

The **+** WITNESS

APRIL 13, 1967

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W. Murray Kenney

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Story of the Week

College Students Take Hard Look At Work of United Nations

★ A five-day exposure to United Nations problems convinced a group of Illinois students that the organization is not as ineffective as they had imagined, and that given proper financial support, the 122-nation body could steer the world away from major international conflicts by preventive social and economic education and help.

According to the students, they found Americans, Soviets and practically everybody else agreed on over-all goals. But they quickly grasped the prevailing basic political differences barring a common approach to solutions.

Some 33 students, accompanied by two clergymen, spent five days at the Church Center for the United Nations, opposite UN headquarters. They represented the United Campus Christian Foundation at Illinois State and Illinois Wesleyan Universities, and the Lutheran Student Foundation at Northern Illinois University.

Their Holy Week program included attendance at sermons by leading New York City preachers; visits with lay preachers from Nigeria, Japan, West Germany and Scotland; a discussion with a Jamaican diplomat on various UN publications. They also heard a Frenchman talk about de-colonization problems and apartheid,

a Canadian describe peace-keeping issues, and a Czechoslovak debate UN efforts in disarmament. The students listened as an Indian official spoke on world health organization problems, an American discussed Southeast Asian issues, and a Canadian diplomat described a stalemate revolution in the southern tip of Africa.

In addition, the students had an opportunity to visit the diplomatic UN missions of Argentina, Ceylon, Czechoslovakia, Norway, the Soviet Union and Nigeria.

Over-all impressions of the March 20-23 program were given by David Holton, a philosophy major at Northern Illinois, and the Rev. David Danielson, a Lutheran campus minister at the same university.

They agreed that perhaps the greatest surprise of the visit was an apparent lack of controversy between the students and the various UN officials with whom they conferred. In fact, they said, most students were especially impressed with their visits to the Soviet and the Czechoslovak missions.

"Religion was mentioned only indirectly," said Holton, who described himself as a conscientious objector. Vietnam, or its social and moral implications, seemed to dominate most debates.

Much to their surprise, Holton and Danielson said, the students heard Miroslav Soukup, an attache at the Czechoslovak mission to the UN, say that he was "very impressed" with the deep religious foundations of the American people, something he admitted did not exist in his native country. He also admitted, they reported, that this made it easier for his government, rather than any American administration, to run things.

Another surprise statement volunteered by Soukup was on Communist China. In a discussion of the Vietnam war, some of the students held the view, thus far publicly shared also by Communist countries, that so long as North Vietnam and Communist China are not members of the UN, the world organization is not equipped to deal with the problem effectively.

According to Danielson, the Czechoslovak diplomat corrected this view by saying that "the irresponsible actions" by Chinese Communists made their UN membership claim questionable.

At the Soviet mission, an official assured the students that the Soviet people "put a great deal of hope" into the activities of the UN. He claimed that "this was our idea even before the League of Nations came into being."

The students asked why, if the Soviets attach so much importance and hope to the UN, Moscow failed to pay up its peace-keeping dues for the

Congo and the Gaza Strip operation in Palestine. The Soviet answer was that those operations, initiated by the late Dag Hammarskjold and endorsed by the General Assembly, were "illegal."

The Soviet official, said Holton and Danielson, could not comprehend why the U.S. was so apprehensive of the Soviet anti-missile missile program since this involved "only defensive weapons." Danielson offered the argument that if two men face each other with a sword, and one of them puts on

an armor, this sword becomes a more dangerous weapon than his adversary's. The Soviet official reportedly did not dispute it.

The students decided the UN could do more in Vietnam on the same day that 12 members of the Senate foreign relations committee discussed the Vietnam war for three hours with Secretary General U Thant.

According to Danielson, the student group found their visit highly instructive. "I certainly feel we should come back more often," he said.

Meaning of Christian Gospel Debated at Stirring Trial

★ Totally different concepts of the message of the Christian gospel for today's world marked the testimony given on both sides in the libel suit brought by two South African churchmen against another member of their Church.

