

ALL INDIA SEMINAR
ON
THE CHURCH IN INDIA TODAY
BANGALORE, MAY 15 - 25, 1969

WORKSHOP HANDBOOKS

Part I
(Workshops I-VIII)

Published by
The Organising Committee
C. B. C. I. CENTRE
ALEXANDRA PLACE, NEW DELHI-1

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FOREWORD

The two volumes of this Workshop Handbook contain material for each one of the sixteen Workshops of the Seminar. These Workshops are listed and numbered in the order in which they were approved, as the need arose.

The material for each Workshop has two main parts. The first part is the background material intended to prepare Workshop members for fruitful discussions. Conceived and prepared by different Workshop Service Centres and dealing with very different subjects, this Part differs widely from Workshop to Workshop. The second part, more or less uniform, contains points or guide lines for discussion, mostly related to the background material. It will be finally for the Chairman and Resource Person of each Workshop to select from the material the actual points to be discussed during the Workshop Sessions.

In the preparation of the Handbook, and especially in the selection of topics for discussion, the following considerations have been mainly taken into account :

1. The topic's *general significance* to the life of the Church in the entire country, and not merely to particular dioceses or regions;
2. the possibility of drawing from its discussion *action-oriented conclusions*;
3. the *wishes of the Preparatory Seminars* as expressed in the Reports received at the Secretariate;
4. the *number of days available for discussion* during the All-India Seminar;
5. in some cases, the *existing structures* and their programmes for renewal.

It will be found that most, if not all, of the selected topics will come under one or other of the four main heads of renewal fostered by the Seminar : the Christian image, common endeavour, integration into the life of the country, self-reliance.

The views expressed in this Handbook, intended at times to promote discussion, are the responsibility of the Service Centre concerned, and especially of its Leader. To these Leaders and members of all Service Centres we should like to express our thanks for their valuable work.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE
All India Seminar.

WORKSHOP—I

Spirituality

I. SOURCES

A. Scripture

The Apostolic function can be seen already in the *Prophets*, sent to announce God's message and call men to conversion : see the vocation narratives of the prophets :

Is. 6, 1-3 ; Jer. 1, 4-10 ; Ez. 2, 1-21 ; Is. 40, 1-8 ; 61, 1-11.

Apostolate is also prefigured by the role of the *Angels* who exercise a kind of "apostolic" function in the Old Testament especially. They are "messengers" sent to communicate God's message : Jg. 6, 11-24 ; 13, 3-23 ; Dn. 8, 18-21 ; 9, 20-27 ; 12. Angels were also the first heralds of the Good Tidings : Lk. 2, 8-15.

CHRIST THE PROPHET (Lk. 7, 16) : the texts quoted above on the role of the prophets should be read again in terms of the new depth of meaning they take in Christ, the supreme prophet (cf. Lk 4, 18-19). Messenger of God's word, Christ is the Apostle par excellence (Hb. 3, 1). Greater than the angels (Hb. 1, 2), he is "sent" to bring men back to God. See the importance of the theme of Christ's "mission" ("apostolos" : means "sent" : Christ is "sent"), in the Gospel of Jn. particularly : Jn. 4, 34 ; 3, 17-18 ; 5, 36 ; 6, 38. 57 ; 7, 16-18 ; 9, 4 ; 12, 44-45 ; 20, 21 etc.

The Christian *Apostle* continues Christ's mission (Jn. 20, 20-23). Read vocation narratives of apostles. Mt. 10, 1-42 (Mk 3, 13-19 ; Lk. 9, 1-6 ; 10, 1-16) and of St. Paul, Act 9 (Act 22, 4-16 ; 26, 9-18 ;) Gal. 1, 15-24. Read in St. Paul the passages where he speaks of his apostolate, for instance : Rom 1, 1-5 ; 15, 16-20 ; 1 Cor 9, 15-27 ; 2 Cor 3, 1-11 ; 4, 7-18 ; Phil 1, 19-26.

B. Vatican II Documents

Abbreviations : Constitution on the Church (LG) ; Constitution on Revelation (DV) ; Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (SC) ; Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (GS) ; Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication (IM) ; Decree on Ecumenism (UR) ; Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches (OE) ; Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church (CD) ; Decree on Priestly Formation (OT) ; Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (AA) ; Decree on the Ministry and life of Priests (PO) ; Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (AG) ; Declaration on Christian Education (GE) ; Declaration on the Relationship of the Church with non-Christian Religions (NA) ; Declaration on Religious Freedom (DH).

AG. 11, 12 : dialogue with non-Christians, presence of charity ; 15, training of Christian community ; 21, advancement of the apostolate of the laity ; 23, missionary vocation ; 24, missionary spirituality ; 25, spiritual and moral formation.

Laity AA : 3, foundations of the apostolate of the laity ; 4, spirituality of the laity in the apostolate ;—*JG* 32, dignity of the laity ; members of the people of God ; 34, participation in universal priesthood ; 35, in prophetic function ; 36, in kingly service.

Religious LG 43-44 ; *PC* 5, elements common to all forms of religious life ; 6, primacy of the spiritual life ; 12-14, chastity, poverty, obedience (dialogue) ; *AG* 18, advancement of religious life (in your churches) ; 40, missionary duty of institutes of perfection.

Clergy : *LG* 28, priests, 41, their vocation to holiness ; *PO* 12-14, priest's call to perfection ; 15-16, spiritual requirements ; 18, means to develop spiritual life. *OT* 8-12, special care for spiritual formation of future priests ; *AG* 16, local clergy ; 24, missionary spirituality.

Development of a modern Christian Spirituality—*LG* 26/4 ; 39 ; 40 ; 41 ; *PO* 12 ; 13 ; 14.

Integrating elements of non-Christian spiritualities—*SC* 37-39 ; 40/1.

Practical means of achieving the above—*OT* 3/1 ; 8/1-2 ; *PC* 5-6 ; *AA* 4 ; *SC* 14/2 ; 10/1 ; 12 ; 17 ; *LG* 42 ; *PO* 18 ; 19.

Spiritual Formation of Italy, nuns, clergy for and in India—*OT* 3 ; 3 ; *PC* 5-6 ; *AA* 4.

II. BACKGROUND PAPER

A. Contemporary Trends in Spirituality

There is today a very articulate demand for an adequate and authentic Christian spirituality. The demand comes from all ranks of the "faithful" : clergy, laity and religious. The demand is a reaction against a spirituality that has been doctrinally anaemic, often times sentimental, tending towards superstition, frequently commercialised, and, worst of all, no longer Christocentric.

For Catholics, the demand is both ecumenically apostolic and pastoral. We want an authentic spirituality for ourselves and for others : a spirituality that can be offered to other Christians, to the non-Christians believers in God, to the dwellers in the "secular city", to the atheists. But the unlabelled practice, by many non-Christians and unbelievers, of what we want to label "Christian charity", puts us to shame and intensifies the awareness of our need for a authentic and therefore adequate, Christian spirituality.

The present inadequacy seems to derive from failure in content and failure in presentation. Regarding content, frequently of late, the divorce between Christian living and its doctrinal basis which resulted in preoccupation with devotional piety has been pointed out. The failure in presentation is due to the truncated view of man and his position in the world. To correct this, Vatican II's pastoral Constitution on "The Church in the Modern World" highlights man's position as inseparable from the world, because only there has he the means his nature requires to achieve his destiny, to become an image of God.

Even the retention of the word "spirituality" points to the inadequate grasp of the nature of man. Modern man finds the term misleading because divisive. Where there should be reference to the life of union with God led by the whole man, a person who can act only as a body-spirit unit, the term "spirituality" suggests the psychologically unacceptable image of man as a "compound" of matter and spirit where the spiritual is the more valuable element ! Think of such question as : "Of which must we take more care, our soul or our body ?" Spirituality in the past has tended to favour the false notion of "spirit imprisoned in matter" and spoke of "saving souls" instead of

persons. It literally came to be something “out of this world”, an angelism imposed on human nature.

But the term can be retained in the more specialized meaning of “spirit” as *the fundamental attitude with which we face judgments and decisions. Our spirituality will designate an integrated way of life, not just prayer-life, but a way affecting the substance of our daily lives and penetrating every type of action with meaning—Christ.* The adequate spirituality that is demanded would not :

“content itself with sprinkling our actions with a pious and ineffectual blessing. Christians today are well aware that spiritualizing their life does not mean having a vague mental advertence to God in the intervals between their professional duties or vital concerns, nor injecting some elevation of the soul into their spare time. This would be the spirituality that they originally rejected ! No, *it is the very stuff of existence that must acquire a new quality in its very depths, a quality that enables it to be ever more and more the matter and the form of the kingdom of God*”. (Besnard, *Concilium*, IX-1/16)

According to Fr. Urs Von Balthasar, “Spirituality may approximately be defined as that basic practical attitude of man which is the consequence and expression of the way in which he understands his religious, or more generally, his ethically committed existence, the way in which he understands his religious, or more generally, his ethically committed existence, the way in which he acts and re-acts habitually throughout his life according to his objective and ultimate insights and decisions.” (*Concilium*, Nov. 1965)

The whole purpose of the Constitution “Church in the Modern World” is to put us into focus. Vatican II’s insights are the result of the converging movements, outside and inside the Church, movements that carry the double burden of protecting both the individual’s right to self-creativity and consequently his life in the community. As Besnard puts it :

“The new dimension of man’s solidarity, the closer interweaving of human lives by the socialism of everyday existence, the custom of working in teams as an absolute necessity for a successful enterprise, the latent anxiety of the individual

with regard to a dreaded solitude without affection : all these are needs consciously felt which, as indications of the strength or the weakness proper to man in our day, tend forcibly and legitimately to influence the form of spiritual life. The interdependence of individuals has never been so complex and widespread. More and more the keys to the projects of each one are, in part, in the hands of others. This is obvious with regard to the self-realisation of man's Christian being." (ibid. pg. 22)

In certain cases, these tendencies have found organized expression.

Personalism : there are several varieties of personalist philosophies, but all have the common purpose of recognizing the dignity of the individual human being, his value as higher than that of a functional position in human society, his right to "I-Though" relations with all other human beings and their obligation to give him love and assistance in developing his unique personality. From these principles derives the factor of "personal relations" which is now recognized as having primacy in all spheres. Our spirituality, our outlook on God and fellow-men, influences and is influenced by our involvement in all human enterprises, an involvement "for others" in religious toleration, civil rights, economic and social opportunities.

Sense of Community : Personalism has added a new perspective to our sense of community, a deeper reason for living in peace and mutual aid with our neighbour. It has carried the obligation of mutual assistance beyond one's immediate family to the local community, and beyond that to the whole human race. The recognition of civic duties, the different agencies set up by the United Nations, the volunteer organizations (Peace Corps, Youth Corps..) the heavy taxation of established governments to raise funds for foreign aid to developing countries, even such business deals as bolstering the pound,—all express our one-world interdependence both in its negative aspect (everyone suffers if anyone does) and in its positive obligations (we must be like "Christ, the one for others", the one for all others.)

The conviction that in Christianity the love of God cannot be separated from love of neighbour has inspired *identification with the underprivileged* in a variety of social services, both in the affluent and in the developing countries. When the need for

pressure legislation arises, there are *Protest Movements* : freedom marches, poor men's marches, student rebellions, etc., in all of which clergy, religious and deeply committed laymen have taken an active part, precisely because of their Christian concern for others.

Personal relations imply communication which, according to *Linguistic Analysis* succeeds or fails insofar as sound (or the written word or any sign) is meaningful ; that is, to the degree that it conveys to the listener the precise image in the speaker's mind. This depends not only on the impact of the different media,—print, picture, radio, television, cinema, but fundamentally on common mental associations. Therefore, the semantic method has passed from literary, historical, sociological, psychological research, to studies involving the sources of spirituality : scripture, catechetics, homily-structure, all dialogue whether verbal or printed.

Secularism is also very much the concern of the community when it refers to conditions where a considerable number of our fellow-citizens live full lives without feeling any need of God. Because of India's dominantly religious mentality, the situation is not so acute here as in the West and some parts of Asia. These people are not atheists ; they are not opposed to God ; they are simply unaware of Him ; they do not see that He is relevant to their lives. Even though they do not as yet constitute an organized movement, yet their indifference to God has its influence on believers, so much so that in the very opposition it has aroused, Christian spirituality has been deprived of the positive and true doctrine of "secularity", viz. man's co-operation with God in scientific and technological progress. Secularity in this positive sense is the leitmotif of Gabriel Marcel and Teilhard de Chardin, and one of the central themes of the "Church in the Modern World". It opposes false spiritualism, upholds the value of all created beings and appreciates technological progress. Secularity has been defined as the "phenomenon of man's control of the resources of the earth" (Adams, *Bible Today*, No. 34, pg. 2360). The same writer goes on to say that "fundamentally, secularity means the hope of a golden age, the ultimate harmony of cosmic energy and human energy." Any authentic spirituality must build on true secularity, because as Gabriel Marcel says :

"..The last thing God wants is to be loved by us over *against* the created ; he wants to be glorified through the created

and starting from it..The mystery of Christianity is that God could save us precisely as human beings, that He could accept us, even affirm us in the flesh, in our human existence.” (quoted by Adams, *ibid.*)

Closely linked with this movement is *Secularization Theology*, best known by the slogans of two of its main sub-groups : “Honest to God” and “Death of God”. Its chief advocates, all earnest Christians, call it the “new Radical Theology”. They wish to make Christianity relevant, not only to the citizens of the “secular city” but especially to us Christians. R. Richard, Jesuit author of “Secularization Theology” lists some of its common traits, all of which have a bearing on an adequate Christian spirituality. The leaders of this school are decidedly Christocentric ; they wish to qualify the traditional emphasis on the “other worldly” ; they are determined to eliminate the misconceptions attached to the name of God. “Death to all false ideas of God” (p. 13)

Incarnationalism is another important factor in the spiritual currents of today. Being a Christian has become too of ten in the past an escape from historical reality, secular reality. To take but one angle of our teaching, spirituality has sometimes been understood as an escape on to a “higher plane” from the plane of the world and matter and historical situations ; while prayer has become far too often the means of escape from reality (“the sewer stinks, let’s have a day of recollection !”), instead of making us more entirely one with God, with man and with the world. Christ asks of us a fidelity both to Himself and the world ; not to one or the other, but to both together because He has united himself to the life of the world for all time.

So, too, the impression has often been created that we call men to be other than human, that the Gospel invites men to live on a level different or “superior” to the human one. In fact we have been so sadly faithful to this, that sometimes we tend to be less human, precisely because we claim to be more “Christian” ! The emphasis today is on showing palpably that Christian life makes a man more fully human giving him “the courage to be human” ! What is involved in true Christian human-ness for life, for prayer, for worship, for apostolate, for dialogue, is the subject of much of today’s spiritual literature.

More than ever, Incarnationalism bolsters the request for a truly indigenous spirituality. As Danielou puts it, the kingdom of God on earth will come only when each people has expressed Christ in the idiom of its characteristic life. The Mediterranean world and the Americas, to which it passed its culture, have had their opportunity. Now the whole Church is to be enriched by the contribution of Africa and Asia, especially through art and culture, philosophy and spirituality. India starts with a heavy handicap: four centuries of "latin" piety and religious culture must give way to a more "incarnated" spirituality.

