

The **+ WITNESS**

DECEMBER 16, 1965

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Story of the Week

Vietnam War Negotiations Urged By Policy Makers of NCC

★ Policy makers for the National Council of Churches have approved a pronouncement on the war in Vietnam asking the United States to consider a halt in the bombing of North Vietnam long enough to create more favorable circumstances for peace negotiations.

The statement was adopted after nearly four hours of debate by the general board at its fall business meeting. The vote was 93 to 10, with six members abstaining.

The board also issued a separate message to the churches "because of our deep concern that Christians in the United States are failing thus far to make their specific contribution to the maintenance of peace in the world, having been almost silent while our nation's involvement in Vietnam increases step by step."

Proposed by Eugene Carson Blake, stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church, the message bids Christians in the United States to support efforts of the NCC "in an approach to the World Council of Churches and Pope Paul VI in a common attempt to mobilize the worldwide Christian community in support of a just alternative to war."

In adopting the pronouncement and the message, the

board directed the NCC staff to pursue this objective "in cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church."

The Vietnam pronouncement itself grew out of recommendations of the world order study conference in St. Louis last month. Because of the long debate, other recommendations from the study conference, including statements on Communist China and political developments in Russia, were laid over to the board's next meeting (Feb. 21 to 25) in St. Louis.

Among the steps recommended by the board were:

- That the United Nations be requested to convene, as soon as possible, a peace conference with representation by all interested parties, including the National Liberation Front (Vietcong).

- That the United States should "continue to reaffirm and manifest its readiness for unconditional discussion and negotiation in such a manner as will remove any uncertainty about official policy relating to the termination of military action."

- That the United States should "adhere strictly to the policy of avoiding bombing of centers of population of North Vietnam."

- That it should "seek to alleviate the desperate plight of

the noncombatants in South Vietnam by increased efforts to prevent their becoming the victims of the hostilities."

- That it should declare itself in favor of the phased withdrawal of all its troops and bases from Vietnamese territory, if and when they can be replaced by adequate international peace keeping forces.

- That Congress, in fulfillment of the president's proposal, should appropriate immediate reconstruction assistance and long range economic development funds for south-east Asia, including the several associated states of Indochina.

The board said that the United States should "make clear that a primary objective of a settlement in the Vietnam conflict is the independence of South Vietnam from outside interference with complete liberty to determine the character of its future government by the result of a peaceful, free and verified choice of its people."

"The choices might include," the NCC statement continued, "whether it wishes to establish a coalition of Nationalists and National Liberation Front, or whether it wishes to be united with North Vietnam (perhaps through a plebiscite), or to operate as an independent, neutral and nonaligned state, or whether it wishes to constitute with Cambodia and Laos a buffer zone between the Communist and non-Communist

spheres of influence, freely trading with both, or whether it wishes to join SEATO or the free states of Southeast Asia or elsewhere."

"In a world of revolution, rapid change and sharp conflict of ideologies, Christians have an opportunity and duty to be a reconciling and healing force between nations and peoples and races wherever possible," the statement said.

In their message to the churches, the NCC policy makers commended the Vietnam pronouncement to church members for study but added: "we must do more."

The message expressed the convictions: "that war in this nuclear age settles hardly anything and may destroy everything"; that unilateral action by the United States will not lead to peace, and that "if the United States follows a unilateral policy in Vietnam, no conceivable victory there can compensate for the distrust and hatred of the United States that is being generated each day throughout the world because we are seen as a predominantly white nation using our overwhelming military strength to kill more and more Asians."

Christians have a special responsibility, the message continued, "to maintain our spiritual and ethical sensitivity and keep before us our awareness of the imperatives of the Christian gospel. In wartime this is often the first casualty."

A National Council spokesman said that no definite plans to implement this directive have yet been drafted.

Other specific actions by the NCC called for by the pronouncement including placing "in the crisis area of Asia a representative, possessing political experience as well as Christian understanding, to serve as a U.S. Christian presence in the

area and to interpret Asian points of view to the churches in the U.S."

The NCC was also asked "to continue and increase major, high-level dialogue between

Asian and U.S. Christians in cooperation with the East Asia Christian Conference on the social, economic and political questions affecting their respective countries."

Toward World Community Theme Brings Out Sharp Opinions

★ Sharp differences over the effectiveness of the NCC pronouncement on the war in Vietnam were expressed at the international colloquy at Cornell University.

The four-day conference, on the theme Toward World Community, honored the memory of John R. Mott, an alumnus of the university, Nobel peace prize winner and a founder of the World Council of Churches.

It brought to the campus a distinguished group of people representing various organizations in the U.S. and overseas, including W. A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary of the WCC, who gave three lectures on the theme of the meeting.

It was Visser 't Hooft who kicked off the discussion about the NCC document (see page three) which he called "clear and reasonable." He also said that he was agreeably surprised that the pronouncement was issued in view of the sharp division in this country about the war.

Interestingly enough, praise for the NCC action came from overseas participants, including Francois Houtart, Roman Catholic priest of Belgium, and Sir Kenneth Grubb of England who is a member of the commission of the churches on international affairs of the WCC and president of the assembly of the Church of England. He outlined a three-point program for the churches on Vietnam; first church leaders must convince people in the pews of the soundness of the document; then call

for negotiations, and finally get government action. He said that church people in England support the conference table to settle East Asian affairs.

John Heidbrink, director of church relations of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, called the statement "mild, prudent and highly responsible to the point where it is ineffective." He added however that "the infinitesimal step" was in the right direction since it by-passes the more accepted institutions, such as the U.N.

Also sharply critical of the NCC declaration was Thomas Cornell of the Catholic Worker, a young man who had previously expressed his opposition to the war in Vietnam by burning his draft card. World affairs, he said, require more than statements from churches, "The ability to act," he insisted, "means whether or not the church survives."

Director of conference, which has taken more than a year to set-up, is John Lee Smith, and the assistant is the Rev. Robert W. Beggs, Episcopalian of the diocese of Central New York.

Mass Communication

Mass communication — newspapers, television, radio and magazines — is failing the American public, said W. H. Ferry, who is a staff member of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions.

Ferry said that mass communication's "delight in the shoddy, the tasteless, the mind-

dulling, the useless, is well established. Equally well established is its tendency toward submerging significant issues in a sea of pointlessness. These practices amount to a policy of trivialization and trivialization comes close to the heart of the indictment."

Other speakers included Alice Mary Hilton, director of the Institute for Cybercultural Research, New York, and a consultant to industry on computers, and Morris Mitchell, director for the Friends committee on a world college.

Ferry said mass communication in the United States is "a chief contributor, though not the only one, to the moral and cultural malaise lying on us all."

"This is so because mass communication is a major beneficiary," he said. "Mass communication can make more money not meeting its responsibilities than by doing so."

Ferry said newsmedia must do more than just inform. It must assume the role of teacher. Its obligation, he said is: "To remain disengaged from the apparatus, to criticize its aims and its claims, to keep the ethical issues always in clear view, to let the citizenry know what is happening to them as they lean more and more on muscle and less and less on mind; and, above all, to stay out of the cheering section."

