

The **+** WITNESS

DECEMBER 28, 1967

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Story of the Week

Executive Council Hits Snags Caused by Structure Changes

By E. John Mohr

Witness Editorial Assistant

★ On motion of a new member, Emmett Harmon of Liberia, the Executive Council closed its meeting of Dec. 12-14, the first since the Seattle General Convention, with a standing tribute to the leadership of its chairman, Presiding Bishop Hines. Before this it had moved cautiously toward implementation of the Crisis-in-American-Life program which the convention authorized on the call of Dr. Hines.

There was an extended and somewhat tense debate on the method of making grants under the special program, but this turned out to have been academic because the proposal did not contain the authorization to make grants which its proponents and opponents thought it did. Permanent arrangements for the administration of the program will be made by the council at its meeting in February, 1968.

In the background of the meeting was an awareness on the part of council members and the staff of imminent changes in the structure of council functions and their financing as a result of the adoption by General Convention of the program method of budgeting, and of the effect which the diversion of

funds to the crisis program will have on existing operations.

Whereas General Convention budgets formerly made allocations to departments as a whole, and by line items, the new program budgets for 1968-70 provide for specific projects which do not necessarily fall into any one of the existing departments. The 1968 convention budget authorizes the expenditure of \$14,654,053, but the council may expend this amount only if the total pledges from dioceses and missionary districts reach about \$13,700,000, the sum assigned by pro-rata quotas to the various jurisdictions.

Inasmuch as the actual pledges, according to the estimate of the finance department, are not likely to exceed \$13,040,000, the budget to be adopted by the council in its February meeting will have to be about \$654,000 less than the one authorized by convention. In the face of this the various departments spent considerable time paring their tentative budgets for submission at the next meeting. As a result, Warren H. Turner, second vice-president, told the council, a number of existing programs would be cut below the 1967 level.

The special crisis program involving an expenditure of some \$3 million annually, including \$500,000 in outright grants to

community organizations, was outlined to the council by Leon E. Modeste, who has been appointed acting director of the program by the Presiding Bishop. He listed its goals as:

- To work with the poor, especially the ghetto poor, to gain an effective voice in the decisions which affect their own lives

- To help lead the Church in the elimination of racist practices by insuring that the Executive Council itself follows non-racial practices

- To assist the Church to use its power through individual members by demonstrating a personal commitment to the needs of the powerless and the poor

- To assist the Church to encourage those with political, economic, and social power to aid the powerless and the poor.

Declaring that no "one person, one group or one Church can solve the problems of the poor and powerless", Modeste reported that the staff of the program unit had been working with representatives of other Church bodies, including the NCC, United Church of Christ, and the Presbyterian Church, as well as organizations such as the National Committee of Negro Churchmen, clergy in the Episcopal Church who are Negro, the Inter-religious Foundation for Community Organization, the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Religious Unity, the Urban League, Dr. Martin Lu-

ther King and his Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and the Congress of Racial Equality.

Questions Raised

Modeste responded somewhat deftly to pointed questions on some aspects of the program, including one from Bishop Burrill of Chicago about what was going to be done through diocesan bishops in the scheme of things, and one from Prime F. Osborn of Jacksonville, Fla., as to whether the rule of the council, that local bishops must be notified of staff activity in their jurisdictions, is being observed. "It's being practiced," Modeste responded.

The General Convention resolutions on the program provide, among other things, that the funds may not be used for, or given to, "activities of any individual or group which advocates the use of violence as a part of its program." Referring to this proviso Charles M. Crump of Memphis asked whether in given cases this would be determined by "what they say, or do" and whether certain actions would constitute violence, to which Modeste responded by saying that this would have to be judged on a particular basis. Apparently referring to King's group, Crump said that one of the organizations with which the program unit has been working proposes mass demonstrations in Washington next year. Modeste said that it was necessary to be in contact with all groups, such contact not constituting any endorsement. When Crump asked, "Is our program going to have some religion in it?" Modeste's comment was, "The very fact that we are involved shows our commitment."

The debate centered on a provision of the interim charter for a Screening and Review Committee promulgated by the

Presiding Bishop and presented to the council by Turner, under which the committee would "provide for the allocation of grants" in the program. Crump argued that a careful examination of the convention resolutions, documents relating to the joint committee on Program and Budget, and the information sent out by the communications department showed that the grants could be made only by the Executive Council itself, and that he had given assurance on this to those to whom he had reported on the special program, although, he said, "not everybody in Memphis has confidence in the Executive Council". He held that because there is a variety of opinions on the program in the Church it was particularly desirable for the council itself to retain control of it. He offered a substitute amendment eliminating provisions for grant-making by the interim committee or its successor.

Debate About Grants

Dean Lloyd E. Gressle of Wilmington, Del., asserted that if the council withheld the power to grant from the committee it would destroy its "whole modus operandi of the delegation of authority". In a systemic argument countering that of Crump, Houston Wilson of Georgetown, Del., also an attorney, and vice-chairman of the convention program and budget committee, maintained that while the council has ultimate responsibility for the program it was empowered by the convention resolutions to delegate the authority to make grants if it chose to do so.

Without questioning the competence of the council to delegate authority Bishop Coadjutor Murray of Alabama said that in a "program questioned throughout the Church" it was "important that we hold this

responsibility". Bishop Stuart of Georgia suggested that while delegations at General Convention had been converted to the crisis program this was not necessarily true of "grass roots folk", and that the way the program is conducted may be the means of making more conversions. Dean Gordon E. Gillett of Peoria, Ill., countered with the assertion that conversions would be slowed if the program were to be tied "down to machinery we have always been using", and that the "world is moving too fast" to require action only at quarterly meetings of the Executive Council. In contrast to Crump and Bishop Murray, Mrs. Harold Sorg, of Berkeley, Calif., said that when she had made reports on the crisis program she had told people that a committee rather than the council would make grants under it.

The Crump substitute did not provide any conditions for the use of grants, once they are made, other than those included in the charter but, apparently under the impression that it did, Bishop Coadjutor Cole of Central New York said, opposing the amendment, that "the only giving that is Christian is that which is given without control over the money".

Evidently referring to programs like the Church and race fund, Church school missionary offering, and Presiding Bishop's fund for world relief, under which grants are made by committees which include persons who are not members of the Executive Council, Charles V. Willie of Syracuse, N. Y., said that if the crisis program were to be treated differently he would wonder why this should be so. The implication of his comment was that the supporters of the Crump amendment would use their membership on the council as a means of restraint on the making of

grants. However, unlike the committees making grants under other programs, which are composed of council and staff members, the steering committee established in the charter which the council had before it provided for representatives of the poor who would not necessarily be from the Episcopal Church.

When Judge Herbert V. Walker of Los Angeles moved the previous question, ending the debate, it was adopted by two-thirds vote, an indication that the Crump amendment would be defeated, as it then was. Crump then sought to have consideration of the adoption of the charter itself deferred until Thursday, a parliamentary move designed to get more time for the matter, but this also failed. The charter was then approved by voice vote, about a fourth appearing to be negative.

