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The WITNESS

FOR CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

Editorial and Publication Office, Eaton Road, Tunkhannock, Pa. 18657

Story of the Week

Theologians Say American Way Is Taught as a Religion

★ One of the dangers of living in North America is the teaching of "the American way of life" as a religion, four theologians said at Chatham, Canada.

Two Roman Catholic priests, an Anglican priest and a United Church of Canada minister submitted an "ecumenical" brief to Ontario's committee on religious education in the public schools. They warned:

"Two of the most vigorous and militant faiths in the world today — faiths which conflict periodically and exhibit all the viciousness and big otry that marks the great wars of religion —are communism and the American way of life."

(The committee, headed by the Queen's former representative in Ontario, J. Keiller Mackay, was appointed by the minister of education to examine the present highly controversial two half-hours a week of religious education in the elementary schools. Introduced in 1944, the program is permissive, not mandatory, but in recent years Jews, Unitarians, Seventh-day Adventists, some Orthodox and the Ethical Education Association have condemned it as divisive. Many Protestant Christians hold that the material is Protestant indoctrination).

Mr. Mackay described the four theologians as the most distin-NOVEMBER 17, 1966 guished group of educators to appear before the committee since it began hearings last April. They are Father D'Arcy Egan and Father E. R. Malley, Catholics; Father T. C. Akeley, Anglican; and the Rev. J. C. Huffman, principal of Iona college, University of Windsor, Ontario.

(Under Canada's constitution, the British North America act, Roman Catholics in Ontario are guaranteed their own elementary education system up to grade 10 — in practice up to grade eight. They provide their own religious training in these grades).

The brief from the four theologians asked:

"Are money, economic power, financial security the most important things in life? Are these the gods we would offer our children? Is there not a danger of indoctrinating our children in a faith which our higher instincts would repudiate?"

They said it was impossible to remove religion from the schools and that there never was and never will be a school system which does not teach religion.

"Whenever we respond to anything with profound seriousness, whenever we commit ourselves deeply to anything, we are dealing with religion," their brief said. However, the theologians added that less emphasis should be put on religious indoctrination and more on humanistic elements "as an attempt to sensitize the student to one facet of what it is to be a human being, to one element of what man has said about himself."

Their brief said that with the present optional system of religious education in the public schools — individual pupils or schools may choose to abstain, providing the Ontario department of education is informed it is even possible that youngsters may get the idea "religion is not very significant, certainly less so than mathematics or spelling, both of which are compulsory."

Dogmas such as the Divinity of Christ, or the Virgin Birth should be studied, they said, not to prove one religious body right and the other wrong, "but to help the student realize basic questions about man and God which certain groups answer differently."

The theologians' brief added that the militant atheism of communism, or the American way of life "religion" could be "just as narrow a religious indoctrination as any fundamentalist sect. It could even be that part of the reason we react so strongly against some of the latter groups and their beliefs is because we have been so successfully indoctrinated in the faith of scientism."

The committee also heard submissions for Jewish representatives who asked that religious education in the public schools be abolished.

Murray Berman of the Sons of Jacob congregation said the present course was "misleading, harmful to children of all faiths." He also quoted a Protestant minister as telling school children: "Anyone not believing in Christianity is a heathen."

Observers feel the committee will probably recommend some form of comparative religion be taught in the public schools, rather than what is now called Protestant "indoctrination." This has been the essence of most briefs and opinions so far.

The Ontario inter-church committee on public education, the group largely responsible for introducing the present courses, admitted some months ago in its brief that much of the instruction "has been understood and executed in a narrow and sometimes partisan spirit."

It added that it sympathized with those calling for elimination of religious instruction.

However, the inter-church committee said religious classes should not be "indoctrination" sessions, but opportunities for students to come to grips with basic issues of life.

Guaranteed Annual Income Urged By Economist Robert Theobald

 \star A guaranteed annual income for all persons was portrayed as "the most fundamental human right of all" in an age of affluence.

Robert Theobald, British economist who has spoken and written extensively as an advocate of the guaranteed annual income, said such a plan would establish "the right to a life of dignity regardless of whether the individual can find a job or not. As such, it is an extension of the civil rights — or, more accurately, human rights — of recent years.

"If we are to provide dignity to man, his right to an income must be absolute and not postulated on the administrative rules of any organization or the generosity of any individual."

Dr. Theobald addressed a twoday consultation dealing with cybernetics, guaranteed income and education. Most of the 150 invited participants were educators, with some representatives of business, labor, religion and government also present.

"Full employment is an obsolete goal — the drive to provide toil is obsolete." Theobald said. "The true challenge is to educate people in such a way that they can live a meaningful life."

The economist criticized societoday for valuing a man tv "The primarily for his work. decline of our values is shown in the fact that those living in an industrial society find it natural that some people do not receive an adequate amount of food, clothing and shelter, even though there is surplus food in storage and the possibility of producing more housing and more clothing if we gave people the money to buy them."

According to Theobald, a guaranteed annual income — or what he termed "basic economic security" — would not only eliminate extreme poverty, but would free the social worker to concentrate on developing the human potential of those who need help rather than supervising their financial affairs.

The increased economic base of the poor, resulting from the guaranteed income, would also increase the total disposable income and encourage the develop-

ment of business by individuals living in poverty areas, he said.

Theobald was also critical of many aspects of today's educational system. "It is no longer appropriate to assume that the older members of society must inevitably know more than the young," he told the group that was dominated by middle-aged, graying college professors and administrators. "In many cases it will be the young who understand the complex situation of today best, for they have been raised in it."

The economist called for more emphasis on "broad concepts" in today's educational system and less stress on facts. To be relevant today, he said, educators should provide the student with an environment in which he can discover reality out of his own experience.

He called for changes in colleges and universities that would include a reduction of the number of classroom hours and more time provided for student reflection and creativity; changing competitive grading to a system in which an entire class would be graded on its total performance; subsidizing students as they prepare to contribute to society; and a move from authoritarian teacher-student relationships to dialogues in which the students can speak more freely.

Reaction to Theobald's economic theories were quite varied. While some of the younger professors reflected an openness to the proposals, the college administrators generally disdained the concept of the guaranteed annual income.

"He doesn't understand the therapeutic concept of work," one college president was heard to remark. Others found Theobald's proposals in radical conflict with traditional ideas of work and its place in the social order.

Teilhard Conference Promoting Christian-Communist Dialogue

 \bigstar Observers in London see bright prospects for an expanded dialogue between Christians and Communists as a result of the recent conference of the newlyformed Pierre Teilhard de Chardin association.

