

of view has rarely been more serious. There are mighty forces without and weaknesses within, inimical to Christianity.

The Greatest Enemy Is Communism

The greatest avowed enemy of Christianity is communism with its basic philosophy of materialism. Closely allied to this foe of Christianity is another form of totalitarianism which deifies the State, expressing itself in various forms on National State Socialism. These two aspects of the modern situation have been brought before us here by our Presiding Bishop in the following words:

"The meeting here is symbolic not only of the historic past, but it has deep significance for the problems of our own day. It should hardly be necessary to state that the Christian Church is opposed to communism as a threat not only to individual freedom but indeed to everything for which the Christian religion stands. But it is necessary to make this statement, for there have been broad generalizations and accusations, particularly against those Churches which have a democratic tradition. The fact is that the Christian Churches are the greatest bulwark against atheism and the whole philosophy and practice of communism. It is not simply a matter of pronouncements but of all that happens on the parish level: the training of children, the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, the worship of Almighty God. The Church is equally opposed to what may be described as creeping fascism. We know from our brethren of the Churches abroad that often fascism has come upon them unawares. We are against trial by uninformed public opinion, against accusations by hearsay. . . . We are for fairness, and justice, as a part both of Christianity and of our democratic way of life."

In many areas there is the suspicion that Christianity is a creature of Western imperialism. Winds of revolution have been blowing briskly in all the world in our generation. Everywhere subject peoples are striving for their independence and national sovereignty. Not only has this trend done much to strengthen the national religions in their opposition to Christianity, but it has tended to associate Christianity with the forces that resist these peoples' natural desire for independence.

Prevalence of Racial Discontent

Associated with this is the problem confronting the Christian Church in the prevalence of racial discontent in large sections of Africa and Asia. In the United States the bitterness and prejudice aroused by racial issues have posed difficulties in dismaying proportions. We rejoice in the stand our brother bishops of the Church of the Province of South Africa have taken in their proclamation of the unity under God of all peoples.

Problems Within the Church

Besides foes without, there are problems within. One of the chief difficulties the Church must face everywhere is nominal church membership. This is reflected in irregular church attendance, in infrequent communions, in perfunctory giving, and in worldly living. Nearly one half the people of the United States do not have so much as a nominal relationship to any religious body, a secular spirit which the Bible describes in the Gospel as "mammon" and in the Epistles as "the world."

Another concern is the morale of our people. Corruption appears in high places, criminals overcrowd our prisons. Juvenile delinquency is a mounting problem. Our country seems to be losing that faith and confidence in itself