What is needed, he said, is "not only information about yesterday's Congress and traffic accidents, but information about those crucial developments and those significant shadows on the horizon now seldom reaching the surface of mass communication."

New Humanity Needed

Miss Hilton said the world is "on the brink of disaster" because it doesn't know what to

do with the results of modern technological sophistication.

"We have not gained much wisdom in 2,000 years," the computer expert said. "Our skill, our technological sophistication, vastly exceed our knowledge, because in our social-political-moral infantilism we do not know how to deal with the results of our technological sophistication," she said.

Modern man apparently can't handle prosperity, she said.

"Human beings are being so rapidly released from the necessity to labor and non-human machines have so recently disemployed human machines, that humanity has been unable to adjust to its own emancipation," she said.

The "age of peace, of abundance, and of leisure" is ready to start, she said, "as soon as the new humanity can emerge."

"The avant garde of new humanity are those who can find a balance again between technological sophistication and corresponding social-political-moral wisdom," she said. "The new humanity will emerge as human beings develop the moral ability to direct technological miracles to benefit mankind. We have no right to expect this to be an easy task."

New Education

Mitchell called for a new concept in university education. Urging the establishment of what he termed centers for world community, Mitchell said the educational-religious centers of the future "must outgrow their ancient role of formulating and transmitting knowledge and/or preparing for a career in a relatively static society."

He detailed two proposals for world community centers involving "radical changes."

In one, "the world becomes the campus, with study centers in selected regions. From these centers the students go out to

experience at first hand the problems and resources of the region."

The second approach, he said, "bolder than this plan of employing the world as a campus, is the curriculum approach."

Under this plan, the present "stereotype program of texts and lectures and quizzes and examinations and grades and graduation" would be replaced by "a program of study based on the recognition and definition and attempted solution of the critical problems that now so dangerously divide mankind."

Mitchell said this new curriculum would consist of discussions of issues which the consensus of the student body selects as the most important to man's welfare.

"The student chooses the school more than the school the student," he said. "There is little need of tests of intelligence, for no dullard comprehends the significance of such a program. The community of students and faculty together works toward the resolution of conflict between the expression of individual preferences and the welfare and harmony of the community as a whole."

Churches and Colleges

"For all churches, the dynamism of social change is bewildering, confusing and frustrating," Paul Abrecht, director of the commission on church and society of the WCC, told a conference audience.

"It has shaken their conception of what they are and what they stand for in the world. They have become spectators rather than actors in the central dramas of modern life."

Another speaker, author and critic Paul Goodman, said the nation's educational organization needs continual prodding from students to pry it out of a "monolithic school system that miseducates the unaca-

demic and swamps the academic."

"In my opinion," Goodman said of the current student unrest and demonstrations such as at Berkeley, "such demands will bring the professors back to life. They will have to prove the relevance in them; and they will be driven to act as professionals in the world rather than as 'professional' teachers."

Abrecht said the coming age of automation and cybernation holds both advantages and disadvantages for man, depending on how he handles the new technology.

"... we feel not only the exhilaration of the new power which men will have over nature, hunger and disease, but also a great sense of the tragedy which awaits much of mankind who will struggle hopelessly to find meaning for their lives in a world in which there is likely to be little spiritual stability and where the old moral patterns and standards will be subject to such profound questioning and uncertainty."

The ecumenical movement has "provoked the churches to deeper thinking about their task in the world" but several problems must be solved before the movement's future contribution can be determined, he said.

These problems include "the difficulty experienced by many churches in determining where they stand on critical social questions" and "the ethical and intellectual weakness of the churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America," said Abrecht.

He said development of an independent Christian opinion in these areas is needed "if there is to be a challenge to western introvertedness and provincialism."

Goodman deplored what he said was society's placing of young people "on ice" by extending their formal education

in order to prepare them for the age of technology.

"Our preferred means of keeping them on ice is to extend the years of schooling," he said, "but though this is useful training for future jobs for some, I doubt that it has any relevance for most."

Harvey "Secular City" Cox Tells Christmas Story for Moderns

★ One of the 'young Turks' of contemporary theological thought has taken to the pages of a slick magazine in his commitment to carry Christianity out of the sanctuary and into the places where people live today.

Harvey Cox of Harvard Divinity School has written an article for the December issue of *Redbook* in which he seeks to "de-mythologize" Christ so that the festivities surrounding the celebration of his birth may have deeper meaning for moderns.

In so doing, Cox is taking seriously his own advice to churchmen, in his influential book, *The Secular City*, to reinterpret Christianity in terms and in places accessible to contemporary man.

The article, "What are We Celebrating and Why?" is designed to help readers of the secular magazine steer an enlightened holiday course between two opposing forces. Cox describes them as the commercializers, who "want us to perceive Christmas as a kind of religiously sanctioned spending orgy," and the ecclesiastical purists — "those dour-faced Savorolas (who) imply that there is something vaguely dishonest about those people who celebrate Christmas but do not qualify as regular churchgoers."

There is, according to Cox, "a growing number of people who

The youth of America has "been forced into the position of being an isolated class," he said. "They regard themselves as a separate race of humanity — and interestingly, 48 per cent of the population is now below the age of 26."

want to find a way to celebrate Christmas that avoids either a surrender to the brainwashing of the admen or a capitulation to the hocus-pocus of the theological obscurantists. These people are angered by the commercial excesses of the holiday season. And yet they have an equally difficult time accepting all the baggage offered in the traditional religious interpretations of Christmas."

Such persons, he continued, "want to tell their children something more than Dickens offers, but they find that the deeper meaning of Christmas is still hidden behind the theological symbols of a bygone era."

Without perceptibly talking down to his readership, Cox, an ordained Baptist minister, reflected some of their unexpressed doubts about religion as it is traditionally encountered.

He described Jesus as "a man, who though he eventually died on a cross, was not averse to parties and gaiety . . . There is a good possibility that if Jesus were with us today in the flesh, he would enjoy more of the secular aspects of the holiday season than his would-be ecclesiastical protectors admit."

What often stands in the way of a contemporary understanding of Jesus, he continued, is the "web of theological meanings" and outworn symbolism

(Continued on Page Sixteen)

THE WITNESS

EDITORIAL

Into the Realm of Joy Christmas -- 1965

IF I SHOULD TELL you that I know a family which, on the anniversary of the birth of Ludwig van Beethoven, burns candles in the windows of its home, reads from some biography of that composer, and then for hours plays music he gave to the world, you would likely say, "That is powerful influence. For any man who, nearly a century and a half after his death, can elicit such discipleship, and such devotion, must have been a durable personality indeed."

But when I say that I know a man whose anniversary of birth finds millions of people burning candles in their windows, and millions reading from some account of his life upon this earth, and millions giving gifts in his name — you would say, "That is Christmas." And you would be right. For it is a lordly story, with the slow pace of its agrarian life, the regularity of taxes, the brutal thrust of tyranny, the promise of a singularly brilliant star, the trials of a chosen family, and the baby lying in a manger. Few indeed are the hearts that such an appealing picture cannot move to once-a-year deeds of deep compassion and joyous thanksgiving.