The two-day gathering brought together 400 persons priests and nuns, Protestant clergymen, politicians, doctors, students — to honor the life and work of the famed French Jesuit who died 11 years ago. He was hailed variously as an evolutionary thinker comparable with Darwin and Marx and as the first mystic visionary to attempt a reasoned synthesis between science and theology since St. Thomas Aquinas.

These characteristics set the tone of the meeting. A feature was the standing ovation accorded a leading French Communist who paid an hour-long tribute to Teilhard's life and work.

He was Prof. Roger Garaudy, Marxist philosopher and official of the French Communist Party, who said Fr. Teilhard's work constituted "a decisive ground for meeting and dialogue between Christians and Marxists."

"Father Teilhard," he added, "has opened up for our age the respect of another form of Christian spirituality which bids the faithful not to renounce the world but, on the contrary, to bend all his energy towards transforming the world into a more human world — a world at once more conscious, more unified and more personal."

Prof. Garaudy added: "We Marxists are materialists. That is to say, we try to answer the questions of man without bringing in the postulates of the 'other world.'

"Christians have made an-NOVEMBER 17, 1966 other choice. Our dialogue will only be fruitful if the answers which each of us give do not evade the real questions put by the other."

Another speaker was M. Claude Cuenot, Teilhard's French biographer, who said he thought that Teilhard's Le Milieu Divin would become the classic of Christian spirituality. It was addressed exactly to the modern situation, he said.

One Catholic observer said later, "The word 'dialogue' often seems glibly used to gloss over vital differences, but suddenly, as Cuenot and Garaudy were speaking, one could see how it could indeed be a genuine technique enabling men of different dogmatic beliefs to work together.

"The success of the Pierre Teilhard de Chardin association will depend on how far it can repeat and extend more widely dialogue of this kind."

Other speakers included Dr. Bernard Towers, director of medical studies at Cambridge; Fr. Francis Elliott, S. J., professor at Lovanium University in the Congo, and the Rev. Anthony Dyson, Anglican chaplain of Ripon Hall, Oxford.

CLERGYMEN SPEND WEEK ON SKID ROW

★ Nine clergymen of various denominations trasformed themselves into "skid row bums" for a week end to find out how the "other half" lives and what the Church can do about it. The adventure was part of the Canadian urban training project.

Including one Roman Catholic priest, the group assembled at a local community center, dressed in old clothes and sporting unshaven faces. One of them was the Rev. Keith Whitney, assistant at Metropolitan United church in Toronto.

"I thought we looked like a bunch of bums," the minister grinned.

Just in case they looked real enough to police officers, each man carried an identification card and \$5.

Whitney said the "loneliness and aimlessness" of the existence of a skid row bum hit him hard. Bums, he found, have absolutely nothing to do and all day in which to do it.

Growing hungry, he just couldn't bring himself to beg for the price of a meal. Finally, he bought a bowl of soup in a cheap restaurant.

He slept in a hostel where, after registering and showering, he was handed a clean pair of pajamas. The dormitory held 75 beds, but only 20 were filled.

Whitney said he didn't sleep much. The men were awakened at 6 a.m., fed gruel, coffee without sugar and doughnuts for breakfast and at 7 a.m. were back on the streets.

He wandered downtown and uptown, tried a "rescue mission" for lunch, but the lineup was too long. He enjoyed coffee and free television at an Anglican friendship center, then had "a dish of slops" for supper at a religious hostel. A bed there cost him 75 cents. He didn't use it because he fell asleep on a park bench, woke up after midnight, too late to claim the bed. Instead of sleeping, he wandered the streets all night.

"A couple of women tried to pick me up, but I didn't want to over-extend my research," he laughed.

On Sunday morning, his breakfast was a cup of coffee and lunch at a mission "where you must attend service to eat. They had a captive congregation of 300 hungry men."

Whitney made no secret of his

distaste for the proceedings. There were three hymns, two prayers, a scripture reading, a vocal solo, a duet, a 20-minute homily and witnessing by a young woman about what Christ had done for her.

"I was appalled," the minister said. "The people running the service and the men in the pews were living in two different worlds . . . It was pious blackmail."

That Sunday evening the minister finished his wanderings in time to climb into his pulpit for the evening service. He said he preached a sermon prepared before his skid row experiences and "it seemed so irrelevant . . . that I was almost nauseated. I could hardly preach, it seemed so unreal."

His conclusions: The unemployables and drifters, the winos and others are human beings and it's the Christian responsibility "to do for them what they apparently cannot do for themselves."

CHURCH RE-MARRIAGE IS ADVOCATED

★ Current Church of England policy which bars the re-marriage in church of divorced people is challenged by the Bishop of Southwark in southeast London, Mervyn Stockwood, in an issue of his diocesan journal.

"Throughout my ministry," he writes, "I have adhered to the rules, and I shall continue to do so until they are changed. If a divorced persons wants to be remarried he must go to the (government) registry office. The most he can hope for from the Church is a private service of blessing after the civil ceremony.

"But it leaves me uncomfortable as it smacks of cowardice and dishonesty. If the first marriage is 'dead' and if the partners want to set up a second home, I believe the Church should frankly accept the situation and marry them publicly in church — as already happens in the Eastern Orthodox Church."

Bishop Stockwood denied that he advocates easier divorce, saying "On the contrary, I take my stand on the sacredness of the family unit."

At the same time, he expressed belief that in certain circumstances it is quite right for a couple to seek a divorce. "I believe," he says, "that circumstances arise which make divorce inevitable.

"When this happens the Church must frankly accept the situation and do everything it can to help the persons find their happiness and prove their usefulness in a second marriage.

"For those who profess the Christian faith this will mean seeking the blessing and approval of God in church in an appropriate marriage service. The Church for its part must openly and gladly welcome them and stop treating them as 'second-class citizens.'"

ST. GEORGE'S HARASSED AFTER LINDSAY TALK

 \star St. George's Church New York reported receiving many hate letters and telephone calls and several bombing and arson threats after Mayor John Lindsay spoke from its pulpit in favor of the city's civilian complaint review board.

The Rev. Ross B. Hildebrande, the associate minister, said that while reaction to the mayor's appearance was "generally very favorable . . . a few objected."

Most of the protest letters to the Manhattan church were not from members of St. George, he said, but from the borough of Queens. In Queens, opposition to the review board and the school integration busing issue has been notably strong.

Hildebrande said three anonymous phone calls threatening to burn the church and a bomb warning had been reported to local police, who responded promptly but were unable to trace the sources.

In his talk from the pulpit Mayor Lindsay strongly defended the review board, stating that while the issue was in part political, "it's a moral question as well."