The matter came before the council again the next day when Turner made a statement which sought to clarify some elements in the charter, and to give some reassurance to those who had opposed what they thought it contained. He said that in any case the interim committee did not intend to make any grants but would confine itself to recommending criteria and procedures to the council in February, largely in line with the Crump amendment. Crump thanked Turner for the statement, which he thought changed the meaning of the charter. Bishop Murray however pointed to a portion of the statement which said that grant-making "is an executive responsibility; grants will be made by the director on behalf of and by direction of the Presiding Bishop", and said that he would not like to see the Presiding Bishop "put in that position — whether you want it or not". Dr. Murray said that he was unhappy at the choosing up of sides as the coun-

cil had done the day before, "coming in here to win", which he held was contrary to the spirit which had prevailed in the council during the past year. Following his suggestion Mrs. Harold Kellerman of Alexandria, Va., moved for the appointment of a conference committee to work out a compromise on the basis of the Turner statement.

When Bishop Murray reported on Thursday for the conference committee, which Bishop Hines had appointed about equally from both sides on the question, he said that since the interim committee had not intended to make any grants, wording which may have implied it had been removed from a revised form of the charter. With unanimous consent the council in effect rescinded its earlier action and adopted the revised charter, providing only for the submission of recommendations in February.

Turn Down Boycotts

On motion of Bishop DeWitt of Pennsylvania, chairman of the home department, the council adopted a resolution rejecting a proposed policy statement on "withholding consumer patronage to secure justice", submitted to it on behalf of the general board of NCC. The proposal, which seeks to set out a theological and ethical basis for consumer boycotts, had been circulated among all the NCC member communions. The council's resolution requests the NCC to "place emphasis instead on the development of more constructive strategies and programs by which the Churches may use their resources to further equal opportunity and economic development."

Referral of some 61 items of General Convention action which affect the work of the council or its departments was made early in the session. Included

was a study of euthanasia, which Bishop Hines thought should be referred to the whole council. After a large number of items, including a study of human sexuality, had been referred to the Christian social relations department its chairman, Bishop Marmion of Southwestern Virginia, said that his department might have to be enlarged. Dr. Hines observed that "human sexuality might do this."

Receipts from jurisdictions on pledges for the 1967 Church program were reported by the treasurer, Lindley M. Franklin Jr., to be normal for the period. The Church school missionary offering, which has been declining steadily since it ceased to be credited to quotas, is not expected to reach \$200,000 for the year. An attempt by the home department to have the communications department get out more promotional material for the 1968 offering failed. John P. Causey, chairman of communications, told the council that in view of the dwindling response from the offering and the fact that dioceses may now, under a General Convention resolution, designate the offering for purposes of their choice, makes a large expenditure on promotion of the offering unwarranted.

MRI Projects

An effect of shift in priorities resulting from the crisis program was the lessening of pressure for MRI projects. During the past triennium dollar goals were sought for each year by the MRI commission. A resolution adopted on motion of Bishop Stuart, chairman of the overseas department, makes a list of "projects for partnerships" available to Church bodies, but sets no dollar objective. When Dr. Stuart was asked whether the word "urge" in the resolu-

tion was meant to be mandatory or advisory in seeking support for projects he said that "it's pleading."

The council approved the appointment of members of the board for theological education established by General Convention. They are Bishop Frederick J. Warnecke of Bethlehem, convenor, the Rev. Charles Price of Harvard, the Rev. Almus M. Thorpe Jr., Mrs. Harold Kelleran, Herschner Cross, Charles V. Willie, James A. Martin of Columbia University, the Rev. Walter Ong, S. J., of St. Louis, and an additional member not yet named.

Many New Members

Of the 45 members of the council 17 were new at this session. An orientation program for the new members was conducted at the Church Center in New York the day before the official meeting of the council. Toward the close of the meeting one of the new members, William G. Ikard of El Paso, Texas, suggested that the secretary, the Rev. Charles M. Guilbert, might use a tape recording of meetings for the preparation of the minutes. Guilbert said that this would be considered but that it was his feeling that "having listened to what has gone on once I have no intention of listening to it again".

New Liturgy

For the first time the revised communion service was used at a council meeting when Bishop Hines celebrated at noon of the first day. The congregation stood throughout the service, except for sitting for the epistle.

The council also:

Authorized acceptance of the gift and lease-back of land in the rear of the Church Center in New York, without cost to it, for the construction of a parking garage by a private business.

Heard from Bishop Burrill, chairman of the division of research and field study, that the planning committee of the council would propose next year that an outside agency be asked to make regional surveys for re-

alignment of diocesan boundaries.

Authorized the registration of the Church, under its corporate name, as an agency approved for the employment of conscientious objectors in civilian work.

Wright Also Becomes Member Of United Church in Detroit

★ The Rev. Nathan Wright joined a congregation of the United Church of Christ in Detroit but said that he intended to retain his membership in the Episcopal cathedral at Newark, N. J.

Director of urban work for the diocese of Newark he joined the Central United Church of Christ. The Rev. Albert Cleage Jr., a black nationalist leader, is minister of the church.

Wright, chairman of the first national black power conference held last summer, spoke at a service at the Detroit church on Sunday, Dec. 10. When an invitation for membership was issued, he walked down from the chancel to fill out a card. Both Wright and the Rev. William H. Colquitt, associate minister, substituting for Cleage, said they regarded the new membership as a full and participating one.

"I am not going to give up my Anglican membership but widen my membership," Wright said. Contacted subsequently in Newark, the churchman told Religious News Service that his decision to hold dual church membership was consistent with two trends, one old and one new.

He pointed out that the more well-to-do people had always held more than one membership: at their city home, their country home and perhaps in Europe.

Second, Wright said that in the present day when many people do not spend the weekend

at the same place where they spend the work-week they should have multiple memberships in order to take up their multiple responsibilities.

"Especially is it important for black ministers in predominantly white denominations," he continued, "to take up a relationship with black congregations and their responsibilities there."

Wright did, however, express grave reservations about the usefulness of white clerical leadership among Negro churches at this time. At the moment, he stated that it was more important for there to be integration of Negroes into the white community while the benefit of the reverse would not be productive until some later time.

Central United Church of Christ is a local center for "black power." Wright is considered a chief spokesman for "black power" through his book "Black Power and Urban Unrest" and his leadership in the conference last summer.

(Continued on Page Sixteen)

WE SKIPPED ONE

★ THE WITNESS has forty-four numbers during the year. We did not follow our usual summer schedule because of General Convention. Therefore there was no issue dated December 21, this being Number 44 for 1967. Happy New Year!

EDITORIAL

A Freshman Reports

THROUGH a decision at Seattle, I was made a freshman member of the Executive Council and, since many have requested that the Council continually interpret its work to the Church-at-large, perhaps a participant-observer's report would not be amiss.

In a sense, all members of the current Executive Council are "freshmen" members. This is due to the fact that, at Seattle, new methods of program and budget operation were approved, involving organization around objectives, rather than departments, and the Council is now in the process, which will take some time, of reorganization to more adequately fit the new look. As with all such kinds of change, it seems that everybody goes off the high board together.

Hence, at this meeting, information sessions, built around five major objectives presented by program-and-budget at Seattle, were held at 815. There, staff members presented to groups of about ten council members, the in-process reorganization that is taking place there. Baseball fans might liken it to the winter sessions in Mexico City where the Yanks trade a good field-no hit third baseman for a left-handed middle reliefer, so that the team might be over-all stronger. The way things are going with the Yanks, I'm afraid, that is just a hypothetical example!. The complexity of the Church's and contemporary mission issues is such that only a team or task-force approach has any chance of doing the job, rather than a departmental and pyramidal model. Business, education and government discovered this fact long since.