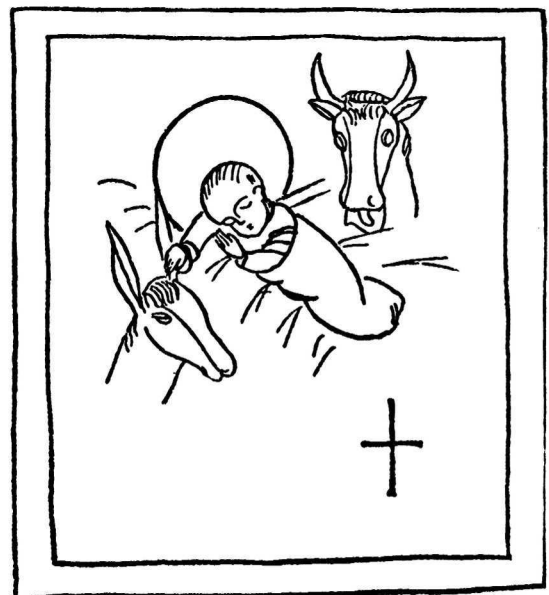
But — dare we look ahead? Dare we lift our eyes to discern the "shape of things to come" for this innocent child: the temptations, the call to son-ship, the dialogue with the world in the interest of the Kingdom's demands, the conflict it inevitably produces, the rejection by the good people of the world, desertion by his closest friends, and death as one who blasphemed and stirred up the people against recognized authority? The thought occurs to us, "What a shame! That sweet, innocent children have to grow up into men and women whose will-to-power disclaims — yea, destroys — the innocence with which they began their life." How much kinder to leave the babe in the manger, unharmed, uninformed, and uninvolved.

One year, it has been said, the principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, surprised the congregation by reading one of the Passion narratives on the Sunday before Christmas. The congrega-

tion thought that the good doctor had made an "absentminded" mistake. But when questioned concerning it, Dr. Selbie pointed out that he had not made a mistake. He had read the Good Friday story as a reminder of what lay in store for the baby whose birth the worshipers might otherwise have celebrated sentimentally. Later, someone commented: "By the same token, it might be appropriate for us to read the Passion narrative on Easter, and the Easter story on Good Friday. If we did so, we might be saved from the twin heresies of unrelieved pessimism and unwarranted optimism."

The message of Christmas is the joyous proclamation that "God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son . . ." The brutal fact is that when love moves out into a sinful world, it meets a cross! Were it only a brave and good man who is the symbol of this tragedy, we would be forced to greet the Christmas story with unrelieved tears. But it is because the symbol of this tragedy is God incarnate — freely choosing to take upon Himself the limitations of human flesh — that the story moves beyond tragedy into the realm of joyous hope. This is why, even in a world in peril of its very existence, we can say, and mean it, too, "Merry Christmas!" "God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay."

— John E. Hines
Presiding Bishop



THE HEART OF A LITTLE CHILD

By George L. Cadigan

The Bishop of Missouri

CHRISTMAS IS FOR THE YOUNG AND THOSE WHO REMAIN YOUNG IN HEART

IN ISAIAH, there is a rather remarkable picture of nature redeemed, wherein "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together," and, then, as a final touch to the idyllic scene, "a little child shall lead them." When this Old Testament prophet writes of wolves and lions and reptiles, he does not mean fierce, cruel, cunning men. When he speaks of beasts, he means beasts, and he does not wish to eliminate them, but rather to make them friends with each other and with man. Charles Darwin gives some pathetic instances of the trustfulness of wild animals towards man, until they come to know him.

But at Christmastime, once again we place ourselves under the leadership of a little child. Because Christmas is the glorification of childhood, it is the fulfillment of Isaiah's vision. It proclaims peace on earth, peace among all those in whom God can be well-pleased; and the Prince of Peace, who leads the peace-makers — the men after God's own heart — is a little child. And that little child grew up to teach us that unless we can receive the kingdom of God in the spirit of a little child, as simply as a little child receives a gift, we shall not enter therein.

It is not that we should remain children in understanding; not that, when we have become men, we should refuse to put away childish things, but that there should remain much of the child-nature in us to the end. The faith came to us in and through a young man and Christianity is yet especially a religion for the young, and for those who remain young in heart, although we be bald and gray. Faith, hope and love are what we most welcome in a child, a growing girl or boy. These graces are those which the cynical man of the world, the man of false cultivation, often prides himself on having outgrown. So often in the afternoon and evening of life, there comes disillusionment, loss of faith in human nature, loss of hope for the world, and that greatest loss, the loss of charity.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there are few things more moving than the discovery of faith, hope and love in those who have had prolonged contact with the world. What refreshment to meet older persons, who, while quite able to take care of themselves, yet believe and hope and trust more freely than people with less experience are usually ready to do, and who generally manage to receive from others the same measure that is meted out to them. It is in such that we find the spirit which Jesus wished to see and to make universal in the world. It is a happy spirit, unsoured by suspicion, unburdened by care: a spirit which has found a natural wealth in simplicity, instead of an artificial poverty in luxury; a spirit which is not ashamed to enjoy heartily, to reverence humbly, to admire unreservedly, and to love and trust with a whole heart. In a word, it is the spirit of a little child, which has kept its fresh bloom and grace long after the cool morning hours of life have changed into the dust and heat and glare and conflict of mid-day.

In celebrating the birth of our Lord, we are doing homage to the child-nature, which the Son of God took upon him, not only, or not so much, because it was a necessary step towards his grownup ministry, but because it was right and seemly that he should show himself upon this earth as a little child. We read in the Bible that Jesus Christ draws us with the cords of a man; and even more compellingly, we may feel at Christmas with the voice and gestures of a little child.

If then, a little child is leading us, let us resolve to follow him whithersoever he goeth. He has been preaching to us from his awful judgment-seat in Advent; he will preach to us from his bitter cross on Good Friday, and from his throne of glory at Ascension-tide. But on Christmas day, he preaches to us from his lowly cradle, with the oxen standing by. Let us kneel 'round that cradle, and pray that, though we, too, may have to tread the path which leads to the cross, we may not lose that best of Christmas gifts — the heart of a little child.

THE PROPER CHRISTMAS

By Hugh McCandless

Rector of the Epiphany, New York

THE STORY TOLD LAST CHRISTMAS AT THE FAMILY SERVICE AT THE EPIPHANY

MY FRIEND, Squadron O'Toole, comes from a very strong-minded family. The O'Tooles have a long tradition of young rebels growing up to be old tyrants. Perhaps no one had better reasons for this than his mother's cousin Ponts. Ponts was born in Florida, and his mother had had him baptized Ponce de Leon (Jones). She used to insist that his name be pronounced in the Spanish way — all but the Jones part — but he always called himself P.L. Jones, and asked the family to call him Ponts.

He escaped to England by way of the Canadian Army during the war, and became an Anglican and a British subject, and an ardent Tory. It was not so much that he scorned the United States as the country of his birth as that he pitied it as the place of his baptism.