Urging church members to support the board, he said it "has been functioning and working all summer, completely effectively and efficiently. If given a chance, this will be the best protection and shield a police officer has."

The city's referendum on whether the board should be continued was the most emotional issue facing New York voters in the November elections.

Reaction to Mayor Lindsay's talk, plus an editorial in a daily paper challenging the church's right to take sides in a political issue, prompted Edward O. Miller, rector of St. George's, to respond from the pulpit the following Sunday.

"I learned a great deal about some of those opposing the review board this past week from their letters," he told the congregation. He said the church had received "some of the most shocking letters, with the most derogatory, unprintable words about Negroes, Jews, and about the relationship of Jews to Communists."

Defending the church's right to become involved in the review board question, Miller said "it is a moral issue" on which the church should take a definite stand.

He challenged the contention of a newspaper editorial that equal time should be given to the other side. "I certainly am not going to let the pulpit of this church be used to expound ideas to which we do not subscribe," he said.

EDITORIAL

What's Life All About?

WHEN, in the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord of Life laid down the principles of God's kingdom, and sketched in fine lines the portrait of the kingdom man or woman, he began with poverty of spirit.

The man who is poor in spirit must not be confused with the poor-spirited man. Christ had and has no blessing for the weakly, whining beggar who simply preys upon the pity of the world. The parasite who is content to remain a parasite is not fit for the kingdom of God. He bids all such stand up upon their feet and work.

The man who is "poor in spirit" must be a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," as Jesus was; he must mourn for the sin and suffering of the world. That, of course, sounds as if Christ means us to be mournful and not cheery souls. It sounds as if he wanted us to go about with long faces and tragic eyes.

But think again. "Happy are the mourners," he says, "for they shall be comforted." The human-hearted, great-souled man who feels himself one of and one with the fellowship of humanity, and therefore suffers the sting of its sorrows and the shame of its sins, will not sit down to weep and wring his hands — he will be comforted. He will hear God's call to fight sin and sorrow, and will be strengthened for his battle.

That is what "comforted" really means. It does not mean that if we all go about weeping and worrying over the suffering of the world, that God will take us on his knee, and dry our eyes, and say, "Never mind, I will put it right."

Christ promised that God would comfort, not coddle us!

If we see the sin of the world and hate it; if we feel the sorrow of the world and long to heal it; if we hear the call of God and answer it, and go out to do a bit for the conquest of sin, and the healing of sorrow, and the coming of the kingdom, then Christ says we will know sorrow all right. We will come up against disappointment and failure, ingratitude, stupidity, and hardness of heart, but we will be comforted, strengthened, upheld in our battle, and in the end will come to count it well worth while. Here is Christ's deeper doctrine about happiness.

Something Worth Doing

THE shallow-thinking man imagines that happiness means pleasure, comfort, prosperity, the absence of all worry and pain. Christ knows human nature better than that. He knows that men and women are never really happy until their lives have found a purpose and a meaning. Give a man something to do that he knows is worth doing, give him something to aim at that fires his imagination, grips his heart and mind, moves and keeps him moving, and he is on the road to happiness.

That mother, devoted to her children, with their clamorous and crying needs, has but little pleasure and small comfort — she has plenty of worry and maybe her share of pain; but she is nearer happiness than the rich lady with a lapdog who does not know what she is alive for, and does nothing but kill time.

That doctor friend, with his keen brain and beautiful hands, has no time for pleasure; comfort he cares nothing for; worries pour in upon him every day — yet he is nearer to happiness than the lounge lizard with a private income and an empty head whose bread is buttered on both sides. He is a man with a purpose, the other is a man with none.

Peace of a Steadfast Mind

WHAT is it makes a fine man who could be perfectly comfortable at home set off to climb Mount Everest, or explore the South Pole? Why should he be happier battling with ice packs, blizzards and killing cold than he would be sitting in carpet slippers by his own fireside?

Why should he ask for trouble like that?

Why—because he has found a purpose, heard a call; troubles do not matter, suffering does not count; his heart has gone to the mountain heights and he must go. That is the real secret of happiness, the discovery of an aim or a purpose in life.

Those who have found that will mourn all right. They will be men of sorrows and acquainted with grief; but they will not care a hang; they will be comforted. The royalty of inward happiness will be theirs and the peace of a steadfast mind.

So it was with him who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross — despising the shame of it. That was what he meant when he said: "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow after me."

Here is a world of sin and sorrow in which men butcher, torture and ruin themselves and one another.

And yet it is a beautiful world. For those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, the stars all sing together and the mountains clap their hands with joy. Who will set out on the great adventure of making it all as beautiful as the stars, as noble as the mountains, and as joyous as the first green days in spring?

In a word, who will come out for the kingdom of God? They must be poor in spirit, bearing the world in their hearts, or they will not be able to see, never mind enter, the kingdom.

They must be prepared to mourn, too. If any man wants roses without thorns, triumph without tears, peace without pain, let him go back. Christ calls for pioneers.

That is the challenge of Christ to the men and women of every generation. Only as we answer to that challenge in some form or other can we find happiness. Happiness always comes to those who are seeking something else, and are so absorbed in seeking it that they never stop to think whether they are happy or not.

When There is no Vision

THIS is not a popular doctrine today. The popular gospel is the gospel of the good time. Let us enjoy ourselves! But it does not work!

We do not enjoy ourselves because we have no real selves to enjoy. We do not know what we want, and will not be happy until we get it. We may be gay, but we are not happy. Life may be full of jazz, but it is not therefore full of joy. We dance because this is a rotten world and we want to forget it, not because it is a good world and we want to remember it.

Nothing can make us happy but a renewed sense of purpose. People simply perish where there is no open vision of the kingdom of love and light.

When men and women lose the vision of the kingdom and of the good purpose in life, they either drug their souls to sleep with pleasures, or else they are haunted by evil visions, and become a prey to tragic and terrible ideas.

When the head and the heart are empty then the devils can take possession. Love dies and hatred rushes in to take its place. Men's souls grow sick of the foolish dance and they sud-

denly draw the sword. Women and wine no longer satisfy; they begin to thirst for blood.

This is the mystery of iniquity. We do not understand it. We only know that it is there. It is written all over history in letters of blood and fire. Never for long are men satisfied with a trivial life. When the sense of a high and noble purpose dies and life becomes trifling, it is always the beginning of the end.

The Human Fellowship

THINK, and you realize that there always comes a crisis, when from trifles men turn to tragedy. We are not little and cannot for long be satisfied with little things and a little view of life.

