those people in prison, and who solved their problem? It wasn't the United States, it was us.

I don't know if you read the report by the US Senate commission which investigated the plans to assassinate leaders of other states. No? I think it would be good if you did. (Laughter) It isn't very difficult reading. In it, the commission acknowledged the large number of attempts on the lives of leaders of the Cuban Revolution organized by the US Government. And not all the attempts are listed therein. I want you to know, I want to tell you that they organized attempts on my life and on those of several others. I had a pretty good record: I think there were about 80 plots to kill me. But did you know that many of the people who planned those attacks are now free and walking around the streets of Hayana? Who got them out of jail? The CIA and the U S Government? No, it was the Revolution.

Revolution needs to defend itself

We do not consider punishment as an act of revenge. We wouldn't be Marxists if we viewed punishment as an act of revenge. That's not our conception of penal law. That's not my conception. For man is the product of a certain environment, and his ideology is moulded by a given class society.

Thus, to a large extent, he is a product of the society in which he lives. We dream of changing that society. Punishment is simply something the Revolution must do to defend itself. For if some man is capable of carrying out an act of sabotage at a factory and kills 100 workers as a result, we have the right to defend those workers. I remember something that happened soon after the triumph of the Revolution and that people can't seem to forget. It involved a woman who was dear to many people. When the counter-revolutionaries set fire to a large department store with several floors, she was trapped inside and was burned alive. I want you to know that there are things like this which the masses don't forget easily. I also want you to know that the head of that counter-revolutionary organization has been released. Sometimes it isn't easy for the people to understand this kind of thing.

I'm not saying that all have shared the same fate. (Laughter) There have been extremely serious crimes which we have punished in the severest way possible, never as an act of revenge, however, but as a result of the need of the Revolution to defend itself. We ourselves worked out the plans and the programmes by virtue of which those people could be released. We set up work programmes which they could work in and out of jail. There is something else: I think ours is the only such case in the world. Did you know that prisoners who work have the same rights and earn the same salaries as factory workers? So, counter-revolutionary and common prisoners in Cuba can work, earn a salary and support their families. (Applause) Thanks to those programmes, 80 per cent of the people who were in prison for counter-revolutionary crimes are now free. Those who are left - and, of course, there could be some new cases, I don't deny it - will be released by virtue of this programme, and, in some cases, they will be released when they serve their sentences in full.

We have always resisted foreign pressure in regard to this matter. The United States wanted us to release their people. We did so for other reasons, because of our desire to solve the problem, and we really have solved it. Since we have done so under the worst conditions of US hostility, including the blockade, we could be even more lenient in solving the problem in a climate of peace.

Still, let me tell you something, it is humane and even Christian to be concerned about others. Regardless of their religion, we must be concerned about all human beings.

I don't know if there were any believers among the judges who sentenced the war criminals at Nuremberg - there may well have been, and the fact is that they sentenced many of those people to death by hanging and others to life sentences. Some of the war criminals are still in jail, and the trial was 32 years ago - or at least 30 years ago - and they are still in jail serving life terms.

The Cuban Revolution is younger. It triumphed less than 20 years ago. I want you to know that there were individuals in Cuba who murdered dozens and even hundreds of people, and they tortured them just like they do in Chile today. What is our view? Should those criminals go scot free? Should they? If those who murdered Jews, democrats and Communists in Germany were hung by the western powers at Nuremberg and others were given life terms, why is it that those who murdered or murder Cubans and committed crimes and tortured people can't be punished. Why?

It was just over a year ago that a Cuban plane exploded carrying the junior fencing team - all of whose members were under 20 and

who had won all the medals - plus workers: fishermen, of those who work together with the countries of the Caribbean; air crew members, who were greatly admired in our country and who transported Cuban soldiers to Angola to fight against the South African racists. A bomb was planted on board, and it exploded when the plane was in flight. The plane went up in flames, and there isn't even some way of knowing whether or not those on board were burned alive before the plane plunged into the sea.

Suppose you go somewhere. Just imagine a bomb under the seat of a plane, imagine the plane in flames. Just think what a terrible crime this was. I don't know if such crimes exist in hell, if such terrible things happen there, (Laughter) but I can't imagine anything more terrible.

The death of those people fills me with grief. I feel profound solidarity with the mothers who lost their children, with the children who lost their parents, with the wives who lost their husbands and with the husbands who lost their wives. I feel pain for them. I admit that I think more about them than the people who are in jail in Cuba for having committed the crimes I mentioned before. (Applause)

Willing to build churches

QUERY - I was in Cuba for about two weeks, and I was deeply fascinated, you know, by the whole movement there. I went to some of the big housing estates like Alamar. There was something noticeable, Dr. Castro, in the areas I visited. In those new housing settlements far away from the inner city where people used to live, there are no new churches; so, as the population moves away from the traditional places of worship into these new areas of habitation, they move away from their area of worship too. But the schools are there, other facilities are there. I am wondering if there is any particular reason why this development takes place?

Dr CASTRO - Let me make myself clear by telling you the following. Churches are not included in our construction programmes. We include schools, hospitals and everything else. However, I can assure you that, if a given community were to ask the Revolutionary Government to build a church because the community felt there was a need for one, if they asked us to build it, we'd build it.

I want to digress for a moment. Forgive me, but I want to tell the president that the comrades have told me something. I didn't know when I answered his question. It is that a shipment of 2,500 Bibles and 2,500 New Testaments arrived in Cuba two weeks ago sent by the Jamaica Bible Society to the Council of Churches in Cuba. (Applause)

QUERY - I would like to ask a question. Now, we in Jamaica, over the last year, a lot of parallel is being drawn between the genesis of the Jamaican Revolution and the genesis of the Cuban Revolution. And one of the things being said was that the Jamaican Revolution was following the pattern of the Cuban Revolution and consequently would end up in the Soviet bloc.

Now, one of the questions I have always asked about you and the Cuban Revolution is whether, at the beginning of the Revolution, it was your country's intention to lead Cuba into that bloc, or whether it came in the process?

Marxist - Leninist doctrine the starting point

Dr CASTRO - Is that a political or a religious question? (Laughter)

I can assure you that we haven't joined the Greek Orthodox Church, you hear?

I will explain the following to you. I don't think... I think that this business of saying that Cuba is a model for Jamaica and that you're going to do things just like they're done in Cuba is part of the propaganda against Jamaica and against Manley's government. All that is simply a ploy, a political device to create confusion. I think that no two processes are exactly alike anywhere. (Applause) There have been many revolutions and many changes in the world lately, and not a single one has been exactly the same as another. I don't think Manley is interested in looking to Cuba as a model nor are we interested in having Manley look to us as a model. (Laughter)

We may have experience in technical, scientific and agricultural matters and in construction, sports and other areas of use to you, and some of your experience may be of value to us. If Manley sends us a certain kind of grass which is very good for cattle, we won't say, this is capitalist grass, so it must not be planted here. (Laughter)

I'll tell you that this grass was developed in the United States. What's more, our best layers - and we have a large-scale programme I might add: the state farms produce 1,750 million eggs every year - come from Canada and the United States. Oh, of course, the United States wouldn't sell them to us, but it is easier to get an egg out of the United States than a locomotive. (Laughter)

There are many ways in which we can help each other and cooperate. Our feeling, which we have expressed publicly is that the Jamaicans should act the way they feel they ought to. They will always enjoy our full respect and greatest consideration. This is our view and our duty of reciprocity toward Jamaica.

Other countries did not act as Jamaica did. They wanted to overthrow the Revolutionary Government and boycotted it. If a country respects us we respect it; if a government doesn't respect us we don't respect it either.

Regarding our membership in what you call the Soviet bloc, I think that is a question of semantics. Would you say that China belongs to the Soviet bloc or not? Is Albania a member of the Soviet bloc? The idea of a bloc is a very relative concept.

We belong to several blocs, if you want to put it that way, or to none. It is my feeling that, at the UN, we belong to the bloc of Latin-American countries; in the international arena, we belong to the bloc, if you will, of the nonaligned countries; in the international organizations, we belong to the bloc of the 77, that is, the bloc of the underdeveloped countries; and in the political sphere, we belong to the community of socialist countries because we have similar political principles and large-scale economic and technical cooperation, etc. Finally, we belong to the bloc of Caribbean countries (Applause) and to the Jamaica-Cuba bloc. (Laughter and Applause) I can assure you that none of this was deliberate; it was the result of history and life. (Applause)

QUERY - I would like to ask a question. First of all, you mentioned about the cooperation between State and Church, which I think is an important one, and I can see that your own concept helped you very much to come to this understanding. (Laughter) The problem is this: in your 1976 Constitution that state is

that state is responsible for the education of the youngsters, and it would seem to me that you might have difficulty in this cooperation between Church and state when one would realize the orientation that you actually have in mind for the children. Maybe it is one that has its foundation in Marxism-Leninism, in Article 38 of the Constitution.

Now, you mentioned before that there should be no imposition from the outside, whether it is religion or education. Now, I think you have in the whole world a text used for ten-year-olds in public schools, and I quote, "About 2,000 years ago, rumours began to spread about the existence of Christ, who was supposed to be the son of God. But science has proved that Christ never existed." And the text is used as part of the history of Cuba.

Now I can see that in this cooperation between Church and State you have the orientation that ends with the "dignification" of man and is aimed at economic and social development, whereas the Church, because of its orientation, has not only dignification but also civilization apart. If you have two orientations, and problems will come up in this cooperation and if this kind of teaching is given to students now, eventually there will be an attrition of religious sentiments and orientation of a people. Could you comment, please?

Dr CASTRO - Well, it's true that we take Marxist-Leninist doctrine as a starting point, but we stress the social aspects really.

I think that the fact that at times political processes have stressed the religious aspect has historically been due to the political disputes which developed between the Church and the revolutionary state. I feel that a union, so to speak, a drawing together or an alliance, as I said before, would force both sides to take this into account.

I think that a state can have textbooks with a non-religious orientation or even an orientation that opposes the religious view in the fields of philosophy or history. At the same time, the child can go to church where he's taught something else. The child should be able to decide freely whether or not he accepts religion, and he might or might not be persuaded by a certain view.

In my time, this problem didn't exist really; I was baptized, they found a godfather for me and so forth. I remember when I was about five years old and still hadn't been baptized I felt very bad, because people said that I was a Jew. I didn't know what being a Jew was, but I imagined it was something bad. They called me a Jew to insult me, and I didn't even know there was a people called the Jewish people.