Cousin Ponts felt it his duty to write frequent improving letters back to the denizens of the jungle, for he was a family-minded person. Squadron and his little sister Flotilla always love the Christmas presents he sends, since they are quite unaware that they are meant to be educational. Usually he sends "The Boy's Own Annual," and "The Girl's Own Annual." They dive into these, and even read each other's. They have learned a great deal of English school slang; but they are now not quite sure how to spell words like "valor" and "honor," which appear frequently in English school stories.

A Dandy Present

LAST CHRISTMAS, Cousin Ponts's present was a dandy. He sent them an English version of "Monopoly." All the streets were in London, and the money was sterling. (Luckily, it was just in pounds; nothing tricky like guineas, florins, or thrupenny bits.) Mr. O'Toole offered to start the children off on the game, but they said they would figure it out for themselves. They assured him that they fully appreciated the purpose of Monopoly, which is to get all you can

for yourself and drive your opponent into bankruptcy and despair. Mrs. O'Toole remembered that General Washington once said that the object of war is to destroy the enemy. She could see bloodshed in the offing, and suggested that an English game ought to be played with English manners.

This made sense to them, and they became terribly polite. It would have done your heart good to hear them playing, although Uncle Ponts would have shuddered at some of their pronunciations. Squadron would say, "Oh Madam, I am so sorry, but you have landed on my Mary-Lee-Bone Station. I'm dreadfully afraid I shall have to charge you two hundred quid. Really, so sorry!" "Notatall, notatall, notatawl," Flotilla would sing back in strange and gentle tones. "Two hundred quid, of course. Right you are. Well played; jolly good. Here it is, and thank you." "Thank yew," Squadron would reply, while Mr. and Mrs. O'Toole hung to the walls, or to each other, in astonishment.

Well, you remember what terrible weather we had just after Christmas last year. There was nothing to do outside, so the Monopoly game would start up every morning. The funny thing was that it would still be going strong — the very same game — at bedtime. Mr. O'Toole began to suspect that all this brotherly and sisterly lovingkindness was perhaps only a joining of forces against a superior enemy, and seeing how late they could stay up. But they went to bed about as promptly and cheerfully as usual, as long as the board and the pieces could remain undisturbed for the next day.

The O'Toole house became heavy with jolly good sportsmanship and mutual helpfulness. It seemed haunted with gentility. The sudden change was almost uncanny, and Mr. O'Toole found himself walking around on tiptoe, as if someone were sick with one of the well-known mysterious diseases. Squadron's little brother Feemus thought it was terribly dull. He would

dive at Flotilla's ankles in the middle of the game, shouting, "Targe, men! Targe!" but she would push him away in a benevolent and motherly way that made him feel incompetent, so he gave up.

A Proper Christmas

FINALLY, Mr. O'Toole found that they had not read the rules very thoroughly, as usual. They had just divided up all the money, and both had acted as bankers, lending to each other whenever it was needed. Naturally the game could never end.

When the fog and the rain finally stopped, Squadron and Flotilla went back to their "normal" sibling rivalries. They tried to see how near they could come to hurting each other with

snowballs without really meaning to. When they hit each other or Feemus, of course it was an accident.

Mr. and Mrs. O'Toole agreed that all good things had to come to an end; and that while it lasted it had been a very proper and restful Christmas.

Do you know why I think it was a proper Christmas? Because when Jesus came into the world on the first Christmas day it was not a warlike invasion. The object of war is to destroy the enemy. He did not come into the world to destroy his enemies, but to help them, to help us all. That is why going to church on Christmas day is so proper. It is our best way of saying, "Thank you, Jesus. Thank you very much."

THE CRITICAL YEARS

By. Wm. B. Spofford Jr.

Dean, St. Michael's Cathedral, Boise, Idaho

PROPOSAL THAT SEMINARIES TAKE A LEAF OUT OF THE ANTIOCH BOOK IN TRAINING THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS

MATERIALS explaining the purpose and work of the seminaries have been coming across the desk in connection with the Theological Education Sunday for 1966. In one piece, Dean John Coburn of the Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, is quoted:

"Theological education is an intensely personal experience, involving a man's growth in understanding God, man and the Christian faith. It begins long before he comes to seminary, and continues until the day he dies, but his three years in seminary are the critical and most important years."

Through the centuries, the nurture, training and education of persons for the ordained ministry have gone through many changes. History is a moving and a dynamic thing and the church does believe that "new occasions teach new duties." For at least twenty years, now, the seminaries have been rigorously examining themselves in light of the job of mission that must be done in a new-type of world.

Should the products of the education be trained as "general practioners" or "specialists"; is the

parish-structure truly meaningful in the type of society which science and technology brings into being at a rapidly-increasing pace; how can historic, creative values be maintained in a way that is communicatable to modern man; what have the new insights of the physical and social and psychological sciences to say to the content and methods of the traditional seminary curriculum? Each of these is a vital and big question for which an answer is being sought in each seminary of the Christian community, Episcopal and otherwise.

All sorts of new — or, in some cases, revivals of old — methods and ideas are being explored and tried. We can think of the urban training program in Chicago; the parish training program as a summer's experience; clinical pastoral training in institutions; a tightening up of field work during the seminary year to emphasize education and training rather than as a means to make a buck or two; parish externships for a year; the abolition of a grade system of evaluation and, indeed, some decisions to view seminary as a graduate experience for persons interested in

theology, as opposed to a training school for a particular vocation. The ferment is pervasive and exciting. As with most fermented brews, the results can get a bit heady.

Recently, we delivered a new freshman to Antioch College in Ohio which, since 1921, has operated on a cooperative system of education. This simply means that academic discipline and vocational practice are coordinated and synthesized. In that place, the student alternates class room work and job experience in three month cycles for five years, prior to receiving the bachelor's degree. In the process, the student may be placed in a variety of jobs in which he can test out his strengths and weaknesses, his vocational interests, his work habits, his life commitments. So, too, he bumps into life and society as it is, rather than as he thinks it is, and has to hammer out his values and philosophy on the anvil of having to survive on the job.

The idea might have some merit for the seminaries. Currently, the seminary career consists of three critical years, each of which is crammed with new knowledge. Then, the parson is ordained deacon and, within six months, is priested and assigned to some kind of charge. The lucky ones receive a curacy under a priest who recognizes that supervision is part of his task. The newly-hatched padre's strengths are fortified and the mistakes are evaluated and dealt with. The unlucky one are put on their own, because there are fields to be filled and the work must go on, and mission after mission can testify to the inadequacies of that arrangement. Each of us has, perhaps, seriously weakened at least two small congregations at the start of our ministry because, really, we were using them as a laboratory for our personal growth and maturation rather than as a locus for our witnessing ministry.

So, how about a five year seminary curriculum which is run on the cooperative basis. This would mean that in the first, third and fifth years, the student would be in the academic community. In the second and fourth year, he would be in some type of supervised work experience, which would be definitely related to the educational process. This would mean that many parishes or hospitals or social agencies would be responsible units of the church as it seeks to train its servants.