When life becomes little for us we lose our self-respect, and then lose our respect for others. Human life becomes cheap. Cynicism turns to cruelty. The dance becomes a dance of death.

We must have a purpose, and to do that we have got to realize that "life is real, life is earnest." If a man is really and truly human the sorrow, the suffering, and the wickedness of the world come home to him. He does not seek to drown them in forgetfulness; he stands straight with his face turned toward the Father and his hands held out to serve his fellow men. He realizes that his life is bound up with and dependent upon the life of that human fellowship, and he is proud and glad that it is so.

Towers of Security

By John Lane Denson Rector of Christ Church, Nashville

NASHVILLE'S leading life insurance companies are racing and raising each other in skyscrapers as well as in amazing growth statistics. They are leaving far below them the church steeples and towers of government buildings that once dominated the sky line.

Are such skyscrapers symbols of our age? De we now look up to man-made security instead of holding above all else our former, more daring faith in the reliability of God's promises, that under God we can live fruitfully together and even die, without fear?

Even life insurance companies cannot insure the security of life for us or for themselves. Security is not a solid like a tower to be seen, shaped, or circumscribed. Security is ineffable and boundless like the sky in which the skyscrapers must stand and have their being. Security must be surrendered in faith, just as we must let go of the air — the whiff of sky —in us, in order to breathe again.

Man-made skyscrapers stand stark against God's horizon like exclamation marks! They — along with church towers of old — emphasize the enigma of security, that the only security in life is to live in insecurity, with faith, to stand tall and fearlessly against a background of apparently empty space. The invisible "air" of God's grace will secure us more and more, supporting us alongside and below as well as above, even though the canopy of the sky may appear to recede, as we rise up higher and higher, structured by concrete and impregnable faith in God and in him alone.

THE GREAT SOCIETY AS A MYTH

By William Stringfellow

Episcopal Layman and Attorney

THE REPAIR JOBS PROPOSED ARE FRAUDS SINCE FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES ARE RE-QUIRED TO MEET THE CRISIS IN AMERICA

ONE extraordinary irony of a time when so much of the doctrine and dogma of the Church is being — supposedly — demythologized for the sake of becoming cogent and relevant in practical life is the accompanying tendency to mythologize the secular.

It is difficult to determine who is more to blame for this—Harvey Cox or Lyndon Johnson.

For the present purpose, however, I will restrict my comments to the latter simply because President Johnson symbolizes a somber, immediate, empirical threat to my own existence along with that of every other human being on the earth, while Professor Cox does not jeopardize my life in any way — or anybody else's. In other words, when a button is pressed, the only thing that Cox can accomplish is to turn the electricity on or off: by a similar effort and the same skill, Johnson can incinerate mankind. By a like token, Cox, conceivably, might someday acquire significant power - say, as President of the American Baptist Convention - and lift that denomination out of its doldrums - or even become editor of Playboy magazine - and save it from effeteness - but there is not the slightest prospect of his ever being invested with exceptional secular office. Harvey Cox will never be President of the United States; Lyndon Johnson is.

So it is to Johnson—to his views and policies, to his ways and programs, to his intentions and style — that I look to breach the mystery of the mythologizing of the secular. Anyway, there will be ample opportunity, later on, either in prison or in the eschaton, to evaluate any role of theologians in the matter.

The Great Society as an Idol

MYTHOLOGIZING the secular order is no peculiar American phenomenon and it is not something unique in modern times. The ancient Greeks were most accomplished at it, as were the pagan Romans at the height of empire. Constantine can be said to have remythologized the secular in consequence of his conversion. The divine right of kings is an example of secular myth. The Eastern religions, notably Buddhism and Hinduism, have long been the media for mythologizing the secular in Asian countries. On that score, indeed, it appears to be exactly such mythology that has nurtured the intense sense of national identity among the Vietnamese through more than a thousand years of foreign occupations, earlier by the Chinese, more recently by the French and the Japanese, and, in fact, it is only right now, during the American presence in that wretched land, that the myth of nationhood for all of Vietnam is being savagely assaulted.

Any number of other examples can readily be cited: British colonialism during the Victorian era, Marxism, South African apartheid, Italian Fascism, Nazism, Peronism, Chinese Nationalism in Taiwan, deGaullism, African nationalism, or, in a rather blithe way, Irish Republicanism.

In the United States, the mythologizing of

the secular has reached its most radical sophistication under the rubric of "The Great Society."

More is involved here than the contrivance of a political slogan or electoral gimmick, although, superficially, that is part of it. Unlike classical Marxism or Nazism or Maoism, the Great Society does not have the dignity of a systematic ideological position. And though its propositions are as self-serving as those of any formal ideology, they are not as coherent, rigid, or internally consistent as those of an organic ideology.

Still, the rudiments of ideology are there. The Great Society is an extemporization of certain ideas which have their genesis in the founding and development of the American nation. Specifically, these ideas germinated in an ethos of the white, Protestant, privileged classes that was culturally dominant for so long that generations of Americans — not white, not Protestant, and not privileged — became imbued with them.

Individual Enterprise

THE PRIMITIVE American secular myth is that individual enterprise in any secular pursuitslike the acquisition of property, the achievement of social status, the access to political power --is morally right if the objective sought is in fact attained. The idea has a great fascination, particularly when one recalls the struggles of the colonies for national independence or, later, the pioneer era in which the frontier was explored and subdued all the way to the Pacific, or, also, the elementary stages of inventiveness and mechanization, because then the odds against individual initiative were so formidable that such accomplishments it seemed could happen only if Providence favored them. Gradually, of course, this mechanistic ethic of extreme individualism has been transmuted so that initiative now covers and allegedly justifies not only authentic ingenuity, audacity and hard work, but inheritance, luck and, on occasion, a little bit of larceny. The generic doctrine, however, survives as part of American mythologizing of the secular: "God helps those who help themselves," "nothing succeeds like success," if a man prevails it is because he is righteous.

This notion has suffered elaborate extension —it has been radically mythologized — to minimize or excuse the most startling aggressions of corporations, unions, universities, and other immense institutional powers, against, paradoxically, individuals. That is the case, for example, in the persistent delinquencies in re-

gard to safety measures of automobile makers for the sake of profits, or in the change from the merchandising of products to that of packaging, or in the commercial pollution of the environment, or in the omniscient surveillance of the telephone companies, or in the ingenious importunities upon employees, competitors, and customers of industrial espionage.