It was nice to see the building . . . to salivate, as a bibliophile, in the Seabury book shop; to participate in the Eucharist in the attractive chapel; to look at plaques, diocese of Albany conference room; etc. Somebody had used a wooden piece of statuary as a coat rack in the visitors room. Said work was the Continuing Peace Statue, dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi, with such persons as Eleanor Roosevelt, Linus Pauling, Jerome Davis, A. J. Muste and Bill Coffin as honored recipients. This observer liked the touch, and remembered, as a boy of

nine, being in Albert Hall, London, watching the charismatic, white-sheeted Mahatma come in to make a speech to the English congregation, following his effective salt-march to the sea.

From Tuesday to Thursday noon, we met at Seabury House, Greenwich. It's mostly one session after another — either as a council or as sub-groups — overseas, home, Christian social relations, finance, world relief, division of field study and research, etc. And then, between sessions, on-going bull-sessions in which feelings get moderated, information is passed, resolutions are written and edited. It rained all day Tuesday with a fresh and, for me at least, invigorating New England storm; Wednesday and Thursday were fair, brisk and scuddy.

One was aware of such things as:

Reams of papers which had to be shuffled in order to keep up;

Tensions building over issues and then, with wit, wisdom or the Holy Spirit, being illuminated and reconciled;

The knowledgeable, clear presentation of things by the lawyer members such as Charles Crump and Houston Wilson and John Causey;

The best and profound joke of Dr. Chuck Willie who, in the debate over the Urban Crisis Fund, said that it was ironic that we finally open the doors of the Church to the black and poor only to announce to them that God is dead;

The fine presentation of Leon Modeste, director of the Special Unit on the Urban Crisis;

The quiet and powerful celebrations of the Liturgy of the Lord's Supper according to the new rite. It was great to assist my first counsellor at Camp O-At-Ka way back when — the Rt. Rev. Roger Blanchard;

A report on world relief and rehabilitation which indicates that the Church really gives tangible help to the world's hungry and dispossessed through the P.B.'s Fund, guided by Ray Maxwell;

New words that get used and built-in to groups. Hence the title of the report. It appears that certain missionaries get "secunded"—that is, we pay the tariff but they work for some other branch of the Anglican communion in the world. It slips trippingly off the tongue. We have a parishioner at the cathedral who, as a professional football quarterback, was once

seconded to the Denver Broncos by the Houston Oilers. I didn't understand that deal then, but now I think I do.

Between now and the February meeting, we all have got tasks to do and, I fear, life has gotten more complex. But then, so has the

world and creation, and we are called the Light of that World. Today, it seems, that means not just a candle but complex dams and power lines and laser beams.

— William B. Spofford Jr.

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

MISSION: — PROCESS, NOT PROGRAM

By Loren B. Mead

Rector of the Holy Family, Chapel Hill, N. C.

MISSIONARY RESPONSIBILITY BELONGS TO THE LOCAL CHURCH AND NOWHERE ELSE

Present Strategy

Item: A state-wide Church commission on education meets in state capital. Its agenda: How to overcome the inertia and disinterest in the clergy and parishes and get them to accept the program planned for the state. This is the same agenda that this group faced last year, and for several previous years.

Item: The mission study program planned by a national Church missions staff is perhaps the best done of any mission study in the past decade, yet participation in it and use of the materials produced shows a decline as it has for the past seven years.

Item: Clergy meeting to discuss programs for the future with diocesan officer put him on the defensive immediately, attacking the diocesan office, the "hierarchy" and the ineffectiveness of the national programs they have seen. Most show little interest in the programs being planned for the coming year. Few seem prepared to exert leadership locally to get those programs off the ground.

* * * *

These incidents are not unusual. I have been in meetings similar to all of these in each calendar year for at least ten years. I think these feelings and reactions are symptomatic of a basic disorder in the strategy of the Church, a disorder that I think is no respecter of denominations, but is equally to be found in followers of Cranmer and Calvin, Wesley and Williams, and all the others.

The disorder is a disorder of strategy. A disorder in how we look at the way the work of the Church is to develop. A disorder that is so habitual that we do not think about it, we simply act upon it as a sort of primeval presupposition.

We simply do not question the presupposition that those "above" us in the Church are the ones who will determine mission objectives, educational approaches, social witness ministries, etc. One of the pleasures, one might even say bribes, of this system is the possibility of somehow getting elected to one of those boards or committees on the "higher" level in the Church, where those decisions are made.

The program having been defined and planned, it is then handed down, made available, or promoted for the local situation. At this point, most such programs run into their initial failure. What seems to be the best possible approach and program in the state capital or in the New York office simply doesn't get put into operation. A few eager clergy snap up the programs and use them, but the vast majority of parishes continue operating as if the program had never been invented. National officers develop ulcers from defending themselves and their programs from all sorts of attacks — usually from people who care about the work of the Church.

The parishes that continue to resist these programs betray their own bankruptcy, in that rarely do they produce programs of any significant importance. It is as though they spend their energy in resisting the new, rather than in developing viable alternatives. Actually this

reaction is indicative of a similar problem — the orientation of the parishes is the same whether or not they accept the programs being prepared from above. The orientation is one of dependence upon the “higher” office. Whether the reaction is one of normal dependence, resulting in indiscriminate and often ineffective use of handed out material, or counter-dependence, stoutly resisting the efforts of those “ecclesiastical bureaucrats”, the result is the same. The local persons involved in the work of the Church look to those “higher up” for the definition of program.

The Problem as I see it

THE WORLD is moving too fast for this strategy. By the time a problem has manifested itself, called itself to the attention of national personnel with sufficient urgency to cause program to be developed, seen the program actually developed and then sold to the local situations — by that time the program developed will be sadly out of time, since new and perhaps more difficult problems will meanwhile have made themselves known. Programs developed in this manner will always be dealing with yesterday's problems, not current ones. And that assumes, also, that the programs thus developed are actually used. This orientation to the “higher” powers as the program initiators and developers will continue to assure that the program of the Church is relevant to yesterday. There is no way that this orientation can prepare for the future.

The problem is really two fold: we think in terms of hierarchical initiative and we think in terms of substantive answers.

If the mission of the Church ever comes alive, it must come alive locally. If the program of the Church is ever to come alive, it must come alive locally; and be in terms of the local situation. If unity is to be real, if liturgy is to be powerful, it must be unity expressed locally and liturgy that relates to the life of the community in which it occurs. This calls for an aliveness, a responsiveness to life, a resilience, an openness to missionary opportunity within the local parish.

This calls for an alertness to local issues and problems, an alertness that is not afraid to develop program and try it out, no matter how rudimentary the tools available, no matter how unsophisticated the result. This is a new orientation. An orientation to the local situation as

the focus of mission. An orientation to local mission responsibility. This orientation is essential if the Church is to respond to its mission opportunities, but it is impossible to sustain with the present orientation we have to the hierarchy of bureaucracy.

We always think in terms of substantive answers to mission problems. We can develop “a program” or “a study guide” or “a new approach”, we think. Again, this will put us in the situation of developing a tool for fixing the motor of a Model T; but when we get the tool, the Model A is already out. We must think in terms of process, not in terms of program. We must try to think in terms of verbs, not nouns. Rather than develop programs, we need to develop ways of being, ways of living, ways of moving through life, developing resources from the midst of the life that flows on about us. We need ways of analyzing and moving and evaluating; we don't need new programs.

Hints Toward the Future

THIS WAY of looking at the work of the Church, it seems to me, calls us to understand the local incarnation of the Church — whether it be traditionally in parishes or perhaps in house churches or some other form — as the locus of mission. This is an understanding that we have effectively castrated in the past, in effect giving the missionary responsibility of the Church to mission boards or departments or commissions. That missionary responsibility belongs to the local church and nowhere else. If the local Christian and the local vestry and the local parish is not involved in the mission of the Church, then the mission doesn't exist.