One could carp about the expense of time and cash. It would seem, however, that one couldn't put a time value on getting truly trained men. And someone might do a study on how many

men, following graduation from seminary, have felt the necessity of taking a year or two off, or three or four summers, to fill some need they have educationally. And, cash-wise, there must be a large, but unknown, number of parishes and institutions in the church which would deem it good mission and wise stewardship to budget, annually, for a coop student. The aim would not be to get an equivalent exchange in work from the student, but to offer to him, and thus to the whole church, a chance to "read, mark, learn and inwardly digest" his role and function as a witness and proclaimer of the good news of Christ.

" To Certain Poor Shepherds"

Christmastide — 1965-1966

By Henry W. Wiesbauer

Chaplain at State Hospital, Westborough, Mass.

He who calls into existence
Heaven and earth,
Day and night,
Grass, herbs, trees,
Creatures of land, sea, and space,
Then calls forth Adam
To be.

To be?
Yes!
To be like Him
Whose image in our selves we sense
Before The Manger.

The Omnipotent Logos
Places Himself incarnate,
Helpless,
In the midst of His creation
And cries.

His need?
Like any infant's:
Not for halo but for home.
Not for mace but for milk.
Not for liturgy but for love.

God's angels appear
Bidding peace and good will among us.
Our response to those so suddenly come?
We race feverishly
To send a chosen few to the moon,

While He cries in all the earth-bound millions
 For whom there is no decent housing.
 We point "up" to God
 And all the time
 Emmanuel is here — naked, homeless, hungry.

Babies have a way
 Of bringing us to our knees.
 We feel their helplessness in our own.
 Bending to them we come down to earth.
 Like Him
 Who came to save us from "religion"
 And to bring us to our selves in Him:

God, lying on the cold floor
 In a barn
 In the bleak mid-winter,
 While the angels' "Gloria"
 Abjures the "news" of men's latest threats and
 thrusts
 Interposed among
 Carols,
 Commercials,
 And credit cards.
 Poor shepherds?
 Who let them in?

- NEW BOOKS -

E. John Mohr
 Book Editor

A *LAYMAN'S INTRODUCTION TO RELIGIOUS EXISTENTIALISM*, by Eugene B. Borowitz. Westminster. \$5

One might think that by now the word existentialism would be pretty much a part of everyone's vocabulary. Yet it is quite obvious that it is still considered rather exotic by the average churchman, and even the clergy are not always sure what is really implied in this movement. Hence this book by a Jewish educator who looks at the existentialist thought-world of our century from a broad perspective will be a welcome explanation of some aspects that still need clarification in many circles.

The author's comprehensiveness is evident in his choice of a method of development. He has chapters dealing with the existentialist thinkers of greatest influence in the world today, including the fountainhead, Soren Kierkegaard, the Jew, Franz Rosenzweig, the Russian Orthodox, Nicholas Berdyaev, the Protestant, Karl Barth. Here, too, are extensive chapters on Maritain, the Roman Catholic lay theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, Marcel, Bultmann, Buber, and Tillich, along with a perceptive discussion of the "theatre of the absurd."

He sees religious existentialism as having opened man to a deeper understanding of "the person," both human and divine. He suggests that its weakness has lain in inadequate attention to the corporate and disciplinary aspects of religion, which have played so important a role in the historic western faiths.

Those who want a fair and penetrating analysis of these world-in-

fluencing thinkers and the movement which in one way or another has influenced all of them will do well to get hold of Eugene Borowitz's book. The author is professor of education and lecturer on Jewish religious thought at Hebrew Union College, the Jewish Institute of Religion, and has lectured also at Temple University.

— KENDIG BRUBAKER CULLY
Dr. Cully is Dean, The Biblical Seminary in New York.

THE CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, by Joachim Jeremias. Scribners. \$2.95

Those who are curious to know what the task of the biblical scholar is, and who may, moreover, wonder as to the relevance of the labors of such specialists, should read this small volume. For it is representative of New Testament studies at their best. At the same time, it is neither dull, nor difficult to understand.

The author, Joachim Jeremias, is a leading continental biblical scholar who is perhaps best known for his noteworthy book *The Parables of Jesus*. In this current volume he offers four separate studies (the title of the book is misleading): "Abba" — this authentic and original utterance of Jesus (addressing God as 'Father') "implies the claim of a unique revelation and a unique authority"; "The Sacrificial Death" — the age-old Christian proclamation that Christ died "for us" goes back to the conscious intention and understanding of Jesus himself; "Justification by Faith" — although the language is Pauline the great Apostle has here deeply understood the significance of Jesus' earthly life and the central core of his gospel; "The Revealing Word" — an extremely lucid demonstration of the meaning of the identification of Christ as the eternal Logos in John 1:1-18.

Not all will agree with every detail of Jeremias' conclusions. The statement, for example, at the bottom of page 74 that the original Christian hymn which underlies John 1:1-18 "was one of the hymns sung at the daily eucharist" seems to me quite arbitrary.

Nevertheless this volume is an excellent example of the kind of study which is constantly going on behind the scenes. It is research such as this which has done so much in recent years to clear away the debris, and focus our attention more and more sharply upon the saving essentials of Jesus' life and teaching.

O. SYDNEY BARR
Dr. Barr is Professor of New Testament, General Theological Seminary, New York City.

ON THE GROWING EDGE OF THE CHURCH, by T. Watson Street. John Knox Press. \$1.95

Some forty or fifty years ago one of the missionary societies put out a booklet, *Don't Say . . .* It was a series of answers to stock objections to missions and the challenge to become a missionary. They were fairly straightforward and obvious objections and the answers were short and to the point. They winkled people out of the hide-outs in which they had sought to shelter from the missionary issue.

The situation today is more complex than it was when *Don't Say . . .* was published. "The Church is Mission," "The Church exists by mission as fire exists by burning," have become almost clichés in ecclesiastical circles. We are all aware that at every turn we are faced with a mission field — the campus, the inner city, suburbia.

This book is concerned with the real danger that absorption in mission as such is blinding us to the urgency of "actual expeditions across the frontier between faith and no faith". Concern for mission must go on to the action of missions. At

least some students of mission must actualize their theories in the role of missionaries. For even the theology of mission can become a hide-out.

Dr. Street, dean of the faculty of Augustine Presbyterian Theological Seminary, brings to bear on the subject the scholarship and experience of his years as professor of church history and missions at Austin and as executive secretary of the board of world missions of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.

This is a small book, only 112 pages of actual text, but it is compact. It requires concentrated reading, for the author has concentrated his facts and his arguments; almost too much so. But it deserves that concentrated reading. His warning and his message are timely and urgent. And they are backed up by his own wide experience and knowledge of his subject as well as by the authorities on whom he draws freely — giants of today's missionary cause such as Leslie Newbiggin, Max Warren, Stephen Neill.

The book is highly quotable. Your reviewer must resist temptation and confine himself to two or three.

On the relationship of scholarship to missions:

"It would be of great benefit if missionary candidates showed a deeper interest in theology and theological courses, in theological debate and inquiry. But it would also help if members of societies of theological inquiry would commit themselves to a pressing forward into the world of the heathen at home and abroad."