Witnesses for both the prosecution and defense have been heard in the trial, now going into its second month. In it, the Rev. C. F. Beyers Naude, director of the Christian Institute of South Africa, and Prof. Albert Geyser of the Witwatersrand University, are attempting to prove that Prof. A. D. Pont who teaches theology at Pretoria University, libeled them in a series of articles he wrote for *Die Hervormer*, official journal of the Nederuits Hervormde Kerk (NHK). All three men are members of the NHK, although Naude lost his ministerial standing when he became head of the interreligious, inter-racial Christian Institute.

Witnesses for the plaintiffs have reviewed the stormy course of ecumenical Christianity in South Africa, the opposition of ecumenically-minded South African Christians to the race

separation policies of both the government and the South African Reformed Churches and efforts of ecumenical South Africans to work together with Christians in other parts of the world for needed social change.

Thus far Prof. Pont has been the only witness in his own defense. His testimony has reflected his belief that the main objective of the ecumenical movement is to force racial integration in South Africa; that ecumenical organizations outside South Africa such as the World Council of Churches, the British Council of Churches and others which endorse the social gospel were being used by communists; and that the plaintiffs, by maintaining relations with such organizations, supported revolution and war against South Africa.

Testifying for the plaintiffs, C. J. Labuschagne, NHK clergyman and lecturer in Semitic languages at the University of Pretoria, explained that the ideal of unity inherent in the ecumenical movement implied dialogue and understanding between individuals.

"This takes the ecumenical work immediately to the level of relationship between people," he said. "The social level is unavoidable. The Church in society always moves on the social level. The Church is not something floating in the air."

He said that the relations between different races was the most critical issue facing the ecumenical movement today. The South African apartheid policy of forced separation of races "is contrary to the idea of the unity of the Church," he stated.

In his *Die Hervormer* articles, Pont had dwelt at length on his contention that communism is creeping into South African churches largely as a result of ties with world ecumenical organizations. Nowhere in the articles, which totaled 240 pages, did he mention the plaintiffs by name, but made frequent references to "certain theologians" and "fellow theologians." Geyser and Naude have maintained Pont was referring to them and are suing for \$58,000 damages.

In his testimony Pont tried to show that communism is attempting to infiltrate Church bodies in South Africa. He quoted so extensively from such a wide variety of publications that the presiding judge, Justice W. G. Trollop, asked him to shorten this aspect of his defense "or this matter is likely to go on forever."

During cross-examination by the plaintiffs' counsel, G.A. Coetzee, Pont said he believed Prof. Geyser supported revolution and war against South Africa. Questioning went as follows:

Q. "Do you think Prof. Geyser and Dr. Naude are Communists?"

A. "No."

Q. "Do you think they know-

ingly supported the cause of communism?"

A. "No, but it was clear to me they furthered the decisions of the World Council of Churches within the framework of the ecumenical movement."

Q. "Do you think Prof. Geyser was a supporter of sabotage?"

A. "I know he wrote an article after the bomb explosion on Johannesburg station and that he rejected violence in that article."

Q. "Do you think today that he was taking part in the planning (at the 1964 Mindolo conference) of a revolution?"

A. "Because he took part in the Mindolo conference I had the impression he had not disassociated himself from the conference's discussions."

The Mindolo conference, held in Zambia in 1964, was organized by the World Council of Churches, the South African institute of race relations and the Mindolo ecumenical center in Zambia. Its theme was "Christian Practice and Desirable Action in Social Change and Race Relations." In his articles Pont had maintained that the Mindolo conference had supported "Communist oriented pan-Africanism" and plotted violent overthrow of the South African regime.

Witnesses for the plaintiffs have testified that the conference had examined the need for social change and various means of bringing about such change but had rejected violence. "Christians can discuss violence with the specific aim to tell other Christians why it should be rejected," F. J. van Wyk, administrative assistant of the Christian Institute, told the court.

Van Wyk testified that South African delegates at Mindolo had been outspoken in their opposition to violence. He

pointed out that Geyser was largely responsible for a statement signed by all South African delegates and some others, disassociating themselves from any suggestions that industrial disruption, international economic sanctions or internal violence could serve social justice.

When Pont was asked during the cross examination whether he believed Geyser took part "in planning of sabotage or revolution," he answered: "Based on the Mindolo papers, yes."