There remains a place for the hierarchical structures of the Church, but their function is seen quite differently. These structures remain as resources to the local mission effort of the Church, with their occasional work that of co-ordination of effort and sharing of experience, but their major work the stimulation of the processes of mission, not any program. These hierarchies would have the job of stimulating within the local churches processes that would help them be more sensitive and effective in their mission. They might bring to the local situation the tools of planning and help local leaders grasp and use these tools on their own situation. They might help the local situation, or even provide tools to help the local people

sensitize themselves to the needs of their communities. Most important of all, the "hierarchies" could help the local situation assume an open, initiating attitude toward mission.

This would obviously demand much of those in hierarchical situations and in local situations. It would demand that the hierarchies cease to be leaders of mission and become instead servants of God's missionary servants. It would demand that the local people and churches recognize themselves for what they are: the forefront of mission. If they do not become the mission, nobody will. No one in New York or the state capital knows one tenth of the missionary possibility of that local situation that could be known by an open, questing, eager agent of God's mission who lives there. Nobody can develop the mission approach, nobody can devise the mission tools, nobody can speak the language like that native inhabitant of the local church—

provided that he sees that it is his responsibility alone.

The Church of today is called not to a program, but to a process. A process of endless openness to what is happening, of responsiveness to what new opportunities appear, of personal responsibility for mission. I think that our response to this call is likely to determine the viability of the Church in the years ahead.

Are we willing to let go our programs, dear as they are to our hearts, for the uncertainties of a process that promises only to lead us out toward our mission. This assumes that we are called out of our stable, well-lighted houses into the kind of pilgrimage in which much is uncertain. To go out, to change is to trust that sufficient program will be found along the way, like manna in the desert places.

I wonder if we are willing to be that kind of pilgrim people.

THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIANITY

By Oscar F. Green

Rector Emeritus of All Saints, Palo Alto, California

WE HAVE TWO GOSPELS, THE GOSPEL OF JESUS AND THE GOSPEL ABOUT JESUS

THERE IS no more remarkable thing about Christian history than that the Church exalted Jesus to the highest heaven, and then blithely proceeded not to take him seriously. Jesus made no great claims for himself. Some of the finest scholars doubt that he even thought of himself as the Jewish Messiah. What he did from the time he was a small boy was to study and meditate and pray and worship and serve God until he was convinced that he had found the answer to the problem of destiny, and had discovered the principles on which the good life and blessedness rest. Then he made men follow him, not because he was the Lord's anointed; but because it seemed to him that the principles he was enunciating were true, and if men would test them out they would find that they were true. His appeal was to men's reason and experience. That was the authority on which he rested his case, the authority that amazed his contemporaries.

But after his death and resurrection the leaders of his movement largely shifted their attention from his teachings, his gospel, to his person. In trying to explain who he was they went all the way. First they said he was a prophet, the only begotten son of God, the Messiah, the incarnate word of God, the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, our great high-priest, the second Adam, and even God himself, who had emptied himself of his divine attributes and appeared in the form of a man.

Finally the doctors of the Church formulated the theory that God was a triple, or triune, being and that Jesus was the second person, or mode of being, of the supernal trilogy. This theological development was perfectly natural and inevitable. Men are by nature thinkers and philosophers. They could not help trying to explain the greatness, the power and glory of Jesus, any more than they can refrain from

trying to explain the natural world, human nature and divine nature.

Although we need not, indeed should not, agree with all the conclusions these thinkers came up with, there is no reason why we should quarrel with them. Most of the doctors of the Church were honest men and were trying to glorify Christ. We should not quarrel with them were it not for the fact that in trying to glorify their Lord they substituted their theories about him for his gospel. They came to insist that what he had taught was really not too important. What was important was that we have the right view of Jesus, that we believe that he is God incarnate, and that we embrace a theological "plan of salvation."

Teachings of Jesus

MOST THEOLOGIANS have believed this line but have hesitated, for obvious reasons, to denigrate his teachings. They have simply treated Christ's own gospel as not being of the essence of Christianity. But occasionally a theologian has forgotten himself and frankly admitted that the teachings of Jesus were of minor importance. I once heard Prof. Percy L. Urban, a major theologian of the last generation, supposedly a great defender of the faith do this. He said that what Jesus taught was not of basic importance, but rather what he was, that Jesus was the incarnation of the spirit of God, and that our business was to come into union with him, and ourselves be extensions of the incarnation. That, of course, is a rather mystical way of stating our duty as Christians. But when Dr. Urban says that the teachings of Jesus are not of basic importance he is talking nonsense. If Jesus be of God, then when he talks it is God talking and to suggest that what God says is not important is blasphemy. It does not seem to me that the words of Jesus can be accepted as an infallible revelation of the divine. However his teachings are as close to divine revelation as we can find in this world.

So it come about that we have two gospels, the gospel of Jesus and the gospel about Jesus. As we have suggested it was inevitable that we have a theology or gospel about Jesus. Some of it is true; but it is a human construction. Yet the gospel of what Jesus taught is primary; and the gospel about Jesus must be checked against the gospel of Jesus. When there is a conflict, the only thing for us to do is to discard the

gospel about Jesus in favor of the gospel of Jesus.

Gospel About Jesus

NOW THE GOSPEL about Jesus is much more dramatic, colorful, and comfortable than the gospel of Jesus. The gospel about Jesus says that Christ died on the cross for us. He paid a debt to God that we could not pay. His blood washes away our sins. It is quite clear that Christ's death did not wash away our present sins. His most devout followers are not free from sin. But the gospel about Jesus goes on to say that God has left channels of grace in the Church and in the sacraments by which we can make sure of our salvation.

So what is required of us is that we be baptized and confirmed and not neglect the holy communion in which we partake of his body and blood. Members of his Church have an inside track on God's mercy. There is a way of interpreting this system of theology whereby it makes sense. But more often than not, it is not so interpreted. The great majority of churchmen think of it as the essence of Christianity and completely ignore the true gospel.

Gospel of Jesus

THE GOSPEL of Jesus is much less dramatic, matter of fact, and uncomfortable. Jesus states it repeatedly. One of his clearest and most emphatic statements of it is in the tenth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel. Jesus' ministry consisted primarily of preaching and teaching and of trying to convert men to his way of life. He solicited followers. His healings and his miracles were incidental. He tried to get men to understand God's will for them, reform their religious practices, and unite in a new social order. So it came about that when his cousin, John, began to proclaim the advent of God's kingdom, Jesus went to him for baptism, and on John's death, himself became the leader of the Kingdom of God movement. While not breaking with his Church, he was highly critical of it. He considered the pious people of his day, the Pharisees, bigots and hypocrites; his Church hierarchy, the Sadducees, a collection of worldlings, many of them crooks. He called for spiritual renewal.

Naturally the members of the status quo took exception to what he was saying; and they were constantly trying to discredit him. One day after he had been delivering a sermon on the sins of his nation, a lawyer, today we should

call him a theologian, or a seminary professor, stood up and asked him, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus probably recognized the man for what he was. So he did not answer him directly, but in turn asked him a question. He knew that the man claimed to be an authority on the law of God. So he asked him, "How does the law read? How do you interpret it?" The man was no fool. He also had a profound sense of spiritual values. So he didn't say, be a good Jew; or keep the whole law; or observe all the sacrifices; or keep away from sinners; but amazingly enough he said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself". Jesus must have been dumbfounded; but not too dumbfounded to reply, "You have answered right; this do and thou shalt live."