American Doctrine

THE EMBELLISHMENT of this same idea of enterprise now embraces the final destiny of the American nation, and not just the disposition of the great institutional principalities in society or only the fortunes of individuals. The myth is that American economic, political, and military power has reached its present enormity in the world because of the virtue of America's national purpose and the moral superiority of "the American way of life." Thus, if America goes to war, it is in the name of securing peace, and not for conquest or aggrandizement. If the U.S. Marines occupy a Latin American capital, it is for the sake of safeguarding the self-determination of the Latin Americans. If the CIA procures the overthrow of some foreign politician or potentate, it is justified as a cause of the indigenous people. If the United States intervenes in Vietnam, it is to save the Vietnamese from one another. In the conflicts with the aspirations of other nations, great or small, America must prevail because its uses of power are gratuitous and benevolent.

It is unambiguous universe that this mythology propounds, in which God rules with the United States as his favorite surrogate, and in which what is right always triumphs and, therefore, what does in fact triumph must be right. Theologically, of course, such a crude view is ridiculously unbiblical and it is to the enduring credit of President Kennedy that he challenged this mythology, notably after the Bay of Pigs fiasco and during the Cuban missile crisis. though whether he questioned it on biblical grounds one does not know. At the same time there is no evidence whatever that it has ever occurred to the incumbent President that this myth is a myth and open to criticism as being unreliable, historically and empirically, as well as theologically.

On the contrary, President Johnson, in what deserves to be remembered as one of the most tortured and strident nonsequiturs in presidential rhetoric — in his Omaha address some weeks ago — argued that while might does not make right, right does make might and, hence, the further escalation of the present war by bombing the Hanoi fuel depots was warranted.

Militant Nationalism

WHEN this mythology of the secular is believed, it inherently requires the subservience of other nations in one way or another. That was the case in the mythologizing of imperialism in Rome or in Britain or of totalitarianism in Nazi Germany. The Americanization of Australia or England — unlike that of Japan — has been accomplished through economic conquest and ideological aggression rather than reliance upon military power, but it remains the case that the sanction for America's militant nationalism is the capability of the United States to launch what Senator Fulbright calls the ultimate war.

Moreover, such a mythologizing of the secular creates an insatiable demand for acquiesence and conformity upon the citizens living under the myth. The means for subduing persons are legion and include indoctrination through public education, the development of a patriotic cultus, the political surveillance of citizens, personification of the myth in hero figures, the equating of dissent and nonconformity with disloyalty or treason - the tactic which President Johnson has, in principle, recently invoked against those, including United States Senators, who oppose the American military involvement in Vietnam -the creation of immediate personal economic vested interests in tribute to the myth; but the underlying sanctions is the police power; the right of the state to remove a citizen from society by imprisonment, exile, or execution.

The Great Society as a Fraud

THE GREAT SOCIETY myth foresees the indefinite, if not eternal, pre-eminence of American power in the world, not only among the nations, but also in the regions of outer space, while at the same time bestowing upon its own citizens full employment, better health, more leisure, the abolition of poverty, beautification of the countryside, depollution of air and water, modernization of transportation, renewal of the cities, and, eventually, equal rights for everyone. It contemplates the grandeur of a universal American hegemony in which the Great Society would be encompassed with satellite great societies secured by the deployment of American military forces overseas, the controlling investment of American capital in other countries, and the American ideological leadership of the nations. The myth presupposes both a technical and moral capability for America to have guns and butter — and the moon as well.

At first blush, at least to most Americans, the Great Society is so attractive that one would like to believe in it and commit oneself to it. It is, to me, a far more sensible and sound national aspiration than the so-called Free Society of Barry Goldwater or the "Creative Society" of Ronald Reagan, both conceived in nostalgia for the 19th century, both so pathetically apprehensive about the most critical issues of this century, both, in fact, so much more visionary than the Great Society, since, whatever the future holds, the past cannot be restored. At least the schemes begun and proposed under the aegis of the Great Society myth purport to address contemporary problems and are oriented by some concern for the years and decades to come.

Christian Realism

YET, speaking as a Christian and, thus, as a realist, about this world as it is, I find the Great Society mythology a reactionary and retarding influence in American life and in the life of the world. In that respect I am not lamenting, like the Reagans and the Goldwaters, contemporary society because the virtues and values of an earlier day have been neglected or abandoned. On the contrary, I find that many of the inherited ethics of American life are both generically false and practically inappropriate. They should not be either restored or preserved, and it amounts to dissipation — as Saint Paul would put it — to attempt their restoration or preservation.

What is objectionable, in this context, about the Great Society is that it is far too modest and much too conservative, that it clings to a social ethics long after those ethics should have been exercised, that rather than moving too fast it moves too slowly and is, on several fronts, outdistanced by events arising from the very circumstances with which it proposes to deal.

In other words, the Great Society emerges as a relatively inconsequential movement of social change — merely a patching of the fabric of American society — at a moment when what is poignantly needed in the United States, and hence, in America's world role, is change of revolutionary imagination and scope: — change which converts the fundamental ethics of society; change which liberates the nation and her people from myth; change which at last demythologizes the secular order in America.

Without here attempting to be exhaustive, but only illustrative, consider some of the existing programs of the Great Society:

The War on Poverty

THE WAR on Poverty, has, no doubt, provided birth control counseling to a few persons, furnished crayons and milk for some children, diverted some slum adolescents from "antisocial behavior," but it has mainly served to further entrench poverty, particularly in the urban regions. One of the reasons for that is the crude misappropriation of poverty funds to supply additional patronage jobs for incumbent political organizations in the big cities.

In one northern city alone, for example, antipoverty funds have been used to create over eight thousand new patronage appointments to buttress the dwindling control of a city by a mayor who can only be described, if one is generous about him, as a white supremist.

In another instance, funds for a desperately needed literacy program among Negro and Puerto Rican slum dwellers was blocked by the intervention of an "Uncle Tom" Negro politician who foresaw that his own power would be overthrown if people ever became literate enough to register and campaign and vote against him.

On still another front, war on poverty monies have been used to vastly expand the existing professional social work bureaucracy, creating and supporting or enhancing hundreds of positions for public and private welfare operatives, while the poor remain unschooled, untrained, and unemployed. Even where antipoverty appropriations have directly benefited some of the poor, the conception involved has usually been a mere extension of the traditional welfare philosophy by which a person or family is maintained in subsistence by the "helping" agency, but is furnished no opportunity for acquiring a marketable and employable skill enabling him or them to quit dependence upon welfare.

Moreover, the war on poverty is itself impoverished, spending, as it does, approximately a nickel where five dollars is really required to seriously modify the institutionalization of poverty in American society. Where not already diverted politically or to appease the social work

establishment, where not a proliferation of tawdry welfare concepts, where not a means of aggravating paternalism, where not a war against the poor, the war on poverty has anyway been focused on symptoms rather than causes. The Great Society myth is perpetuating this.