In further questioning Pont said he thought Geyser at Mindolo "had betrayed his country, his people, his Church, his Christian belief and his God."

Asked if he still thought so, Pont replied: "I don't know."

The defendant answered in the negative, however, when asked if he thought Naude "had been a supporter of sabotage, revolution or war against South Africa."

In his testimony Pont told the court that although he had no personal feelings against Geyser or Naude, he considered their viewpoints dangerous to his Church and his people.

His object in writing the articles, Pont said, had been to defend and protect the interests of his Church and people. He said he regarded the propagation of ideas of racial integration as a threat to the survival of this Church and people, who could only be defended against this type of attack if they were supplied with information he provided in his *Die Hervormer* articles.

Pont added that if the community was attacked by forces attempting to create a chaotic state of affairs, it was the task of the Church to strengthen the hand of the state so that the preaching of the gospel could proceed undisturbed.

During his testimony Pont recalled his student days at the University of Utrecht in Holland. He attributed his failure to attain a theological degree with honors to a clash with one of his professors who was highly critical of the "caste system in South Africa." Pont said he and Geyser lived at the same boarding house in Utrecht for five months during their students days.

SEES UNITED ACTION ON SOCIAL ISSUES

★ Pope Paul's encyclical on the development of peoples offers the "prospect of a united Christian social thinking on a broader range than ever before seemed possible," according to the Rev. Paul Abrecht, executive secretary of the WCC's department on Church and society.

In lauding the prospect of wider interreligious social collaboration, Abrecht pointed to a number of "striking similarities" to be found in the Pope's encyclical and in the conclusions reached by the WCC-sponsored world conference on Church and society held last year.

The parallels from the encyclical and the conference's findings were listed by Abrecht as follows:

- The dangers of drift and inaction in coping with the need for worldwide social and economic development.

- The emphasis on the need to change "oppressive social and economic structures" where these are an obstacle to social justice and more rapid development.

- The search for a new humanism in establishing the goals and the methods of development and description of the nature of society's human conditions.

- The acceptance of the possibility and the need for

radical social change to safeguard human rights.

● The need for planning of economic development on a world basis and the proposal for a large international fund for development as testimony to the conviction that "development is the new name for peace"—this includes the transfer of money from armaments to development.

● The recognition of the difficult dilemmas of the new nations faced with the choice between rapid economic development and preservation of traditional, cultural and spiritual values.

● The vision of a new world order based on new possibilities and new roles for the poorer nations in world affairs.

LAMBETH CONFERENCE PLANS ANNOUNCED

★ The Lambeth Conference will be held from July 25th to August 25th, 1968. It is anticipated that the total number of bishops will be in the region of five hundred, and on this occasion for the first time, coadjutor, suffragan and assistant bishops from all over the world are being invited. There will be more bishops from Asiatic and African countries than ever before.

Also for the first time, there will be consultants to advise the bishops in their deliberations, and observers from other Churches will be invited.

The over-all theme is The Renewal of the Church, and attention will be focussed on three main areas — in faith, in ministry, and in unity. The respective chairmen of the three major sections are in faith — The primate of Canada: in ministry—the Archbishop of York: and in unity — The Metropolitan of India.

The section concerning faith will deal with the language of

faith, The experience of faith, and the faith and secular society. This last section will indicate the outward look of the conference, since it will deal with such matters as international morality today, the technological society, and urbanization and the metropolis.

The section dealing with the ministry will focus attention not only on the forms of ordained ministry, but also the function of laymen in mission, society and the Church generally.

The section concentrating on unity will show the ecumenical outreach of the conference since it will deal not only with relations with other Churches but also the role of the Anglican communion in the families of Christendom.

In view of the much larger number of bishops expected to be present the main sessions of the conference will be held in Church House, Westminster.

REDUCED BUDGET IN MINNESOTA

★ A deficit budget was approved at the convention of Minnesota, with most diocesan departments curtailing plans for 1967.

Bishop Kellogg told delegates that the plateau for the stewardship budget reached last year was no longer a plateau. "We have already begun to slide off. The slide is downward. Indeed this is the second year of the downward slide and the warning light has turned bright red."