The case-history of present-day spirituality can be traced in the vicissitudes of interacting twentieth-century movements. The doctrine of the Mystical Body, shifted the emphasis away from the juridical concept of the Church and, giving new direction to the Liturgical revival, saved it from antiquarianism. Both movements helped to keep Catholic Action from becoming "activism with episcopal blessing." The Worker Priest Movement found itself by the hard way of trial and error. The Family-Life Movement restored matrimony to the status of a great sacrament which the Council has re-affirmed, by insisting it is a state of sanctity where husband and wife achieve self-realization in shared enjoyment of human values. The Catechetical Movement forced a change in methodology at all levels to gear doctrinal instruction to worthy concepts of a living and loving God. Insistence on Theology for the Laity exposed the inadequacy of a purely speculative scholasticism and forced changes in syllabi. This meant not only heavy work and some resistance, when accretions had to be scraped off, but the positive incorporation of Christian Anthropology. Human nature is no longer seen as vitiated by the seven capital sins; instead, the human tendencies are recognized as valuable endowments, though abuse can be both by excess and defect.

Supporting all these Movements, giving them a biblical, patristic and doctrinal foundation, is the work of the theologians and Scripture scholars. To them we owe the new emphasis in Christology, with a correct focus on our Lord's Risen *human* life, enabling us to live to the full *our* human lives by an adequate, authentic Christian spirituality.

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B. The Spiritual Image Which The Church in India Actually Presents

“At the source of all genuine renewal in the Church is a personal experiential awareness of the Spirit of Christ at work in the world, in the human person and in the community. The Spirit is leading men and the universe to their ultimate fullness in Christ at the end of time, in and through history. This awareness demands of us an attitude of listening, in humility, to the Spirit in ourselves and in others. It would be mediated by, and make itself manifest to, all men in witness, worship and service.” (Conclusion of a pre-Seminar meeting of experts held in Bombay, July 1968).

The Vatican II Council reminds us that “the Lord Jesus.. sent the Holy Spirit upon all men that He might inspire them from within to love God with their whole heart and their whole soul, with all their mind and all their strength, and that they might love one another as Christ loved them..devoting themselves with all their being to the glory of God and the service of their neighbour” (LG 40.). We have now to ask ourselves whether the Church in India today presents the image of an open community of persons whose external activity flows from an interior attitude of listening to the Spirit.

(1) IDEAL AND MOTIVATION

The Church is called to serve as a leaven and a kind of soul for human society. Let us consider for the moment, not what the Church should be in order to fulfill that mission, but what she actually is in this country. What are the inner forces which

command and direct her life and activity? What are the ideals that inspire, the motivations that impel—implicitly or explicitly?

(a) *The Contemplative Ideal* : We speak of that ideal, not as the monopoly of a few monasteries, but as the life-force of the whole Church. It is the life of the Spirit, not the mere acceptance of a formula, but an experience modelled on the experience of Jesus and made possible by baptism which gives to all believers 'access to the Father through Christ in the one Spirit' (LG 4). How far can we say this experience is lived in the Indian Church? Does not Christianity in India chiefly appear as a 'way of works'? Is the Church at large, under the action of the Spirit, 'turned towards God to adore and love'? Does the eschatological consummation in which, Christ having handed over the kingdom to the Father, God will be all in all (1 C 15, 20-21), constitute the inspiring vision of the Church's activities? Can the Indian Church recognize herself in these words of the Council : "The Church becomes on earth the initial budding of that kingdom. While she slowly grows, the Church strains towards the consummation of the kingdom, and with all her strength, hopes and desires to be united in glory with her King" (LG 12)? If we answer that question sincerely, we shall admit that we are generally much more concerned with immediate results than with the indispensable witness to be given to Indian society of the theocentric meaning of human life and of the transcendence of the consummation of human destiny. (cfr. Orientation Paper E/6-7)

(b) *Conversion Motivation* : This motivation has been and is one of the most powerful stimuli in the Indian Church. The proof of this is the frustration caused in certain quarters by the clear declaration of the Council that salvation is possible outside the visible Church. That the duty to preach and baptize remains quite relevant to our times is quite obvious and the Council has not failed to affirm it. Yet we know that modern India is not likely to become Christian in the foreseeable future and we know that the eventual conversion of India to Christianity would not solve all the problems implied in the mission of the Church. Has there not been in our missionary approach a lack of vision? We repeat that the most important task of the Church is to preach the Gospel. Have we preached it? Have we spoken to the

people of India in a way which revealed our esteem for, and understanding of, their traditions? Have we tried to know the aspirations and the mental atmosphere of those to whom we have been sent? Then, have we preached the Gospel? Or have we been satisfied with imposing upon our faithful and converts a morality dissociated from its sacramental and dogmatic foundations? Have we perhaps chosen the easy way of reducing religion to a few practices and have we tried to satisfy the spiritual needs of our flock with marginal devotions, pious and individualistic devices? Have we perhaps substituted the Gospel by the Catechism? What is our attitude to the catechetical renewal? (cfr. OP-E7-8)

(2) THE LEGACY OF HISTORY

(a) *The Image of the Imperialist Church* : Largely as a result of the historical fact that Christianity in India has, since the 17th century, been associated with foreign domination, first Portuguese, then British, and also because of the drastic and, to modern eyes, unpardonable means frequently used to propagate it, the Church has traditionally been regarded as an aggressive body out for conquest (cfr. Manilal Parekh, "Christian Proselytism in India" ; and M. S. Golwalkar, "A Bunch of Thoughts" pp. 179 ff.). It is true that this impression has been strengthened by a mistakenly literal and militaristic interpretation (by others) of phrases like "the kingdom of God" ; but would it still have been so strong among our contemporaries if we had had a more deeply spiritual understanding of our approach to our fellow countrymen? Nor is understanding enough : "We must not ignore either that we are not entirely blameless. At the time of the Niyogi enquiry an old missionary told me with an amused smile : Their report is a tissue of lies. But if they had consulted me, I could have given them a good number of true facts to substantiate their accusations." (OP-E/17). "We have dreamt of conquest : the other religions have been considered fortresses to be besieged. A little more apostolic detachment and a little more faith in the mysterious plan of God would restore serenity and deepen charity within the Church." (OP-E/68)

(b) *The Foreign Church* : Another unfortunate effect of history on the spiritual image of the Church is its lack of integration in the social and cultural life of the country. "The ignorance and contempt of many Christians for things Indian and their

adulation of things foreign, persists. Non-Christian Indians see them in the light of this history as foreign, western. They suspect and fear them as the possible colonial agents of the future". (OP-D/39)

The westernization in the style of life also affects the Church's witness to poverty and detachment, such essential elements in traditional Indian spirituality. Ideas on what was suitable in the training of clergy and the way of life of religious in other countries were sometimes adopted in India without sufficiently imaginative and courageous allowance for differences in standard of living and notions of what is appropriate for people wholly consecrated to the service of God. If your "life's message has to carry any meaning to us, it has to reach us through your poor lives. Otherwise, it will not be Christ's. It is the poor nuns rather than learned priests who have truly brought Christ to India. If there are more Jesuit sanyasis (like those at Belgaum) and more Mother Teresas, Christ will soon be better known and loved and accepted by India." (Dr. A. S. Apte of Poona in an interview with the Jesuit "Quest" team.—Cfr. also OP-E/24-25)

Another result from this history is that Christianity is largely of the imported brand. "The liturgy of no rite (Syro-Malabar, Malankara, Roman) is of Indian origin. The spirituality, theology, etc. is all fed on foreign sources, and that too, often, non-biblical, non-liturgical. There is the unhealthy suspicious attitude to all forms of mystical prayer, and mysticism in general, inherited from the West. The clergy and religious orders are bound by Canon Law and constitutions derived entirely from the West, with little attempt so far to present valid christian ideals in Indian form and to incorporate valid Indian ideals into Christian religious and spiritual life." (OP-D/40)

This is the heart of the whole matter. "The Church needs a much greater spiritual sensitivity. Much more should be done to prepare the future Christian leaders, both religious and lay, to understand positively the non-Christian world around them. The Church vitally needs men who know and respect the non-Christian traditions of India. Too many of our leading men are remarkable scholars in Canon Law, but are ignorant of the spiritual values that make men live around them ; too many are the leaders unable to speak the language of those whom they

are in charge of ; too many are unable to guide the few who work for dialogue and spiritual understanding of the non-Christian.” (OL-E/23)

Until our spirituality is really in touch with the Indian *psyche*.—deeply buried though it may now be under layers of Westernised piety,—we shall never have a truly living Christian spirituality in India, for the Holy Spirit works most easily in the human heart according to the natural dispositions of each race and people : we find at present that there is “often a mental and intellectual dependence on foreign churches, always waiting for them to show the way ; a psychological attitude that nothing must be tried until it is first tried and approved by some foreign church, especially English-speaking churches. The spirituality of the priest and people continues largely on the level of devotions and folk religion ; the catechism is learnt by heart, with little need to question, to explore, to understand, and to disagree.” (OP:D/40) -

(3) THE WHOLE PEOPLE OF GOD MUST BE TRULY SPIRITUAL

The spiritual image of the Church in India will not be what it should be until the laity have taken their true place in the Christian community, exercising to the full their baptismal roles as priests teachers, leaders. How do they stand at present ?

“It must be said that the Church in India today, like the Church in many other countries. . . is clergy-dominated, with all the implications of paternalism, authoritarianism that this phrase contains. The laity have yet to be made to realize that they are the Church in their own spheres of life, that they are called to holiness as much as the clergy and religious, that they have a sphere of action proper to them, over and above that which they have as helpers of the hierarchy.” (OP-D/41)

At present, it must be admitted, many of the laity do not present a very spiritual image to their non-Christian contemporaries. Impressions obviously vary from region to region, from group to group, and individual to individual, but by and large the common belief is that they are considered to be “too westernized, and more western than Indian”, with all that that implies of congenital unspirituality ; “to be too free in things sexual, and therefore to be morally lax...” Their “western music and dancing, meat-eating, alcohol-drinking, western dress and home

furnishings, etc.” confirm this impression. Unfortunately, there is a widespread idea that Christians are dishonest, too, which does not always lack foundation. (OP-D/48)

There is also the negative witness of lack of charity : “The Church in India tends to be parochial ; each parish, diocese, is concerned with its own world and is indifferent to and suspicious of the needs and works of other parishes and dioceses ; is split through and through with factions based on caste, community, historical origin, rite, etc.” (OP-D/41 ; cfr. also Nirad Chaudhuri : *The Continent of Circe*, Pg. 310, for this point of caste).

The importance of charity—love—in our spiritual apostolate cannot be overstressed ; “I would like to think of priests as dynamic leaders, as dynamic as Christ Himself ! You have to be men who think and plan ahead of the times, vigorous men of bold vision. For that you need to step out of your closed rooms and come and mingle with us, meet our friends and live with our families. If there is one thing we cannot resist, it is your friendship. I wish to God you sometimes cared less for your religion and more for the virtue of neighbourliness. You profess to be men of God, then you should be friendly men, kind and holy and interested in us and in our lives. Only such men can represent Christ to us. It is not your knowledge and learning that impresses and inspires us, but it is the warmth of your heart. Forget your theology for a while and simply get to know and love people” (Dr. A. S. Apte, loc. cit.) Religious and laity could also take this to heart. Religious, especially, too often appear as more efficient and busy, than spiritual and kind.

(4) CONCLUSION

We may return to the passage from LG with which we began ; the Church must present the image of a community of men moved from within by the Holy Spirit, to love God with their whole hearts, and one another as Christ loved them, and devote themselves with their whole being to the glory of God and the service of their neighbour.

Perhaps the picture drawn so far has been too gloomy ; indeed, there is much devotedness to the cause of God, much prayer, much hidden and loving service of God and man on the part of clergy, religious and laity in the Church in India ; but we have not so far adequately met the need of our country for a

truly interior Christian spirituality fully adapted to the present times, i.e. able to integrate into the worship of God all the aspects of modern life, scientific progress, industrialization and all the attendant changes and complexities of human living,—in a word, a spirituality capable of answering the deepest longings of the Indian soul while at the same time penetrating and orienting to its ultimate fulfilment in God the whole material universe and every branch of human activity : “The Church sees herself as a sort of sacrament of Christ, through which and by which Christ becomes present in the world, and through which He acts to save, perfect and fulfil men by his truth and grace. Using another analogy, she sees herself as the leaven and soul of human society, both interpenetrating the other. The Church must seek to become this more realistically in the next 30 years. To do this, she must continually reform and renew herself (G & S, 4,3) all her members, clerical and lay, being called to participate in this task (UR, 4—5). All her members must become aware that each and every one is called to the same holiness, not just religious or priests, and that they are to find this holiness in the duties of their daily life and vocation (LG—41)”. (OP-D/42)

This may mean that a radical re-orientation of effort on the part of the whole Church in India is needed : “The Church for some time past has been investing an extremely high proportion of her resources, financial and personnel, into educational and social welfare work. The reason for this was that she gave a high priority to certain values and goals which at that time seemed to be fulfilled and attained by her action programmes in education and social welfare work. The Church has now to review this position. She must ask herself what are the values and goals behind her educational and social welfare work ? How effective a means were education and social work in attaining these goals? Does the priority which she formerly gave to these values and goals hold good for today ? The answer to these questions might easily mean that the Church either increases or lessens or channelises into a few critical fields the resources in men and money which she has hitherto invested in educational and social work. The same self-examination must also be made of her church and seminary building programmes.” (OP-D/42)

Some guidelines for a possible re-orientation of effort may be found in the address delivered by H. E. Mgr. G. Caprio,

Pro-Nuncio to India, at the graduation ceremony at the Institute Mater Dei, Old Goa, on 19th March 1968 : "Perhaps one of the failings of the Church in this country is that the full spectrum of Catholic religious life has not been presented before the eyes of the Hindus. Active orders and congregations predominated, and that too in a land known throughout the world for mysticism, contemplation and austerity. The monastic institutes which concentrate on prayer, silence and toil are unfortunately all but unknown in this ancient land, and hence the image that the Church projects is incomplete and therefore less attractive".

Perhaps this is the explanation, in part at least, of the comment so often made in different form by Hindus : "We know Christ and we love Christ ; but you and your Church remain a puzzle to us." If the dimension of interiority, the primacy of prayer and union with God over external works, charity always being safeguarded, were given their true place in the life of the whole Church, clergy, laity and religious alike, the spiritual image of the Church could not fail to be congenial to India, and all other things would be added unto us, for this would mean that all the members of the Church were really listening to the Spirit dwelling within them, and the Spirit alone knows the heart of India, for He already dwells there.

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III. SOME CONCRETE PROBLEMS

A. Christian Spirituality : Interiority and Involvement

In very powerful language, the II Vatican Council highlights the elements of interiority and involvement, at the same time establishing certain priorities in the Church :

“It is of the essence of the Church that she be both human and divine, visible and yet invisibly endowed, eager to act and yet devoted to contemplation, present in this world and yet not at home in it. She is all these things in such a way that in her the human is directed and subordinated to the divine, the visible likewise to the invisible, action to contemplation, and this present world to that city yet to come, which we seek.” (SC 2)

(1) In other words, any form of spirituality that claims to be genuinely Christian must be simultaneously both eschatological and incarnational : it must be turned towards God, but it must likewise be turned towards the world ; however, it can never give itself completely to this world, nor can it ever succeed in fleeing entirely into the desert. Throughout history, a deep tension between these two poles exists in the Church, with the pendulum swinging now in one direction, now in another. If, until recently, most reform movements in the Church tended to re-assert the values of the “other world”, there is no doubt that the emphasis to-day is on bringing the Church into the world, incarnating it more perfectly. And in the process, *have we, perhaps, lost sight of the very raison d’etre of the incarnational? Do we not need to establish a better harmony and a deeper unity between action-involvement and interiority-contemplation in our lives? How is this to be done?*

(2) It is love that impels to both contemplation and action, though if we consider action and contemplation as separate aspects of the Christian life, contemplation has a certain supremacy, if only because two different things must necessarily fall into some order when compared with each other. Christ has established such an order : love of God is the first commandment, and love of neighbour is like to the first. In fact, the love of neighbour and how it relates to love of God is one of the most interesting problems in modern spirituality. For Fr. Bernard Cooke, love of neighbour equals a 'spirituality of involvement'. Christians individually and as a community are meant to become involved in their world and transform it.