On unified budgets:

"Surely there must be some way to keep prominent in the church's structure and budget and promotion, however unified they must be for the good of the total mission of the church, and to keep prominent in the minds of church members, the church's obligation to proclaim the gospel to the unevangelized and to extend the bounds of the Christian family."

In the closing chapter, *Our Mission Till He Come*, the tempo slows down. It is a profound and scholarly exegesis of St. Matthew 24:14 and a stirring biblical apologia for mission.

"We witness to what he has done and is doing. The issue is in his hands. The gospel will be preached. Our task is not frantically to rush about gathering wood for the fire in fear that the fire will go out. The fire belongs to him and he will keep it going. Our job is to stay close to the flame."

— ERIC W. JACKSON

The reviewer is chaplain of San Rafael Military Academy, San Rafael, Calif.

HOW TO TEACH JUNIOR HIGHS,

by Barbara Smith. Westminster. \$3.95

Whether you accept or reject Barbara Smith's theory of Christian education, you will find her book stimulating because it asks the reader to formulate his own theory of Christian education and practical because it contains five chapters on how to prepare and teach. Her theory of Christian education is called "Study" and consists of bringing together the inner life of young adolescents and the sources of information that we have about the faith.

She spells out no specific aims. "Study" consists in repeatedly turning to the scriptures to listen, hear, and respond to what God is saying to his people, and brings together the word of God and the person, not God and the person, for only God does that. She is critical of the process of developmental tasks, memorization of facts, character education, inspiration, systematic theology, and development of citizenship.

She tends to be dogmatic, but even so her book can be helpful as a stimulus to clarify theory.

— MARVIN A. JOHNSON

The reviewer is a research associate of the character research project of Union College, Schenectady, N. Y.

THE CHRISTIAN AGNOSTIC, by Leslie D. Weatherhead. Abingdon. \$4.75

I was disappointed in this book. I took it up with relish, remembering what an effect the author had on me years ago when I heard him preach in London. Twice I sat spellbound in the crowded congregation he consistently drew. Between times I, together with thousands of others, read and profited from several of the sequence of popular books that made the name of Leslie Weatherhead one of the best known among the Christian writers of our time.

In this, his latest book he sets out to speak to the "bewildered layman" in our midst. He believes there are hosts of the same who, though sympathetic with the teachings of Christ, are kept out of his church by outworn creeds, by rites and liturgies which too often are meaninglessly irrelevant, and by a gross misunderstanding of what they are supposed to believe in the Bible.

There is much in what he says, and a good deal of it is aimed straight at the Church of England and its "incomparable" Prayer Book. And perhaps we ought to ask the question, "Is there not something a bit absurd, and even perverse and tragic in the mother church's use

of a liturgy that has scarcely been altered in more than 400 years?"

I agree with many of Dr. Weatherhead's points, but I could not help wondering what effect the reading of such a book would have on a so-called "agnostic Christian." It struck me as too exaggerated, too negative.

I feel too this book is dated. Can retired men in their 70s speak tellingly to those coming on? I'm afraid, not very often. This one writes with a surety about God and his ways that contemporary men, even theists and believers, cannot fully share. Ours is an age of "the shaking of the foundations," and something more of a note, not of doubt and unbelief, but of asking and seeking, even within the framework of Christian commitment, is characteristic of our time.

Then too, I found Dr. Weatherhead's attempts to defend belief in a future life through the evidence of psychical research not at all convincing. I remain thoroughly suspicious of reports of messages received from beyond the grave.

Finally, I quite gave up when I came to the chapter where the author lines up reasons for believing in re-incarnation. Here he is speaking not to a Christian agnostic but to a Christian sceptic.

— BENJAMIN MINIFIE

The reviewer is rector of Grace Church, New York

THE LANGUAGE OF THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER, by Stella Brook. Oxford University Press. \$5.50

In this study Dr. Brook discusses the language of the Prayer Book in relation to semantic development, changing grammatical usage and stylistic habits within 400 years of English. She deals with the authorship, emergence and revisions of the book, compares the vocabulary and usage in it with those of the Authorized Version, and comments on the style used in translations of the psalms and on the prose of the prefaces and rubrics. In a concluding chapter she discusses the relation between Prayer Book language and 20th century English, and her preference for retaining the Tudor style of the book, except for some archaisms.

— E. J. M.

RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHIES OF THE WEST, by George F. Thomas. Scribner's. \$7.95

In this large survey the distinguished professor of religion at Princeton University presents "A Critical Analysis of the Major Figures From Plato to Tillich". It is his belief that philosophers and philosophical theologians have per-

formed an invaluable critical function in the development of western religious thought, and further that after a period of philosophical positivism and theological dogmatism a renewal of philosophical issues concerning religion has begun to manifest itself, as indeed it has.

It is his purpose to present a critical analysis of major types of western religious philosophy, to come to grips with the perennial problems of religion raised by them, and to evaluate their contributions to the philosophy of religion. Rather than dealing with these types in general and in abstract Dr. Thomas has selected a representative thinker of each for careful study in order to present it in a concrete example.

In an epilogue he indicates briefly the nature of three recent — as time goes — philosophical developments which have challenged traditional methods and opened up new issues in the philosophy of religion: linguistic analysis, existentialism, and atheistic humanism. Among the philosophers treated, as representative of a type, are Augustine, Spinoza, Kant, Kierkegaard, Whitehead, Hegel, Aquinas, Plotinus and Aristotle.

— E. J. M.

CHRISTIAN METAPHYSICS, by Claude Tresmontant. Translated by Gerard Slevin, with a preface by Walter J. Ong, S. J. Sheed & Ward. \$3.50

In this book the French Roman Catholic philosopher Claude Tresmontant puts forth the point that there is one Christian philosophy and one only. It is his contention that Christianity calls for a metaphysical structure. He attempts to discover this metaphysical basis by an examination of the Bible, the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, and also the definitions of Ecumenical Councils and of Popes.

M. Tresmontant makes the following conclusions: (1) Implicit in the Christian faith is an original metaphysical structure; (2) This structure is seen primarily in biblical theology; (3) Various branches or "shoots" of this metaphysics exist, for example, in the Great Schism of the West and in the theologies of the Reformation.

But the author feels that "the *phylum* of Catholic theology continues the *phylum* of biblical thought in a substantially homogeneous way, both as regards the doctrine of creation and as regards the doctrine of human nature, freedom, and reason." This fundamental metaphysical structure is not a static or rigid system. Instead it is open to development and realization. As he

says: "Orthodoxy is spirit. But the spirit is not without structure . . . Orthodoxy is life — but life, once again, presupposes and constitutes structures . . ."

Much doubt enters my mind concerning the validity of M. Tresmontant's thesis, but at the same time there can be no doubt that current Protestant theology can learn much from some of the emphases of this volume. For example, "Faith is not a passion endured. It is not the consequence of a breaking in, of a violent supernatural intrusion upon us . . . Faith is not, to use Kierkegaard's phrase, a 'qualitative leap into the absurd'. Such a leap is not required. Faith is grounded, in reason, in experience, in the nature of things, in history, in creation, in sacred history, in the history of the Church."