He pointed out the program or stewardship budget for 1966 was \$411,000 with a national Church quota of \$160,459. He also explained that in spite of the efforts of 54 congregations raising their pledges to the diocese for 1967, only \$404,000 has been pledged and at the same time, the 1967 national Church quota had risen to \$176,583. With this type of in-

come, the bishop said that "it will require the command, 'To The Rear — March' in the work of our own diocese and obviously, this is nothing less than tragic."

He also explained that "we can cut down at home just so far, but there must come a time when we can go no further."

The bishop offered delegates these alternatives — that missions and parishes present the situation to their people and request an increase in individual pledges; that the diocese reduce its pledge to the national Church; the "amputation" of a whole department from the carefully planned diocesan structure; or to continue to borrow from the diocesan reserve funds which are already dwindling.

Bishop Philip McNairy, suffragan, said that the diocese accepted the deficit budget — about \$36,000 less than pledged — in order to meet quota shares to the national Church and to continue support to the state's council of Churches.

"For the fourth straight year, we have accepted increased commitments beyond the diocese, while our Minnesota program has remained comparatively stationary."

He expressed the hope that the diocesan paper, cut to seven issues as an economy move, could be restored to ten issues at the 1968 convention.

GROUP FORMED TO BACK JOHN PAIRMAN BROWN

★ Students in the six seminaries in the San Francisco area have organized the Inter-Seminary League for Academic Freedom. Documents have been received by the Witness urging the renewal of the contract of Prof. John Pairman Brown at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific. We hope to have statements from officials of the school before dealing with the situation. (Witness, 3/30/67)

EDITORIAL

The Ideal Layman

LAYMEN are playing an ever increasing role in Church affairs. We sat in recently with a group that spend a couple of hours discussing what they thought a good layman should be like. There were three rectors, a bishop, a layman and a laywoman present and at the close of the session the bishop was asked to make an abstract of the opinions expressed. His title was The Ideal Layman, which we let stand, adding only that when we showed the document to the laymen he said simply, "If that is it, count me out — it's too large an order for me." With this one negative vote here it is:

In the first place, he is one who represents to the world what Christ means by a good man. He is a man of high standards of morals and righteousness and behavior, and does his best to live up to them. He is an eager man, on fire with the vision and the opportunity, anxious to make his life tell for God and his kingdom. He is a happy man, for in measure, he realizes the beatitudes. His Christianity is to him a glory — the glory of being in action according to a divine standard. His standard, in brief, is God. He is a serious man, for he realizes that in some sort he exemplifies and illustrates the Church of God to the world. This layman is a man of firm faith, who believes with all his heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, his only Lord and Saviour — a man who thinks of things in terms of the cross, and measures the worth of things by that standard.

He is a man of unquenchable hope. This member of Christ never thinks or says that the forces of God cannot conquer evil, nor that the Church is powerless and ineffectual in a perverse world, rather does he live the belief he professes — "I believe in God the Father Almighty"—the belief in creative and all-sovereign love. He believes that "the Church is touching more lives, and touching them in more quickening and ennobling ways, than in this land she has ever done before."

If he serve, as such a man will, as warden or vestryman, he will appreciate the paralysis of a non-worshipping vestry, and realize the power of worship and praise and thanksgiving and the contemplation of and communion with God. So far from fulfilling the usual conception of the

duties of a church warden, namely, that it is an office of guardianship, observation and complaint, he never criticizes the working of the church unless it be suggestively and constructively, for he sees the church less in its imperfect condition and more as it lives in the mind of Christ. He is not content with a vestry with committees on finance and care of property: he likes a vestry with committees on worship and evangelism and teaching.

He is a man of infinite charity, who loves his fellow men. The Church means to him the habitation of creative love. The cause of mission does not seem to him an irksome and crippling duty, because he sees beyond the machinery to the functioning of God's love. Mission mean to him the establishment of God's kingdom in the hearts of men. He is interested in all human brotherhoods, unions, fellowships — in all that will bind men together in a good cause; but to him there is one effectual and abiding brotherhood, ordained of God, whose head is Christ—namely, the Christian Church. Church-manship, to him, means the love with which Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it.