The Ethic of Work

TECHNOLOGICAL sophistication is causing a drastic change in the nature of work which the inherited ethic of work in American society no longer befits. Yet the Great Society mentality has not ventured to enunciate a more realistic work ethic.

While the corporate powers have generally greeted automation as a welcome efficiency and, presumably, economy, organized labor has been panicked by it, and the governmental establishment seems to alternate between these equally myopic attitudes of enthusiasm and apprehension.

It is widely supposed, for example, that advanced technics will require much expanded training opportunities for erudite jobs which will survive or be created by automation and cybernation. But that is only part of the prospect, for there is also the potential of such an extraordinary increase in leisure time available to common folk as to make leisure activities the principal occupation of most people. Not only can there be a vast expansion of "leisure industries," where employment involves limited skills, but also some activities, most obviously in the creative arts, which previously have not been compensated as work, can be so recognized. Automation portends more bowling alleys, more parks, more bars, more beaches and, I suppose, more brothels, but it also can mean more ballet, more opera, more circuses, more music, and more poetry.

Moreover, let the fiction be abandoned that the only kind of work worthy of wages is for activity that is tangibly productive. This old ethic of work has long since been forsaken with respect to the so-called service occupations brokers, agents, and other middlemen — in which the white middle classes are so often employed. Let a new work ethic go further and acknowledge that creative artists, especially in the years of discipline and practice, are working, and that their work deserves pay. For that matter, let students in higher education be

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salaried, because study is a form of work, and thus, incidentally, breach at last the class privilege which is now the chief credential for admission to university studies.

The Structure of Government

THE GREAT SOCIETY envisions no fundamental reordering of the inherited institutions of local, state, or national governments, although it becomes increasingly manifest that these institutions are incapable of governing. The traditional political jurisdictions — dividing powers by happenstance geographical and historical factors — are radically unsuited for the realities of a mass, automated, urbanized society.

In the New York City complex, to take the most gruesome example - an area calculated to embrace all those who are economically and socially interdependent in a direct sense-exist some twenty-five millions of human beings presently ruled by more than fourteen hundred distinct and uncordinated, overlapping, and competing agencies, bureaus, authorities, executives, legislatures, and various improvisations of government. That there is fantastic waste, overtaxation, perpetual corruption, an excess of patronage, inevitable inefficiency, and the resignation of most citizens to bewilderment and apathy is hardly surprising under the circumstances.

What has in fact emerged in New York is a new political entity — a sort of city-state — to which the inherited forms of political administration in the federal system are proving themselves wholly inappropriate. New York City is not governed now, in any serious use of the term, because the existing instrumentalities are anachronisms. The federal system is not a sine qua non of political democracy, it is not sacrosanct to modern urbanization, and the urgent task is to radically modify the inherited state and municipal boundaries and jurisdictions in order to constitute a government for megalopolis that will function.

The Racial Crisis

THAT WHICH BECLOUDS the Great Society mythology more than any other single thing is the crisis between black citizens and white citizens. The outcome of that will determine the very survival of society, as well as any claim to greatness. Yet the myth offers no challenge to the ethic of white supremacy which has dominated America since 1619, when the first slave ship arrived. And make no mistake about the depth and vitality of white supremacy as an American social ethic. Slavery is the most radical form of race supremacy imaginable, because it u p h o l d s a proposition that certain human beings are not persons but property. Slavery was abolished, but white supremacy was legalized for nearly a century more by local option and now, even in the aftermath of the civil rights movement, remains institutionalized in apartheid and ghettoization.

Most white citizens are not, as yet, pathological in their attitudes toward Negroes; they are not vulgar or vicious racists, but they have been reared for so long in an ethos of white supremacy that ghettoization is assumed as normative. They harbor the notion that racial unrest in society is due to an insufficient white paternalism, not realizing that paternalism is itself a form of racism. What most whites who are not pathological racists envision when they contemplate words like "integration" or "civil rights" is a time when a significant emperical betterment of places like Harlem or Woodlawn or Watts will have been achieved. They entertain images of black ghettos becoming decent and pleasant habitations.

What white "moderates" do not comprehend is that they themselves are ghettoized, not only racially and physically, in the places where they live and study and work and play and worship, but also in their minds and mentalities and, hence, in their morality. White "moderates" are still enamored of the possibility of a society in which there is equality but separation, not realizing that equality is inherently incompatible with the profound division of society by race in the basic spheres of common life and that this represents an inequality as perniciously dehumanizing for whites as for blacks.

Nothing on the agenda of the Great Society, nothing yet envisioned in the mythology of the Great Society contemplates the end of the ghettoization of American life. Yet it is only the determination to erase every ghetto, virtually every city and town in this land that can possibly absolve the despair of Negro citizens, which erupts in riotous violence, or emancipate whites from the prison of their own complacency and paternalism.

The ghettos must go, but what does that imply in terms of concrete public policies? I suggest, among other things, that it means the recognition that black ghettos like Harlem are now so congested, so deteriorated, so insufferable as to be unfit for human habitation and beyond the reach of rehabilitation. But to destroy the Harlem ghetto would require dispersion of the population elsewhere in the city and suburbs, in localities where from the outset of the dispersion there would have to be honestly integrated housing and neighborhoods, schools and churches, employment and credit, political access and community enterprises.

No doubt that would threaten and dislocate the fabric of white society in a startling manner, but the answer to that is that the bourgeois white ghettos need to be destroyed just as much as the black ones if this is ever to become a society worthy of humanity.

The Great Society as Blasphemy

ONE COULD continue throughout the entire agenda of the Great Society, but the fundamental criticism would be redundant. The Great Society myth is fraudulent and deceptive because it is too slow, too little, too temporizing, too readily corruptible, too cautious, too tardy. The Great Society blueprints repairs, while the old house has rotted and is in collapse, and it is a new house which must be built. What is needed so pathetically in America is a revolutionary reconstruction of the nation. The moral, as well as the practical, capacity for that kind of social change depends first of all upon demythologizing the Great Society.

It is perchance, only a Christian who can speak in this fashion, in the face of the truth that the Great Society myth is essentially a commitment to the preservation and extension of the status quo and in view of the attrition which the pressures of conformity and the anxieties of dissent have already cost under the rubric of the Great Society.