Incarnation is the key to understanding of Christian involvement, for it is the involvement of the divine with the human. We have to learn as a Christian community to do what Christ did. The only way you can christianize is from within.

Men are groping, even if they often do not realise it, for a way of reconciling the material preoccupations and ambitions which legitimately fill their minds with their profound, if often, unconscious need for God : they need to see the world and everything in it as penetrated by God's presence, and all our human progress and development, social work projects and educational activities, etc., as integral parts of the great hymn of praise of the universe. Unfortunately, so far, we have not always followed out the logical implications of the coming of Christ into the world to draw the whole human race and the whole of creation back to the Father in the Spirit. We are too externalized, not sufficiently aware of the presence of God in everything we touch or see. We must have a tremendous respect for creation and, within creation, a particular reverence for men. Secular and profane should not be derogatory words. There is danger in secularism, but we are seeing today that what we have called the secular, is also part of the sacred. The only way you can have anything sacred (other than God) is by transforming the profane.

Besides, a spirituality of involvement necessitates a genuine human love and concern for people. Every now and then you get the idea that Christian charity is some sort of romantic "togetherness." No, Christian charity is a more quiet, abiding

attitude : it means that one never feels indifferent towards any human being, that as soon as one sees a human being in need, there is an automatic concern.

Christianity is not simply seeking my own personal fulfilment. This is a danger with a lot of people to-day who are discovering the wonderful personal dimension of the faith. They ask : how do I become an authentic person ? How do I find self-fulfilment ? One should want to become an authentic person, but one can concentrate on that till it becomes narcissistic. One must realize that the only way to become a genuine person is to forget about oneself and open out towards people. The only way to become genuinely Christian is to become absorbed in others and in the mystery of Christ. Then self-fulfilment will take care of itself.

If we are going to let people know that behind what we are doing lies the reality of Christ, we must open ourselves as persons. We must run the deepest personal risk of our lives : we are going to have to let people know who we are in our relationship to God,—who God is for me and how I stand in relationship to him. Many people never tell anyone that. But yet, if I am not willing to be known in my relationship to Christ, I cannot really witness to him. When people reach that level in me perhaps they do not find a witness to Christ. Perhaps they discover that what Christ is for me is someone I talk about, not someone I live with, not someone who is meaningful for me. What really then is behind the spirituality of involvement is the mystery of Christ, the Redeemer, lived on in us in terms of identification with and transformation of the world in which we find ourselves. (cf. Jordan Aumann, O.P., "Spirituality of Involvement", in *Cross and Crown*, Sept. 1965).

(3) Unfortunately, in the past, we have all too easily taken for granted the primacy of the spiritual in the life of the Church ; so we have busied ourselves with many things, presuming that, by themselves, they would promote the spiritual mission of the Church. The result has been that oftener than not, under a mass of educational, cultural and socio-economic activity, of which the Church in India is rightly proud, her true nature as "the sacrament of Christ" doesn't appear clearly enough. In fact, the image of the Christian, particularly priests and religious, among most non-Christians is of a good, useful, busy citizen,

often very competent in scientific skills and administration, but scarcely a spiritual man. The Government officer who said to a priest: "I understand you are here for a spiritual purpose; therefore you are not a missionary," spoke more truly than he realized, while all too unwittingly confessing what he understood by the term "missionary."

And yet it is precisely the spiritual that should characterize the life of the Church and her members. This is what the new life really means! The very uniqueness of the Christian message is that God's own life is communicated to man in Christ by the Holy Spirit, through the Church. This life should, then, be clearly discernible to all men of good will. *Is it? What should be done to make it even more manifest?*

(4) While it is true that the Church and the Christian must become ever more incarnate in the world and in the concrete human situation, nevertheless they must always remain the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the leaven in the dough. The Spirit must so permeate the entire apostolic endeavour of the Church and the Christian that their works must be totally transparent to the spiritual values they enshrine and the spiritual goals they are meant to lead all men to. This should clearly appear both in the persons—their sense of values, their motives, their mental attitudes, as well as in the works themselves—their necessity, the priority with which they are selected, their involvement with the real problems of the community, and above all the disinterested service that animates them. "Yet the way we have conditioned our thinking does not easily induce us to this. For we generally like to control the institutions we run or the services we provide, and are also tempted to be rather complacent about social injustice as we easily get compromised with the wealthy by accepting their favours." (T. Balasuriya, C. M. 32 (1968) Aug. 350.) We should honestly ask ourselves: *for the average Indian, are we and our works perfectly transparent to the Spirit?* Or, in the words of one missionary, "*is the almost exclusive external activism among us Christians perhaps the chief stumbling block to our Hindu fellow citizens being able to believe that the Gospel is authentic?*" *What could we do to remedy our deficiencies, if any, in this matter?*

(5) Besides, the Church is holy, and her members *are called* to be holy at Baptism by the presence of the Spirit—the Spirit

of holiness. Vatican II has solemnly proclaimed that all christians *called* are to holiness within their own state of life ; it has likewise affirmed that by their presence and activity they *are to make* all holy (cfr, LG chs. 2 & 5, AA ch. 2). Now this can only be accomplished if they themselves live at the level of the Spirit. As was pointed out by Swami Abhisiktananda at a pre-Seminar meeting in Bombay (July 1968), the life of the Spirit manifests itself at all levels of human life, the physical and the intellectual alike. The Russian tradition on the transformation of man by the grace of the Holy Spirit is fairly common in other Christian traditions as well. Yet the source of such a transformation lies behind and beyond anything accessible to human perception.” (Cfr. 1 Cor 15,50 ; 2 Cor 3, 6 ; Jn 6, 64 ; 4, 26 ; 16, 13 ; etc.) The spiritual man does not live simply at the level of mind and senses, but at the level of the “Spirit”, in which he communicates with the Divine Spirit (Rom 8. 16). All reading and study, preaching and teaching, social and cultural activity are in the words of St. Paul ‘*aes sonans*’ (1Cor 13, 1-4) when they are not enlivened by the inner contact with the Spirit.”

This life of “interiority” would itself be a valuable apostolate. For “every believer who sanctifies himself takes part in the mystery of universal redemption. It is his privilege that he cannot save himself alone ; his personal sanctification is also an apostolate : a work of redemption in Christ. In the same way, there cannot be true apostolate, without personal sanctification. There are not two redemptions, one effected by Christ, the other by his apostles. There is only one, strictly personal to Christ, effected by his death and resurrection. The apostle can place it at the disposal of the world by realizing it in himself. The apostle is not above his Master, and, by the grace of his Master, he is not below him either. The work of redemption is not something exterior to him : an alien grace merited by Christ and which he simply passes on like a worker on an assembly line. For him, as for his Master, redemption is a living work which is accomplished in a personal sanctification, in a death to self and a resurrection to God. Thus Christ exalts the person of the apostle and magnifies him in proportion as he demands that the apostle die to himself ; for it is in the apostle’s own person that the salvation of others is worked out. The prime law of apostolate is a law of communion in Christ and in his mystery of Redemption. Everything else,—the law of incarnation for

instance or external activity—is secondary, though not subordinate ; it can only follow from the first law.” (Durwell, In the Redeeming Christ, pg. 17),

This demands a *truly contemplative spirit in the lives of Christians*, which does not mean the life of one set outside the world and its lawful activities, or the life of one who is unconcerned with the work of the Church in establishing the kingdom in the Modern world. Nor does it mean simply a life devoted to thinking or meditating about God, nor even the life of vocal prayer and liturgical celebration ; but *the hardly expressible awareness of the presence of the Spirit at the very source of our being and of all our activities, in the very depths of our own spirit*. These heights of the spiritual life are the birth-right of every Christian. If this is not properly understood in the Church now, there is danger that all the present trends for an *aggiornamento* might well end up in confusion. The great tragedy at present is precisely that some well-meaning Christians, under the spell of renewal, are chiefly interested in external changes of language, method, techniques, etc. This may be quite necessary, but it is only a very small part of the entire process ! Only by returning to her source which is the Spirit, and by a deeper participation in the life of the Spirit, will the Church’s renewal be authentic and adequate. (cfr. Pre-Seminar paper of Swami Abhisiktananda)

In this context we may discuss the following : *In the dealings of Christians with one another is it evident that we are dealing with someone “holy” ? In our multifarious activities is our primary concern for persons and their human-christian growth and maturity ? How discernible is it to the casual Indian citizen that all of us, laity-clergy-religious, are seriously concerned about holiness, to which we are called ? How do we go about developing the contemplative spirit among Christians so as to give real depth to their lives and activities ?*

(6) Intimately connected with the primacy of the spiritual in the life of the Church is another question : the charismatic element in the Church and in the life of Christians. The existence of charismata is definitely a data of revelation : Holy Scripture has innumerable references to them, cfr. 1 Cor 12-14 ; Rom 12, 1-8 ; 16, 1 ; Eph. 4, 1-16 ; the Church’s Magisterium recognizes them in her ordinary teaching, cfr. *Mystici Corporis*, AAS 35 (1943), 200 and CTS translation pp. 13-14, 23-24, as

well as in her Conciliar Decrees, (cfr. LG 12/3-4; AG 23/1; 3/3 ; 30/6 ; etc.); and the whole history of the Church reveals both the tensions that at times existed between the "hierarchies" and "charismatics" as well as the accord given to genuine charisms.

The Holy Spirit is certainly given to the institutional Church ; but to restrict his activity only to that sector of the new People of God would be theologically inadequate. "The Spirit breathes where he wills." For even if the Church is "absolute" in the sense that she is one with Christ, yet this attribution of an absolute character does not involve a totalitarian view of the Church! And yet our view would be totalitarian if we were to think, explicitly or tacitly, that the Church is not liable to err in any of her actions ; if we supposed that all living impulses of the Church can originate only from her official ministers ; if we were to admit that any initiative is legitimate only if springing from authority or that every stirring of life in the Church is mere carrying out of an order or wish from above. (cfr. K. Rahner, *The Dynamic Element in the Church*). Says the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church : "These charismatic gifts..are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation, for they are exceedingly suitable and useful for the needs of the Church". But immediately it adds : "Judgment as to their genuineness and proper use belongs to those who preside over the Church, and to whose special competence it belongs, not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to that which is good.". LG 12

Within the Church Universal, *what*, we may ask, *is the special charism of the Indian Church ? Are we developing it sufficiently ? In our dealings with persons, are we concerned about discovering their individual charisms, recognising them and fostering them? or are we rather inclined to smother them, particularly if they appear "different" from our own or from those of the "establishment" ? How can we discern whether a particular charism is really from the Spirit ? Is there any concrete criterion to guide us ?*

B. Spiritual Experience

(1) Christianity is essentially the handing down of a spiritual experience : the experience which Jesus Christ, the Man *par excellence*, had of God the Father, and which he communicated

to his Apostles ; and the experience which the Apostles had of Jesus the God-Man, Redeemer of the world, who through his life-death-resurrection made all believers sharers of his Father's life and glory. It is the experience of a total commitment of faith in Christ ! The Church is the social and human milieu willed by Christ in which this experience is transmitted by way of the 'word' and 'sacraments'. But in her inmost being she is ordained to transmit that spiritual experience which is the fulness of faith.

Hence the Church is not only a social structure consisting of formulae and rules, rites and ceremonies. All these externals in the Church are directed towards the reality (the 'res'), the inner core beyond sensorial and mental perception : a living experience of the living God, implying a total conversion, *metanoia*, in the biblical sense. Far too easily are our Christians satisfied with the sacramental signs and symbols ; few are consciously striving to obtain the reality signified by the sacraments (the 'res sacramenti').

Such a deep spiritual experience is noticeable in the Apostles, Saints and Prophets, for whom faith is not a dull habit but an acute fever. Their personal spiritual experience was then expressed in words, reduced to formulae, codified and handed down. But the formula was meant to mediate the experience : the rule of life was meant to be a sure path to acquire such an experience for their followers and imitators in much the same way as the Church and sacraments were meant to mediate the original Christian experience. Instead, we are perhaps so busily engaged in passing on the formulae and the rules, the method and the ceremonies that we don't seem to ever have the time to concern ourselves about transmitting the experience itself, the experience which can be summed up in those few words : We have seen the Lord !

Would you accept that Christianity is primarily a living experience of God in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit ? Do you think that in the entire religious formation of laity-clergy-religious the whole field of spiritual experience has been sorely neglected ? If so, what reasons would you assign to this ? What remedies would you recommend ?

(2) Moreover, because of the prevailing currents all over the world, modern man craves for experience of all kinds,—includ-

ing spiritual experience. (Consider for a moment the attraction exercised all over the world by any movement claiming to give its adherents an experiential awareness of the Divine !)

Knowledge alone doesn't satisfy man any more. Perhaps with all his great discoveries during the last 30 years, he feels he knows too much already ; certainly more than the average man of any bygone age. And yet this mere national knowledge fails to satisfy him. On the contrary, in the depths of his being he remains empty. Even the speculative knowledge of religion, studied and repeated parrot-wise and practiced more or less in a routine-like manner fails to do more than give him the very righteous feeling that he has paid his debt to God and can now live as freely as he wills. Thus the very knowledge of religion could become a cover-up for the void in our hearts : since we know, we think we are dispensed from the primary demand of our faith, which is, getting totally involved with God. Mere knowledge, even theological, could sometimes become the shield protecting us from the terrors of personal spiritual experience, which is recognized as far too "dangerous", as it is often more exacting than the demands of our routine formula and devotional practices. Because of his utter sincerity, modern man rejects any such hypocrisy ; he wants the genuine product !

Much less does any purely voluntaristic path appeal to the man of today. Experience shows him only too clearly that the way of the will by itself is very inadequate ; what is imposed on man by the force of his will alone cannot really last. On the contrary, an aggressive assertion of the will puts a person under great strain, and in the long run it becomes impossible for him to resist the pull of the heart in any deep personal religious crisis.

In a harmonious development of a person's spiritual life, knowledge, will and emotions must play their respective roles. Education of the intellect and the will has perhaps already progressed sufficiently ; in our day it is the education of the emotions and the training in spiritual experience that lags far behind. And without it, we can hardly be said to form the whole man !

How should we go about forming Catholics at all levels,—lay, clerical and religious,—to acquire such a spiritual experience ? Do you think that in the religious formation of Catholics, be it in school, college, parish or seminary, far too much importance is given to a purely notional knowledge of the faith, as something to

be proved, defended, speculated about and externally practiced,— and not enough to the living and loving experience of that faith? How would you remedy this situation? At present why do relatively so many once sincere and committed Catholic laymen, religious and even priests, who to all appearances prayed and received the sacraments frequently, suddenly loose their moorings and give up the priesthood, religious life and even the faith? Would it perchance have something to do with a lack of genuine Christian spiritual experience in their lives?

(3) Moreover, in a country like India which is the land *par excellence* of spiritual experience, the importance of presenting Christianity not so much as a 'dharma', i.e. formulae, rites and rules, but rather as a living experience in faith-hope-love cannot be underestimated.

In a pre-Seminar paper, Swami Abhisiktananda expressed this very forcefully. All through the centuries the Church has had to face innumerable challenges. But now it is her own religious experience which is challenged both by contemporary atheism and by religious Hinduism.

Western atheism contests the value of what the Church called her own faith in, and experience of, the Lord. It regards the expression of her experience as a kind of fiduciary currency, without any real security guaranteeing it, fit only for the credulity of the ignorant. And now that man has come of age he must be able to face squarely his own existence in the world without the aid or temporary comfort of any "myths and legends".