With all humility and charity, and appreciation of others, he believes that there is no fitter or finer instrument in the hand of God for the salvation of the world than that branch of the Church to which he owes allegiance. He believes in its divine origin and supernatural grace. He glories in its hallowed and reverent worship. He rejoices in its heritage, its order, its continuity, its tradition. He appreciates its magnificent organization. While he is devoted to his own parish, he knows that the Church is far more. To him the Church appears what it really is — an absorbingly interesting and vital thing, perhaps the most abiding organization on earth, which will out-last dominions and governments.

And so he seeks a place in Church life beyond his parish, because he feels that therein he is taking his part in something that will go on throughout the ages in the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. The well-being of the world-wide Church, its projects, its policies, its problems, its opportunities, are things that touch him closely because he realizes that with these are bound up the issues of God's kingdom.

So the godly layman has a very high conception

of what the Church means. He wants it to be the great city of friends. In short, the Church bulks very large in his life and he loves it with all his heart, believing it to be Christ's body, through which Christ seeks to express his will and to release the energy of his grace. He believes in the power of God — the continual outflow of God's inmost being into man's life through Christ. He is a man of principle and conviction who places the Church and her interests before anything else.

Such a man penetrates to the heart of Chris-

tianity and knows how to make his service effective. He is progressive because he believes the Holy Spirit is still leading us on. His life, humble though it may be by earthly measures, is touched by the glory of God. If we should attempt to sum up the character of this godly layman in a sentence, we should say he was one who expresses by his life that ascription which we commonly venture to append to our Lord's prayer, "for thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory." We thank God that the Church is producing such men. May he multiply their number!

THE NECESSITY OF HERESY

By W. Murray Kenney

Rector of Christ Church, Cambridge, Mass.

THE CHURCH BEGAN AS A GROUP OF PROFESSING HERETICS

IN 1923 Bishop W. M. Brown of Arkansas was deposed — kicked out — for teachings contrary to our Church. Among other things he denied the existence of a personal God and doubted the historical Jesus. Our bishops in 1923 issued a pastoral insisting on the historicity of the virgin birth and the bodily resurrection of Christ, asserting that they were supported by "the best scholarship of the day." Dr. L. Parks of St. Bartholomew's, New York City, replied that if the pastoral was correct, he himself and Bishop W. Lawrence of Massachusetts and others ought to be brought to trial! (A forbear of Bishop Pike?)

I daresay that if the 1923 pastoral became a test for us Christ Churchians, most of us would have to be deposed or whatever they do to the laity — excommunicate perhaps. Many would say these questions about the virgin birth, the inerrancy of holy scripture and the bodily resurrection are secondary and irrelevant. However, as the institutional Churches thrust and parry and make ecumenical noises, these matters must be dealt with. They are near and dear to many of our more conservative brethren in Christ.

These issues do seem mild compared to those raised by Pike, Bonhoeffer, Robinson, Cox and the Death-of-God theologians. My theology has been a simmering stew of Paul, Augustine,

Niebuhr, Barth, Tillich, Kirkegaard and existentialism ("a lively faith") — but I feel somebody has knocked over the pot. How do I pick up and salvage a mess of spilled stew? Like many breast beaters, I don't mind the institutional Church taking its lumps, even my beloved PECUSA, but for Robinson and Cox to raise the issue again of a personal God and to identify Jesus and gospel and Church with a form of social service, rocks me. Back in 1937 or 8 I was converted to classical Christianity and began to understand sin through Reinhold Niebuhr and later Professor Mollegen at the Virginia Seminary. And it made such sense — my conversion from a do-gooder, me and Jesus and the sermon-on-the-mount religion, a kind of an ethical society using traditional symbols.

My optimistic progressivism that man and his society were getting better and better had been exploded by two world wars and an international depression. Niebuhr put me together theologically. And now comes a new school shaking me up again — questioning a personal God, calling Jesus as "the man or the person for the other," emphasizing gospel and Church as servants for the world. Although I don't claim to understand him, the great philosopher-theologian-scientist-roman priest Pierre Teilhard de Chardin seems to provide a base for all this.