If we may presume to interpret the words of Jesus; in our vernacular Jesus said, "You have hit the nail on the head. This is it. This is the essence of my gospel. It is the heart of all true religion. It is what Christianity is all about. This is what God requires of every man. Do this and thou shalt live."

True Religion

NOTE, will you, that Jesus was talking to a Jew, a man who had never heard of the plan of salvation, a man who probably disliked Jesus intensely, and was trying to put Jesus on the spot. But whether he was trying to live up to his description of true religion or not, his statement as to the nature of true religion was valid.

But being a lawyer, he could not let the matter lay. He wanted to argue. He didn't want Jesus to agree with him. So he asked another question, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus was ready for that question too; and he told the lawyer the parable of the Good Samaritan. The main point of the story, of course, is that our neighbor is any human being who needs us. Another point is that half-breed, despised Samaritans sometimes had more religion than officials in the Jewish Church, priests and levites; that Samaritans could also inherit eternal life.

Christianity is an ecumenical and a universal religion because its essence is spiritual, it rests on the two principles of the love of God and of our neighbors. Therefore it embraces Jews, Samaritans, Romans, Syro-Phoenicians, as well

as orthodox Christians, of an infinite variety. It is well for us to understand that there is no one orthodoxy. Some wit has said that all that orthodoxy is, is my "doxy."

Jesus reformed the Judaism of his day. He did not reject the law. He thought it to be of divine origin. What he rejected was the traditions of the elders. He never confused Moses with God. Moses was a prophet of the Lord, and a law-giver inspired of God. But he could still be in error, and many who came after him magnified his errors. So it remained for Jesus to correct them. He went back to first principles.

Essence of the Gospel

IN LIKE MANNER it is not necessary for us to reject in its entirety the gospel about Christ. Much of it is valid. What we mustn't do is to confuse St. Paul with Jesus. At times St. Paul was inspired. At other times he wasn't. The test of his inspiration is the mind of Christ, and the first principles which Jesus gave us — to love God and our neighbors. This says Jesus is the essence of the gospel. Do this and thou shalt live.

It is the gospel about Jesus that to our modern world seems to make Christianity irrelevant. It is not that much of theology is untrue, but that it isn't vital. Our theology is largely a matter of opinion. God may well be a Trinity. But ultimately what difference does it make? It is within the range of possibility that Jesus had no human father; but he is the same person whether he did or not.

Why was it that Jesus had to die on the cross? There are a half a dozen answers to that question, and no one of them may be right. Why quarrel about it? It is inevitable that the followers of Christ organize, and form a Church; but it is not necessary that we have a theory about the nature of the Church. An Episcopal form of government we feel is a good thing. But bishops can be a good thing without standing in an apostolic succession. Why can't we work in the Episcopal Church because it is where we want to serve Christ without contending that no other form of Church government is valid.

The essential thing is to take Jesus seriously. With him are the words of eternal life. We are never going to be able to understand the nature of the diety, nor the relationship of Jesus to God. As long as we will try to follow Jesus he

does not worry about what we think of him as a person. And if we don't try to follow him, our praise of him, our calling him God, our creeds, and our orthodoxy are a stench in his nostrils. Loving God and people is never irrelevant, in the secular world, among the scientists, in hippyland. Love is vital.

Interabang

By Corwin C. Roach

Director of School of Religion, Fargo, N. D.

PRINTERS and type designers are recommending a new punctuation mark, the first since the 17th century. It is the interabang, a combination of exclamation point and question mark. Its proponents suggest using it for statements which are not clear-cut affirmations or questions. Certainly our present punctuation marks do not cover all situations. There is the rhetorical question for example which may express surprise or doubt but certainly demands no answer. There is the exclamation point which can be either emotive or imperative.

One commentator remarks cynically that the interabang might be used at the end of all political remarks and all sermons. I would be the first to admit the credibility gap in politics and government. When it comes to the Church, we must acknowledge that often there has been more pontificating than soul searching. The question mark has been needed desperately to temper an undue authoritarianism. We must still continue to question. However the fault today is mostly in the opposite direction. The Church has a weak and quavering voice on the great moral issues of the day. The trumpet gives an uncertain sound. We need a little more of the exclamation point mixed in.

There are other areas today where the interabang might come in handy. The wonder world of advertising could benefit by a few question marks interspersed among the exclamation points. Likewise if modern science looked a little more closely at its conclusions, it might find a few interabangs instead of the comfortable periods it supposed to be there. I can see the interabang playing an important part in the university. There is literary criticism. What a topic for a dissertation, "The Place of the Interabang in the New Literary Criticism". We might

go on into other fields — a statement itself worthy of an interabang—but let us look at the Bible.

The New Testament has the outstanding example in Pilate's, "What is truth?", closely seconded by the young man's "Who is my neighbor?" However it is the Old Testament which is particularly rich in interabangs. Hebrew can indicate a question in various ways but it does not do so consistently. Sometimes what appears as an affirmation in a translation should be a question and vice versa.

We find some interesting cases of interabangs right at the beginning of Genesis. The serpent addresses Eve with a choice specimen, "Did God actually say 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden'?" Cain has another in the following chapter "Am I my brother's keeper?" Job gives us two very famous ones. The first ends with a period in the R.S.V. "No doubt you are the people, and wisdom will die with you" (12:2) but it is as subtle an interabang as that of the serpent. Two chapters later we have the pathetic "If a man die, shall he live again?" The Book of Jonah is a single stupendous interabang. God's doom on Nineveh is not without a saving question attached to the pronouncement. Contrariwise, the confident promise in some renderings of Isaiah 1:18 "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" might better be interpreted as an interabang. God holds out promise to the penitent but so often we try whitewash instead.

Indeed God's relation with man is always an interabang. The exclamation point is the good news of the gospel, the lovingkindness and mercy of God to man as revealed in the life of Jesus but the question mark of man's response always enters in. T.S. Eliot in "The Hollow Man" may be wrong. The world may well end not with a bang nor even with a whimper but by an interabang man has failed to resolve.

Holy Matrimony

Hugh McCandless

*Rector of the Church of The Epiphany
New York City*

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HOW CAN YOU BELIEVE?

By George W. Wickersham II

*Minister, the Tamworth Associated Churches,
Chocorua, N. H.*

"HOW CAN you believe that there is a God?" I was asked this question at a recent meeting of our young people's group.

The youth fellowship of a church may be of some benefit to the young people, but I am inclined to think that it is of greater benefit to its leaders. I have gotten more ideas for sermons from young people's meetings than from almost any other source in the parish.

This is at least partly because children tend to call a spade a spade. They have not gotten into the morass of adult self-deception.

"How can you believe that there is a God?" How indeed?

An adult would have been slower to ask such a blunt question. He might very well have preferred to avoid the issue altogether. Most adults do not like to consider the thought that there just might not be a God. Many try to teach their children to believe in God when they have grave doubts about him themselves.

All right — children accept their parents' word on things of this sort and go along with it, at least until they begin to sense their parents' uncertainties. Sooner or later the day of reckoning arrives. For some it arrives in high school, for others, in college. Many young people toss their childish acceptances out of the window at the first onslaught of a doubting teacher or of an agnostic book. Others wrestle valiantly with philosophy and theology until they come to a reasoned point of view one way or the other.

But this is only the beginning of the answer to the question, "How can you believe that there is a God?"