But religious Hinduism challenges the Church's faith in the name of its own experience of the Divine. For like Christianity, Hinduism is first and foremost a spiritual experience. Anyone who honestly studies the Hindu scriptures, especially the old Upanishads, some of the later religious books and the lives of numerous sages and mystics, cannot doubt this.

And so the real problem that faces the Church in India actually is no longer how to preach effectively to the masses; rather, prior to any attempt at evangelization or rather as the basis of it she has first to answer the challenge of interiority and spiritual experience which is put to her by Hinduism.

For the majority of Hindus the Church appears generally at the level of her structures, of her intellectual formulations, of her

techniques of education and socio-economic work, of her apostolate. They may resent the Church's success in these fields,—or make use of, compete with or imitate them. Yet looking at all those externals from the heights of their spiritual achievements and the experience of their saints and sages, they have nothing but deep contempt for Christianity that doesn't seem to offer them anything corresponding to the Hindu experience of God.

Moreover, in the Hindu tradition the words of the Scriptures, particularly the Vedas, are not studied as ends in themselves ; they obtain their value from the fact that they spring from the spiritual experience of sages and are meant to lead others to a personal spiritual experience. Hence the need, normally, of a guru to ascertain the real meaning of the Vedas : a guru who having himself realized their truth is able to lead his disciples to the experience, which is their "res." Unfortunately, a commonly expressed concern among Catholics at all levels is that in the Church today it is very difficult, if not almost impossible, to find genuine guides among the clergy and religious who don't merely repeat spiritual clichés, but from their own personal experience of God can help others acquire a similar spiritual experience. The difficulty is certainly one of time : priests and religious are engaged in so many diverse activities for the glory of God and the salvation of men that they never seem to have the time, the peace and quiet required to lead souls to a genuine Christian experience. Here is where the problem of priorities comes up. But this is not the only difficulty ; far more serious is the one of formation. As Rev. Murray Rogers puts it : *if at present there were no Christian institutions to be administered, enlarged, looked after and fought about ; if there were no organizations to be run and associations to be kept going ; would the clergy and religious really know what to do and how to spend the long hours of the day ? In short, are they equipped to make a deep spiritual impact on persons or groups, catholic and others, that are thirsting for the spiritual experience of Communion with good ? Do you think this situation needs to be remedied ? If, so, how ? Does your own experience confirm or contradict the view of some scholars who affirm that Christianity will never appeal to the really spiritual men of India so long as it is not taught and lived as an experience ? Would this in any way conflict with the need of teaching Christianity as a 'creed', dogmas and all ? How could the two trends be reconciled in practice ?*

(4) While recognizing the importance of spiritual experience for the life of the Church in India, one cannot lose sight of the dangers inherent in it. For one thing, it is not to be confused with certain unusual phenomena and para-psychic manifestations, often due to accidental circumstances or even to the weakness of the individual *psyche*, always, of course, leaving the possibility of a special charism or intervention from God; rather, **it is the experiential awareness of the fact that I am from God, and for God, and before God, always; an awareness which does not leave man the possibility of being satisfied with any judaical observance of his religion, but which demands an unreserved following of Christ, and a profound attention to the Spirit.**

Besides, there are the well-known dangers of excessive subjectivism and emotionalism, to say nothing of illuminism and quietism which must be guarded against. They have always posed a threat to the Church at different periods and under various labels. But in our human situation, every good does involve a certain risk. The remedy consists not in eliminating the good, but in carefully watching over any exaggerations that may creep in, and preserving a healthy balance.

This can only be achieved through sound guidance, existential counseling and consistent spiritual direction; through a complete openness and submission to the Holy Spirit; through a better understanding of the movements of the Spirit by means of a keen spiritual discernment and through the assiduous practice of prayer, not as a stereo-typed, irrelevant item on the daily programme, which must be gone through at all costs, more out of fear and superstition than anything else—but rather as a personal, existential encounter with the living Lord, who through his consolations and desolations will give to each an experience of Himself in greater or lesser degree: this is the inheritance to which He himself has called us. "Taste and see how sweet is the Lord!"

Given the characteristics of the Indian psyche (traditional and modern), what positive helps will we find and what concrete dangers need we guard against when presenting and fostering Christianity as a spiritual experience? How could these dangers be best obviated? What approaches should be used in order to make Christians appreciate prayer as a true spiritual experience?

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C. Integration of Hindu Spiritual Values into Christian Spirituality

Introduction : This section takes for granted the theme proposed for discussion in section A and B of this Workshop Paper, i.e., it assumes that :

Spirituality means the fundamental attitude of a man for whom the reality of God is a lived experience in the very depths of his being—an experience which gives life and meaning to all his activities, religious as well as secular.

Christian Spirituality is centred in Christ, directed towards the Father in the mystery of the Holy Spirit. It is lived in the Church, that is, in the Community of the Mystical Body. It is founded in the Bible, and takes its main inspiration from the corporate worship of the Church, that is, the Liturgy.

Spirituality in Christ or in the Church cannot be authentic if the individual's relationship to God is separated, in theory or in practice, from his relationship to his fellow-men. Hence the essentially "involved" character of Christian Spirituality so forcefully re-stated in our times.

The main purpose of this third section is to see how these essential characteristics of any truly Christian Spirituality can be lived in the Indian context.

For practical purposes, the term "Indian" is here taken as equivalent to "Hindu". It is true that "Indian Culture" is multiform, consisting of a number of diverse strands, but the Hindu culture-cum—religion is—*overwhelmingly dominant* through sheer weight of numbers (in the 1961 census 83% of the population declared themselves Hindus) ; and—*fundamental* : it has shaped the Indian mind for three or four thousand years, and has influenced not only the Indian's social customs but the very structure of his language and his thought, all his reactions to life. It may even be said that other cultures found in India have remained foreign bodies in the measure in which they have failed to take into account this fact of the Hindu infra-structure of the whole cultural/religious life of the country.

It is greatly to be desired that studies in depth of Buddhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Sikhism should be undertaken in the light of this principle, but unfortunately the limited time available

for discussion at the National Seminar does not allow this to be done here.

We should not forget the impact on modern India of *contemporary secularism and technology*. Hinduism, like all other religions, including Christianity, has to face this challenge and is going through a crisis of growth not unlike the present crisis in the Church. In our study of Hindu Spirituality we should therefore insist less on its transitory forms, even though they may be a thousand years old, than on the permanent values which remain identical under the changes of credal formulae, rites, practices of devotion, asceticism and the like.

1. THE REASONS FOR INTEGRATION

The Christian man is first of all a man. Grace does not destroy his nature, but ennobles and transforms him from within. There is here no dichotomy : Grace does not exist as a separate entity apart from the human being it vivifies and transforms. In the same way, on the social level. Christianity is not itself a culture or civilization, but an inspiring and animating force which penetrates, transforms and vivifies the diverse cultures of men, doing no violence to all that is good in them, but perfecting them, giving a new supernatural dimension to their civilising effect. This is what Christ meant when He said that the Gospel is like yeast in the dough.

Each culture, no less than each individual man, is expected to sing its own canticle in the all-embracing canticle of the Lamb. The diversity of cultures and individuals has no other purpose than to make possible this wonderful multiform manifestation of God in His creation.

God does not, then, expect an Indian to react, to pray, etc., in the manner of a Japanese, a Bantu, an Australian or an American : Christianity must bring about the fulfilment of man as man, and as *this* man. The same is true of cultures and civilisations.

Hindu culture and Hindu spirituality have nothing to lose in accepting the transformation of themselves from within offered by the Gospel, a transformation which can only bring them fulfilment, accentuating, not destroying, their own characteristics.

Are Christians in India sufficiently convinced of this? Until recent times there has been little awareness of it. Nowadays, however, there is a growing realisation that Christianity itself has lost something by keeping apart from the mainstream of Indian culture and religious life.

It is increasingly recognized that the witness to Christ which should be given by Christians in India is too often obscured by :

—the foreign character of their religious customs, rites, formulae, ways of prayer ;

—the emphasis laid on the external and even accidental aspects of religion : administration, secular education, socio-economic activities, etc., so much so that Hindus often wonder whether there really is such a thing as Christian spirituality at all, and whether Christians are not too easily satisfied with mere ritualism.

2. THE SPIRITUAL OF HINDUISM

For at least three thousand years, the *Sanatana Dharma* has proved itself to be spiritually fruitful in a marvellous way. We do not deny that there are defects in Hinduism, but instead of stressing these, it is surely better to concentrate on its better and higher aspects, and then ask ourselves whether we have not something to learn from them.

The spiritual value of the *Dharma* is proved above all by:

(i) the deep and inspiring character of its scriptures and of the many mystical books it has produced down the ages ;

(ii) the uninterrupted chain of its holy men who have never been lacking, from Vedic times to the present day ;

(iii) the call of so many to a life of complete renunciation and consecration to God.

It therefore confronts us as a challenge and an invitation from the Holy Spirit :

—a challenge, because, as noted above, many Hindus, even though they may admire our honesty, devotedness, etc., do not consider us really spiritual. Are they wrong? Does our preaching of the Gospel really meet the demands of the spiritual tradition of India? Does their knowledge of lead Hindus to expect to

find the fulfilment of their own spiritual aspirations by becoming Christians ?

—*an invitation from the Holy Spirit*, because nothing falls outside God's Providence. Through the challenge of Hindu Spirituality, the Holy Spirit seems to be calling Christians to a serious re-examination of their own lives. Christ's experience of the Father which is shared through faith by every Christian is surely as deep as, and even deeper than, any Hindu experience. Is not the challenge of Hindu interiority a reminder to us from God to go deeper into our own experience of the Spirit ?

In this connection it may be worth reminding ourselves that if we take a cross-section of the Indian community and try to distinguish spiritual men from non-spiritual, honest from dishonest, etc., the dividing line will cut across all religions and denominations. Why is this ? What are its implications for the pharisaic pride we sometimes take in being Christians ?

3. FUNDAMENTAL VALUES OF HINDU SPIRITUALITY

We shall not consider here values such as honesty, truth, chastity, etc., but focus attention on some of the most fundamental and characteristic aspects of Hindu Spirituality.

(i) *Awareness of the Presence of God** in everything, at the heart of everything, and especially in the depths of man's own heart. This is what is meant by the "dimension of interiority" of Hinduism. The Presence is experienced, not as coming from without or from above, but as most intimately *within*, as the Self of a man's own self, so that it is difficult for him at times to distinguish his own being from the Being of God. As a result, attempts to express this experience in words have not always succeeded in avoiding pantheistic formulations.

(ii) The genuine Advaitic experience *frees a man so completely from all egoism* that the *jnani* will fulfil his obligations

*It should be noted that the term 'God' in Christian usage includes not only what Hindus understand by 'Ishwara'—namely, God viewed from man's angle as Creator, Lord, Judge, etc. but also God in the impenetrable mystery of His innermost being, inaccessible to human speech or thought (Cf Tait : Up. II-iv. 1): i.e. it includes the two distinct Hindu concepts of *saguna* and *nirguna* Brahman. The Hindu awareness of the Presence tends towards an experience of the simultaneous transcendence and immanence of God which is ultimately ineffable.

equally well whether he is called to retire to a lonely cave or to become a Cabinet Minister.

The natural consequence of this awareness of the Presence is a *loss of interest* in temporal and transient things, which can sometimes lead to *neglect of duty* and *lack of due attention to others as others*—even to *lack of interest in oneself* as a personal being. These are certainly some of the weak points in Hinduism. However they do not spring from the essential nature of Hinduism but rather from an imperfect interpretation of it. We have only to read the Bhagavad Gita to see how strictly man is bound to perform his *Svadharmā*.

Perhaps before anyone allows himself to pass judgment on the mistaken "other worldiness" of many Hindu holy men, he should reflect that Christians themselves are only beginning to overcome the same defect in their own spirituality.

(iii) *Complete unselfishness* in prayer as well as in fulfilment of all religious and temporal duties (*Nishvalakarma*) is the natural outcome of the true Hindu experience of the Presence.

4. MEANS BY WHICH HINDUS FOSTER THEIR SPIRITUAL LIFE

For the sake of clarity, these means may be classified under the five headings of Prayer, Worship, Meditation, Yoga and Tapas (ascetic practices) and Sannyasa. These will require a brief general presentation followed by a separate discussion of each, first in the light of Hindu tradition and then with a view to its possible integration into Christian Spirituality.

(a) *Prayer*—This term is used to include vocal prayer, bhajans, kirtans etc.

(i) *Hindu prayer* is first and foremost concentration on God, adoration, praise, imploring His blessing, much more than petition. When a Hindu wants to obtain something from God, he will recite the appropriate *mantras*, perform *puja*, *yajna*, etc., but he regards this as something different from prayer.

The Nama-japa (prayerful repetition of the name of God) has an important place in Hindu prayer and spirituality.

(ii) *Implications for Christian Spirituality*

This would mean :

—prayer for God's sake, stress on prayer of adoration, thanksgiving, praise, rather than petition ;

—'prayer of the Name—cf. the Greek-Russian tradition of the 'Prayer of Jesus'. ("The Way of the Pilgrim": Hindi translation, "Yatrik"): its usefulness among Christians, especially in India.

(b) *Worship (Puja-Yajna)*

This involves the whole question of the use of Hindu symbols, texts, rites, and so on in Christian worship to express and foster our spiritual life. This problem should be studied in depth in the Liturgy Workshop and possibly in joint Workshop discussions.

(c) *Meditation*

(i) *Hindu Meditation* is not speculation or mental conversation, but rather simple awareness of the presence of God. The essential purpose of all Yogic exercises is to help the concentration of the mind on one thought, leading to the suppression of all particular thoughts in a simple self-awareness which is certainly no less conducive to the experience of the divine mystery than any activity of the mind at the conceptual level. However, we are not concerned here with the psychological problems posed by this experience : our aim is simply to form a sufficiently accurate idea of Hindu meditation.

(ii) *Implications for Christian Spirituality.*

Christian tradition also recognises the call to such a prayer of silent awareness. Some would say that it is reserved to a few, yet the call of the Gospel to contemplation and a deeply spiritual life is addressed to all. (cf the documents of the Vatican Council : L. G. nos. 39, 41 ; S.C. no. 2 ; O.T. nos. 5, 9.)

If this contemplative way of prayer has been so fruitful for Hindus, could it not also be fruitful for Christians? Is not the Hindu way of meditation especially suitable to the Indian psyche ?

(d) *Yoga-Tapas* (including all forms of asceticism and ways of self control)

(i) *Aim of Yoga*

YOGA—There is a Yoga which is purely physical ; the true Yoga aims at self-control of the whole man, mind and body together. It is essentially ordained towards self-realization or the awareness of God, and must always be preceded and accompanied by practice of Virtues (*Yama-Niyama*).

ASANAS—(i.e., the different postures) aim at quieting and controlling the muscles of the body.

PRANAYAMA (i.e. control of the breath) aims at controlling, quieting, “rhythming”, the breathing, so that the body can remain motionless during meditation and the mind can concentrate easily.

(ii) *Implications for Christian Spirituality*

We must be careful to see that the so-called Christian—Yoga is really Yoga in the true sense, and not merely a watered-down imitation of it.

—Some *asanas* and *pranayamas* are extremely useful as self-discipline on the path to contemplation.

—Yoga, especially in the higher stages, should not be undertaken without the help of a competent *guru*.

—Some well-prepared Christians should be trained in traditional Yoga in order to help their Christian brethren, and to study in a sympathetic manner the adaptation of Yogic methods to Christian spiritual life.