Three Heresies

HENCE it would appear from the current rumblings and controversies and withdrawals from the Church that heresy is still alive and kicking vigorously. How should we, how have we dealt with it? Theologian John McQuarrie warns that it's difficult to define a heretic. Those who leave the fold or attack us from outside should not be considered heretics. From an orthodox point of view we shall define heresy as "a denial or distortion of some part of the faith, but the heretic chooses to remain with the Church." Might it not be useful to ask how the apostolic Church handled its heresies and dissenters?

"Cheap Grace" I shall call heresy No. 1—the desire of the Church to be successful and secure and avoid suffering. When Jesus demanded public response at Caesarea Philippi, Peter replied "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus accepts this and then forthtells that "The Son of man must suffer, be rejected, killed and rise again." Peter intrudes, "God forbid! this shall never happen to you." Jesus turns and says "Peter get behind me! You are a hindrance to me for you are on the side of men and not God"! Peter wanted a safe and secure Messiah. Was it Bonhoeffer who called it "cheap grace"—Easter without Good Friday?

Heresy No. 2 was Exclusivism. They squabbled over baptism and who belonged to whom. I suppose this is inevitable. As a movement grows, "the saints of the movement" must fight for their lives or get lost in the shuffle — witness the civil rights struggle today. Many of the champions of the 30's through the 50's have been long forgotten and even Martin Luther King and the white liberals of 2-3 years ago seem to be swept aside. Exclusivism was the issue between the Judaizers, the Circumcisers and the Pauline group. Peter got chewed up and told off in the battle over the law, tradition vs. the mission expansion of the Church. Paul states that in Jesus Christ there is "no slave nor free, male nor female etc." Under Pauline theology all our institutions are segregated. All and each of us practices the heresy of segregation in some form.

Lastly, heresy No. 3 was Gnosticism or salvation by knowledge about or excellence in learning. The Gnostics denied Jesus came in the flesh, see II John 1:7. This heresy of identifying salvation or Christianity with knowledge about it, or with an acceptance of pure doctrine

can be found among both intellectuals and fundamentalists. In part the Seabury educational approach was an attempt to combat mid-twentieth century Gnosticism.

(1) Cheap Grace, (2) Exclusivism and (3) Salvation by Knowledge, how were these heresies dealt with by the early Church? As they seem to be with us still, how should we deal with them?

"You are the Christ!"—the Messiah, the one for whom we've waited hundreds of years. Some look upon Peter's affirmation at Caesarea Philippi as the birth or the conception of the Church. If so, from an orthodox point of view, the Church began as a company of professing heretics. "He is risen indeed!" Certainly from a first century Jewish point of view, Easter and the believing disciples made for dangerous heresy. Saul of Tarsus realized this and was such a defender of the faith that he set out to destroy the Church. I love the old King James' description "and Saul yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples." I can just see him charging about here and there trying to stop an avalanche. These fierce actions explain somewhat his strong feelings following his conversion to Christianity.

Hence I suggest Christianity ought always to be sympathetic to heresy and dissent as it began as a heresy. And as theologian J. McQuarrie reminds us it's difficult to define a heretic for all theological statements are tentative and a human description of what was believed to be a divine-human encounter.

The Apostolic Church

WE LISTED three heresies which divided the apostolic Church: (1) Cheap Grace (Easter without Good Friday) (2) Exclusivism (3) Gnosticism, or salvation through knowledge. How did the Church deal with these? And it's obvious that like all good heresies they remain with us. Following Peter's response at Caesarea Philippi "Thou art the Christ," Jesus predicted his death and resurrection. Peter was shocked; perhaps he wanted a victorious and triumphant king, maybe a second David. Having left his wife and fishing business, maybe Peter felt he had suffered enough. Jesus met this heresy of security and success by rebuking Peter and until his arrest in the garden, constantly predicting his suffering, death, yes, isolation and ultimate rising again. Success and comfortableness, riches in men and money have been continuing

temptations and seductions for the American Church. We have been accused of baptizing the establishment and middle class white values and standards; so Jesus met this head on "playing it cool" and reminded the Church that a faithful response promised no success. Incidentally Peter was not kicked but became at least in the eyes of Rome, its first primate.