If that be so, it is only because Christians never speak as idologues, and they are seldom patriots—at least in the sense in which patriotism connotes a stupid allegiance to the mythology of a nation. If it be so, it is only because a Christian is free to be first of all a mature man in this world, free from the idolatry of nationhood, even in its more beguiling forms as in the myth of the Great Society, free from the fraudulence of myth, free from the blasphemy inherent in any mythology, and thus, free to revolt.

The Church and Money

By John C. Leffler

Dean of St. Mark's Cathedral, Seattle

"THE GOLDEN CALF" is the title of a documentary presented on tv in Seattle. Produced in Portland, with one sequence filmed in Seattle, it offered a telling but fragmentary critique of organized religion in our times.

The significance of its title; "The Golden Calf" was not stated, but rather implied, by the frequent "shots" of offering plates being passed; a look at a church bazaar; and glimpses of new church buildings; thus giving the overall impression that the primary objective of the modern church was to secure the money to maintain itself.

It would be easy to criticize this production for lop-sidedness, to raise the question as to whether the producer knows from first-hand experience what the Church is trying to be in this period of its re-appraisal, or whether he might be rationalizing his own resistance to making a pledge to a church budget.

However, we of the Church cannot dismiss the question raised by this documentary. Is the Church so engrossed in its material existence that the Golden Calf has replaced the Risen Christ as the object of its worship?

Of course the Church is an institution, an organized attempt to exemplify and proclaim the gospel of Jesus. An institution is an exacting task-master for those who would serve it; be that institution a corporation, a school, a family, a state, or a Church. If it is to fulfill its purpose it must demand and receive the concern and devotion of those who participate in it.

Sometimes the institution, instead of serving the purpose for which it was created, becomes an end in itself. And for none is this danger more serious than for a Church, as history too clearly reveals. Its buildings, its ornaments, its visible evidences of success can become the subtle idols to which clergy and laity alike give their chief concern and devotion. The gospel is forgotten and Jesus is lost in the very temples men raise to his honor in their attempt to contain him.

These are sobering thoughts one has as he faces such matters as budgets and pledges and the need of money if the Church is to exist. The trouble is that modern man is of two minds about money and material things. On the one hand he spends most of his time earning it, investing it, spending it, because without it none of the things he does or believes in can be accomplished in this age.

Then he turns around after all this concern with money, and in his attitude toward the Church and its needs, implies that money and what it can do is somehow a sinful thing which has no place in religion. Our world criticizes the Church for being irrelevant to modern life, but "The Golden Calf" implies that the most important aspect of modern life should be bypassed by religion.

This of course is nonsense. The institutions of man in our time express themselves in material symbols. Giant corporations push tall buildings into the sky, television antennas pierce the clouds, gevernment expresses its power and majesty in its buildings, a community takes pride in its school-houses. Is it only the Church then, that should forego these material symbols? And is it only the Church that should get along without money? Or is it the Church's business to show to this very materialistic age that symbols have a spiritual significance; that the gospel can be truly served by an institution; and money can be transmitted into a program concerned with the well-being of man's soul?

This is a very difficult assignment. The Golden Calf always lurks in the shadows. But the power of the Spirit is stronger if we trust it and live by it.

UNITY TIMETABLE URGED IN BRITAIN

 \star An eight-point timetable through which Britain's Protestant Churches would achieve unity in the next two decades was proposed in a book written by one of the country's top ecumenical planners.

He is Canon A. Horace Dammers of Coventry Cathedral, a proponent of the resolution passed at Britain's first faith and order conference at Nottingham in September, 1964.

That resolution invited member denominations of the British Council of Churches "to covenant together to work and pray for the inauguration of union" and to "dare to hope" that this may be achieved by Easter, 1980.

"Only by planning now and publishing the plan can the Churches 'dare to hope' for reunion by 1980," he wrote. He suggested that the British Council of Churches draw up a timetable of dates for eight targets:

• Anglican - Methodist reunion, completion of state 1 that is, integration of ministries and inter-communion

• Anglican - Methodist reunion, completion of state 2 that is, full organic union • Inauguration of Congregational-Presbyterian reunion

• Full communion between Anglicans and Presbyterians

• Initiation of reunion talks between those four denominations and all other BCC member Churches who are willing to join in

• Completion of such talks and submission of proposals to the Churches concerned

• Signing of the covenant to work together for reunion by a specified target date

• The specified target date —whether Easter, 1980, or another.

As steps to this ultimate date of reunion, Dammers suggested a wide range of developments within the various Churches.

On faith, for example, he called for a redefinition of the place of the creeds and revision, or abolition, of the 39 articles, the Church of England's code of faith and doctrine. On worship, he suggested that forms be revised boldly with the hope of reunion always in mind.

On Church membership, he advocated that infant baptism be replaced — but only as an alternative — by the laying on of hands, and that baptism be reserved for those able to make the promises for themselves.

On Church government, he suggested establishing elected synods, making salaries "rational and just," and reshaping the dioceses so that they are much smaller but also simpler. Proposals on these lines are, in fact, now being considered by the Church of England following publication of a report on synodical government by an Anglican commission. As regards

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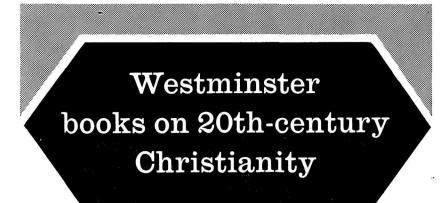
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relations with the state, he urges reforming of the "Establishment" radically or, possibly, abolishing it.

In what the Methodist Recorder editorially termed a "personal and passionate answer" to questions about Christian unity in this country, Canon Dammers also wrote:

"It was said that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton. The battle for the reunion of the member Churches of the British Council of Churches by 1980 will be won or lost among the chapel hat pegs and in the drafty parochial church halls where small groups of men and women huddle together over a cup of weak tea to integrate or oppose the integration of mission, worship, service and training programs of their local churches."

Commented the Methodist



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MIXED MARRIAGE LAW UNSATISFACTORY

★ Eugene Carson Blake, general secretary-designate of the World Council of Churches, expressed the opinion in Arnoldshain, Germany that the Vatican's mixed marriage regulations are regarded as unsatisfactory by many Catholics.

But at the same time he stated that the limited participation of a Protestant clergyman at a mixed marriage in a Catholic church would be "more sensible than to estrange two people from their respective Churches."

Under the new regulations, non-Catholic clergymen are permitted to give a blessing or to offer a prayer after the Catholic marriage rites. A mixed marriage performed by a Protestant minister is still not regarded as valid in the eyes of the Catholic Church.

A number of Protestant Church bodies in West Germany have forbidden their ministers to participate in mixed marriage rites in Catholic churches.