TAPAS

(i) *Forms of tapas for Hindus* include fasting, silence, simplicity of life, detachment from all worldly things, especially in the case of people who have given themselves wholly to God.

(ii) *Implications for Christian Spirituality*: which forms of Hindu *tapas* could be usefully emulated by Christians? Fasting, days of silence, times of silence, simplicity of dress, habits of living, abstention from smoking or drinking, vegetarian food, (e.g. during Lent) ?

SANNYASA

Note : Everything that has been said so far applies to all Christians, clergy, religious or laity. This section concerns men and women consecrated to God.

(i) *The Hindu Idea of Sannyasa* consists in *renunciation* of all the pleasures of the world and *freedom* from all duties in the world in order to be a visible witness to the transcendence of God.

The unworthiness of many *Sadhus* today cannot conceal the value of those who are genuine, nor can we say that Hindus no longer respect a *Sadhu*. They are merely less and less inclined to accept him at his face value. The true *sadhu* is still regarded with great reverence.

(ii) *Implications for Christian Spirituality* : Since India already has a traditional way of life for people dedicated to God, Christians cannot ignore it. *Sannyasis* show us what Hindus expect of any consecrated person, religious or priest, because the *Brahmacharya* of priests makes Hindus put them on a par with *Sannyasis*—How far is it possible or advisable to evolve *Christian Sannyasa* along the lines of *Hindu Sannyasa* ?

In what ways could or should religious institutes and the life of priests be renewed in the light of the exigencies of *Sannyasa* ?

—What are the practical consequences for the training given in the Seminaries, scholasticates, novitiates, etc. ?

v. *Means to achieve this Integration.*

(i) It must take place first of all in the lives of those who are specially trained for the service of the Church—priests, religious men and women, catechists.

Houses of formation should be renewed on the lines suggested. This means that the fundamental attitude towards God of the Indian soul (cf. above) must be developed, enriched and brought to fulfilment through the teaching of the Gospel. In practice this will entail :

—a contemplative approach to the whole of life—study, work, recreation, etc. ;

—the fostering of meditation/prayer, in the ways already mentioned ;

—integration of ascetical practices according to the Hindu tradition ;

—a Liturgy adapted to Indian needs and traditions ;

—serious study of Hindu religious beliefs, worship, etc., especially reading of Hindu scriptures and other religious texts ;

—the adoption of traditional Indian ways of life even in external lodging, eating, dress, furniture, social customs, etc.

Could we envisage *Pilot Seminaries* or *Pilot Novitiates* to serve as models or experimentation centres ?

(ii) What could or should be done for the *laity* and for the *clergy* and *religious* who have not received such opportunities during their training ?—intensive courses, crash programmes, seminars ?

(iii) What can be done to provide the necessary *literature*, similar to the book “Religious Hinduism” ; an anthology of Hindu sacred texts and commentaries for Christians ; articles or pamphlets explaining the nature and possible forms of adaptation of traditional Hindu values, etc. ?

(iv) Could *spiritual centres* be established on the pattern already described ? This would amount to the founding of the greatly desired genuine “Christian Ashram”.

What is an ashram ?—The place where a *guru* lives and where disciples come, or even live, to receive from him instruction and training in the spiritual life. Only the head of an ashram can be a *guru* in the strict sense of the word. (cf. the ancient concept of the ‘Abba’ in the early Christian monastic tradition and even today, to some extent, in Benedictine monasteries).

For a spiritual centre to receive the name of ashram, certain conditions must be fulfilled :

—an ashram means a Spiritual Centre on Hindu lines.

—the external way of life must be genuinely traditional.

—above all, the inner search for God must be based on the awareness of His presence.

—In such ashrams it will be possible for a genuinely *Indian Christian liturgy* to evolve : this is possible only in a community living a truly Indian life interiorly as well as in externals.

—along with a truly Indian spirituality and liturgy, such ashrams will be the proper place for the development of an Indian Christian *theology* which will incorporate into the Christian tradition all the riches of thought and experience of Hindu theology.

—Such ashrams will also be the most suitable setting for *dialogue in depth* between Christians and Hindus.

—There is surely room for ashrams of a *purely contemplative and secluded* type ; nevertheless we can just as well conceive of a more “open” kind of ashram which would welcome people coming for spiritual guidance and training and even act as host for seminars, refresher courses, etc.

—Specially qualified members of the ashrams could also go out to give lectures or courses of instruction.

—Would such an ashram serve any useful purpose at present ?

— If so, how could it be established ?

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TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

TOPIC I : IMAGE OF THE CHURCH AND COMMON ENDEAVOUR

The image projected by the Church in India both through her institutions and through her members needs to be more visibly spiritual. How can this be achieved ?

(a) The works of the Church and of each one of her members must be so penetrated by the action of the Holy Spirit that they become transparent to God and to spiritual values.

(i) What are the main obstacles to this in daily life ?

(ii) What steps should be taken to improve matters ?

(b) Clergy, religious and laity must be given a better spiritual formation, especially through training in prayer and initiation into spiritual experience.

—Have we enough competent personnel in the country for this task ?

—or do we need an in-service training programme for all those in charge of the spiritual formation of others ?

—If so, what should be the content of this programme ?

—Who should be responsible for carrying it out ?

(c) A re-structuring of the life and activities of priests and religious is needed, so that they will be more easily available as spiritual guides and counsellors : or at least so that those who have a special charism for this work could be set aside for it. To achieve this :

—What scale of priorities should be followed by ecclesiastical authorities and religious superiors in assigning work to priests and religious ?

—What realistic adjustments do we need in our deployment of personnel ?

—What concrete proposals could be made to bishops and religious superiors ?

TOPIC II : INTEGRATION INTO THE LIFE OF THE COUNTRY

(a) The main means by which Hindus develop their spiritual life are prayer, meditation, worship, yoga and *tapas*, and *sannyasa* :

—Can we learn anything on these matters from Hindu spiritual tradition for the enrichment of our own spiritual lives ?

(b) In Hindu tradition, an *ashram* is a centre for spiritual formation.

—Would a Christian *ashram* serve any useful purpose at present ?

—If so, how could it be established ?

(c) It is hardly possible for those in charge of spiritual formation to integrate Indian traditions into the training they are giving unless they themselves have personal experience of them.

—Would it be possible/desirable to have a pilot seminary and/or novitiate in the country where the entire formation would be in keeping with all that is best in Indian spiritual traditions ?

—If so, how could a beginning be made in this direction ?

TOPIC III : SELF RELIANCE

—In order that the customs and the traditions, the wisdom and learning the arts and sciences of every nation may contribute to the Glory of the Creator, the revelation of the Savior's grace and the proper ordering of Christian life, theological investigation must necessarily be stirred up in each major socio-cultural area" (c.f. A.G. no. 22)

—How could the study—groups demanded by the Church to carry on this task be set up in the country ?

—Has the time not come for us to have our own institutes of higher Christian formation instead of relying on such institutes in other countries ?

—What practical steps could be taken to achieve this ?

WORKSHOP-II

Liturgy and Catechetics

This workshop paper will contain four sections:

- I. Outline of the Doctrine of the Church on the subject of Workshop
- II. An account of the relevant activities of the Church in the country
- III. A select bibliography.
- IV. Selected topics for discussion and conclusion.

I

Doctrine of the Church on the subject of Worship

A. Liturgy

The best summary on the matter is found in the Constitution of the Second Vatican Council "Sacrosanctum Concilium", promulgated on 4th December 1963.

Other documents which explain and implement the above are:

1. Const. on Church *Lumen Gentium*: 26, Bishops' function as sanctifiers; 28, same of priests; 34, of participation of of the laity, cf. Const. Lit. 11, 14, 48, 55, 59.
2. Decree on Church's Miss. Act. *Ad Gentes* 14 in the catechumenate, cf 22, adaptations.
3. Decree on Ministry & Life of priests *Presbyterorum Ordinis*: 5, priests ministers of the sacraments and the Eucharist; 13b, ministers of sanctification....
4. Decree on Priestly Formation: *Optatam Totius*, 8 Liturgy in spiritual formation of seminarians.
5. Decree on Bishops' Past. Office in Church: *Christus Dominus* 15b in Bishops' office of sanctifying.
6. Motu proprio *Sacram Liturgiam* of Paul VI dated 25th January 1964.

7. First Instruction of the Consilium *Inter Oecumenici* dated 26th September, 1964.
8. Instruction on Sacred Music *Musicam Sacram* dated 7th March, 1965.
9. Second Instruction of the Consilium *Tres Abhinc Annos* dated 4th May 1967.
10. Instruction on the Eucharistic Mystery *Mysterium Eucharisticum* dated 25th May 1967.

B. Catechetics

Various Documents of the Council refer to this subject, especially the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, on Revelation, Liturgy and Decrees On Missionary Activity, Bishops, Priests, Lay People (cfr. cyclostyled documents).

Decree On Bishop's Past. Office in Church: 13-14, Bishops' care for catechetics.

Decree on Ministry & Life of priests: 4b Priests'duty;

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26, Brothers and Sisters trained in catechetics.

II

An Account of the relevant activities of the church in the country

1. Long-term programme of Catechetical and Liturgical Renewal in the country.

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IV

The preliminary draft of Workshop No 2 on 'Catechetics and Liturgy' published in September 1968, listed practically all the topics worth discussing in order to promote an all-round Catechetical and Liturgical renewal in India, at all levels; national, regional, diocesan and parochial. Its chief purpose was to ser-

ve as a source from which the workshops of diocesan and regional seminars could draw and choose topics for their discussions. That is why the Service Centre expressly abstained from selecting topics and fixing priorities; this was rather the work of regional and diocesan workshops.

Now, however, our chief and only preoccupation is the National Seminar to be conducted at *the National level* in May 1969. Besides, at this level, more than at any other, the Seminar must be really *action-oriented*, that is to say, the conclusions of the discussions at this National Seminar should lend themselves and lead to action on the morrow of the Seminar. This necessitates a strict selection of topics, and the need for establishing priorities in the vast domain of the ministries, of word and worship cannot be gainsaid. Therefore, if several topics considered important do not figure here, it does not mean that the Service Centre does not consider them so or that it is not aware of such problems. Problems are all important and are inter-connected, but we cannot do justice to them all.

Next, *due attention has been paid* when selecting topics, to the *existing structures, their long term programmes of renewal or the projects under way and in the process of implementation*. For example, there is the National Catechetical and Liturgical Centre which has been active for the last three years: it has a long term programme of renewal, its three year plans and annual plans; it carries out a good number of projects, like information, publication, formation by seminars and courses, coordination, pastoral integration and international liaison. It has organised structures at diocesan and regional levels by helping to establish regional Catechetical centres and regional liturgical commissions, diocesan catechetical services and diocesan liturgical commissions. We want therefore, to leave out all these domains where the Centres are already engaged. Similarly what is in the nature of a theoretical and academic discussion is omitted. For example, it is not the moment to explain or to discuss the catechetical pedagogy of children, teenagers or adults. Special seminars are organised at the National Centre on these topics.

The selection of topics for discussion has also been governed by other general considerations such as the following:

1. Respect for the wishes expressed and *topics underlined by the parish, diocesan, regional and seminary seminars and the natio-*

nal consultations. If e.g. almost all the workshops of the country dealt with a particular problems, it is an indication that it deserves priority of consideration at the national level.

2. However, these topics, though emphasised by the above seminars, should be of *significance* to the life of the Church in the entire country, and not merely to particular dioceses or regions.

3. We have also to take into account the *number of days* available at the Seminar for workshop discussion: only three days (16, 17, 18 May=18 hours)

4. The topics selected and proposed for consideration and discussion will come under any of the four *main heads of renewal.*

- (a) Projecting the correct image of the Church,
- (b) Common endeavour,
- (c) Integration of the Church into the life of the country,
- (d) self-reliance.

We are proposing six topics for the consideration of the workshops on Catechetics and Liturgy. Each of these topics will have the following notes:

- (a) scope and objectives
- (b) the background
- (c) the problems connected with it.
- (d) possible solutions.

I RESTORATION AND RENEWAL OF AN ADULT CATECHUMENATE

(a) Scope and Objectives

Its importance in the whole ecclesial action cannot be gainsaid. The type of adult Christians we have will depend upon the nature of the catechumenate. All the defects of the Christian life can be traced back to a hurried catechumenate or a total lack of it. The Sacraments of Initiation, the Baptism of children, the communitarian character of Sacraments, the meaning of Lenten Liturgy, Christian life as a continuous journey, the problem of adaptation, the renewal of parish life, etc. can be understood only according to our knowledge of the Catechumenate. In short, renewal of the Church community and increase of apostolic

activity depend on the restoration of the catechumenate. That is why every year during Lent, the Church enters mystically into the Catechumenate.

For this we need to know the place of the Catechumenate in the ensemble of the Church's missionary and pastoral activities, its nature, its stages and its constituent elements:

(i) *The Mission of the Church is carried out by a triple ministry: ministry of the Word (evangelisation and catechesis), ministry of worship and sanctification (liturgy) and ministry of guidance (organisation and formation of the Christian Community towards Christian charity and maturity). The Catechumenate takes a man from the moment of his initial conversion and first act of faith (brought about by evangelisation) and leads him quite up to the end, by a gradual process of initiation. In some cases, when conversion is not genuine or faith is doubtful, the Catechumenate includes evangelisation as well, though in that case it will be called pre-catechumenate.*

Through evangelisation, which includes Christian witness and preaching of the Gospel (Missionary Activity: 11-12, 13), the Holy Spirit opens the hearts of non-Christians and they are freely converted to the living God. This is the beginning of a journey.

“Those who, through the Church, have accepted from God a belief in Christ should be admitted to the Catechumenate by liturgical rites” (Missionary Activity, No. 14 a).

(ii) *The Catechumenate is a long spiritual journey in several stages: “By the workings of divine grace, the new convert sets out on a spiritual journey . . . he journeys from the old man to the new one perfected in Christ”* (No. 13). *“This transition, which brings with it a progressive change of outlook and morals, should manifest itself through its social effects”* (No. 13). Therefore *“the catechumenate is not a mere expounding of doctrinal precepts, but a training period for the whole Christian life. It is an apprenticeship of appropriate length during which disciples are formed to Christ their Teacher”* (No. 14).

Catechumenal Community

The Catechumenate is not merely a period of time but a reality and task of the whole Christian community. *“This work of Christian initiation should be taken care of not only by catechists and priests, but by the entire community of the faithful,*

especially by the sponsors. Thus from the outset the catechumens will feel that they belong to the People of God" (No. 14).

(iii) *Duration and stages of the Catechumenate*: It is a question of duration and certain stages. Just as there are stages in the organic growth of human life such as infancy, adolescence and adulthood so also there are stages in the growth of Christian life, in the unfolding of the Church's pastoral action and in the process of initiation.

The summit of the ecclesial action is the celebration of the Eucharist; or we can say that the Church is in an adult stage, in the state of perfection of grace and ministry when it celebrates the Eucharist. If so, a Christian at this stage is supposed to be mature, an adult in Christ and a fully conscious and active member of the Christian community. A Christian at this stage of growth should manifest the exigencies and qualities proper to it: namely, an intensity of living faith, flowering of charity, a sense of personal and community responsibility in the Kingdom of God, and apostolic dynamism. Such a stage of growth supposes earlier stages of development and initiation. They are the stages of the neophyte community, the baptismal community, the catechumenal community and the pre-catechumenal community. The various rites of baptism itself are administered in stages according to the progress of his journey, preferably during Lent culminating in the Paschal Vigil.

(iv) *Constitutive Elements of the Catechumenate*: 1. Catechumenal catechesis: "Catechumens should be properly instructed in the mystery of salvation and in the practice of Gospel morality" (14).