Religion was not really taught to me but rather imposed upon me; I didn't have an option, an opportunity to get information that would allow me freedom of choice as to whether or not to have a religion. I even disagreed with many of the things which they taught me, I really did. Why? Because I like to be taught to reason things out, to think and to understand things. I don't like dogma. That's one thing. Secondly, they made me pray for hours on end without knowing what I was praying about since I prayed in Latin and Greek, and I didn't know what it all meant.

That's what happened to me in life. Since I told you I was going to be honest with you, I will say that I disagree with that kind of religious education. It's saying it now, because I'm complaining that I was subjected to that for a long time when I was a child and a teenager.

I believe that the human being should have information and freedom to choose what he wants to do as far as religion is concerned.

I think this principle is a reasonable one, and on this basis there's no need for a conflict to exist between religion and revolution. I don't mean the state; I'm talking about relations between socialism and religion, between the Revolution and religion, rather than between the state and religion.

My thinking is as follows: if socialism stands for the greatest freedom of man, why should it exclude from society the freedom to have religious convictions? We're imposing socialism on no one nor are we imposing Marxist-Leninist ideas on anyone. For I ask, what kind of revolutionary is the person who must have an idea imposed on him?

In truth, I was never a good believer because belief was imposed on me. It wasn't due to persuasion nor was it a consequence of my own reasoning. I think that by imposing religion upon people you get bad believers, and by imposing Marxism-Leninism as a dogma you get bad Communists.

So now we're going through a new experience. I realize that the point he raised is an interesting one. We must think about these questions, and about how we are going to learn to live with these contradictions.

QUERY - I would like to ask that, flowing from the freedom of expression in Cuba and freedom of the area as Christians, if a Christian denomination were to apply for permission to establish a broadcasting station specifically for the dissemination of Christian doctrine and to propagate the Christian idea of life, would that broadcasting station be permitted?

Dr CASTRO - I sincerely believe that, under the present circumstances, the answer is no. That's reality and I must be frank with you about it. I can't commit myself on the question of the station; the Bible is different as we already have a policy on that. (Laughter) I don't know whether true religious education can really be taught over the radio. I don't believe so, I's not sure.

Actually, this is the first time this question has been raised in that way. It couldn't be done now, really, not now. Were I to suggest it to my comrades in the Party and in the government, I fear they would think you had succeeded in converting me to religion herein Jamaica. (Laughter) That's all right. (Applause)

Rev. SAM REID - Mr President, I wish to tell you that this has been a most interesting two hours, and I believe there's nothing further to ask you.

I would just like to say, on behalf of this gathering of Church representatives that we are extremely grateful to the President for the free and frank discussion which we have had and that it has been very illuminating to us in many ways. And I am sure that it will provide the groundwork for greater understanding of the problems of the government and people of Cuba and, I hope, greater opportunities for cooperation with the coming of understanding.

Let us pray.

FIDEL CASTRO ON CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS IN CUBA

Introductory Note

This document is the record of a meeting between Dr Fidel Castro, President of Cuba, with representatives of churches in Jamaica on October 20, 1977 at Kingston, Jamaica, presided over by Mr Michael Manley, Prime Minister of that West Indian state. Dr Castro describes church-state relations in Cuba since the socialist Revolution in 1959, explains his government's policy in regard to religion and church, and answers a few questions on these subjects, thus providing a view of the situation in Cuba from the government's side. When Dr Philip Potter, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, met him on a recent visit to Cuba, Dr Castro commended the statement for widespread use and gave Dr Potter a copy of the record of the meeting, published in the Cuban newspaper Granma, dated November 20, 1977.

He claims that no revolutionary process as radical and profound as the Cuban revolution has had as few conflicts with religion as that experienced in Cuba. He declares that there are no "contradictions" between the Revolution and Christian beliefs as he feels there is much in common between the essence of Christ's teachings and socialism. So, in his view, the Church and the socialist state ought to "work together to change the world".

In issue No. 2 of May 1977 this documentation service published the declaration of faith of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba which sets out certain articles of faith coming out of the experience of a church living in Cuban socialist society and revolution. The church believes that "the new Socialist Constitution of Cuba is shaping the establishment of a more just society when it declares that 'the primary law of our Republic should be the homage of Cubans to the full dignity of man'". The Church commends responsible participation of its members in activities in all spheres of public life for the building of the new society. Recent visitors to Cuba have noted that socialism in terms of people's participation is a reality from the smallest unit of society onwards.

FIDEL CASTRO ON CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS IN CUBA

The Honorable Mr MICHAEL MANLEY, Prime Minister of Jamaica—Mr. President, the President of the Council of Churches, my brothers and sisters and friends:

I am very happy to welcome you all this morning, it is not quite this morning and yet not yet firmly established as this afternoon. But you are very welcome nonetheless to what I am sure is going to prove to be a meeting of very great interest to everyone.

Now, I would like to take the opportunity of beginning the meeting with a simple reminder of the complete consistency with which the Jamaican Government has always observed in the most complete sense the principle of freedom of worship, and it is not only that we observe it now, that we have observed it in the past, that other governments have observed it in the past, but also that we are completely committed to it as a principle for the future.

Human rights belong together - Jamaican View

We feel that the concept of freedom of religious worship is a very critical and integral part of the totality of those rights which we describe as human rights, and we accord it an especial place within the framework of those rights.

We also feel very strongly that human rights only take on a complete meaning when they sit firmly and completely in the framework of economic and social rights. We do not believe that you can separate any one kind of right from all kinds of rights, and therefore, it is an equally profound commitment of this government to work ceaselessly to try to create those conditions in society that can provide the foundation for economic and social rights for all human beings.

It is equally a fundamental commitment of this government that the human rights of one people as described in this wider sense are incomplete unless they are associated with an equally complete framework of human rights for all people everywhere in the world.

And it is for this reason also that this government is profoundly committed to internationalism and to the belief that our responsibilities are not only defined in terms of a brotherhood and sisterhood within the Jamaican nation but equally in terms of a brotherhood and sisterhood throughout the world, and equally that that wider concern does not either begin or end with human rights narrowly defined but must operate in terms of human rights in its widest definition, that includes economic and social rights.

In spite of these objectives, we are very aware of the inadequacy of our accomplishments in these regards. We have no sense of false pride or false achievement, and I only state this so that the moral framework within which this meeting takes place is set out as clearly as I can from the point of view of the Jamaican Government.

In the course of this, two things strike me as interesting. Firstly, it has been our experience that the Cuban Government has made an outstanding contribution to the struggle for human rights in this wide and complete definition in the world at large. Their own internationalism and the tremendous efforts that they have made to help struggling people in other parts of the Third World are already a part of the fabric of modern history. And it is for that reason that we have a very special pride in inviting to be with us in Jamaica the person who is more than any other single person the leader and the inspiration of that process, namely, Mr President Fidel Castro. (Applause)

I can say of my own experience how very interested we have been and how moved we have been in recent years by the quality of friendship and solidarity and support and cooperation which have always been extended by the Cuban government to the Jamaican people in the present struggle to build a country of self-reliance, independence and of genuine freedom for our people.

My last comment would seek to establish the second reason why I think this meeting is so significant and it is because we feel very profoundly that the Church has an active responsibility to play a positive part in the struggle for economic and social justice.

We understand that it must be the first responsibility of the Church to concern itself with both the state and the fate of man's eternal soul - perhaps the first having a profound bearing on the second. But we feel also that there has to be the positive acceptance of a temporal responsibility to work actively with those forces, factors and institutions in the state which are striving for economic and social justice. And I must say, Comrade president, that there are leaders of the Church in this room who to my certain knowledge, do accept this responsibility very seriously and do, in their

LATIN AMERICA BISHOPS MEET AT PUEBLA

(Issues at stake)

The meeting of Bishops of the Latin America Church at Puebla is of importance to the entire Church because of the basic issues that are being raised. The article which we reproduce here highlights the fundamental issues. It is taken from "Cross Currents" Vol. XXVIII, No 1 .

CELAM III = TWO MUTUALLY INCOMPATIBLE ECCLESIOLOGIES LOCKED IN STRUGGLE
Celam III, the third meeting of the Bishops of Latin America, to be held at Puebla, Mexico, must make decisions that will have crucial transcendental importance for the Church in Latin America and beyond. Two mutually incompatible ecclesiologys are locked in struggle. What the Bishops decide may not resolve the issues, it will, however, have a major bearing on the survival of the institutional church, either facilitating or complicating the struggle of the people of Latin America to free themselves from the oppression under which they long have groaned.

The ecclesiologys are basically those that agitated Vatican Council II. Should the church continue on its traditional course and in its traditional forms: structurally , a pyramid of power, stressing religious practices, seeing itself as an international institution, the universal instrument of salvation ? Or should it continue on the new lines already significantly developed in places (particularly Brazil) : with horizontal structures created by grass-roots groups, stressing lay ministries, concerned about ethical practices, seeing itself as a community rather than a society, as a network of communications, and as a sign of universal salvation ?

The political implications in the Latin American context are obvious. To return to the old ways, cosmetically modernized, would be supportive of the status quo economically and politically, favoring the objective interests of the oligarchs, the middle sectors dependent on them, and the transnational corporations that are the main beneficiaries of the present order without justice. To change would benefit economically and politically, as well as spiritually, the 80 percent of Latin Americans living in extreme poverty and powerlessness in the countryside and the mushrooming city slums.

CELAM II (MEDELLIN' - 1968)=OPTED FOR THE POOR AND IDENTIFIED THE SOURCE OF OPPRESSION.

CELAM II (Medellin, Colombia, 1968) was long thought to have resolved the issue, as many thought in 1965 that Vatican II had resolved the same problem at the level of the universal Church. Celam II opted positively for the poor, the voiceless, the oppressed. It identified the source of oppression as institutionalized violence, the neocolonialism of the national oligarchies, and the external neocolonialism of "the international monopolies and the international imperialism of money"; a situation calling for "global daring, urgent and basically renewing change". The commitment to radical transformation was unambiguous : " a thirst for complete emancipation, liberation from every subjection, personal growth and social solidarity."

THE BETRAYAL OF CELAM II ?

As happened after Vatican II, however, some bishops minimized the concept of basic change when they went home. Others who started serious implementation had second thoughts when they found priests and people wanted to run faster and farther than they judged prudent. Yet others buckled under the pressures of the national oligarchies and their international overlords who correctly identified the church envisaged by Medellin as a greater threat than the previous whipping boy, the communist conspiracy.

All the distortions described by Medellin have everywhere grown exponentially in ten years. Capital-intensive production techniques mean less work and more hunger in the cities. Expansion of luxury crops (such as strawberries), nonfood crops (orchids), and beef - all for U.S. market - has transferred the best land to the transnational corporations, leaving less and poorer land for beans, corn, and rice. To hold wages down and maintain this order without justice forced a massive expansion of structures of oppression: new techniques of control ranging from brainwashing in the controlled mass media through psychological torture to sophisticated weapons and computerized surveillance.