This book is excellently translated and is easy to read. For those people who have had little exposure to current Roman Catholic thought, *Christian Metaphysics* would be a good place to begin.

— JOHN E. SKINNER

Dr. Skinner is Professor of Philosophical Theology, The Divinity School of the P. E. Church in Philadelphia.

BOOK NOTES

The Body of Christ, A New Testament Image of the Church, by Alan Cole.

Called to Serve, Ministry and Ministers in the Church, by Michael Green.

But for the Grace of God, Divine Initiative and Human Need, by Philip E. Hughes.

Confess Your Sins, The Way of Reconciliation, by John R. W. Stott.

All four books, priced \$1.25 each, are part of a Christian Foundations series, published by Westminster and written by evangelical churchmen, designed to affirm for laymen the fundamental elements of Christian faith based on the New Testament.

The Taste of New Wine, by Keith Miller; foreword by D. Elton Trueblood. World Books. \$2.50

An account of the development of personal religious conviction in the author.

Style and Content in Christian Art, by Jane Dillenger. Abingdon. \$2.95

Written both for the layman and the art historian the book is an orientation, with 80 pages of illustrations, in the style and content of Christian art from beginnings in the catacombs to its expression in the present.

World Aflame, by Billy Graham. Doubleday. \$3.95

Dr. Graham here sets forth what is wrong with the world and some contemporary movements in religion, along with his presentation of truth, all with suitable exaggeration and biblical proof-texts.

Religion and Science, Conflict and Synthesis, by I. T. Ramsey. \$1.25

An Outline of Western Philosophy, by C. B. Armstrong. \$1.25

Thomas Fuller, Thoughts and Contemplations, edited by James O. Wood. \$1.50

Can We Imitate Jesus Christ, by F. F. Rigby. \$1.50

Part of a series, these are popular presentations of subjects by competent English writers, published by Seabury in this country.

After Death, What?, by William B. Ward.

Acts of Devotion, prepared by George Appleton.

Have Time and Be Free, by Theodor Bovet.

Boundaries Unlimited, by Neil Wyrick Jr.

Additional issues in Chime Paperbacks series, each \$1.

REPRINTS

Portrait of Karl Barth, by Georges Casalis; introduced and translated by Robert McAfee Brown. Doubleday. 95c

How to Believe, by Ralph W. Sockman. Abingdon. \$1.50

The Interpretation of Religion, by John Baillie. Abingdon. \$2.45

Protestant Concepts of Church and State, by Thomas G. Sanders. Doubleday. \$1.45

The Parables of the Kingdom, by C. H. Dodd. Scribner's. \$1.45

From Tradition to Gospel, by Martin Dibelius. Scribner's. \$1.65

The Search for Jewish Identity in America, by Stuart E. Rosenberg. Doubleday. \$1.45

Maker of Heaven and Earth, by Langdon Gilkey. Doubleday. 1.45

The Mediator, by Emil Brunner. Westminster. \$3.25

The Layman's Role Today, by Frederick K. Wentz. Abingdon. \$1.50

At All Times and In All Places, by Massey H. Shepherd Jr. Seabury. \$3.95

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The WITNESS

PENNSYLVANIA

HARVEY COX'S CHRISTMAS

(Continued from Page Six)

traditionally used by the church in describing his life and its significance.

He noted that "a respectable number" of ministers and theologians, both Catholic and Protestant, are concerned about reinterpreting the early church's formulations about Jesus and his significance.

"They try to fathom what the early followers of Jesus meant by these symbols and then try to put their meaning into modern idiom," he wrote. "Once we free the story of Jesus from its

mythological residues it may emerge as a much more persuasive account, one that can speak to some who now reject the drama itself because of its puzzling stage setting."

He summarized "the core of the new view of Jesus" as follows:

- His first followers saw in Jesus the most complete and authentic human life ever lived . . . he was seen as the 'Son of God,' meaning one who accomplished what his father expected and who fulfilled all the potentialities with which he was endowed.

- Jesus was understood as a kind of "second Adam." His followers believed that in him a new chapter in history had begun . . . that since he had lived such a remarkable life — even though he died early — they too somehow could now live freely and joyously despite

the possibility of martyrdom.

- His early followers believed that the clue to Jesus' authenticity was that he lived a life that was wholly and unreservedly for his fellow man. He was, in his very essence, the "man for other men." They reasoned that since this was the case, then the way for every man to fulfill his potential manhood was to live completely for his neighbor. They believed too that this was possible because Jesus had somehow broken the pattern of self-centeredness and that now they not only should but could be men for other men.

- They believed that wherever people took seriously Jesus and the new life he made possible, traditional barriers, stereotypes and prejudices would fall away . . .

- . . . those who took Jesus seriously insisted that the same kind of life was possible not just for people who had known him personally but also for those who knew him only through the stories and deeds of others. Somehow his reality was still available, was not dead; but it was accessible only for those who were willing to risk living unreservedly for their fellow men.

Cox acknowledged that in addition to the problem of ancient words and creeds which do not communicate Jesus' significance to moderns, the deeds of churches and church people have also formed a barrier to fuller understanding of Christ. "Instead of living for man and for the world, churches have often fled from the world, opposed it or demanded special deference . . . Instead of breaking down barriers and uniting people across society's walls, churches frequently have not only reinforced social separations — between races, classes, national and ethnic groups — but even created new ones . . . People find it difficult to hear the news about a man who lived

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entirely for the other when it is presented by an institution that acts at times as though the other persons were there not to be served but to serve it."

As for celebrating Christmas, Cox concluded that there "can be no single way." For some it will be a secular holiday "for family reunions, presents and gaiety. I believe that these people should be allowed to make merry without having their wassail interrupted by the 'Bah! Humbugs!' of religious scolders." Others, he stated, will celebrate it in the traditional Christian rituals.

"But still others will choose to celebrate at Christmas the appearance in history of one whose life has made and changed history, a man who demonstrated that it is possible after all to be magnificently human in a world that tries to make us something less. They will see in the annual observance of the birth of Jesus a time to rejoice in terms that make sense in their own lives, and a time to probe ever deeper into the strange attraction his life has had for men in every age."

The article by the theologian was given a final — and doubtless unintentional — secularist touch by the magazine's layout department. The concluding page of Cox's article features a quarter-page ad for Champale, described as "America's Original Sparkling Malt Liquor."

NEW YORK CHURCH DESTROYED BY FIRE

★ St. Matthew and St. Timothy Church in New York was destroyed by a five-alarm fire which left standing only the stone facade, part of the walls and the 80-foot steeple topped by a cross.

There was no immediate estimate of the damage. Cause of

the blaze was not determined.

When the fire started in mid-afternoon, about 120 children were attending released time religious education classes in the church's basement and in its adjoining community center which was not damaged.

The Rev. James A. Gusweller, the church's rector who has been active in community affairs of the predominantly Puerto Rican neighborhood, was one of the clergymen conducting the classes. With several other ministers and the church's sexton, Pascual Colon, he escorted the children to the street.