A non-swimmer, standing by the river, finds it difficult to accept the idea that he can swim in its clear green waters. Even the sight of others enjoying the cool pleasure of the stream does not reassure him. A little instruction, a little help — these go a long way, but ultimately he has to wade in to find out.

An Act of Faith

SO IT IS with belief in God. There is no getting around the act of faith. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," our Lord is quoted in

Revelations; "if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him . . ."

Occasionally we see a child take his parents at their word to the point of making the act of faith when they never have. The young person actually does open the door and God actually does become real to him. This is exciting. It is marvelous. It means that this child is going to have a life of promise and of fulfillment. There will be little wasted motion. There will be much by way of enrichment to those around him. This is why I feel it so important to give what time and effort we can to our young people. There is nothing more glorious than to see them grow in grace. The sooner they begin, the better.

Alas! This is not the way most believers have come to the conviction that there is a God.

One of the most vivid incidents in my life took place on the path approaching Salisbury Cathedral. A college friend and I were walking to service there. An erect and seasoned gentleman caught up with us and asked us if we were Americans. Yes, we were Americans. "Do you always go to church?" Yes, we did. "Extraordinary! You Americans accept everything on faith. Me: I had to go through the coffee mill to discover that there is a God!" He doffed his hat at the mention of the sacred name and disappeared into the soaring nave of that sublime edifice.

During the thirty-four years which have followed that encounter I have come to the realization that nobody, whether believing or unbelieving, can fully escape that coffee mill.

All of us begin life thinking of ourselves very highly indeed. It takes years to discover the truth. Some there are who never can face it. These die in the dreadful terror and utter exhaustion of constant flight. Do not condemn them. All of us have done a lot of running away too. And why not? The truth, after all, is something to run away from. For the truth is that none of us really amounts to very much.

We are vain, sensitive, irritable, impatient, unforgiving, moody, jealous, lazy, defensive, self-seeking, self-indulgent, self-centered. We are filled with anger, violence and all manner of

inordinate affections. Caprice, compromise, capitulation — these lie at the heart of human nature. The general confession, whether said weekly or daily, always applies. "We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us." Until we are capable of admitting this, the coffee mill grinds on.

Illusions of Grandeur

AND WHAT is this coffee mill? The third chapter of Genesis makes the answer to this question crystal clear. It is the knowledge of good and evil. From the time that our forbears gained this sensibility the Garden of Eden was finished. Life was no longer simply a matter of fulfilling one's instincts. The basic self-centeredness of a man's life was recognized and every man found himself burdened with guilt. The coffee mill had commenced to grind.

St. Paul speaks of us as all dying in Adam. It is an apt expression. With the knowledge which we obtained in Adam we become aware of the dire condition of our souls, and at the same time we receive no power with which to change them. The coffee mill! Our allusions of grandeur are ground to powder.

The story of man's travail begins in the Book of Genesis. It ends in the Revelation of St. John the Divine. Between these two we read the majestic story of man's redemption. For God not only gave his children the appreciation of good and evil, he also gave them Himself.

The patriarchs and prophets discovered that the Lord was at hand: Abraham at Mamre, Jacob at Peniel, Moses at the Bush, Elijah at Horeb, Isaiah, Amos, Hoseah, Jeremiah — the list is endless. "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near." Then follows the matchless testimony of the New Testament. "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

A Higher Power

HEREIN LIES the one possible escape from the coffee mill. Alcoholics who have hitherto doubted the existence of God find themselves caught between the spectre of alcoholic death on the one hand and the prospect of help from a higher power on the other. They know that they cannot achieve sobriety on their own. Even the help of fellow humans with the same problem is not enough. The ultimate strength to

get well is available only from that invisible source which we call "God."

This is but a ramification of the fact that without the help of the Almighty you cannot overcome yourself: that essentially selfish individual.

How can you believe that there is a God? Life is long and daily. No matter who you are or what your point of view, life grinds out the same lesson slowly, ceaselessly, irresistibly. Not everyone is willing to face it, but there it is.

Rely on your own powers and you will begin to see the growth of that sophisticated hypocrite which so many people actually are. This process takes place easily enough, but becomes more and more unendurable as time goes on. Our sins: the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable. The coffee mill grinds fine.

There is only one workable alternative. That is to reach out for the unseen hand. If you do, you will reverse the usual process. As you grow in age you will grow in grace and in that Christ-like stature to which many have aspired.

This is how most believers come to the conviction that there is a God.

GOOD LUCK, MR. MODESTE

By William B. Spofford Sr.

GCSP you will hear a lot about in the years ahead so get used to it. It stands for General Convention Special Program, kicked off by the Presiding Bishop at the opening of the Seattle convention. It was also the business of the Executive Council which you can read about in this issue.

Leon E. Modeste, who has a notable record as a social worker (Witness, 11/30), is the director, and he told council members that considerable progress had been made in getting the program underway. A staff of five is now on the job. Also a committee has been set-up to screen applications for grants — hopefully a total of \$3-million annually.

The goals of the program are spelled out in Ed Mohr's news story. That Director Modeste is going to have headaches is obvious. The Episcopal Church, like all Churches, is full of people who have no use whatever for helping the poor to help themselves. For the Church to encourage them to seek political, economic and social power — and to put up the money for them to do it, is absurd and worse. So very nice Episcopalians, like some who got into the debate at the council meeting, will do whatever they can to jimmy the works.

DOUBLE MEMBERSHIP —

(Continued from Page Six)

He was applauded frequently during his Detroit sermon. His message touched on the unity of mankind. "The hand of others must help us as black men in our urgent need for identity and power," he said.

Wright also called for unity within the "black power" movement: "Black men who remain powerless and self-hating will continue to destroy our cities... We must work and work quickly to encourage all black men to see their simple working 'together in unity' as the same saving means which God has given us — and all men — to chart their destiny and grow in power, in dignity and in grace."

He explained "black power" as a gift of God, an opportunity to escape, similar to God's providing a "way out" for Abraham by providing a ram in the bush when the Old Testament patriarch was about to sacrifice his son Isaac.

"It is also his will that men, women and children develop the power to become what God intended that they might be," he stated.

Wright told reporters that he found among the people at the Detroit church a self-awareness and sense of being what God had called them to be.

There was, he added, none of the "superficial religiosity" which has often characterized religion, even at its best. He said the people of the congregation were "unmasked" and willing to become what God intended they might be.

Observing that the Church is never wholly local but involves, especially in worship, a vertical dimension as well as a horizontal one, Wright said that the Detroit Negro congregation reflected both dimensions in its service.

It was his opinion that "black religion" has the most to offer theology today, and that Cleage was setting the pattern which could express this contribution.

CANADIAN CHURCHES AID NORTH VIETNAM

★ The Canadian Council of Churches estimated that it has channeled approximately \$50,000 to North Vietnam civilian war victims during the last 18 months.

The Rev. Reginald M. Bennett, acting general secretary of the council, said an almost equal amount has gone to South Vietnam.

He said the money had been contributed primarily by the Anglican, United and Presbyterian Churches. The funds were transmitted to the World Council of Churches, which, he said, follows the request of the donors on the eventual destination of the money — North or South Vietnam.

Meanwhile, the Rev. Arnold Thaw, chairman of Unitarian medical aid to Vietnam, said Unitarians have organized a committee to send medical aid to North and South. The committee is seeking funds from 1,100 Unitarian and Universalist churches in Canada and the U.S.