Paul and Peter

HERESY No. 2 Exclusivism is inevitable, for when you fight and die for a cause you're a bit reluctant to let the unwashed in. I suppose some of the strongest reasons for not giving up the neurotic practice of paddling pledges in fraternities were that "we got our rear ends warmed" and "we'll cut em down to our size." Again Peter was chewed up over this as he got trapped between convert and upstart Paul who wanted Christianity loosened up and the Judaizers, many of whom were the first Christians. For the Jewish Christians, Paul and his theology were heretical.

Paul countered this heresy of exclusivism with a barrage of sermons, letters and actions. Galatians and Romans especially deal with the tensions and relationships of law, grace, sin and salvation. That is, Paul replaced narrow and outmoded theology with new and relevant. The exclusivists forced him to set forth and clarify his position. Inasmuch as exclusivism is always with us, we, who are in control, might use lawyer Gamaliel's principle — "for if this plan or this undertaking is of men it will fail, but if it is of God you will not be able to overthrow

them. You might even be found opposing God" (not to take the proposed Pike heresy trial too seriously for really I don't, "you might even be found opposing God" could be a godly admonition for both sides).

Salvation by Knowing

LASTLY Gnosticism. Some scholars claim that all the Johannine literature was written to combat this heresy — salvation by knowing about or that Jesus didn't come in the flesh. And the theology of John's Gospel and Epistles gives us not only powerful theology about the incarnation,—"the word became flesh and dwelt among us," but also some of the most moving passages on the eucharist, John 6, the Church, its nature and mission and relationship to Christ, Chapters 15 and 17 of John, and of course, the beautiful and provocative trilogies of love God, and one's neighbor in I John 3, 4 and 5. Again heresy and division are combatted by strong and clear forthtelling.

What are our conclusions? Several and simple:

- Heresy is everywhere and from the beginning.
- It is best not to bury it or excommunicate but to deal with heresy and dissent within the fellowship.
- Following theologian J. McQuarrie's lead, we conclude heresy or suspected heresy is best combatted by a clear and affirmative statement of the Church's position in language appropriate for the moment.

CHURCHMEN OPPOSE VIETNAM POLICY

★ A letter signed by 47 Protestant and 12 Roman Catholic clergymen and laymen expressing "profound anguish" over the Vietnamese war was given to a state department official in San Francisco.

"As Christians prepare for the observance of Easter," the letter read, "we ministers and representatives in San Francisco of the Christian faith, want also to express our profound anguish over the war in Viet-

nam, a tragedy which makes a mockery of complacent celebration and which summons us to confront the resurrection within the context of the blood-stained face that history has taken on today."

Spokesmen for the signers were the Rev. Robert W. Cromey of St. Aiden's Episcopal church, and the Rev. Thomas Dietrich of Howard Presbyterian church. They noted that the group's individual political positions on the war ranged "from total opposition to American involvement to a qualified dis-

sent from the policy of the Johnson administration."

BREAKING THE BARRIER IN CALIFORNIA

★ A simple, double-ring marriage ceremony at St. Augustine's Roman Catholic church in Oakland, Calif. made ecumenical history.

Officiating at the wedding was the Rev. Alden A. Read, a United Church of Christ minister. The groom was his son, John, whose letter to the head of the Oakland diocese, Bishop Floyd L. Bein, resulted in the

Vatican granting permission for his father to conduct the wedding ceremony.

The ritual for John's marriage to Marie Immekeppel, a Catholic, was read by his father from a prayer book the United Church of Christ minister had used many times before in his own church. The vows the couple exchanged are similar in both Churches.

DOWNTOWN MINISTRY IN WINSTON-SALEM

★ The downtown ministry, an Episcopal venture, has become an ecumenical project in expanding its program.

Founded in 1966 by an Episcopal church in Winston-Salem, N. C., the center, located in a downtown office building, has been open only in the mornings. Now, it will be open to the public from 9 a.m., to 5 p.m., Mondays through Fridays.

Staffing the office will be clergymen representing the Episcopal, Christian, Methodist, and Baptist Churches.