This catechesis is two-fold: individual and collective

It comprises: Catechesis of the history of salvation—the baptismal symbol (before baptism)

Mystagogical catechesis—after the reception of sacraments, initiation to the sacraments.

Catechesis of the Christian and apostolic life

2. Catechumenal liturgy: the Liturgy of the Word and the administration of the sacrament of Baptism in stages.

"By sacred rites which are to be held at successive intervals they should be introduced into the life of faith, liturgy and love which God's People lives" (N. 14).

3. Initiation by god-parents to concrete Christian and apostolic life to a Christian witnessing of charity and service in the world.

“Since the life of the Church is an apostolic one, the catechumens should also learn to cooperate actively by the witness of their lives and by the progress of their faith, in the spread of the gospel and the upbuilding of the Church” (14).

—integration of the catechumens into the parochial and diocesan community

—introduction into the parochial activities and eucharistic celebration

—education for moral and spiritual life

—awakening them to their missionary vocation and duty by welcoming them to lay apostolate movements and groups.

(b) Background

—the way the people were joined to the Church on the day of Pentecost and the following days in the primitive Church

—the golden age of Catechumenate (3rd to the 5th Centuries)

—decline of the catechumenate with the advent of Christendom, medieval theocracy and Christian society.

—the early missionary methods of evangelisation and Christian initiation in India.

—Mass conversions and hurried baptisms of hundreds and thousands of people

—the present practice prevalent in the various regions of India

—one-sided emphasis on ‘ex opere operato’ effect of the Sacraments, belief in the magical effects of rites, consideration of baptism as a ticket to heaven without due respect to the grace of God and the freedom of the individual and the genuine conversion and disposition of the subject, and to the significance of the rites.

In most cases

—catechumens have little contact with the Christian community

—it is an affair of the catechist or a sister or a priest

—It is just a hurried preparation for baptism, not an initiation to the whole Christian life.

—duration not taken into account, nor the stages observed.

—it amounts to learning by heart prayer formulas and catechism of questions and answers. Just that amount of time is given that is required to learn the above prayers and catechism.

—Christian life appearing more like a book than a life, it is a set of truths to be believed, sin to be avoided and virtues to be practised rather than a life of fellowship and interpersonal relationship with God and with one another in love, service and witnessing.

—little or no emphasis on change of life, purification of motives, verifying the dispositions indispensable for faith and conversion, on getting a new vision of society, the world and history, on understanding the meaning and aim of life, on following the new evangelical morals, on the removal of false ideas and prejudices about the Church etc., on the difficulties and the problems to be solved, on the values to be fostered, on the correct attitudes to be inculcated, on the introduction to and encounter with the person of Christ, on covenant and commitment, on making good the defects in natural virtues or human qualities, in an awareness of the living God to be created, in the sense of the sacred to be purified, on the desire for spiritual realities to be aroused, etc.

—no follow-up action after baptism, no continuity of parish priests

—as a result, a lot of fall-outs, individually and in groups.

(c) Identification of problems

Problems on the way of organising a catechumenate as outlined above:

—lack of time for the over-worked pastor and for the catechumen beset with difficulties

—lack of facilities for a sufficiently long catechumenate:

Converts scattered over several villages, distance between the parish or mission headquarters and the residence of the converts,

need to work to earn their livelihood and hence inability to gather together often for catechesis or liturgy, urgency of marriage or voyage,

the disorderly state of the enquirer and the necessity to settle the disorderly and sinful life as soon as possible,

need to accelerate the process out of fear lest the converts be taken over by another Christian denomination or by another church of different rite,

pressure or allurements to show a greater list of converts, etc.

—the mania for number and quantity rather than concern for quality and respect of grace and freedom; the indirect enticement brought about by the custom of sending annual returns to the diocesan curia or Roman curia

—converts attached more to individual priests than to a Christian community; hence when a priest is transferred, the successor and the parishioners have no interest in the new converts.

—the false theory that we need not be strict with new converts and that their second or third generation will be better

—not demanding a real conversion and change of life under the pretext that the Church is a Church of sinners,

—taking refuge under the exceptional case of the mass conversions and baptism of 3000 on Pentecost day and subsequent days which took place without a Catechumenate

—numberless drop-outs (in some cases entire villages falling back to paganism

—baptism becoming an incident without significance: no transformation of life brought about by baptism, since conferred without faith and conversion.

—a good section of the Christian community living no better than pagans

—a good bulk just becoming and remaining nominal, sociological Christians, or 'baptised pagans'.

—the faith and life of our Christians is not bright and dynamic, though they are at the highest level of the Christian growth, the Eucharistic community.

—non-practising Christians: these do not even attend Sunday Mass; they see the Church, at the most, at Christmas or Easter or the parish feast

—the crisis of faith and morals among adolescents who's having had no Christian initiation at home, school or parish undergo a crisis of faith and morality during adolescence and sometimes continue upto adulthood.

All these problems can be traced back to the nature, quality and duration of the preparation for baptism, to the type of catechesis, liturgy and life by which they were initiated in a catechumenate which may not have existed at all.

(d) Possible solutions

—The Rite of Christian initiation of adults prepared by the Consilium was sent for experimentation. This is being finalised and will be published shortly. This must be implemented as soon as possible, but with due pastoral preparation of the people and the requisite training of the clergy.

—the need to organise a real catechumenal community, consisting of catechesists, pastors, sponsors, parishioners, involving the whole parish.

—catechumenate must not be considered as a mere ceremony, or as mere catechism, but as a spiritual journey and progressive growth in faith and initiation to an all-round Christian life.

—it must include stages, but the stages must be assured and respected:

—evangelisation, leading to conversion and the 'rite of entrance into the catechumenate'

—Catechumenate leading to 'profession of faith' and rites, making one a faithful (reception of the sacraments of initiation).

—Mystagogy, leading to Christian and apostolic life, with deeper introduction into the mystery of salvation renewed by the sacraments

—the parochial context to be kept in view—the main rite of the catechumenate to be performed during the Lenten season, leading up to initiation proper (baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) at the Paschal vigil.

—as regards 'converts' on the occasion of marriages, if marriage is urgent and cannot be postponed till the partner is converted, it is better to get a dispensation from disparity of cult rather than to baptise hurriedly. Baptism, faith and conversion are more serious exigencies than to see that both the partners of marriage be Christians; baptism is not a necessary condition for marriage, but a sign of faith and conversion.

—a common pastoral policy on the matter to be given in every diocese, region or even in the whole country.

II IMPERATIVE NEED OF AN ADULT CATECHESIS AND URGENCY OF HAVING HOME CATECHESIS OF CHILDREN BY PARENTS

(a) Scope of the topic and formulation of objectives :

Adult catechesis deserves top priority in the whole field of catechesis. Our target should be the integral formation of an adult Christian. It is in view of it that all the rest must be arranged. Otherwise Christians will remain children at the level of religious knowledge and their life of faith, while they grow daily in the secular culture and professional life.

Catechesis is an education of faith, in a manner adapted to each age-group and the needs of the times. It aims at awakening, deepening and developing the faith of the Christians so that everything may be enlightened by faith, seen and lived in it.

It is the vocation of the laity to 'seek the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God' (L.G. 31). Engaged in the secular professions and occupations, and living in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life, from which the very web of their existence is woven, the lay people have the 'special task of illumine and organise their affairs in such a way that they may always start out, develop, and persist according to Christ's mind' (L.G. 31). For this the adult Christian must be educated in faith so that in all things they may be 'led by the spirit of the gospel' and enlightened by faith. This is precisely adult catechesis.

Moreover, they are in need of making, constantly, a synthesis of their faith and secular knowledge, of their Christian life and family, social and professional life.

The catechesis meant for them should not be only directed towards giving them a personal formation in Christian maturity but also towards enabling them to impart religious formation to those under their care, their children.

Adult Christians, especially parents are the first and best catechists of their children. To do this they need guidance and some sort of training. Our main endeavour should be to train parents in the art of initiating their children in the faith.

All these set in relief the importance and urgency of adult catechesis.

(b) The background

The greatest drawback in the field of religious instruction at present is that it is too exclusively school-centered and mostly restricted to children. This has a number of disadvantages:

(1) Catechesis appears as something 'childish' or 'infantile', as something meant only for children, whereas catechesis as education of faith is necessary for all age-groups since faith, in order to be lived all along our life and in the concrete circumstances of it, needs to be educated, which is done by catechesis.

(2) Catechesis given to them when they were children is not enough. For grown-ups must acquire a mature religious outlook, attitudes and practice. This cannot be done unless we start with the problems, difficulties, aspirations, life-situations experienced by adults and accordingly propose solutions, answers and means of fulfilment. Catechesis of children follows a different pedagogy adapted to children and does not deal with adult problems, since they are not aware of these problems. It is therefore necessary to have a special pedagogy for the catechesis of adults which starts from adults and their problems. At all costs we must avoid applying to adults what is meant for children.

(3) Since religious instruction stops with schooling, the religious life of grown-ups is likely to remain at infant-level, or child-level, or school level.

(4) Since catechesis is school-centered, parents do not bother about the religious formation of their children nor do they care to make it home-centered. They are only too happy to transfer all responsibility, in this matter, to the teachers at the school. Thereby also the religious life of parents and families loses an important stimulus for up-dating the development.

(5) It is a well-known fact that religious instruction given at school is not likely to have a lasting effect, if it is not backed up by religious education at home. Any modern catechism has a set of three books: one for the teacher, one for the child and one for the parents.

(6) Quite a number of children do not or cannot go to Catholic schools, others do not attend school at all. Consequently, not a few of them remain without religious instruction and drift away.

(7) If ever our schools were to be nationalised, we would have to rely on parents entirely for the religious formation of children. They will not be ready for the task overnight.

(8) History is in favour of it. Till schools came into existence the religious formation of children was looked after in the home environment and by the parish community, and in the liturgy. In the lives of great men and saints and in our own lives we may notice the spiritual influence exerted by our parents.

The 'Dutch Catechism' is precisely an emphasis in action on the point. When the Dutch hierarchy asked the Catechetical Institute to draw up a catechism for children the specialists and pastors found it impossible to start with children. Then they switched over to the adults and from there they wanted to view the problem of children's catechesis. The only way to bring about children's catechesis at home is to concentrate all one's energy and attention on adult catechesis; the result is the famous 'Dutch Catechism.'

(c) Identification of problems

—lack of awareness of these vital questions

—ignorance of the proper pedagogy for adult catechesis

—lack of books for this purpose

—lack of time and personnel to attend to it

—the difficulty to reach them outside Sunday Mass it is difficult to gather them, and even during Sunday Mass, how much can be said through the homily ?

—The aversion or apathy of many adults to any kind of catechesis, even that specially meant for them, though called by other names. Some of them may come once in a way; but very few are accustomed or are willing to attend something regular; perseverance is a big problem for adults.

Ignorance, illiteracy and poverty of many people prevent them from paying heed to it.

As regards home catechesis by parents, several parents think that it is a question of systematic presentation of doctrine and that they require special training, etc. Or some of the parents, are so illiterate that they feel shy to teach their children, or feel inadequate to answer their questions.

In most cases, parents shirk their responsibility and shift it to school teachers, the parish-priest, or the convent.

(d) Possible solutions

1. While so far our attention has been directed to children's catechesis and, that too, in a school set-up, it now seems imperative to shift the emphasis to adult catechesis.

(i) General and special lectures, group discussions and seminars to be arranged (occasionally or regularly) for adult Christians in general or according to professional categories, either at the parish level (or, in cities and towns, at the interparish level).

(ii) To arrange that the Sunday homilies be a real adult catechesis.

(iii) Special Lenten or other sermons on specific themes.

(iv) Setting up of small libraries of selected books at the parochial or interparochial level.

(v) Making available to them selected books and booklets or making them subscribe to selected magazines and reviews.

(vi) Publishing, wherever possible, parish bulletins.

(vii) In case of illiterate Christians, to make use of some traditional Indian forms of catechetics : bhajans, Kirtans, katha-kalatchebams, etc.

(vii') Making use of the formation facilities and programmes available in lay apostolate groups.

2. To help parents fulfil their function as their children's religious educators, it is necessary to educate them

(a) by frequent references, in talks, to parents' role

(b) by visiting homes for imparting practical guidance,

(c) by carefully prepared and well-organised series of sermons. By these and other means we should aim at:—

(a) encouraging parents who are actually fulfilling their role;

(b) explaining to them that catechesis by parents does not necessarily mean a systematic presentation of doctrine;

(c) teaching parents to create in children certain basic Christian attitudes towards God and man by training them in the right postures, gestures and actions and introducing them to simple prayer.

3. ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH IN CATECHESIS OF ALL FORMS, AND IN THE HOMILY.

(a) Scope and Objectives

The Church is the bearer of the Word of God, the depository of the Word of Salvation. Her mission is to announce this Word to man in every place and in every period. This Word is meant for him in order to transform him; if so, it must first of all reach him; only then, can it become effective:

“the Word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do”. (Isaiah 55:11)

An Anthropological approach is one in which the word of God seems to have reached man in the course of salvation history and continues to reach him still today.

The ministry of the word, in whatever form it is done, is a proclamation of the word of God addressed to man through a meaningful human word. The Bible is both the word of God and the word of Man; that is why it has a message for all men, for all times. If the ministry of the word is to reach man, it must be a human word. The word of God, though transcendent, reaches man by being immanent to him.

A human word—which the word of God should be—does not fall from the blue, it does not come from without, it is not imposed by someone. It is a word that comes from within, that reaches him at the interior of his human experience, he discovers it progressively in the midst of his life-situations. Such a word will be related to his life and will be meaningful for him. Such a word starts from man, takes him seriously and accepts him where he is and as he is. Understood in this sense Jesus Christ or his Gospel will be a revelation of God by being first and foremost a revelation of man, of his existence and life-situation, of his problems and aspirations.

The scope and objective of our discussion is to see how the various forms of the ministry of the word may follow this approach and be thereby relevant and effective. What we look for is not a technique or a method but a basic approach common to all and applicable to various cases.

(b) Background

1. Though this is not altogether a new approach, and though found in the Bible, it is of recent origin and is still in the stage of development. But the *difficulties experienced in certain fields of ministry provoked research and interest in this approach*:

1. Dialogue with unbelievers
2. Dialogue with non-Christians
3. Evangelisation
4. Catechumenal catechesis
5. Catechesis of Adults
6. Catechesis of teenagers

In these and other similar cases, it is either impossible to start from Revelation or, if one does so, the Word of God does not appear relevant for man; and in both cases dialogue experiences a break down.

2. It is an universal complaint that most of our sermons and homilies are unrelated to life, have no relevance to the audience; hence people take it as a necessary evil and just put up with it. Instead of being the most intense moment of communication between the assembly and the celebrant, the homily brings about a break in the celebration and mars the relations between them. There is a universal clamour from all over India requesting the clergy to make the homily a meaningful word relevant to people's life.

3. *This is the method proposed and followed by the Council Documents in the Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, in the Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, in the Decree of the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, etc.*

“According to the almost unanimous opinion of believers, and unbelievers alike, all things on earth should be related to man as their centre and crown” (G.S. 21).
 “Nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in the hearts of the followers of Christ . . . They have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for everyman. That is why this community realises that it is truly and intimately linked with mankind and its history” (G.S. 1).

“Therefore, the Council focuses its attention on the world of men, the whole family along with the sum of those realities in the midst of which that family lives” (G.S. 2).

“Though mankind today is struck with wonder at its own discoveries and its power, it often raises anxious questions about the current trend of the world, about the place and role of man in the universe, about the meaning of his individual and collective strivings, and about the ultimate destiny of reality and of humanity. Hence, giving witness and voice to the faith of the whole People of God gathered together by Christ, this Council can provide no more eloquent proof of its solidarity with the entire human family with which it is bound up, as well as its respect and love for that family, than by engaging with it in conversation about these various problems”. (G.S. 3).