A Quaker spokesman said \$70,000 collected in Canada and the U.S. by Quakers has been used to purchase medical supplies for North and South Vietnam in the past year.

CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL FOR EPISCOPAL CONSECRATION

★ Ecumenical cooperation will be highlighted in Pittsburgh in mid-February when the successor to Bishop Austin Pardue will be consecrated in St. Paul's Roman Catholic Cathedral.

The announcement was made by Bishop John J. Wright of Pittsburgh, who said that the

Episcopal diocese's request for "hospitality of peace" had been "gladly granted."

Canon Robert Appleyard will be consecrated by Presiding Bishop John E. Hines.

Bishop Wright said the Episcopal diocese will use its own "sanctuary furnishings, vessels and vestments." Other cathedral parish buildings will also be made available for the day.

CASTRO ATTENDS BISHOP'S RECEPTION IN HAVANA

★ President Fidel Castro's presence at a reception given for a bishop who represents the Vatican is being interpreted as a possible sign of improvement in church-state relations in Cuba.

Castro went to the apostolic nunciature in Havana for a reception following the episcopal consecration of Bishop Czsaro-Zacchi, interim charge d'affaires for the Vatican. There has been no papal nuncio in Cuba since 1962 when the former nuncio, Archbishop Luigi Centoz, was appointed vice-chamberlain of the Roman Church.

In an interview given to a Mexican newspaper in 1966, Bishop (then Msgr.) Zacchi was quoted as saying that "current relations between Church and state in Cuba are very cordial. There has been no persecution of any sort against the priests, nor have any churches been closed or religious services interrupted."

In the interview, Msgr. Zacchi said that some of the things being said about Cuba are "incredible" and "the Castro government has been very conscientious" in avoiding religious persecution.

He contrasted his experience in Cuba with a previous assignment in Yugoslavia where he said "a harsh religious persecution took place" and he was expelled.

PSYCHIATRISTS MEET WITH CLERGYMEN

★ Psychiatrists and clergymen were urged to "harness" the forces each represent for the good of humanity.

The Rev. George C. Anderson, Episcopalian and founder and honorary president of the Academy of Religion and Mental Health, spoke to a medical and religion symposium at the Silver Hill Foundation in New Canaan, Conn.

He said that while the "cold war" which existed between physicians and clergymen in the early years of this century was dissolving, there are "still areas of misunderstanding" requiring clarification.

Some 100 leaders in medicine and religion met to discuss the areas of conflict and cooperation between the two disciplines. They agreed that "considerably more dialogue" must develop if each group is to fulfill its traditional role of responsibility to people in need of guidance.

The symposium was sponsored by the foundation, a residential psychiatric treatment and rehabilitation center, in conjunction with the academy.

Anderson spoke at a luncheon session. Participants in a panel discussion included Fr. William C. Bier, S. J., chairman of the department of psychology at Fordham University, New York; Frank Fremont-Smith, director of the New York Academy of Sciences, and John M. Cotton, professor of clinical psychiatry at Columbia University's college of physicians and surgeons.

Bier said he felt the historic conflict between psychiatry and religion was influenced by three factors: 1) Sigmund Freud, the father of modern psychiatry who had no religious belief; 2) the attitude of psychiatrists who felt religion should be brought into line with clinical findings; and 3) the populari-

zers of psychiatry in the lay press who created false images of the profession.

He added that religionists reacted to such factors by forming a united front against psychiatry. He asked for further clarification about the neutrality of psychiatry toward religion, the idea that psychiatric treatment may be a danger to faith and free will versus determinism.

Fremont-Smith stressed the importance of communication between religion and psychiatry. "We must find common areas to work together, and then work together," he said.

CATHOLIC PRIEST JOINS TEAM MINISTRY

★ A French Roman Catholic priest has accepted an invitation to join an ecumenical team of clergy and ministers on the staff of the Anglican parish church of St. Mary's at Woolwich, in southeast London, according to an announcement.

He is Fr. Henri du Halgouet, who will join a team of five Anglican priests, a Presbyterian, a Methodist and a Baptist minister. His association will be on an "informal" basis, however, and he will also teach at a local school.

Father du Halgouet received his invitation from the Rev. Nicholas Stacey, lively, controversial rector of Woolwich.

St. Mary's first made history a couple of years ago when it became the first Anglican parish to go into formal sharing partnership with Presbyterians. Since then Stacey has revolutionized its way of life.

It still serves its original purpose of worship, with pew space for about 350 people, but the remaining part of the church has been turned into a unique multi-purpose center, embracing such features as a coffee-house lunchroom for the public, a

lounge available for meetings of local organizations, a citizens' advice bureau and — in the crypt — a discoteque where teenagers can dance to pop music or sip sodas at a bar.

Mr. Stacey, often criticized for such innovations, sees St. Mary's as a church developing in line with the integration of Church and society. To this end he has built up his staff along ecumenical lines, though not all are fully employed by the church. Three, for example, are Anglican clergymen who also hold secular employment.

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL'S DESIGNER QUILTS POST

★ A major "clash of temperaments" is being blamed for the widely-publicized resignation, officially announced, of Sir Basil Spence as consulting architect to Coventry Cathedral.

Sir Basil was the designer of the Anglican shrine, which virtually rose from the ashes of a cathedral destroyed by Nazi bombs during world war two and has since attracted tourists from all parts of the world. This year it marked the fifth anniversary of its consecration.

After construction, Sir Basil remained as consultant architect and held this post until he tendered his resignation to Bishop Cuthbert Bardsley of Coventry.

He was quoted as saying a clash of temperaments with the cathedral provost, the Very Rev. Harold Williams, was the cause.

"It's complete incompatibility," he said. "I am heartbroken. The cathedral has been my life. I spent twelve years of my life on it and carried on for five years after it was consecrated. But eventually the position became untenable."

He said other architects had been employed and changes were made without consulting him.



(the year
of our Lord)

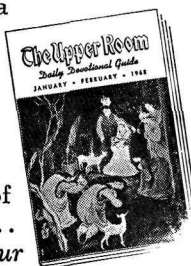
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- NEW BOOKS -

E. John Mohr
Book Editor

THE EMPTY PULPIT, by Clyde
Reid. Harper & Row. \$3.50

The title refers to the fact that,
according to the author, the pulpit
is no longer being listened to as it
once was, and is not communicating.

I read this book somewhat defen-
sively, for I have long been one who
believes in preaching, whose Church
membership and becoming a clergy-
man were almost entirely a result
of listening to sermons and being
edified thereby — not always and
ever, of course, but enough times to
make the difference.

The author says he is not against
preaching, but he certainly is ques-
tioning its effectiveness in today's
world, and he maintains that the day
of the idolization of the pulpit is
rapidly passing and it should do so.
What is so sorely lacking is the op-
portunity for "dialogue" and "feed-
back", for involving the laity instead
of expecting them to be passive
listeners.

An interesting example is given.
Two groups of women were told of
the nutritious value of beef hearts,
sweetbreads, kidneys and the like.
The lecture approach was used on
the first group; the second one dis-
cussed the subject, and there was
much give and take. Later it came
out that whereas only three percent
of those in the lecture group ever
served the recommended meats,
thirty-two percent in the discussion
group did so.

The author is saying in effect,
"See. You should not put all your
eggs in this one out-of-date basket.
Preaching has its place, but preach-
ers are not being heard any more.
Where there is no feed-back people
actually develop hostility. And the
monologuish technique doesn't change
very much. Certainly racial atti-
tudes are not changed by it: you only
build up resistance. Preaching should
no longer be used to bear the major
burden of God's communication with
his people. This is a new age. Get
with it. Avail yourself of other
techniques. Be open. Be imagina-
tive."