Those who would back away from Medellin, whether from conviction, prudence, or fear, are forced by the logic of their stand to commit the future of the church to the support of this unjust status quo. Some of them, in attempted justification, point to the centuries-long interpenetration of the church and civil society in Latin America. Whether such interpenetration was ever good for the church is questionable. What is not questionable is that its continuation or revival today would be a disastrous.

MAKING GOD THE PROTECTOR AND AUTHOR OF THE PRESENT SOCIAL SYSTEM

The reason for this has been well expressed by the theological-pastoral team of the Bishops of Brazil's Northeast in a reflection on the upcoming Puebla meeting. "With respect to God, the testimony of the People of God accuses and denounces the blasphemous discourses in which the systems of oppression of the poor, using his name and invoking his authority, try to hide and justify their injustice and persecutions. There are many who use the name of God and make God in their own image and likeness, attributing to him the responsibility for the type of society in which we presently live. They make God the protector and even the author of the present social system, which guarantees to them their property, the established order which requires obedience, submission and resignation to the injustices and disgraces that afflict Latin America because of decisions made by men. The People of God denounce the abuse committed in the name of the Father and the scandals that come from those abuses, provoking atheism in many people by presenting God as the enemy of the poor and the oppressed.

Such a society is a travesty of Christianity, even if its institutions invoke God, its military dictators are installed in cathedral services, and its church dignitaries loaded with medals and honors, in return for papal decorations for captains of industry and generals of the armed forces. The Christian cannot accept its basic premise -- one dear to the world propaganda of the United States -- that the oppressors and oppressed can coexist in love and constitute one community (in this instance, the community of the Church), that the institutionalized violence of the oppressor and the survival counter-violence of the oppressed are of the same nature, equally condemnable, and equally to blame for the failure of society to prosper.

That assumption effectively castrates the church, rendering it impotent to take side with the victim against the violator. This society's god is not the Lord and Father of Jesus Christ, the God of justice who does not place good and evil on a level of equality but always takes a firm stand on the side of the oppressed.

SINCE MEDELLIN, THE ESTABLISHED STRUCTURES HAVE PROVED THEIR ABILITY TO RESIST CHANGE.

It is an illusion to imagine that the church will benefit from returning to a theology that is antiquated and repudiated. There is no possibility of a new Christendom (that is, a church dominated society), nor would it be desirable. Secularization is not only a reality but a positive one. The function of the church, as Vatican II made clear, is to be a servant of humanity, a leaven in the world, a sacramental sign of Christ's presence, the support of the spirit in the common effort to bring the world to the perfection God intended for it.

A leit motif in the massive documentation distributed by the conservatives who seek to withdraw from Medellin is the poisonous suggestion that Protestantism is a root cause of Latin America's malaise. It is significant that neo-fascist doctrine of National Security developed by the new military dictatorships under the aegis of the Pentagon places major stress on the importance of sowing dissension both within and between the churches. This activity is particularly shameful in Latin America where for at least a century up to thirty years ago Protestantism was singled out by Catholic church leaders as the cause of all the church's problems. Happily, Vatican II purged us of that error and opened our eyes to the deep spiritual and Christian values our fellow Christians have to share with us. It is shameful but it is also unrealistic, to try to resurrect the prejudice of yesterday. Like Christendom, anti-Protestantism lies dead in its unmarked, unmourned grave.

What is most clear is that since Medellin the established structures have demonstrated their ability to resist the changes required for truly human development. But it is precisely because liberation today seems so much more remote and humbly doubtful that the church must be seen clearly to be on the side of the poor and oppressed.

SOURCE = CROSS CURRENTS, Vol XXVIII, No 1

See next page = Issues at stake (P.T.O.)

Next page = Issues at stake

P U E B L A

The following is an attempt to present the issues at Puebla in a schematic way. Admittedly it oversimplifies. For want of better terms we call the two groups Liberal (e.g. Holder Camara) and Conservative (e.g. Alfonso Lopez Trujillo, the general secretary of CELAM).

CONSERVATIVES

LIBERALS

Biggest Problem	Secularism	Poverty/ Injustice
Biggest fear	Communism	An irrelevant Church
Prime target of Church work	The elite/ the educated	The poor
Concept of the Church	Emphasize "institutional" aspect - Church is the universal <u>means</u> of salvation	Emphasize "People of God" aspect - Church is the <u>sign</u> of salvation.
<u>Attitude to</u>		
Army	Often a necessary partner in nation building	An oppressor
Technology	Hopeful	To be critically assessed
Basic Communities	Suspicious	Positive
Protestants	Very critical	Friendly
Medellin	Critical	Positive
Society	Church should dominate - the concert of Christendom	Church is only one element - civil society is autonomous.

Source = INFO - December 1978
(Office for Human Development of the FABC).

FORMATION OF CONSCIENCE

As an Integral Part of
Religious and Moral Education of College Youth*

Fr. Paul Leon

Education is a dynamic process by which man acquires the true form of his being as man. Man is the only being who is capable of such formation, because his mind enables him to confront all reality and let himself be challenged. Other living beings can only evolve, and possibly be trained; but man besides evolving can consciously develop his own character and abilities. Man's world includes his basic relations—with extra-human nature, with the human community, with society and its history, and finally with God and divine revelation. The growth and development of these relations presuppose man's fundamental capacity to perceive moral values, relate them to his "existential ends" and thus form his moral conscience.

The formation of conscience is a continual process which knows no age limits. However, the highly impressionable age of youth should be given particular importance in the formation of conscience.

"It seems apparent that the ultimate problem confronting youth today—a continually un-resolved problem—is one of moral decision, and this in the context of youth's rejection of traditional, authoritarian moral judgement. Young people are determined to reach their own moral decisions on the problems which confront mankind.

* This brochure is a lecture given at the NBCLC Seminar for College Lecturers on Religious and Moral Education of Youth.

Ultimately, therefore, the problem of youth today is one of conscience".¹

The college campus has become more and more the place where students make, and will be making, their moral decisions with respect to their life and the great issues which confront our society.

Educators can greatly contribute to "moral clarity" in students' thinking only if they are prepared to deal openly and honestly with the questions youth ask about themselves.

Religious education, which also includes moral aspects, must prepare men for faith, provide it with the chance of growing and taking deeper roots. It must make the Lord clearly known, and make the encounter with him possible, while God is the real agent and the only educator. The message of salvation must be offered in such a way that it can be known, assimilated and put in practice at each stage of life.

In a sense, then, the basic aim of moral and religious education is the formation of conscience which enables man to assume consciously his personal responsibility towards world, men and God.

I. The Experience of Conscience

It is the experience and conviction of all mankind that in his heart man can hearken to the good and to the "voice of God". In conscience man has a direct experience in the depths of his personality of the moral quality of a concrete personal decision or act as a call of duty on him, through his awareness of its significance for the ultimate fulfilment of his personal being. In conscience man has the lived experience of values, through which the binding force of religious-moral duties are known in the concrete situation. "The human person has an inbuilt capacity to react to the morality of the situations in which he is involved. He has some direct moral awareness. It is permissible to speak of his moral consciousness or aware-

1. P.H. ROTTERMAN, "Conscience and Student Protest", in: *Conscience—Its Freedom and Limitations*, ed. by W.C. Bier, Fordham University Press, New York, 1970, p. 241.

ness, his awareness of the moral dimension of his situation and so of his moral experience".²

Feelings of guilt, remorse, well-being or fulfilment often accompany a person's activities. Anxiety, fear, a sense of obligation, an awareness of the ethical dimension of past, present, or proposed conduct: all these enter as part and parcel of ordinary human experience.

The religious and moral experience contained in the Old Testament presupposes that, if God has spoken to man asking for man's knowing and free response, then man must be capable of recognizing this personally and responding to it of his own. This response-ability was experienced in the *heart* of man and was guided by *wisdom* and *prudence*.³

The New Testament considers conscience as a personal reality, proper to each individual, so that it merits different qualifiers: good, bad, weak and strong consciences are mentioned (Cf. 1 Cor. 8:7-12; Rom. 2:12-16). The unique and decisive intervention of God in Christ implies that conscience is not only a natural judgement, but receives enlightenment from faith. In conjunction with faith, attention must be given to the operation of the Holy Spirit whose inner guidance works and bears witness in our conscience (Rom. 8:22).⁴

II. Moral Conscience and its dimensions

Moral conscience is founded upon the radical reality of man's self-consciousness or self-awareness. If animal consciousness is submerged in nature, human consciousness emerges from nature in order to know it and change it. The prime reality of consciousness is at the root of man's spontaneous, non-reflexive and pre-conceptual moral sense and knowledge.

Man is constitutionally oriented towards God and, therefore, with his conscience as original faculty and power he

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2. E. McDONAGH, *Gift and Call. Towards a Christian Theology of Morality*, Dublin, 1975, p. 5
 3. Cf. Ph. DELHAYE, *The Christian Conscience*, New York, 1968, pp. 51-56.
 4. Cf. R. SCHNACKENBURG, *The Moral Teaching of the New Testament*, New York, 1971, pp. 287-296.

stands in a mysterious relation to God, for every created good is founded on the original Good. In the human conscience, therefore, man's totality is reflected.

Besides, conscience is also practical moral judgment which judges whether our actions are good or evil, which reproaches us when we have done wrong, and gives us a sense of contentment or peace when we have done well. This, obviously is not a mere intellectual event. The whole person, emotional as well as intellectual, loving, or committed as well as knowing, is involved in assessment of moral realities involving a general pattern for life and particular activities. It is not enough to make an intellectual judgment; it must be a personal one.

The understanding of conscience must be in the full sense Christian and theological as well as personal, taking cognizance of the insights of psychology, sociology and ethnology. An intensive study of the Bible is essential, as well as a thorough appreciation of the role of conscience in the entire Christian life, especially in its significance to the spiritual life and the circumstances of the individual Christian.

The moral conscience is a complex reality. "It obliges, yet it does not interfere with human self-determination; it is an autonomous faculty which acts on its own inner sources, yet it knows itself to be highly dependent on other influences; it presents itself as sacred and absolute, yet it is subject to constant changes; it directs itself towards an individual action, yet it encompasses the whole human being".⁵

A. The three levels of Conscience

Louis Monden in his 'Sin, Liberty and Law'⁶ discusses in turn

- (1) the instinctive
- (2) the moral, and
- (3) the Christian-religious levels of conduct.