The Rev. Downs Spitler, rector of St. Anne's, who directed the project of enlarging and staffing the center, pointed out that it was begun as a one-year pilot project open to all. Services of the ministers are free, and the office is designed to serve an area rather than a denomination.

Now that the project is well under way, sponsors feel that it should become ecumenical, Spitler said. It had been ecumenical-minded since it began, with college chaplains of several denominations maintaining the office. Now pastors of several churches will contribute their time and efforts.

The program, directed by a board made up of laymen and clergymen of participating congregations, has as its goal: To counsel on personal problems, supplementing other community services; to provide opportunities and a place for business and

professional people to discuss their faith and work; to provide a place for physicians, attorneys, court workers, and people from local business and industry to refer people for counsel; and to refer those with special needs to appropriate agencies.

The ministry maintains a 24-hour answering service.

- NEW BOOKS -

YOUTH IN CRISIS, edited by Peter C. Moore. Seabury \$2

One wonders how and why a book like this came to be published. It's simply the minutes of a conference of prep-school teachers. William S. Coffin, Jr., and William Stringfellow, have some important and relevant things to say, and say them very well.

Coffin's quotes from, and comments on, Teilhard de Chardin are excellent and his personal confession of faith is splendid and challenging. Stringfellow, in language fortunately more lucid than is sometimes his wont, writes forcefully about our inheritance of decadence. But the rest of the book is insipid.

— PAUL T. SHULTZ

Rector of Zion Parish, Greene, N. Y.

RING OF TRUTH, by J. B. Phillips. Macmillan. \$2.95

This easily readable book by the famous New Testament translator, J. B. Phillips, is the author's personal warm testimony to the historicity and reliability of the New Testament. Its concern with the seeming negativism of some biblical scholars is a proper one. And the writer's involvement over the years with the problems of rendering the biblical text into a modern understandable idiom enables him in this present volume to throw much light upon the contemporary meaningfulness of the biblical witness. Phillips claims that the words of the New Testament as they stand ring true — and he is right.

Unfortunately, however, it's not that simple. The author's view of biblical scholarship, from which he himself has so much benefited in the past, is more negative than positive. The flip characterization of the best minds in this field as "avant-garde" and as men who explain away "as 'myth' all that they find disquieting and unacceptable to the modern mind", can only suggest, as does the book as a whole, that the author is unaware of, or arbitrarily

chooses to ignore, the complexity of the biblical sources and of the genuine problems which they pose for sincere people of faith today.

We may well agree that biblical scholars ought to assume more responsibility than sometimes in the past for assisting people with the apologetic problems which historical analysis raises. But these problems will never be answered simply by asserting "I am utterly convinced that this thing really happened". No less than Mr. Phillips, the "avant-garde" Christian historian very much cares "what God says and does". That's why he is a historian in the first place!

— O. SYDNEY BARR

Professor of New Testament, General Theological Seminary, New York.

THE GOD QUESTION & MODERN MAN, by Hans Urs von Balthasar. Seabury. \$1.95

Although advertised as a contribution to the "death of God discussion" from a European standpoint, this volume is far more than that. It is in reality the Christian view of nature, man and God by a distinguished Roman Catholic theologian. It is a work of great beauty and great depth. It is also a good antidote to those who would discard the concept of God from their thought and give themselves to Jesus Christ as "the man for others".

Dr. von Balthasar is certain that the fullness of faith makes it impossible to separate Jesus Christ and love from God. The author believes that man as spirit is above nature and even more above matter, but at the same time looks up to and is open to God. While God for modern man is hidden, "A growing vagueness and transcendence of the concept of God may be but a symptom indicating that this concept itself is growing among men."

Man is not God, but nevertheless God comes to us through man and this relation is developed in a beautiful chapter entitled, *The Sacrament of the Brother* in which Dr. von Balthasar writes: "The adventure of losing self will not be worth while if I do not meet God in my brother, if no breath of infinity stirs in this love, if I cannot love my brother with a love that comes from a higher source than my finite capacity of loving; in short if what in our meeting may bear the sublime name of love does not come from God and return to him."

This sentence is sufficient to underscore the fact that this is the kind of book which merits reading in a time of leisure for quiet reflection.

— GARDINER M. DAY

A contributing editor of the Witness.

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