“The Council brings to mankind light kindled from the gospel, and puts at its disposal those saving resources which the Church herself, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, receives, from her Founder. For the human person deserves to be preserved; human society deserves to be renewed. Hence the pivotal point of our total presentation will be man himself, whole and entire, body and soul, heart and conscience, mind and will” (G.S. 3).

The manner in which the evangelisation of people is to proceed is incarnational:

“The Church must be present in these groups of men. . . . let Christians be joined to them by esteem and love, acknowledge themselves to be members of the group of men among whom they live, share in cultural and social life by the various exchanges and enterprises of human living, be familiar with their national and religious traditions, like Christ Himself who searched the hearts of men and led them to divine light through truly human conversation” (Ad Gentes No. 11).

In other words

“In order to be able to offer all of them the mystery of salvation and the life brought by God, the Church

must become part of all these groups for the same motive which led Christ to bind himself, in virtue of his incarnation, to the definite social and cultural conditions of these human beings among whom He dwelt (Ad. Gentes No. 10).

(c) Identification of Problems

—Our training in deductive method,
 in starting with Revelation,
 in beginning with scripture or liturgical texts
 in stating principles and indicating applications
 in presenting God's word to our listeners in an impersonal and uncommitted manner by keeping our listeners over against us and imposing our explanations from outside rather than identifying ourselves with the audience, helping them to discover its relevance from within.

—the attitudes we have developed towards revelation and God :

A set of ready-made things and clearly formulated truths understood once for all, with the help of intellectual explanation given from outside, taking for granted the universal application of truths already enunciated.

—the moralising method and approach we are currently employing.

—ignorance of and scepticism with regard to the approach proposed here

—the difficulty involved in learning and applying this approach in our actual catechesis and sermons

—this method requires greater preparation and hence more efforts for which we are not prepared

—a discovery, and a continuous one, from within, involves a laborious and trying process to which we are little accustomed.

—the fear that we may over-emphasise man and underestimate God and the supernatural; that man may take the place of God, that we may not sufficiently announce the Gospel,

—temptation to condemn or reject this approach as a form of atheism, humanism or existentialism.

(d) Possible Solutions

1. We have to learn the approach

—Man being the starting point and object of focus, the need to discover human and specifically Indian problems of the day which call for solutions fundamental aspirations of men in general and of the Indian people in particular in the various regions and social classes which need fulfilment

—The varied ways in which our people have expressed their fundamental aspirations through song and saga, novel and folk experience, social attitudes and comportments, religious practices and cultural achievements; the main life-situations that need enlightenment and essential values (human, Indian, religious and cultural) that appeal to contemporary Indians to be assumed, preserved and fostered by catechesis.

—the need to develop sensitivity to the whole human background: family, neighbourhood, economic status, society, traditional culture and modern culture, religious heritage and values, etc.,

—the necessity to concentrate on the receiver of God's Word; and to present God's word through a genuine human word

—an unconditional acceptance of man where he is and as he is

—emphasis on discovery from within rather than in imposing explanation from outside

The main elements and stages of the approach to be followed:

—evoking, describing and analysing major human situations

—interpreting their significance for man

—and in discovering through faith their fuller significance and fulfilment in Revelation when assumed by Jesus Christ.

Focus: on fostering correct values (especially human and Indian) correct attitudes (calling faith, loyalty and commitment to with Christian values).

2. Guidelines to be made available in order that this approach may be followed in catechetics and liturgy

3. Model Catechesis of adults and adolescents; and homilies according to this approach to be prepared and published.

4. RESOLUTE, IMMEDIATE AND ALL-OUT EFFORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AT ALL LEVELS OF THE WHOLE LITURGICAL RENEWAL WARRANTED BY CHURCH DOCUMENTS

(a) Scope and objective

It was the goal of the (Second Vatican) Council “to intensify the daily growth of Catholics in Christian living”; and in order to reach this goal it provided “for the renewal and fostering of the liturgy”. (Lit. Const. 1.) “For it is through the liturgy, . . . that the work of our redemption is exercised”, and it is

“the outstanding means by which the faithful, can express in their lives, and manifest to others, the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church” (Lit. Const. 2).

“Day by day the liturgy builds up those within the Church into the Lord’s Holy Temple . . . until Christ’s full stature is achieved. At the same time the liturgy marvelously fortifies the faithful in their capacity to preach Christ. To outsiders the liturgy thereby reveals the Church as a sign raised above the nations. Under this sign the scattered sons of God are being gathered into one”. (Const. Lit. 2).

“Zeal for the promotion and restoration of the liturgy is rightly held to be a sign of the providential dispositions of our God in our time, as a movement of the Holy Spirit in His Church. It is today a distinguishing work of the Church’s life, indeed of the whole tenor of contemporary religious thought and action.” (No. 43).

“In order that this pastoral-liturgical action may become even more vigorous in the Church” (no. 43) “the Council called to mind the principles concerning the promotion and reform of the liturgy, and established practical norms” (no. 3)

The 'Consilium' was set up soon after the Council in order to implement the Constitution on Sacred liturgy; it has published practical instructions for the same purpose.

These must be implemented *at once, fully and at all levels* (namely at the local, parochial, diocesan, regional and national levels). All the obstacles in the way of implementation must be removed so that a liturgical renewal may take place and bring about the salutary fruits expected of it by the Council.

(b) Background

The National Catechetical and Liturgical Centre under the auspices of the CBCI Commission for Liturgy has drawn up a long term programme for liturgical renewal for India and is carrying it out systematically.

It has a network of organisations and lists of collaborators: it counts 40 consultants chosen from all over India; it has urged the creation and functioning of regional and diocesan liturgical commissions and proposed to them fields and ways of collaboration with the National Centre and Commissions and coordinates their efforts. It also works in close contact with the professors of Liturgy in seminaries and scholasticates and helps the implementation of liturgical reform in the seminaries. Regular circulars and news bulletins and the monthly review WORD AND WORSHIP provide them with needed information. The annual All-India Liturgical Meetings bring these people together and enable them to follow a concerted and dynamic policy of renewal. New liturgical texts, as published by Rome, are made available to the country at the earliest by the National Centre which prints and distributes copies at once. Lately, the question of adaptation and experimentation was also taken up and decisions were taken to introduce short term and minor adaptations in the liturgy and to permit experimentation in other questions

For most of the major language-groups, there are regional liturgical commissions; likewise most of the dioceses have either a diocesan liturgical commission or at least a priest appointed for this work. Though these organs of implementation have been set up and do exist, they depend upon so many factors and lack so many facilities that more often than not they cannot function or function inefficiently.

On the part of the people there has been enthusiasm and good cooperation towards implementation; but often the difficulty and has been on the part of individual priests and bishops.

Wherever bishops have permitted generously all that was granted by Rome and wherever priests had been initiated to liturgy and given guide-lines, the renewal has taken place; elsewhere the situation is pre-Vatican and there is no hope of change for the better.

(c) Identification of Problems

1. Refusal or hesitation of Bishops to grant in their dioceses or regions what is sanctioned or permitted by Rome and what is cleared and approved for India by the CBCI, e.g.

—the use of vernacular

—faculty for concelebration and communion under both species.

—celebration of Mass facing the people

—arrangement of the sanctuary to set in relief the important places of worship.

—approval of music for sung Mass

—introduction of the weekday lectionary and new liturgical texts like the New Anaphoras, etc.

2. Lack of sufficient staff at *the National Centre* to render all the services requested by the regions and dioceses, e.g.

—some more useful publications can be made available

—more guidelines can be issued on specific points

—a team of two or three specialists may go round the dioceses to give lectures and seminars on liturgy and to urge the implementation of the Liturgical Instructions.

3. *Regional Commissions* are rather slow in the translation of texts; this is due to the following factors:

(1) there is no full-time secretary or full-time translator

(2) the translators have had no technical training

(3) the procedure of consultation is not functional and fast

(4) there is too great divergence of views among bishops and members of the Committees on the texts prepared, so that matters expedite be expedited.

- (5) the difficulty commonly experienced is the inability to meet often. Several committees don't meet even once a year.
- (6) Financial problems.
- (7) Lack of collaboration on the part of Catholic Presses to print the texts quickly.
- (8) Lack of proper working conditions and facilities.
- (9) Lack of cooperation among the dioceses.

4. *Diocesan Commissions:*

- most of them exist in name and do not function.
- they rarely meet; some of them do not meet even once a year.
- there exists no full-time secretary, not even a part-time one
- even if there is a secretary appointed, he is a jack of all trades and lacks authority or competence to promote liturgy in the diocese.

5. Most *seminaries* and scholasticates do not have a trained or qualified Professor of Liturgy.

- all the members of the staff are not enthusiastic in collaborating in the liturgical renewal of the seminary; this division impedes speedy and correct implementation.
- though there is some improvement after the Council, the liturgical education and formation of the seminarians is far from adequate.

6. *Priests in the ministry:* there have been some seminars or lectures on liturgy at monthly (deanery) meetings; but it is like a drop in the ocean. What they need is systematic, comprehensive and continued initiation to the liturgy by a more regular and practical programme of training. Some priests know the new rules but have not acquired a liturgical sense nor are they able to create a proper atmosphere for proper worship. Since they have never or seldom experienced what a living and meaningful liturgy is, they are content with merely implementing new rules in the place of the old.

(d) Possible Solutions

- (1) The National Centre should be adequately staffed by appointing one or two priests specialised in Liturgy.
- (2) The National Centre should make available one or two

lecturers to go round the dioceses, seminaries and other institutions to give lectures, courses and seminars.

(3) There should be a full-time secretary in every regional liturgical Commission or Centre who should be empowered and equipped to execute a modest and carefully drawn out programme of activities decided by the Regional Liturgical Committee and Regional Conference of Bishops.

(4) The recommendations of the First All-India Liturgical Meeting (Febr. 1968) should be taken seriously and followed without delay:

They are:

I. Where they are not existing, REGIONAL LITURGICAL COMMISSIONS should be constituted, and they should meet at least one a year. The APPOINTMENT OF A FULL-TIME SECRETARY FOR LITURGY, at least on the regional level, is strongly urged.

II. Apart from this, EACH DIOCESE SHOULD HAVE A LITURGICAL COMMISSION and the latter should meet at least twice a year. The role of this commission is to implement the Constitution and Instructions on the Liturgy and decrees of the National and Regional Conferences of Bishops. This comprises the following concrete tasks: The Commission should

- (a) undertake a PROGRAMME OF FORMATION for priests, religious and laity, in accordance with the suggestions indicated in WORD & WORSHIP, Vol. I, page 422,
- (b) provide the texts and clarifications of the Roman Documents;
- (c) make available to the clergy and laity, directly or indirectly, liturgical books and other liturgical literature (especially in the vernacular), musical compositions and guide lines on Sacred Arts;
- (d) issue, if possible, a regular bulletin with concrete and practical directives.
- (e) organise short seminars for the clergy, religious and lay-people. In these seminars they should get down to concrete problems, reflections on them and clear solutions.

If it is really impossible to have a full-fledged commission, the above tasks should be entrusted to a priest appointed ad-hoc.

(5) Formation of priests deserves top priority. It is on them that the liturgical life of Christian Communities mostly depends. It is of supreme importance that they should have experienced what a living liturgy is and imbibed a true liturgical spirit. In order to give the spirit of the liturgy to priests already in the ministry who have not had the benefit of being trained in the new liturgy in the seminary, liturgical retreats, monthly recollections, seminars and talks on liturgical matters should be organised. The National Liturgical Centre of Bangalore must be requested to recommend priests competent in the art of communicating a true liturgical spirit.

(6) This supposes that there be available in every diocese one or more priests, sisters, or lay people to give these courses and talks. Hence the need to get them trained. (Cfr. last topic on the formation of leaders for liturgical renewal.)

(7) Conditions and interest for liturgical renewal must be created in the seminaries. The Liturgical Life of the Seminary matters even more than the course in liturgy. A fine liturgical spirituality must be fostered, it must be well integrated with the seminarian's personal life of prayer. The liturgy must enter into and permeate his whole life. Prayer and celebration, personal and communitarian, must be harmonised. Steps must be taken to carry out the instructions of the Roman Documents with regard to making Liturgy a major subject, getting a trained professor and assuring an all round liturgical formation which shall have full cooperation of the entire staff, and the support of their good example.

5. TOWARDS AUTHENTIC INDIAN LITURGIES

(a) Scope and Objectives

Terms of reference:

Constitution on Sacred Liturgy: Arts. 4, 21:

Arts. 37-40:

—“Even in the liturgy, the Church has no wish to impose a rigid uniformity”. Rather she respects and fosters the spiritual adornments and gifts of the various races and peoples.

She studies with sympathy and if possible, preserves intact and sometimes admits to the liturgy itself whatever is not indissolubly bound up with superstition and error.

“The revision of liturgical books should allow for legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions and peoples, especially in mission lands.”

Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity:

Art. 9:

“Whatever truth and grade are to be found among the nations, as a sort of secret presence of God, missionary activity frees from all taint of evil and restores to Christ its maker And so, whatever good is found to be sown in the hearts and minds of men or in the rites and cultures peculiar to various peoples, is not lost. More than that, it is healed, ennobled and perfected for the glory of God.”

Art. 11:

“Let the Christians be familiar with their national and religious traditions, gladly and reverently laying bare the seeds of the Word which lie hidden in them.”

Art. 18:

“The Church must assimilate the ascetic and contemplative traditions whose seeds were sometimes already planted by God in ancient cultures prior to the preaching of the gospel.”

Art. 22:

“In imitation of the plan of the Incarnation, the young churches rooted in Christ take to themselves in a wonderful exchange all the riches of the nations which is given to Christ as an inheritance. From the customs and traditions of their people, from their wisdom and their learning, from their arts and sciences, these Churches borrow all these things which can contribute to the glory of their creator, the revelation of the Saviour's grace, or the proper arrangement of Christian life.”

If efforts are made to translate into concrete action the mind of the Church expressed above, they may result in an authentic Indian Liturgy.

Liturgy is the sum-total of efficacious signs of sanctification of men and worship of God.

“In the liturgy the sanctification of men (as well as the worship of God) is manifested by signs perceptible to the senses and is effected in a way which is proper to each of these signs” (Lit. Const. No. 7c.).

These signs may be persons (assembly, ministers) gestures and postures, words proclaimed, recited or sung (acclamations, prayer, and song), or things, (place, time, objects) and actions (catechumenate, baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, liturgy of word and sacrifice) etc. The approach or method of pastoral liturgy is essentially a passage in faith from visible things (signs) to invisible realities (significance). “While we know God in the invisible manner we are thereby drawn to the love of things invisible.”

“The liturgy is made up of unchangeable elements divinely instituted and elements subject to change. The latter not only may but ought to be changed with the passing of time if features have by chance crept in which are less harmonious with the intimate nature of the liturgy, or if existing elements have grown less functional” Art. 21.

In other words, liturgical signs are both universal and particular in character. They are UNIVERSAL in character, because in the liturgy Christ builds up His one Body, the one People whom He gathers from all places and all times. It is universal also in another sense: Christ has addressed His message of salvation to all men within one concrete historical and cultural setting, that of the Bible; furthermore He Himself has instituted certain actions and signs in which He wants to be the vehicle of His salvific action in the world until the end of times.

The liturgy is at the same time PARTICULAR i.e. proper to one concrete people at one period of history: for every people and every local Christian community has the duty and the right to worship the Father and to seek communion with him through Christ by means of signs, actions and prayers which are conna-

tural and fully intelligible to them, which therefore are part of their own cultural, social and religious heritage and customs.