5. C. J. VAN DER POEL, *The Search for Human Values*, New York, 1971, pp. 105-106.

6. Cf. L. MONDEN, *Sin, Liberty and Law*, New York, 1965, Ch. I.

This analysis permits insights into a more accurate understanding of moral conscience.

- (1) The twinge of guilty conscience which men sometimes experience from supposedly sinful conduct actually stems at times from a pre-human level of instinct. This sort of guilt, sin, contrition, or conscience does not have its basis in a personal and free decision, but rather constitutes an instinctive anxiety reflex. If Christian conscience were identified with this level of ethical conduct, man would justifiably live in apprehension about his destiny.
- (2) Man attains his free and conscious self-realization on the moral level of his existence. This authentically human manner of ethical conduct occurs mainly by the development of one's personality in an adult, loving self-giving relation to others. Man experiences himself as a free and autonomous individual in a process of continual growth and self-development from within. On this level, conscience is a power of discrimination in choosing between what will promote or hinder man's self-realization. Ideally, the instinctive feelings of duty, guilt, or sinfulness arising from one's unconscious past should harmonize with the consciously recognized duty, sin, or guilt.
- (3) The properly Christian-religious dimension of ethical conduct integrates and elevates the instinctive and moral levels of existence into a partnership of love with God, in the service of men.

But these three levels are not to be understood as clearly defined compartments in the functioning of conscience; they inter-penetrate.

The biological theory of conscience of the evolutionists sees in conscience no more than the vital pragmatic adjustment to environment. The sociological theory sees in conscience a mere manifestation of adjustment to society, the vitally necessary balance between egoism and social interest. Hence conscience is viewed as a culturally determined and institutionally transmitted mechanism that produces voluntary conformity on the part of the members. The psychological theory identifies moral conscience with "super-ego"; it

is a repository of "do's" and "don'ts"—both conscious and unconscious, not only of current rules and regulations but also prohibitions and restrictions of the distant past.

We appreciate the contribution of the above theories for the understanding of moral conscience. In fact, the physical, psychological and sociological determinisms which influence the human action also influence its moral value. However, these determinisms cannot be simply identified with the moral conscience. As Ignace Lepp says, "there is always an important difference between Christian morality and psychological morality: the former is interested only in the harmony that exists between behaviour and conscience, whereas the latter stresses primarily the unconscious motivations of behaviour".⁷ Hence we also uphold the autonomy of moral conscience which cannot be reduced to a phenomenon entirely conditioned by biological, social or psychological realities.

B. Objective Morality and Personal Fulfilment

Conscience does not involve a detached "objective" kind of knowledge such as the scientist's or the mathematician's; it is an "interested" judgment of what is good and evil for me. In weighing the morality of any proposed action, therefore, a person actually makes a two-fold judgment. One concerns the inner moral value of what he proposes to do; the other concerns his own personal fulfilment to be realized through actually accomplishing or doing the proposed action.⁸

- (1) **The judgment about the objective morality:** This refers to the inner morality of the proposed action as it relates to the moral order willed by God, prescinding from the internal emotional and affective states of the person (e.g. his motives, passions). It is possible that conscience errs. But the judgment about the morality of an action requires moral certainty.

7. I. LEPP, *The Depths of the Soul*, New York, 1965, pp. 247. Cf. also J.W. GLASER, "Conscience and Superego: A Key Distinction", in: *Theological Studies* 32 (1971), pp. 30-47

8. Cf. X. COLAVECCHIO, "Conscience: A Personalist Perspective" in: *Continuum* 5 (1967), pp. 203-210.

- (2) **The judgment about personal fulfilment:** Every moral decision involves at least implicitly a practical judgment about the effect of the proposed action on one's own personal existence: fulfilling or hindering one's self-realization. The chief criterion for discerning the presence of such an upright intention is a personal love of God and one's neighbour, the constant sign of the presence and inner movement of the Holy Spirit. Hence it seems preferable to reserve terms such as immoral, sinful and guilty to the area of personal involvement where free and conscious decision-making comes into play. However, subjectively guiltless actions frequently cause immense havoc in society and harm others.

C. Conscience and Personal Commitment

An honest conscience judgment demands openness to the full truth of the situation. Openness to the full truth of the situation is a matter of decision, not something already given, so that presupposed in every conscience judgment is a *decision or commitment*.

The personal commitment to the truth which is presupposed in a properly formed conscience judgment is affected by the person's temperament, his emotional condition both long-term and immediate.

The interplay between intellect, will and emotion has enormous influence on the final judgment of conscience and needs to be properly understood if that judgment is to be as true to reality as possible.

How commitment to the truth, presupposed in the conscience judgment takes concrete shape, differs from person to person, of course. For the Christian it takes on a particular form as it were, of the incarnation. He sees as the ultimate truth, God who has given himself in the person of his Son, who therefore asks for our response as sons of the Father and brothers of one another.⁹

9. Cf. F. BOWCKLE, *Fundamental Concepts of Moral Theology*, New Jersey, 1968, pp. 67-78.

Moral development in any particular area is the actualizing from within, of the capacity to respond to God and neighbour. The formula "you must not lie", or even positively, "you must tell the truth in all circumstances" is a legal one which is extrinsic and does not involve understanding the internal relationship which binds one to God and the neighbour and which calls for this particular response. We must understand then the situation in which we are and how verbal communication expresses our relationship with God and neighbour.

The same applies to sexual communication, to respect for life, to the handling and control of material goods.

D. Conscience and Life-direction

Man's moral life should not be understood as a series of isolated actions which he chooses freely and consciously with great frequency. Rather greater stress should be given to the *life-direction, life-tendency or life-orientation*, which the person chooses. This tendency stems from the inmost core of the person and becomes manifest in the various concrete choices he makes. The object of moral knowledge can never be completely isolated from the involvement of the subject of the moral action. "The subject's basic orientation is the fruit of his historical responses, his responses over a time which together have been predominantly in one direction in such a way and to such a degree that the subject has acquired this kind of settled disposition".¹⁰

Another dimension of moral conscience is its "*personal*" and "*personalizing*" character. Authentic personhood emerges only in man's free acceptance of himself in his vital relationships to other persons and ultimately to God. Morality is not related to a world of "things" but to a world of persons in their relationships. Fundamental to all the person's relationships as a Christian is his relation to Christ and the people of God gathered in Christ. This approach permits insight into such practical moral failings as lying, stealing or sexual mis-

10. F. MCDONAGH, *Gift and Call*, op. cit., p. 64.

conduct: instead of making these choices "things", it views them as violations of personal values and, ultimately, of the inherent dignity of the other.

III. The Educator's role in the Formation of Conscience

The educator's role consists in helping persons grasp moral values "contextually" or "existentially" in a lived experience. Conscience is the "Voice of God", but in the sense that we must contribute something of our own to the formation of the decision of our conscience, which is right in God's sight.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CELL

326, V Main, I Block

Koramangala

A. The Development of Conscience

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India

Conscience is most intimately connected with the whole of personality. It develops normally under the influence of the morally significant impressions gained in human experience from birth onward. The judgments, standards and values of loved ones as parents, or educators, become incorporated internally with the gradual development of the child's personality. "The moral development of the child also requires that his emotions be educated. It is extremely important that he be helped to develop hope—an attitude based on the belief that things which are hard but worthwhile can be accomplished. This can be done by encouraging the child to undertake tasks which are difficult but possible".¹¹

The authoritarian and legal strictures of the youthful conscience should progress in time from being an external disciplinary agent to an independent position of free response to personal appreciation of moral values.

Defects in normal psychological development could result in distorted malfunctionings which interfere or inhibit an authentic moral sense: fixation, regression to earlier stages of development, unhealthy guilt feelings, transference of guilt, compulsive-obsessive anxiety.

11. G. GRISEZ—R. SHAW, *Beyond the New Morality—The Responsibilities of Freedom*, Notre Dame, 1974, p 165.

B. Various Steps in the Formation of Conscience

If the decision of conscience is the moral judgment about the whole human self-realization, then it is necessary that the development and formation of conscience be on par with the development and formation of the personality.

However, a distinction must be drawn between the formation of conscience as a faculty or power and the formation of particular decisions or judgments of conscience. Zeal for truth and diligent cultivation of knowledge of norms and values are indispensable conditions for any training of conscience. To cultivate moral knowledge as such demands in every concrete situation zeal and vigilance in the attempt to reach the right verdict of conscience. Moreover, there must be a readiness on the part of man, limited as he is, to accept instruction and counsel. Even more important is the correct attitude toward the Church's teaching and governing magisterium and ultimately, docility to the Holy Spirit.

The developing and sharpening of conscience should concern every person called in Christ. Christian moral life consists in responsiveness to conscience in a free and conscious fashion. How can the person accurately respond, if he does not accurately hear God's call in the depths of his own being? Sufficient knowledge mixed with a mature sense of Christian freedom should be the goal of the morally aware Christian.

Attention should be given not just to negative obligations (how to avoid sins), but to positive moral values (how to develop the open-ended character of christian love).

The proper development of conscience depends greatly on moral instruction, especially through formal and informal religious education, both at home and at school.

Children first acquire their moral awareness largely from social adaptation through example, praise and punishment. The aim of moral education touches not only the extent of moral knowledge at one's command, but also the freedom, the independence and due autonomy the person brings to bear in his moral judgments and choices, together with their depth, intensity and vitality.

The example of an authentic Christian life in the family and a gentle step-by-step guidance in response to a loving God (not the Supreme Lawmaker) will permit children to see and love freely moral values. Such values will not be coercively imposed from without but seen rather as the fullness of being-a-man.

Correction and punishment should be accompanied by explanations of the intrinsic nature of the wrong doing, and God should not be depicted as the judge in fiery wrath or the tyrant who hates little children. "It is wrong because I told you so" as the typical parental explanation will hardly convey the dignity of a son's response to God's loving call to love him and one's neighbour.

The Christian formation of conscience should inculcate a certain opportunity of adopting a personal point of view and an independence free from the undue interference of other persons or the over-riding influence of irrational psychological forces.

The adult Christian conscience does not depend on the mass movements of the moment, which may verge at times on mass hysteria, or an externally imposed code-morality. *Self-conviction*, not the following of the herd, is the ultimate goal of moral education. God calls each man by his own name and not by another's. Each person should be encouraged to experience the joy of genuine Christian freedom.

In brief, one must grow out of an "authoritarian conscience" into a "humanistic conscience".¹²

C. Obstacles in the Formation of Conscience

As studies in normal and abnormal psychology have shown, much of human behaviour is motivated by man's unconscious tendencies. A clear insight into these tendencies may reveal the presence of obstacles in the formation of an

12. Cf. E. FROMM, *Man for Himself—An Enquiry into the Psychology of Ethics*, New York, 1964

individual's moral conscience. Conscience formation is a kind of challenge on the part of the objective power to love directed to the subjective readiness to love. If the readiness or willingness to love fails constantly, then eventually the objective power to love is progressively hampered and crippled.