Blake addressed a meeting of leaders of the Evangelical Church in Germany and of the working commission of Christian Churches in Germany.

While in Arnoldshain, Blake advocated increased cooperation between member bodies of the WCC and the Catholic Church wherever possible and emphasized the need to make Christian unity visible to the outside world.

The United Presbyterian leader expressed hope that he would be able to visit churches in East Germany and so accept an invitation to do so from Lutheran Bishop Friedrich-Wilhelm Krummacher of Griefswald who is chairman of EKID's East German Bishops' Conference.

Blake also said he plans to go to Russia as his first official trip after being installed as WCC general secretary on Dec. 1.

MISSOURI CHURCHES PLAN SEMINAR ON 'MERGER'

★ Missouri Churches whose denominations are participating in the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) will join in a statewide seminar in Jefferson City, on the basic principles involved in Church merger.

Called by the department of faith and order of the division of Christian unity of the Missouri Council of Churches, the consultation will be held Dec. 16 at Grace Episcopal church. Participating denominations have been invited to send nine delegates each, and non-participating denominations and local councils of churches are invited to send two observers each.

Allen O. Miller, professor of systematic theology at Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, and chairman of the department of faith and order, will chair the meeting and make presentations on "The Faith of the Church" and "The Worship of the Church."

"The Sacraments of the Church" will be presented by Lester B. Rickman, executive secretary of the Missouri association of Christian Churches and an official delegate from his denomination to COCU. Elmer Arndt, professor of historical theology and ethics at Eden Seminary, and a United Church of Christ delegate to COCU, will present "The Ministry of the Church."

Jack Pierson, a St. Louis at-NOVEMBER 17, 1966 torney and an official lay delegate to COCU from the Episcopal Church, will make the final presentation on "The Structure of the Church." Each of the addresses will be followed by a period of discussion.

ANGLICAN-VATICAN DIALOGUE

★ The first meeting of the joint preparatory committee set up to inaugurate "serious dialogue" between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican communion will take place Jan. 9-13 at Gazzada, near Varese, in northern Italy.

The dialogue for which preparations are being made was agreed upon in a joint declaration issued last March by Pope Paul and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Among the Anglican members are Bishop John Moorman of Ripon, England, who was the senior Anglican delegate-observer throughout the Vatican Council; Massey H. Shepherd, Jr., professor at Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, Calif., and bishops from Wales, Ceylon and South Africa.

PLAN JOINT WORK ON BIBLE

★ Pope Paul on Nov. 8 directed Cardinal Bea, head of the Christian unity secretariat, to plan for cooperation with Protestant groups in Bible translations and distribution.

The Rev. Walter M. Abbott, an American Jesuit, has been named personal assistant to Cardinal Bea to direct the studies.

The New York Times on Nov. 9, in spite of election news, gave it an eight column head: "Bible Project Called Sign Church Politicians Are Catching Up With Scholars."

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- NEW BOOKS -

E. John Mohr **Book Editor**

THE CHURCH AND THE JEW-ISH PEOPLE, by Cardinal Bea. Harper \$4.50

Cardinal Bea, the great leader of those Roman Catholic bishops at the Vatican Council who supported the more up to date views, including biblical and historical scholarship, was the real author of the Council's Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Catholic Religions. That is the title of the Declaration on the Jews, which was finally included in the larger declaration.

This important book is a commentary on the Declaration, and is of course of first-rate importance. The Cardinal takes the stand that such a term as "deicide" simply cannot be applied to the Jews, and also any derogatory terms that imply the guilt of the Jews for the death of Christ. The defense of the Declaration is masterly, and no doubt sets forth arguments that persuaded the Council Fathers to approve the final form of the document.

If an Anglican or Protestant were to write a defense of the statement, the language would be different, no doubt; for example, it would make more use of modern biblical scholarship — which Bea could very well have used, as he is a first class biblical (Old Testament) scholar. But that might not have won the battle in the Council, for the majority of Roman Catholic clergy, including bishops, are still, like many of ours, very, very conservative, and suspicious of "modern criticism." But we can rejoice in the victory, and the final statement, and add our own supporting briefs where they apply.

- FREDERICK C. GRANT Dr. Grant, an Anglican observer at the first Vatican Council session, is the author of "Rome and Re-Union", Oxford University Press.

WILL THE HUMAN RACE SUR-VIVE? by Henry Still; Hawthorn Books. \$5.95

The author is an engineer and aircraft executive and is concerned with what the future holds for mankind. Primarily he is concerned with water and power, and space exploration, and indicates strongly that the major part of man's problem, now and in the future, is the unwillingness to put his knowledge and insights to work in a disciplined, coordinated way, rather than not knowing enough.

A non-scientific layman can learn much about the recent history of science, as well as what is current and on the drawing boards, by reading this book. Mr. Still writes clearly and well and challenges mankind, not to an eagerness for more knowledge, but to a willingness to put his verbal moral beliefs into practice.

- WM. B. SPOFFORD JR. Dean, St. Michael's Cathedral. Boise

GOD BEYOND DOUBT, by Geddes MacGregor. Lippincott. \$3.95

For those people who are becomingly bored with the alarmist attitude of many within the Christian Churches concerning theological trends, particularly since the most vocal of these critics of modern theology are frightened people who are unable to cope with the relation of faith to life in the latter part of the twentieth century, and who confuse an idolatrous and rigid conformism to theological tenets of the past with a genuine faith in God and Christ, and who because they have nothing else to do but cry out for heresy trials as a diversionary tactic to take attention away from their own indolence and ineptitude, this book by Dean MacGregor will be welcomed as an excellent antidote.

MacGregor introduces again what has always been a necessary element in the Christian posture of faith, the element of doubt that corresponds to man's creatureliness, and stands as a protection against nonsensical and pretentious claims to absoluteness, which claims shut out the reality of the Holy God. By a careful discussion of the question of religious experience, illusion or encounter, the author shows how easy it is to fall into the illusory areas due to the above mentioned pretensions, but also how through a dispelling of the illusions, one is brought squarely into a stark encounter with the Holy God.

This book should be read by all believers, and particularly those who hold that faith is a posture that does not close out reality, but opens it up.

— JOHN E. SKINNER

Dr. Skinner is Professor of Philosophical Theology, Philadelphia Divinity School.

CANON LAW: A HANDBOOK, by Daniel B. Stevick. Seabury. \$5.95

A workable guide and reference for practical purposes this book is useful for clergy, students, and others who may deal with the constitution and canons of the Church without having to go into the most refined legalistic details and precedents. It includes some history, commentary, and interpretation.

- E. J. M.

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