Reid refers to "the tired morning
service" of many churches, and I
expect many of them are so. He calls
for more variety in our Church life,
particularly in how we present and
teach the faith. He speaks of Bible
study and discussion groups, of the
use of more silence in public wor-
ship, of the experiments going on at

St. Clement's Church in Manhattan
where poetry is read or dramatic
scenes presented in lieu of a sermon,
of the interesting church service
being tried at Potter's House in
Washington D. C. — very informal
and lay-centered espresso, tape re-
corded music, a simple litany, medi-
tation, silence, discussion.

It is hard to change after more
than thirty years in the parish min-
istry, but I expect Reid has some-
thing on his side. Ours is truly a
new day, change and experiment are
in the air we breathe, and the Church
needs to be open and sensitive to the
climate, to new ways. But a word
of caution is in order here too. I
know of one church which was
brought low by a very modern cleric
who despised all the old and proven
ways of ministering, so enamored
was he of novel and experimental
methods of communication and edu-
cation. I am bound to be troubled
too lest the author's thesis encourage
and justify the wrong people, those
who already belittle and neglect
preaching and sermon preparation.

In the middle of this book I
thought of a Churchill and of how
his eloquence rallied a nation in its
darkest hour. Reid would say, "But
there are very few Churchills about".
And I would say, "Yes, and let us
try different approaches, whatever
involves people more".

But I am still partial to a well-
ordered service with a good sermon
preached from the pulpit. I prefer
this to a discussion group or the like
where everybody has to get his two
cents worth in, but maybe this is just
my age showing.

— BENJAMIN MINIFIE

Rector, Grace Church, New York.

*THE ROOTS OF THE RADICAL
THEOLOGY*, by John Charles
Cooper. Westminster. \$4.95

Although the treatment is some-
what cursory, even, at times, sket-
chily quite incomplete, this is a no-
table book on the "death of God"
theologians. It is so for two pri-
mary reasons: first, it is neither
condemnatory nor laudatory, but ap-
preciative in the best sense of that
term; second, Dr. Cooper, professor
of philosophy at Newberry College
in South Carolina, knows Altizer,
the most radical of the radical theo-
logians, and is thus able to throw
some measure of light upon his
friend's all-too-often needlessly ob-
scure remarks, particularly with re-
gard to the phrase "the death of
God."

Maintaining that the radical the-
ology is "the most promising theo-
logical movement now at work," for
"only radical thought that cuts to
the roots of our current religious

THE WITNESS

problems can point us toward a recovery of the transcendent dimensions of life," the author begins his discussion with a consideration of the "contrapuntal," or negative, critical tradition in the west, giving us a glimpse of Plato, and Xenophanes; a brief look at Luther, Comte, Feuerbach, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Marx and Freud; and then proceeds in order with critical scholarship and rationalistic orthodoxy, radical scholarship and protestant piety, the divorce of mind and spirit in modern times, the rise of the radical theologians, and finally, the future of theology.

This is a tall order for the brief compass of 172 pages, but given these limits, Cooper writes with both authority and perspicacity. What he has to say, he says well and convincingly. I find myself in radical disagreement with him on only fairly minor points. His assessment of the work of Altizer, Hamilton and Van Buren is fair and judicious, as is his treatment of Tillich, Barth and Bultmann, who are the immediate precursors of the new radical theology — which, incidentally, I still prefer to call atheology, for that is what it is.

Perhaps the finest part of this otherwise fine book is the discussion of Teilhard de Chardin's possible role in the future of theology. De Chardin, he says, "will be the Dante who will guide us from the purgatory in the transcendent future." As this reflects my own view, I am very much in accord with the prophecy. The only critical comment I would venture to make of his section on the great Jesuit is that he seems insufficiently alive to the positive emphasis upon certain traditional theological stances that de Chardin does make.

But one further comment: why so much money for so slight a book. This is a work that should be read widely, but the inordinate price will effectively prohibit it.

— JAMES A. CARPENTER
Professor of Theology, General
Theological Seminary, New York.

THE HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE METAPHYSICAL MOVEMENTS IN AMERICA, by J. Stillson Judah. Westminster. \$7.95

A fascinating and eye-opening presentation of so-called metaphysical religious movements in America is presented in this volume by J. Stillson Judah, professor of history of religions at Pacific School of Religion. Spiritualism, Theosophy, New Thought, Divine Science, Religious Science, Unity, Christian Science, and derivative groups, are cogently described with a minimum of unsympathetic criticism, while their

basic unity is demonstrated by fifteen points of similarity: extreme individualism in the search for salvation; a tendency to consider God as Divine or Universal Mind, Principle, or Law; belief that the real, inner self of every man is divine; a quasi-gnostic or dualistic view of matter; separation of Jesus from the Christ Principle which is one with God and every man's inner nature; an interest in healing by mental techniques of understanding and affirmation; general optimism about man and the future etc. Difficult as it is to define exactly what metaphysical religion may be, "it especially concerns itself with the daily application of the absolute Truth of Being in all the affairs of our daily and hourly living." Don't knock it until you try it.

Among the more interesting features of Professor Judah's analysis is his clear delineation of the metaphysical movements' historic background. While in a deep sense perhaps only another popular expression of the mystical instinct in man, historically these religions spring largely from American soil. The majesty of God stressed by Puritanism becomes for Jonathan Edwards a "quasi-monism" close to pantheism, since in his thinking, God did not create the world from anything but from himself. Emerson and the Transcendentalists, influenced by Neo-platonism, Oriental philosophy, and Swedenborgianism, became in the pioneer works of Phineas P. Quimby and Warren Felt Evans a system which has since been called New Thought, while the spiritualist, Andrew Jackson Davis, and others, paralleled and overlapped this movement with their own particular stress and emphasis. In due course Theosophy and related groups grafted into it elements of an age-old tradition of occultism. While perhaps not quite living up to William James' prediction that metaphysical movements would eventually constitute a spiritual revolution as significant as the Reformation, these groups are vastly popular and their influence is

widespread beyond their sectarian limits. Clearly they meet the spiritual needs of hundreds of thousands of people.

On the negative side, it is a little bit discouraging to note the claims of special revelation made on the part of their several leaders. Spiritualism, for one example, is divided as to the existence of reincarnation: it all depends on which spirit you listen to and believe. Theosophy, a wealth of religious resource, is marred by extreme sectarianism and infighting and a variety of leaders who claim direct instruction from a variety of hidden masters. On paper it is hard to discern a great distinction between the original New Thought writers and, for example, Christian Science. The total effect is not to make us doubt the insights provided by the metaphysical movement in America, but it does make us wonder about the vanity of some of its leaders.

The vogue of positive thinking which is clearly related to New Thought philosophy has been widely denounced by leaders of the major Protestant denominations, apparently without troubling its adherents in the slightest, although perhaps more pertinently, raising questions about ourselves. In Protestant Churches it is very hard to relate Sunday religion to the daily life of the individual. Reading *Forward Day by Day* is hardly comparable to the daily study of the abundant literature of Theosophy or Christian Science lessons. Adult study groups and the daily service appear to appeal only to a few of our churchmen, whereas the metaphysical movements involve all of their members in an engrossing daily pursuit of Ultimate Truth. After reading this splendid study, we wonder how our Church can do the same.

— MARION L. MATICS
Rector, Christ Church, Bay Ridge,
New York.

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