Habitual refusal to love engenders hardness of heart and impossibility of loving. It is evil when conscience errs in judgment. But incomparably more tragic is the blunting and crippling of moral conscience itself. This is a hardening of heart which assume a variety of basic types.

Unity and harmony of personality and with it the dynamics of conscience are particularly jeopardized in the case of a man who quite admires the good abstractly and in theory, though he holds himself aloof from the practice of it. In this connection we should note the importance of cultivating a well-ordered emotional life, since the emotions in some way or other are essential for the sparking of intellect with the drive of the will.

IV. Moral Norms and Conscience

Truth and value represent objective norms of action but it does not always happen that they impose their necessary clarity on the conscience judgment. The human spirit, in fact, in order to be true to itself cannot be totally passive before truth and value and totally determined by its object.

Conscience brings to mind the objective moral norm in its relation to the concrete decision to be made in the present situation. Since the role of conscience is thus an intermediary one, it does not see the moral norm itself in an autonomous sense; it is, however, not passive.

When morality is presented in the legal form it comes as it were from outside; we attempt then to understand the law and follow it. This creates a false dilemma which is to be solved, according to the suggestion of some by interiorization of the law. This seems quite the reverse of what ought to happen. What we are looking for in formulations, and formulations we need, is not something we can interiorize; what

we are looking for is an exterior expression of the internal reality that is there.

This is not to say that the individual is the creator of his own morality. He is not the creator, but he must be the 'knower', he must understand himself, what is demanded of him. This understanding, of course, is not something that comes to him by way of divine inspiration or by his own efforts alone: none of us understands anything as individuals. We can only understand and learn in community.

The moral norms formulated through the experience of past and present Christian reflection on the implications of Jesus' Word provide an abundant source for concrete moral judgments. They state in universal terms what God asks of man in situations which have the same morally relevant features, e.g. that it is always forbidden to commit infanticide or to calumniate another person. Conscience draws on these norms as expressions of the moral life to which we are called in Christ. These norms articulate the deepest urgings of man's personal being, if they are correctly formulated. By personally appropriating these formulations handed down in Christian experience, the individual Christian can avoid mere caprice in moral judgments and an overly arbitrary approach to concrete decisions.

External authorities can never replace one's personal conscience. Though Vatican II says: "Let the layman not imagine that his pastors are always such experts, that to every problem which arises, however complicated, they can readily give him a concrete solution, or even that such is their mission"¹³ many Catholics fail to assume the authentic personal responsibility which is their Christian heritage.

The truly authoritative teaching office of the Church nevertheless occupies a central role in the formation of Christian conscience. The guidance of the Holy Spirit assists in a special way the entire Christian community to gain progressive insight into the implications of the Gospel announced

13. Pastoral Constitution on *The Church in the Modern World*, (GS) No. 43

in Christ. Aware of this divine assistance, the believing Catholic will listen openly and attentively to the Pope and the college of Bishops when they proclaim the community's faith. Such openness and docility should not be construed as a servile abandonment of personal responsibility, but rather as a due acknowledgement of Christ's presence in his ecclesial body. "In the formation of their consciences, the Christian faithful ought carefully to attend to the sacred and certain doctrine of the Church."¹⁴

V. Formation of Social Consciousness

One of the urgent needs of moral and religious education is the formation of social awareness of conscientization. It refers to learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions and take action against the oppressive elements of reality.

Paolo Freire, the Brazilian-born educator, who has dedicated a life-time to the cause of adult education, offers some valid insights into the formation of social awareness.¹⁵ He distinguishes two types of education:

- “banking education”
- “problem-posing education”.

Banking education has inherent tendencies to be controlling and determining rather than ‘educating’. It “anaesthetizes and inhibits creative power”; it “attempts to maintain the *submersion* of consciousness.” *Problem-posing education*, on the contrary, “involves a constant unveiling of reality”; it “strives for the *emergence* of consciousness or *critical intervention* in reality.”¹⁶

Man is a being in the process of *becoming*. He is an unfinished reality and his transformational character necessitates that education be an on-going activity.¹⁷

14 *Declaration on Religious Freedom* (DH) No. 14.

15. Cf. P. FREIRE, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Penguin Books, 1972.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

17. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

Basic requirement of problem-posing education and conscientization is *dialogue*. Dialogue is a listening relationship where people respect each other as much as they question each other, and vice versa. It is founded on human and Christian values. "Dialogue cannot exist...in the absence of a profound love for the world and for men...Love is at the same time the foundation of dialogue and dialogue itself."¹⁸

Freire lists the following as hall-marks of dialogue:

- Word*, with its two dimensions of reflection and action.
- Love*
- Humility*
- Faith in man*
- Trust*
- Critical thinking*

This humanistic vision of Freire contains valid elements which could be made use of in the Christian formation of conscience and of social awareness. In fact, the process we use in our task as Christian educators must itself be a humanizing and liberating one.

Thomas H. Groom has successfully applied these insights in a genuinely Christian context. He calls his experience "Christian education by shared praxis."¹⁹ It is a "process of critical reflection in the light of the Christian Story and Vision on present action (which embodies one's own story and vision) that is shared in dialogue."

The five steps of this education process are:

- Present Action
- Individual Story and Vision
- Christian Community Story and Vision

18. *Ibid.*, p. 62

19. T.H. GROOM, "The Crossroads: A Story of Christian Education by Shared Praxis", in: *Lumen Vitae* 32 (1977), No. 1, pp. 45-70.

- Dialectic between Community and Individual Stories
- A Decision for Future Action

"The ideal of social justice is a permanent horizon which we may never reach. Yet we need such horizons if only to show us where we want to go, *to give significance to our journey*, and to release the inner energy needed to reach the next bend in the road. Social justice is a necessary ideal for people who want to be fully human, and to be true to themselves.

Christian hope will want to go further. Faith in Jesus Christ gives birth to the conviction that he has a continuing purpose for the world. If Christ is risen and alive, then the future is always open to hope, whatever the appearances may be. Alongside his concern for the eternal destiny of each individual, the God of righteousness works out his purpose for societies and their history."²⁰

VI. Formation of Conscience=Formation to Freedom

Each of the epochs of human history has had its own particular concern. Looking at the evidence of our time one of the primary interests seems to be the quest for human freedom. It expresses itself in various ways and struggles and is surely pervasive enough to be called a general movement of our humanity.

The word "freedom" could have many different meanings. It may refer simply to the lack of physical constraint, the absence of external social pressures and demands, or signify that state in which an individual is able to create his own life—and, in a real sense, his own *self*—through his choice.

Freedom is the power to do good. The power to do good, however, is derived from the likeness of man to God, from the created participation in the divine freedom. As Bernard Haering says, "Moral liberty, which consists in the power and in the capacity to choose the good is essential in any discussion of religious liberty. When one affirms that

20. B.A. WREN, *Education for Justice*, London, 1977, p. 117.

liberty consists in the power of choosing indifferently good or evil, he is on a dangerous path. The liberty of God does not include the power to choose evil, but only the power to do good."²¹

The power of freedom is granted to us only in germ. Its seeds implanted in us must grow from within through the development of the person into personality.

Freedom can also attain the stage in which man surrenders entirely to the guidance of the Spirit. "Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor. 3:17).

Man cannot exercise his freedom without motives. The more profound the motivation, the more potent is the freedom.

Freedom unfolds its capacity as it exercises itself in obedience, but it must be obedience to the Spirit. And this is impossible without the true spirit of independence and self-mastery.

A. Follow one's conscience?

Everyone must ultimately follow his conscience; this means he must do right as he sees the right with sincere desire and effort to find and do what is good. But there are certain moral principles which no one can fail to recognize.

Conscience is always "autonomous" as it is rooted in the consciousness of man. But the autonomy of conscience can never be an autonomy from God since the very possibility of conscience as confrontation with the calling of God presupposes the Absolute.

Hence, what is "freedom of conscience"? The various "freedoms" guaranteed by the society are ultimately founded upon the fact that in man there is a fundamental reality which cannot be subjected. But this does not mean that man is free from all moral imperatives; for conscience presupposes

21. B. HAERING, *Liberty of the Children of God*, New York, 1966, pp. 118-119.

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a *calling*. If freedom of conscience is understood as "I do as it pleases me", it is no more freedom *of* conscience but freedom *from* conscience that leads to alienation and uncritical acceptance of the brute reality, hence the "inauthenticity" of existence. But if the expression "freedom of conscience" signifies the freedom to judge and to choose without having to follow passively acts of command coming from outside, then it indicates that there is a possibility of judgment which is not arbitrary, but being ultimate and interiorly imperative. In this sense Paul speaks of pagans who have become law unto themselves or rather have discovered the moral law, and of the Christians who should not confront themselves with the judgment of men but of God. (Rom. 14:10-12).

Man fulfils himself by following his personal conscience. Without doubt, the free formation and following of conscience constitute fundamental human rights. To harm these rights injures the person gravely, for it attacks the deepest level of his self.²²

Interference with the proper formation of conscience cannot be condemned too strongly.²³

Proper respect and reverence should always be paid to a person who follows his conscience, even if he unknowingly errs.²⁴

B. Unlimited Freedom?

But does a person have an unlimited right to follow his personal conscience in the carrying out of all his external actions? For instance, can a person who professes to act in good conscience or from religious motives murder, steal, take his own life or perform bodily harm to another? Some Christian-human moral principles may be of guidance in this area:

22. Cf. *Declaration on Religious Freedom* (DH) No. 3

23. Cf. *Declaration on Christian Education* (GE), No. 2.

24. Cf. GS, No. 16. As regards religious freedom, cf. DH, No. 2.

First, a person who follows his erroneous conscience without injuring others should not be prevented from acting, unless he objects unreasonably against his own welfare, as in the prevention of suicide or grave self-mutilation or injury to one's health.

Second, a person who follows his erroneous conscience and injures others should be prevented from performing his external deed, though his internal conscience is to be respected. The civil authorities may justifiably decide, on the other hand, that toleration of certain abuses (pornography, prostitution...) may at times be better than the attempt to eradicate them completely.

Third, one may not morally coerce or persuade another to act against his conscience. This does not exclude attempts to persuade another to *change* his attitude by offering him new arguments.

C. Types of Conscience and Interior Freedom

The conscience of man may not always enjoy proper freedom of decision and action. The following are a few major "types" which may be permanent or temporary in a given individual.