The fire was brought under control after being fought for an hour by 240 firemen. Winds spread the blaze to a ten-story apartment house next to the church, burning about half of the building, but all residents escaped injury.

Standing on the street, Mr.

Gusweller looked at the shell of what was the spiritual home of 2,000-member congregation and said: "Right now I'm too numb to have feelings."

Later he said the community center, which means so much to the neighborhood, "seems to be undamaged, Oh, if it is, I'll be so thankful."

The 69-year-old church, which seats 500 worshippers, is located between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue and was erected to replace an older building on the west side also destroyed by fire.

At one time the church was surrounded by private brownstone houses, but now is hemmed in by high rise apartments, changing the face of what used to be one of the worst slum blocks of the city.

Gusweller, a long-time crusader against slums and racial discrimination, has been in the

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forefront in the fight for better housing for minority groups.

A committee, including many non-Episcopalians, was set-up the next day to raise funds to rebuild.

VISSER 't HOOFT WRITES ON GOD-IS-DEAD

★ "When men shout: 'God is dead', this can only mean that he is not in the place where they are looking for him," W. A. Visser 't Hooft maintained in his Christmas message.

The general secretary of the World Council of Churches affirmed that despite all men's efforts to keep him out of their world, God "always finds an entrance, generally a very unexpected, unobtrusive entrance."

Whether or not Christians can have a "genuine Christmas," Visser 't Hooft said, "will depend on our readiness to let God 'interfere' in our lives and on our ability to distinguish Christ's quiet voice of authority among the many loud voices around us."

RUSSIAN CHURCH HAS NO CANDIDATE

★ A top official of the Russian Orthodox Church, which reportedly had strong influence in a World Council of Churches decision to delay naming a successor to W. A. Visser 't Hooft as general secretary, said that his church would not put forward a candidate for the post.

Metropolitan Nicodim, head of his church's foreign affairs department, in an interview with a New York Times correspondent, stated that the Russian Church would prefer keeping Visser 't Hooft in the post.

While speaking "warmly" of Eugene Carson Blake, chief administrator of the United Presbyterian Church, the Russian Orthodox official declined to

state what position his church would take if Blake is nominated for the general secretaryship.

Blake, according to friends, would accept the post if he received unanimous support. He has declined to comment publicly on the matter.

PHONE MESSAGES IN N. Y. MUST IDENTIFY SPONSORS

★ Beginning Jan. 1, the New York Telephone Co. will require identification of sponsors of recorded telephone messages in an effort to curb the irresponsible use of controversial messages by anonymous groups to attack individuals or organizations.

The regulation, requiring the name and address of the sponsors in the message, was filed with the public service commission and is expected to be approved by the commission.

Not covered by the new rule are such general public announcements as the time, weather, airline and other travel schedules, and stock market quotations.

WOMEN PUT HOLES IN THE CARPET

★ St. Paul's Cathedral in Dunedin, New Zealand has a new rule for women parishioners. They must take off their shoes at the chancel steps before going to the altar rail.

The rule was adopted because

a royal blue carpet used in Westminster Abbey for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II and now gracing the chancel floor of the cathedral here had begun to show signs of wear from the heels of women's shoes.

Explained the parish magazine: "The carpet, with the gold one in the sanctuary, was used at the Abbey for the coronation, but even now it is showing signs of undue wear under these fashionable instruments of destruction. And the carpet is irreplaceable."

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A REPLY TO THE RIGHT

BY BURKE RIVERS

Rector of St. Stephen's, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

A letter addressed to a good friend who has been sending the author clippings and quotes from various publication of the radical right. Among them was an editorial by David Lawrence

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THE WITNESS

TUNKHANNOCK, PA. 18657

- BACKFIRE -

The Witness has received letters from clergy and others on whether the rules of the Church Pension Fund should be revised to allow retirement at 65 with the same benefits they now receive at 68. Bishop Mosley of Delaware, president of the Fund, spelled out the cost — raising assessments from 15% to over 20%, plus raising \$30-million in new money — in a letter he sent to all clergy and treasurers. He ended the letter with the following personal opinion:

"It seems to me that the moral justification for accumulating such sums for this purpose is questionable, particularly in the face of the Church's growing understanding of its responsibilities throughout the world. I say this mindful that the Episcopal clergyman already has the privilege of retiring at 65 with a reduced pension, that he may retire on full pension at any age if he should become disabled, that his widow and orphaned children are guaranteed Fund benefits as well as himself, that in today's world he is already assured years of life and an abundance of health in greater measure than his predecessors ever knew, and that he may have the community benefits of Social Security.

"When we add to all of this the faithful nature of his commitment to the ministry of Jesus Christ, it is difficult to conclude that the Church has an obligation to provide him, at considerable extra cost, an earlier retirement from it."

Several of the letters received by the Witness were copies addressed to Bishop Mosley, including the following:

Albert E. Jenkins

*Rector of St. Matthias,
Whittier, Calif.*

Your letter of October 25

astonishes me — and several neighboring clergy with whom I have talked. Do you mean to say that you wrote a "personal letter" to over 6000 clergy and to an equal number of treasurers!

If so, did you consider that there should have been provided some sort of an "answering device" — a brief yes and no questionnaire, for instance — in order that you might tabulate some kind of an opinion from the thousands of clergy and others involved?

Are you reading this letter and numberless others? What a task you have cut out for yourself!

Having been an insurance man myself I congratulate you on being able to get across in simple language: "earlier pension means more reserves and higher assessments." To follow your suggestion, however, would imply that the previous raises in minimum pensions and consequent raises in assessments lacked moral justification, because the funds might better have been spent elsewhere in the world.

The first argument for adjusting to an age 65 retirement is simply to enable the clergyman at 65 to realize the benefit of his considerable investment in Social Security without the present severe penalty reduction of our pension fund. This age-adjustment is one which should and can be. I believe that the Church Pension Fund could work out this program over a period of, say, nine years or less, dropping the retirement age one year after every three; also during every three year's period seeking the ten million or more needed for reserve. If the thirty million were more quickly raised the reduction might come sooner than the nine years. Also, if it would be necessary, why couldn't both

Parish and Clergy share the increased assessment above 15%, reconsidering after nine years whether or not the full assessment should be partially contributory?

Now, as you closed your letter with a personal note, here is mine. I don't know how things are in the tidy diocese of Delaware, but, Bishop Mosley, out here on the west coast and plenty of other places, I know the pressure of population is upon us. We have a "bear by the tail" in this diocese, and most men I know have been working too hard for too long. To age 65 and not to age 68 seem a more reasonable time for keeping the pressure on as one realistically sees what the modern world is demanding. Industry thinks so, so do many institutions.

Finally, here is my last thought — a retired clergyman at 65 on full pension and Social Security can still be a vital and necessary part of the Church. Adequately provided for, still with some vigor left, relieved of administration, he could be that "extra clergyman" needed in parishes and missions all over this population-exploding church of ours. If he didn't volunteer to assist he could be an assistant at a minimum of cost to the church. Here is a rich return on a 30 million dollar investment: mature men still available to do a job for the Lord and adequately provided for by the Church's Fund and Social Security.

BISHOP PARSONS

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