—A *scrupulous conscience* is characterized by an unhealthy and morbid kind of meticulousness which hampers a person's religious adjustment. Scruple means fear and insecurity which tends to make an individual see evil where there is no evil, serious sin where there is no serious sin, and obligation where there is no obligation. In a scrupulous person the infantile, irrational super-ego is seen as dominating the individual's activities.

There may be a causal relation between religious instruction and guidance and the manifestations of scrupulosity. It can be a critical stage in the religious growth. Anxiety neurosis may be due to the presentation of a religion of fear: God's claim on us is viewed as a threat affecting our actual response to God. Anxiety neurosis may also be centred around one area (e.g. truthfulness, chastity). There may be also compulsive neurotic scrupulosity.

The solution is to inculcate a sane sense of responsibility. To be responsible means above all to participate in the dialogue of love with God and one's neighbour. One of the principal causes of scrupulosity is the fact that some men never come to a living contact of love for God or neighbour or have lost it. Instead they fancy that they have to face a God of threat (anxiety neurosis) or a thousand stark legalities (compulsive neurosis).

—Conscience itself as faculty or power cannot be erroneous, but its decisions may be in error. Conscience as vital power can be dulled, but it cannot err. An *inculpable erroneous dictate of conscience* obliges the same as a correct conscience, just as a servant feels obliged to carry out the order of his master as he has understood it if he listened attentively even though the command was actually different. One sins in following a culpably erroneous dictate of conscience and also in acting contrary to it. But it is entirely within his power to correct the verdict of conscience by means of a purging of the source of error in their very depths.

—*The disturbed or perplexed conscience* is a particular type of erroneous conscience which arises from a transitory but violent disturbance of the capacity to form a judgment. Faced with the necessity of making a decision, there is no apparent choice that is free from sin. In such instances, if the decision can be delayed one must postpone the solution of the difficulty in order to deliberate upon it. But if the decision cannot be postponed the conscientious person will choose what he thinks the "lesser evil (sin)" and thus manifest his morally correct attitude. In fact, there is no question of sin in this matter; for sin is not merely a matter of intellectual judgment, but also of freedom of will, which here is lacking.

—*Lax conscience* means permanent moral dullness, gradual hardening of conscience. It does not face up to its grave moral obligations. The antithesis to lax conscience is the *tender conscience*, the delicate conscience. One with tender conscience preserves oneself intact with clear and vigilant discernment of the good.

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Now it is time to move from my spiritual experiences to my experiences in investigating the interrelationship between health care and religion in a predominantly Hindu country. I had wondered if a person who believes in reincarnation experiences illness, especially life threatening illness, differently than does a Christian. I also wondered if religion affects the health care delivery system in a nation such as India.

To help me with this project I contacted an Indian physician, Dr. Ravi Narayan, who is on the faculty of St. John's Medical College in Bangalore in the Department of Rural Health Services. I am deeply appreciative to him for arranging contacts with various professional people. Dr. Narayan is a nephew of Lalitha Krishnan, Margaret Leulor's Indian companion. He gave us a brief description of how the Indian health delivery system works and an introduction to various doctors. Betty and Peggy attended most of these interviews with me, so we had a basis for dialogue after these meetings.

Rather than objectively reporting the findings I would like to identify the sources of the raw data and present the findings in a subjective framework. My intention is to give a lay person explanation of how the Indian health care system functions to an uninformed but interested audience.

The information sources I would like to thank are:

Professional people:

Dr. A. V. Kasurkar, the principal of the Government College of Indian Medicine, Bangalore, which teaches both ayurvedic and unani medicine.

Dr. R. V. Nair, professor of Panchakalnia at the above college.

Dr. Mohan Issac, a psychiatrist in the Department of Community Psychiatry at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurological Sciences, Bangalore.

Father Harry Byjvolt, Chaplain, St. John's Medical College and Hospital.

Major General B. Mahadevan, PVSM, AVSM, FAMS, the director of Rural Health Services and Training Programmes at St. John's Medical College. He also furnished us with two papers: "Health Care Policy and Delivery Methods," by Gen. Mahadevan, and a draft of the "National Health Policy" stating the position of the Government of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi.

Dr. George P. Modagel, an orthopaedic surgeon, practicing in Bangalore, who took his residency in Ramakrishna Mission Hospital in Lucknow.

Lay people:

Mrs. Sheila Subbiah, Dr. Narayan's cousin.

Mr. and Mrs. Siasp T. Kothavala (wife Zerene), owners and operators of Bamboo Banks Guest Home, Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary.

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Mr. Anil Gupta, a tax advocate and tax advisor to the Modi Enterprises, New Delhi.

Mr. P. L. Bhasin, sales manager of Imperial Motor Stores of Bombay.

Mr. Ashok K. Neth, owner of Delhi's Ivory Palace and proponent of India's cottage industry concept.

Essential to understanding how the health care delivery system works is some knowledge of the Indian person and family. The great mass of people are relatively uneducated and poor; they live in rural villages in extended family groups; they have a 5 level language system, are Hindu, vegetarian, and believe in reincarnation, are cynical, because of centuries of suppression under a caste system and foreign rule; and while nominally thought of as a male dominated society actually have a female dominated socio-economic society through their influence in the close knit family circle. I realize this appears to be judgemental but these traits were all pointed out to me by Indian people.

To elaborate a little, 80% of the population of 650,000,000 live in rural areas. The 1976 per capita income was Rs. 1400 or less than U.S. \$200. Sixty percent of the total population live below a poverty line where they lack the purchasing power to secure health services.

The family unit is much closer in India than in the U.S., out of economic necessity. Whereas this closeness limits privacy it leads to much more dialogue within the family group. This situation leads to the establishment of a dominant female in the family who is very influential in making most family decisions, whether it concerns health care of her daughter's new baby or the type of fertilizer used on the vegetables.

Because 85% of the population is Hindu, and a majority of Hindus are vegetarian, there is a significant religious factor in nutritional needs of a large segment of the population.

Communication between the educated urban dwellers and the uneducated rural residents also presents formidable problems. In the Indian communication system at least 3 languages are involved. Although English is disliked as a remnant of colonialism, it is the accepted language of business and education. Hindi is the official language that the federal government is attempting to put into universal use, but the native state tongue remains the primary and only language of many of the rural uneducated people.

In examining the way that the Indian health care system functions, one finds that it is divided into a 5 level system. Each level seems to be competing for the federal as well as the private dollar, and each type of doctor enjoys a different socio-economic position.

The system can be outlined as:

1. Western style, allopathic, or crises intervention medicine.
2. Ayurvedic and unani medicine.
3. German medicine, called homeopathy.
4. Village or community health workers.

5. Village priests, faith healers, shamans, etc.

Western style medicine is practiced in 2 different forms. The urban practice is similar to, but less sophisticated than what is seen in the Western countries. The rural practice is more like public health or military medicine, heavily dependent on decentralized facilities and the use of auxiliaries, who may or may not be supervised by a physician.

The rural practice follows the basic principles of primary health care as published by the World Health Organization. Briefly stated they are that essential health care is made universally available to individuals and families in a community by means acceptable to them, through their full participation, and at a cost that the community and country can afford.

Primary Health Centers (PHC) have the responsibility for rural health care. Each center is to provide basic health care for 75,000 to 125,000 rural people. Each has a staff of two or 3 doctors, about 30 auxiliaries, and a 6 bed infirmary. Each PHC has sub-centers for every 10,000 population, which are staffed only with a male and a female multi-purpose worker. These 2 people serve as a link between the PHC and the community health workers who live in the surrounding villages. There is an attempt to provide one community health worker (CHW) for each 1000 people. They are quite autonomous, responsible to guide lines but to no person, and initially see nearly all of the ill. These CHWs are also responsible for motivating the village people into accepting basic sanitation, preventive medical, and nutrition concepts. These village workers make up level 4 of the delivery system.

Dr. Narayan explained how the system worked and also pointed out some problems in its operation. The doctors sent to these PHC's are new graduates and unfamiliar with rural life. The villagers do not trust these doctors who treat them with unfamiliar techniques. The doctors do not have the sophisticated diagnostic equipment and laboratories they depended upon while in medical school and during their hospital internships. Additionally, these young M.D.'s may not know the local language and have to depend on interpreters for communicating with patients. Neither have they experience in managing a staff. Each PHC has 20 or 30 auxiliaries plus all of the community health workers in the small villages. To compound the problem the auxiliaries usually are middle aged, seasoned workers, and from rural areas. So the new young doctor goes into a town where he/she doesn't know the ropes and doesn't have experience in managing a staff or in treating patients outside of a hospital environment.

One mission of Dr. Narayan's department is to try to prepare the medical student for this phase of his/her career, and to offer a support system during this 3 year required rural practice residency. Another mission is to show the doctors and staff how to work with local healers so as to keep healing practices close to home, to provide the type of care that the rural people will accept, and to explain more sophisticated Western treatment to village people. An example of this is to treat a person for tape worms, then show him the worms as evidence that the evil spirit making him ill has been driven from his body.

The staff of the Primary Health Centers also cooperate with

Dr. Mohan Issac of the National Institute of Mental Health in developing a community mental health program. Dr. Issac said there are only 2500 psychiatrists and trained psychiatric nurses in India to care for the mental health needs of the 650 million people. He contrasted this to the United States having nearly 10,000 psychiatrists to treat 250 million people. Nearly all of the Indian psychiatrists practice in the 4 urban centers of Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, and New Delhi.

The main thrust of his work in community mental health is to work with the staff of the PHO's to enable them to identify epileptic and deeply psychotic patients and refer them to the Bangalore hospital for treatment. These two conditions make up about 10 percent of the community needs. The other 90% are encouraged to seek treatment from traditional healers. His departmental budget is less than one rupee per person per year.

Dr. Issac also works with the traditional local healers, holding 5 day courses which will help them identify epileptic and psychotic patients which will be helped more with psychochemical treatment at the National Institute Hospital. He shows them that these are the patients that give the traditional healers most of the trouble in their "practices" because they do not respond to traditional methods of healing.

I asked him if he observed any difference in the incidence of mental disease between Hindu patients as compared to Moslem or Christian patients. He had not observed any differences, knew of no studies in this area, and assumed that religious beliefs would not be a factor in the incidence of mental disease. I also found out that there are no reliable records kept of the incidence of mental disease so one could not run a valid study comparing the incidence of mental health problems among Indians compared with the incidence among people in the U.S. He thought the incidence would appear to be statistically lower in India because the family assumes the responsibility for dealing with a child or adult with mental problems and probably would not seek help in treating the afflicted person. In these cases there would be no record of the person having a mental illness and because it is so common it would significantly alter the statistics.

Because of this lack of a system for reporting mental or physical diseases in India, I would be very hesitant about accepting any statistical comparisons between population groups in a Western country and an Asian country. Even among professionally trained people a term like ill or infirm has a different meaning to an Eastern researcher than to a Western researcher.

The urban practice of Western medicine is on a fee-for-service basis. The affluent who can afford it make up a very small portion of the total population. There seems to be considerable criticism of Western style medicine based usually on the high charges of the doctors. The doctors and the fees charged are the butt of jokes in newspapers and the objects of sensational stories in expose type magazines like IMPACT. A cartoon I saw was of a doctor talking to his nurse. He said "How many times do I have to tell you - x-ray the wallet first. How can I diagnose his case if I don't know how much money he has?" An example of the expose was a 20 to 25 page article in IMPACT on corruption in hospitals stating that extensive bribes are needed for better beds, food, nursing and even doctor care.

The second level, called Indian (ayurvedic) or Arabic (unani) medicine appears to be the most commonly available health care. The word ayurvedic means life-science. This system does not use Western style drugs but uses Eastern style medicines prepared from herbs, minerals, bones, and oil. Also used are steam or hot water baths and massage therapy.

It takes 5 1/2 years of training to graduate from the College of Indian Medicine, a federally funded school in Bangalore. About 60% of the students are women. Most of the training deals with the 14 different operations used in patient treatment. Additionally much time is spent in learning the technique of medicine preparation. The herbs or minerals are placed in a tightly sealed clay container which is placed in a very hot oven long enough to reduce the contents to an ash. This ash is mixed with ghee (clarified butter) to make the medicine, which can be used externally with massaging or taken internally.

The philosophy behind treatment, Dr. Nair explained, is to remove shlegha from the patients body through pancha (5) karmia (operation). This allows the body and mind to return to a normal healthy state. The panchakarma consists of:

1. Vasthi - an oil, water, and herbal enema.
2. Virechama - an oral purgative.
3. Vairana - an emetic to induce vomiting.
4. Nasya - a powder to induce sneezing.
5. Raktha Moksha - blood letting through use of a leech.

The ayurvedic hospital we visited is a teaching hospital associated with the College of Indian Medicine. It has 340 beds and is divided into wards by sex and medical condition. A bed is a cot with a thin rubber mattress usually covered by a thread-bare sheet. The hospital was considered clean by local standards, but incredibly dirty by Western standards. There were common Indian style toilets and showers. With a one rupee a day bribe one could get a bed with a mosquito net and for 2 rupees one could get into a semi-private room.

I found that patients have a lot of confidence in this system and that it does take them from a state of illness and return them to a well state. These doctors are proud of their profession. They were pleased to have me visit their hospital so that patients could tell me of their progress toward recovery.

The third level of care is called German medicine and is what we refer to as homeopathy. It is a system of medicine that was developed in Germany during the 18th century. In this philosophy the cure of a disease is accomplished by giving a minute dose of a drug that is capable of producing in a healthy person symptoms similar to the disease to be treated.

I was not able to interview a German doctor. This explanation was given to me by Dr. Narayan. Western medicine feels the drugs given by homeopathic doctors cannot "hurt" the patient and do help many patients through the "placebo effect."

A drawback to German medicine is the necessity of the doctor to spend considerable time with a patient getting to know him, because the nature of the patient controls the drug as much as the nature of the illness. The doctor needs rather lengthy appointments to talk about a patient's lifestyle, working conditions, family life, etc.

The fourth level of care is performed by community or village health workers. They are men and women from rural areas who are given a 3 month training program. This prepares them to carry out a limited number of specific curative, preventive, and health promotional activities with the aid of only an emergency kit and elementary local resources. There are no educational background requirements for these workers. They are usually recruited in the villages because they have expressed a desire to serve and are usually already engaged in providing care such as being a midwife or naturepath.

They help the rural family understand basic health measures, give them nutrition information, help with infant care such as diarrhea control and treatment, give aid in family planning, and give information concerning environmental sanitation such as waste disposal and water chlorination. They encourage people to seek treatment for their illnesses from traditional sources and are trained to recognize conditions which should be sent to the Primary Health Centers for treatment.

St. John's Medical College has a training program for the development of these Community Health Workers. Governmental expectations for raising the general level of health in rural India rests primarily in the development of this program. Adequate funding for training these workers is a major problem. There is a great amount of red tape bureaucracy and most of the economic resources are drained off before they get down to the CHW. This places community health doctors like Dr. Narayan in conflict with the rest of the Indian medical establishment for federal funding.

The fifth or lowest level of care, but the one that probably treats most patients, are traditional village healers. Instead of having a medical orientation they have a religious or mystical orientation. They may be priests or shamans, faith healers, witch doctors, herb doctors, midwives, etc. Their knowledge is usually handed down to them by a similar type healer. They treat by isolating the patient, performing certain rites, giving certain medicines, and by evoking supernatural spirits to come to the patient's aid. They cure by driving out the demons, devils or evil spirits which cause the illness. Once these are removed from the patient's body he/she will recover and will soon be able to rejoin village life.

I was not able to meet any traditional healers but learned about them from Drs. Narayan and Issac. Both of these Western oriented doctors had a high degree of respect for the traditional healers. They know many of them and give programs which enable the traditional healers to learn, by dialogue with peers and Western doctors, what types of illnesses do not respond to traditional healing methods and should be referred to PHC's. They also put on programs for M.D.'s to tell them of illnesses that respond better to traditional healers than to Western allopathic medicine. Therefore the M.D. should refer these patients to the traditional healers. As the California saying goes "This really blew my mind."

SUMMARY

To summarize my experiences in the health care field I found that from a personal point of view a Hindu's response to illness and impending death is quite similar to a Christian's response. Just because one expects to reincarnate does not make her/him look forward to, or to be less apprehensive concerning death. The

personal response to death is not much different in India than in the United States.

The answer to my question concerning religion and health care from a cultural basis rather than a personal basis seems much more difficult to ascertain. Superficially it seems impossible to evaluate the situation because of the wide economic and technological differences between India and the U.S. Yet individually the people of both countries are concerned about their health and they are religious people.

In synthesizing the many bits and pieces of information about health care and religion in India, my not-very-dramatic conclusion is that individual health care in both countries must be a joint concern and responsibility of the individual, family and community. In the U.S. the family group has disintegrated to a great extent and mobility has removed most of our sense of community.

I would like to postulate that because the individual in the United States does not have a concerned family or community she/he has turned to the health care industry as a surrogate family. However the health care industry is an institution operating under economic principles and cannot function as a loving or caring family.

There are two other institutions who might have substituted for the family and community but generally both institutional education and the institutional church have negated responsibility toward health care of individuals.

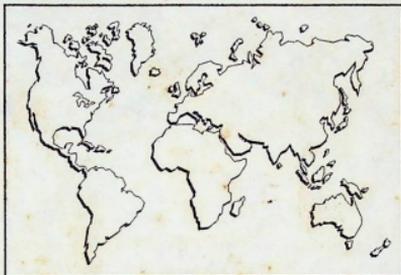
Because India has a much greater cohesiveness of family and sense of community, we see economic support for grass roots community health programs and personal care as their main need.

In the U.S. I believe we have to develop a surrogate family which with similar families will form a functional community. One possibility for developing this substitute family is in a church setting. I believe that churches in the U.S. need to become more sensitive to the health needs of their members. By functioning as an extended family, expressing the type of love and concern that exists in families, individuals could thus become less dependent upon the health care industry.

My conclusion is that in the United States an autonomous, independent, democratically organized church, functioning as an extended family, and with other churches forming the basis of a community, is one possible answer for our grass roots spiritual and health needs. We will always have need for our fine high technological medical care industry, but the responsibility for the whole and unfragmented individual's physical, mental and spiritual health will be returned to that individual, the family, and the community.

Christian Entrepreneur Network

Changing World



- **Changing Geo-Political structures**

No more Berlin wall. No more Soviet Union. Rise of Islamic Fundamentalism.

- **Changing Socio-Economic Structures**

-Rise of Pan-Islamic Economic Empire? Rise Asian economic powers.

-Decline of Western economic power. Globalization of economy. Business without borders (North American Trade Agreement; European Economic Community).

- **Changing Socio-Demographic Structures**

- Global village. Urbanization. Multi-ethnic/religious communities. Polarization.

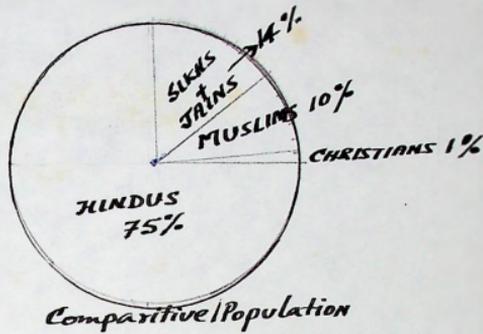
- **Changing paradigms**

-Made in Japan. The stone rejected by the builders becomes the corner stone.

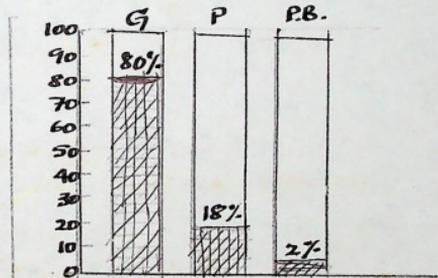
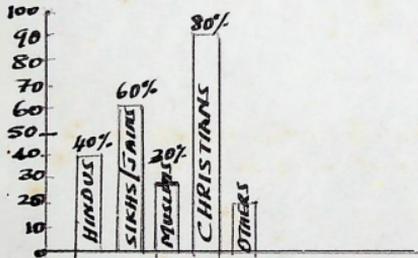
-Mission concepts, methods and operational modules.

Economic Pie in India

	Economy	Population
- Hindus	75%	75%
- Sikhs/Jains	14%	3%
- Muslims:	10%	12%
- Christians:	0.1%	3.5%
- Others	0.9%	5.5%



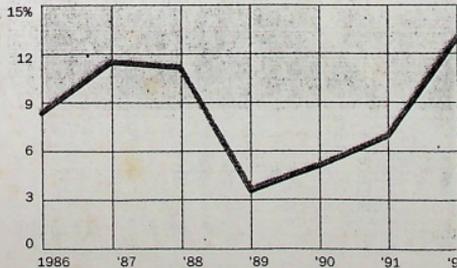
Education and Employment of Christians in India (A comparative chart)



Upward Bound

After a brief slowdown, China's economy has taken off again. Over seven years, it has averaged a hefty 8.4% growth annually, the government says.

Real economic growth rates for China (Inflation-adjusted)



Source: State Statistical Bureau

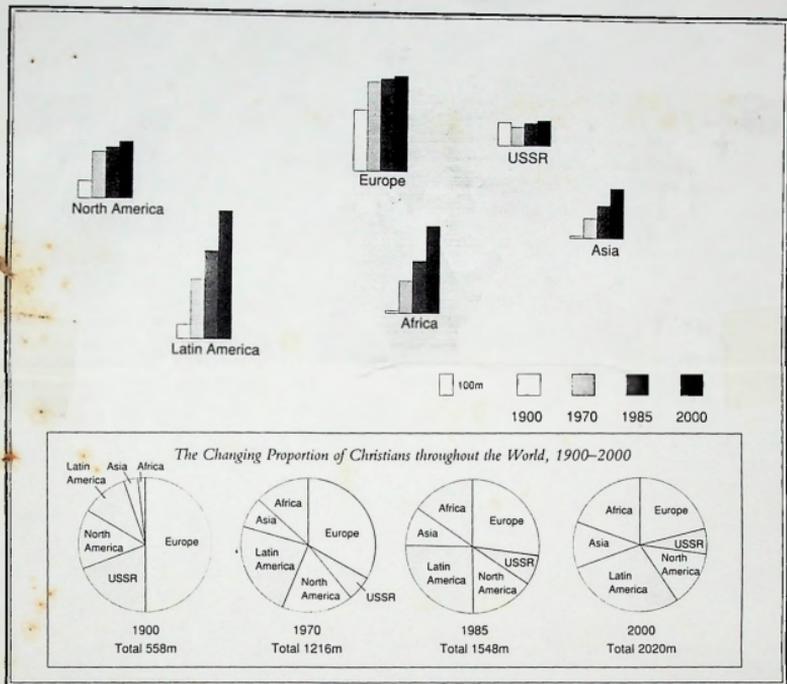


FIGURE 3. Growth in the number of Christians throughout the world, 1900-2000.

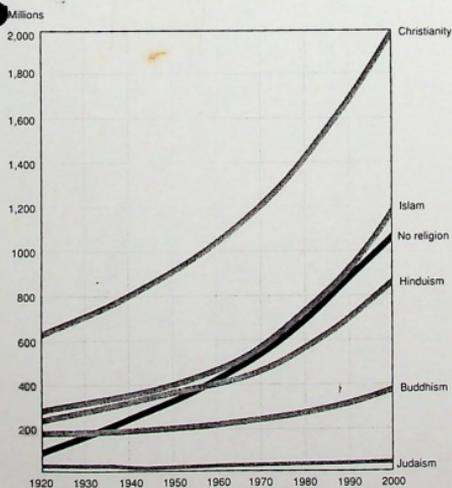


FIGURE 1. Comparative growth of world religions, 1920-2000.

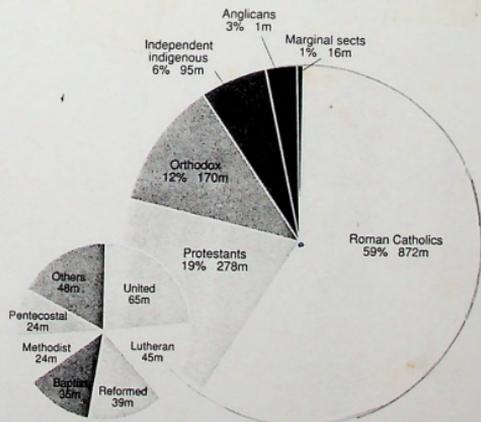


FIGURE 4. The relative size of the major Christian denominations in 1985.

A Historical Survey of the Bible and the Church History

<u>Date</u>	<u>Events</u>	<u>Observations</u>
2000 B.C.	<i>Egyptian captivity</i>	<i>Economic event. Through slavery God declared His Glory among the nations.</i>
500 B.C.	<i>Babylonian Exile</i>	<i>Punitive in nature but has laid a strong foundation for future economic activities.</i>
400 B.C.	<i>Intertestament period</i>	<i>Expansion of economic activity during the Greco-Roman periods. Jews were found in every key cities of the Roman Empire. Synagogues were always been the part of Jewish community.</i>
30 A.D	<i>Birth and expansion of the Church/Paul's Missionary methods.</i>	<i>Church's expansion was primarily through channels of diaspora Jews. Most of them were expert business people.</i>
1600 A.D.	<i>Colonial Period.</i>	<i>Colonial expansion was primarily a commercial expansion of the west. But God used it to further His Kingdom. Church was an arm of the temporal powers.</i>
1900 A.D.	<i>Post Colonial period.</i>	<i>Church is dependent, anemic and an alien entity. Looked upon with favor and disfavor.</i>
2000 A.D.	<i>Post Christian period.</i>	<i>Strong indigenous, independent and inter-related church. Must have international relationship without being seen as a Western puppet. Must have strong economic base in order to make the ecclesiastical base strong.</i>

Potentials of Indian Economy

1. *Indian Economy shooting for the sky?*

-1989 Fortune/Wall Street Journal

-Why U.S. Business still likes India? (Fortune, Feb.8,1993)

2. *Depleted Foreign Reserve:*

-Lower Credit rating. China is the fastest growing economy today.

-Lack of foreign investment. Indonesia has 10 times more Foreign investments than India. Red tape/lack incentives/political instability.

- 40 million diaspora Indians, very wealthy and investing other places.

3. *Indian Economic Policy:*

-More incentive/security for NRI's (No response from Indians yet).

-More trade/tax incentives for Multinational corporations.

-More investments on infra-structures.

-Relaxed government policies.

4. *India's Internal Civil conflicts:*

-Hindu/Muslim

-Sikh independent movement

-Linguistic warfare

-Conflicts with neighboring countries.

-Loss of leadership role.

5. *Growth of Education/Emerging Middle Class*

-1947 5% Middle class

-1990 25% Middle Class

-2000 35% Middle Class (Approx. 225 million).

6. *India's Internal Economy:*

-Vibrant and growing strong.

-Small business growing faster than big businesses.

-Still needs tax incentives and favorable policies to help small business.

Current Status of the Church

West: *Secular Humanism/Universal brotherhood/ Increasing antagonism to Christianity.*

East: *-Church is a minority.
-Church is an alien religion.
-Church is poor.
-Church is divided.
-Church is dependent.*

*-80% Protestant churches depend upon overseas support.
-75% people within the church are poor.
-95% pastors and Christian workers are underpaid.*

Causes for poverty within the church:

- 1. Dependence: Old paradigm: Mission agencies were similar to colonial structures of the past.*
- 2. Lack of Economic base: Wrong/Mis-guided theology of finance.*
- 3. Lack of trained business people: Education was primarily focused on jobs.*
- 4. Lack of capital: Most Christians in the cities are middle or lower middle class economically.*

Future Plans

1. Establish Christian Entrepreneur Network.

Chapters in main cities.

Objectives:

- Mutual encouragement/Spiritual/Social/Psychological
- Mutual exchange of ideas
- Mutual exchange of goods/services
- Mutual expansion of market
- Motivate, mobilize, and recruit/train new entrepreneur.
- Establish funds for inventions and Franchise expansion.

2. Establish contact with other cities and other countries.

- Expand the market (Export and Import)
- Produce products for overseas market.

3. Establish a school for starting small business.

- Basic knowledge of small business
 - Manufacturing, marketing, retailing, accounting, taxes, employee/employer relationship etc.
- Biblical theology of doing business
- Biblical theology of business ethics
- Biblical theology of community development.

4. Establish franchises to help start new businesses.

- Coffee house for evangelism
- Small industries (manufacturing household goods).
- Small retailing stores
- Small service businesses
 - Hair stylists/American Style/Bombay style
 - Ladies beauty saloons/nail/health clubs etc.
 - Building maintenance./Domestic cleaning/catering services.

Every business must have an evangelist opportunities.

Community Health Cell

From: NCC India <news@nccindia.org>
Sent: Friday, May 14, 2004 4:10 PM
Subject: Press Release

Dear Ecumenical Partners,

Greetings from NCCI

The 14th General Elections are over.

We are sending you a Statement from National United Christian Forum.

With warm regards,

Sincerely

Rev. Dr. Ipe Joseph

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NATIONAL UNITED CHRISTIAN FORUM
1, Ashok Place, New Delhi - 110 001. Tel. 2334 3457; 23362058

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Christian Forum Congratulates the New Government

New Delhi 14/05/04

The National United Christian Forum today congratulated the secular democratic forces led by the Congress for securing sufficient seats in the 14th Lok Sabha general elections and bring in a position to form the next government. The National United Christian Forum is a body comprising Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI); the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI); and the Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI).

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While the United Christian Forum thanks the outgoing NDA government for its achievement in many areas of its governance and notes with a little regret its deafening silence towards those fundamentalists who were spreading hatred against the minorities, it expresses its pleasure that a non-communal government will be in place at the Centre soon.

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"We congratulate the Congress leader Mrs. Sonia Gandhi for working so hard to bring the party back to the centre of political activities in the country after its rather poor earlier performance. We note that this mandate by the people of India is to strengthen the secular traditions for which India is known the world over", said Delhi Archbishop Vincent M. Concessao, the President of the Forum.

The Forum in its recent meeting also congratulated the Election Commission for its commendable job in holding these elections successfully. The Forum, however, reminds the new government that it can forget its promises made to the poor and to the minorities only at its own peril as the recent results to the Lok Sabha amply demonstrate. Archbishop Concessao has also reiterated the Churches' commitment to the poor and the down trodden for whom it has always stood.

The Forum also asks all the political parties and the people of the nation to cooperate with the new government in a responsible manner and to ensure that they do not betray the trust the electorate has put in them and uphold the secular democratic values enshrined in the Constitutions.

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Archbishop Vincent M. Concessao, President

Rev. Dr. Ipe Joseph, General Secretary - NCCI

Rev. Richard Howell, Secretary - EIT

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Issued by

Rev. Dr. Dominic Emmanuel sgd, Spokesperson

News letter - N C C India

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सरकार

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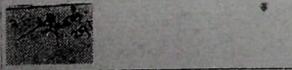


नाम /NAME
SUSANTA KUMAR GHOSH

पिता का नाम /FATHER'S NAME
ARABINDA GHOSH

जन्म तिथि /DATE OF BIRTH
09-01-1957

हस्ताक्षर /SIGNATURE



Susanta Kumar Ghosh

मुख्य आयकर आयुक्त, कर्नाटक एवं गोवा
Chief Commissioner of Income-tax, Karnataka & Goa