The harmonious blending of these two aspects, the universal and the particular, can be called the never-ending process of adaptation in the liturgy.

If liturgy is to be a living experience, meaningful to the participants and relevant to their life, the liturgy should consist of appropriate signs and their significance should be accessible to the worshippers.

The great obstacle to liturgical renewal and fruitfulness is the presence of complex, obsolete and meaningless signs and the lack of understanding of their significance on the part of the participants. A modern man finds a seeming incompatibility between religious symbols used in the liturgy and symbols of his professional life drawn from the technological culture. And in the case of Indians, these signs are not only not meaningful to the Hindu Indian mentality but they do not evoke the cultural and religious traditions of his country.

Therefore the Constitution on Liturgy has decreed that: "whenever necessary, the rites be carefully and thoroughly revised in the light of sound tradition and that they be given new vigour to meet the circumstances and needs of modern times". (No. 4.).

"In this restoration, both texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly the holy things which they signify". (No. 21)

"The rites should be distinguished by a noble simplicity; they should be short, clear and unencumbered by useless repetitions." (34)

These signs should be, as far as possible, self-evident and meaningful in themselves without requiring elaborate and intellectual explanations. They should be at least so within a socio-cultural or socio-religious context for the people of that group. If our liturgy is composed of such signs, people will spontaneously understand and experience the significance of these signs. Participation will become just normal and active by itself. The Constitution rightly says therefore that

"the Christian people, as far as possible, should be able to understand them with ease and to take part in them fully, actively and as benefits a community" (21 b).

Or

“they should be within the people’s powers of comprehension and normally should not require such explanation” (34).

However simple and self-evident these signs may be, they require also a certain amount of human culture, religious culture and above all biblical culture. The Word of God enlightens the signs, removes ambiguity and gives the people their right significance. That is why initiation to the Bible is necessary as well as readings, homily, commentary on the reading, interpreting and understanding liturgical signs:

“That the intimate connection between the words and rites may be apparent in the liturgy,

- (1) in sacred celebration there is to be more reading from holy scripture
- (2) the sermon is part of the liturgical service
- (3) Instruction which is more explicitly liturgical shall be also imparted in a variety of ways
- (4) Bible services should be encouraged. (Art. 35).

An authentic Indian Liturgy supposes signs that are drawn from Indian cultural and religious traditions which are still meaningful to modern Indians of a given region and which are capable of expressing the realities of the Christian mystery. We should therefore see whether the signs which we use in our liturgy are genuinely and relevantly Indian; if they are not we should acknowledge this fact and replace them gradually by Indian religious signs. This will be conditioned by the nature of the study, research and experimentation we make, the extent of collaboration in wider ecumenism we receive and the intensity of pastoral preparation we realise.

In this process of Indianising our Liturgy, it is desirable that all the Christian denominations and rites be involved and work together right from the start.

First of all the three rites of the Roman Catholic Church in India (Syro-Malankara, Syro-Malabar and Latin) : all these three rites want to have authentically Indian Liturgies, and all the three are engaged in the work of renewing their respective liturgies. There is a growing awareness within the three main rites that a greater unity—which does not mean uniformity—would be

beneficent to each of them and to the Church and India as a whole. While respecting the autonomy of each rite, these three rites may work together in a common team for study, research and experimentation. As the results are gathered, discussed and found acceptable they may be introduced in the respective rites as the authorities of each rite decide. Thus all the three rites, keeping their identity and autonomy may converge towards something common in the very process of renewing and indianizing their liturgy. Already the introduction of the vernacular—Malayalam—in the three rites have brought them closer together than before. Language is a sign and an important one; there are other signs, major and minor which can be replaced fruitfully by Indian ones, by local ones.

Once this formula is acceptable to the three rites, the invitation can be extended as well to the other Christian Churches in India (the Protestant Churches and the Mar Thomite and Jacobite Churches) so that the process of renewal and indianization of our Liturgy be not an obstacle to ecumenical dialogue, harmony and progress.

It is in this sense that the term 'one rite' or 'common Indian Liturgy' may be understood; that is to say all the three rites want to tend towards a common Indian Liturgy which will have a basic unity with a plurality or variety of forms according to the cultural and religious traditions of the regions.

These adaptations concern the following:

- Indian art, architecture, sculpture, painting and decorations meant for worship.
- postures, gestures, objects and vestments used for worship
- the use of other religious literature in one form or other in our Christian liturgy, 'laying bare the seeds of the Word'.
- Mass (liturgy of the Word and liturgy of the Eucharist, especially the Anaphora).
- Baptism and initiation ceremonies
- matrimony and local marriage customs and ceremonies
- Christian funeral with the funeral customs of the society, regions and religions
- Christian celebration of Indian festivals (national, social and religious)

Some of them are short-range and others long-range.

(b) Background

The efforts made so far in this line

Faithful to the spirit and decisions of the Council as contained in the Sacred Constitution on the Liturgy, and sensing the needs and aspirations of their people, the Hierarchy of India has entrusted the two-fold task of study and experimentation to the National Commission for Liturgy. The Commission for Liturgy has been asked to

“make a detailed study of the possibility of one liturgical rite for India” (Cfr. Report of the General Meeting of the CBCI, Oct. 1966).

Work done by the Commission

At the First All-India Liturgical Meeting (February, 1968), several sub-commissions were constituted. They are listed here, together with the first results of their work (up to January, 1969).

(a) The work of the SUB-COMMISSION FOR THE STUDY OF THE RITE OF THE MASS, comprised:

- a comparative study of the Eucharistic Prayers in the two Oriental rites (Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara), in the Roman Rite and in the CSI. On concluding their study the special sub-commission stated that the fourteen Eucharistic Prayers, now in use, can gain by the integration of religious features of the Indian heritage, and that this can best be done by the composition of a new Indian Anaphora. While investigating the structure of the Liturgy of the Word, with the same purpose of giving it a more genuinely Indian character, the same sub-commission found that a start could be made, not in the Liturgy proper, but through the use of prayer services for well initiated groups.
- A second group made a thorough research of the structure of the Anaphora. This was done with the purpose of giving guidelines to competent persons who would volunteer to compose truly Indian Anaphoras in the local languages, seeking their inspiration in the religious background of their respective milieux. We may expect that such Anaphoras will be available in the near future.

Members of this latter group also examined what would be the basic elements that would characterise a truly Indian Mass.

The outcome of their work was a scheme of the Mass in which we can discern the following main features:

- (i) An Indian Mass is not to be envisaged as ONE STRICTLY UNIFORM Rite which would be the same up to the last detail for the whole of India. It would rather comprise a *basic common structure*, calling for adaptation and integration into a local religious and cultural setting. Hence the Mass among Christians drawn from a Hindu milieu would differ very much from the same Mass celebrated by a tribal community in the Khasi hills.
- (ii) This underlying basic structure would comprise *the use of non-Christian sacred writings*, as a source of inspiration
 - for the people’s songs,
 - for the priest’s prayers,
 - and perhaps also as a formal proclamation of the “Seeds of the Word” or an expression of the “Cosmic Covenant”—by this we understand the primitive revelation of a God who never abandoned sinful mankind, but Who even prior to the revelation of the Old Testament, and outside the Chosen People, manifested his salvific will to every people. Such a reading might find a place in the first part of the Mass, preliminary to and distinct from the Liturgy of the Word.

N.B.—The use of Indian Scriptures (e.g. the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Koran etc.) in the Liturgy poses a serious problem: It is important that a thorough study be made of the relation between such writings and the Revelation of the Old and New Testament (Scriptural background), the attitude of the early Church towards such writings (patristic research), the tradition of the Church in her worship (the findings of the Liturgists), and then finally the theological implication of the question.

(b) Besides these long-term projects, which will demand a prolonged study, another sub-commission was entrusted with a short-term project; this could be implemented rather soon. The Liturgy of the Word and of the Eucharist, celebrated by the People of God in the concrete circumstances of the Church in India calls

for expressions and modes of behaviour, which should be drawn from the local culture. This is a field that is widely open to a variety of gestures, postures, religious vestments and objects used in worship. At the Second All-India Liturgical Meeting (January, 1969) this found a very wide approval, and concrete proposals to the Hierarchy have been made for immediate implementation throughout India, but with due respect for local conditions and aspirations, and preceded by sufficient pastoral preparation of the people.

In addition to the latter elements we should not forget that genuine adaptation calls for prayers and hymns which in their content and form reflect and express the spontaneous longings and feelings of a concrete Indian community.

N.B.—We pointed out that these minor changes could be implemented very soon. Yet they will appear very important to our ordinary people for whom change in dress or mere external posture often matters more than the promulgation of some new doctrine or disciplinary measure. Therefore it is all important that they be preceded by repeated explanation on the reasons and the meaning, and also on the very modality of the changes proposed.

Besides Holy Mass there are two more fields of adaptation: that of the *Sacraments and of the Festivals*. These do not pose the problems with which we are confronted in the Mass.

History gives ample proof that the Church has tried to integrate the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation), Marriage and Funeral Service into the social and cultural practices of the people. "Provided they do not smack of superstition or mythology, provided they do not contain any doctrinal error", we should aim at Christianising whatever is good in the existing customs.

Two sub-commissions have taken up this work. It is felt that the laity can play a prominent role here both in collecting the data and in the preliminary stage of experimentation. Furthermore, this work can, to a great extent, be done immediately at the national level. Much of this kind of adaptation already exists in what we can term "home-Liturgy": i.e. the practices and customs handed over by successive generations and observed either in the homes as such or in the village; they are practices observed before

and after the celebration of baptism in the Church, the sacrament of marriage celebrated before the priest, the funeral in Church and cemetery.

(c) Identification of Problems

1. To distinguish carefully our objective from other objectives proposed or pursued by some of the experiments of the 'ONE RITE MOVEMENT'.

2. To take into account and not to lose sight of the regional diversity in culture, language, religious traditions and social customs, development of the Church. The unity in diversity of Indian culture and religion is to be respected in our liturgy too.

3. To work towards a common liturgy respecting the autonomy and identity of the three existing Rites in India.

4. To work together, both hierarchy and people, for this goal.

5. To satisfy the exigencies of serious study, prolonged research and careful experimentation while trying not to disappoint those who want to go fast.

6. To ensure psychological and doctrinal preparation of the faithful coupled with a wise and realistic pastoral approach before introducing these adaptations.

7. To assure freedom both ways: permitting those who want to experiment and introduce adaptations, and not imposing them on those who are unwilling or unprepared.

8. To accelerate the evolution of an Indian Liturgy while assuring that it be an organic growth and not a laboratory for fabricated liturgy.

9. To consult the laity and respect their reactions without forgetting or giving up the duty of enlightening and educating them in the liturgy.

(d) Possible Solutions

To pursue the programme of adaptation prudently, courageously and perseveringly, rallying together the whole Church along the lines proposed by the National Liturgical Commission and Centre of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India.

As a practical preparation for an authentic Indian Liturgy, all concerned should promote prudently and gradually an Indian

atmosphere in our worship, by adapting suitable Indian decorations, objects, postures, gestures, etc., by promoting Indian architecture, sculpture and painting and music, and by composing prayers and hymns which take their inspirations from Indian religious literature.

6. FORMATION OF HIGHER CADRES OR LEADERS FOR CATECHETICAL APOSTOLATE AND LITURGICAL RENEWAL AT ALL LEVELS

(a) Scope and Objectives

Renewal supposes spirit and persons.

Persons must be equipped for the task by adequate formation and facilities.

This holds good at all levels (local, institutional, parochial, diocesan, regional and national).

Hence the importance of formation programmes.

(b) Background

In recent years our country has seen numberless courses, seminars, meetings, conferences at all levels. This is particularly true in the fields of catechetics and liturgy.

However they are far from being adequate to meet the requirements of the country.

A systematic and far-reaching programme must be worked out.

(c) Identification of Problems

- lack of training Institutes
- the need of training facilities.
- buildings
- teaching staff
- finance and maintenance
- lack of personnel who can be freed from other occupations and sent for long training and who after training can be appointed full-time for such tasks at diocesan and regional levels.

(d) Possible Solutions

1. A training Institute to be part of the National Catechetical and Liturgical Centre to Bangalore to provide a course of one year for leaders in catechetics and liturgy: diocesan directors of Catechetics, directors of Catechetical Centres and Services, secretaries of regional and diocesan liturgical commissions, professors of liturgy and catechetics in seminaries, scholasticates, heads of juniorates and noviciates, etc.....

Requirements:

—A building with 50 rooms: cost Rs. 6 lakhs.

—A full-time staff with two priests and several sisters.

trained sisters are easily available but what is difficult is to get trained priests.

2. A mobile team of lecturers must be set up at the National Centre to go round the dioceses and regions to help conduct seminars and give courses.

3. There should be in every linguistic region or political State a Catechetical and Liturgical Centre (or a Pastoral Centre) which will conduct a training course in the respective vernaculars for priests, nuns and selected laymen as these may later on promote the work at diocesan and local levels.

4. A regional mobile team of lectures must be organised to give lectures in the vernaculars to smaller groups.

5. A diocesan catechetical and liturgical service, with a full timer and some part-time workers to visit the parishes of the diocese, to help the parish-priests to issue training programme, and to coordinate and promote the work in the diocese is necessary.

6. Regular meetings to be organised for the benefit of the Clergy at the diocesan or deanery reunions during which a comprehensive programme of lectures, workshops and discussions must be carried out. If possible, regular liturgical and catechetical (programmes) bulletins to be published which will provide guidelines, for all those engaged in the apostolate.

7. More profit to be drawn from WORD & WORSHIP by encouraging further subscriptions to this review. The other existing liturgical and catechetical publications to be put to the best use.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

TOPIC I: THE PLACE OF THE CATECHUMENATE IN THE ENSEMBLE OF THE CHURCH'S MISSIONARY AND PASTORAL ACTIVITY.

1. Is there an organised catechumenate in India:

—in the missions ?

—in established parishes ?

Should we ask Rome to establish a Congregation for the Catechumenate ?

2. How can we involve the entire people of God in the catechumenate ?

3. What steps should be taken to ensure the “social security” of the Catechist ?

TOPIC II: ADULT CATECHESIS

(a) The imperative need for adult catechesis

—for personal formation in Christian maturity

—for imparting Christian formation to children and youth.

(b) Coping with disadvantages in the present system

—re-orientation of Christian adult attitudes and practices with particular attention to parents..suggest means to do this.

—consultation with workshop on Social Communications Media concerning aids, keeping in mind the illiterate, and the different language groups in India.

TOPIC III: ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH IN CATECHESIS OF ALL FORMS, AND IN THE HOMILY

(a) Significance of the anthropological approach—fruits of research done.

(b) How to relate catechesis and the homily to life

—to the Indian, regional, local situation

—to human, Indian, religious and cultural values that appeal to contemporary Indians

- to social structures
- to the individual
- to methods that encourage discovery, growth and development.

(c) Consider providing more service centres—the preparation and publication of suitable source books, bearing in mind

- personnel
- finance
- audio-visual aids.

TOPIC IV: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LITURGICAL RENEWAL WARRANTED BY CHURCH DOCUMENTS

A. Review of the situation in India

- the ground covered by the National Catechetical and Liturgical Centre.
- the regional liturgical commissions
- possible approaches to apparently disinterested bishops and priests.

B. Suggestions for the practical implementation of effective solutions

- long and short term planning
- personnel
- literature
- finance

TOPIC V: TOWARDS AUTHENTIC INDIAN LITURGIES

A. Guidelines for the psychological and doctrinal preparation of the faithful bearing in mind diversity in

- culture
- language
- religious tradition
- social customs
- development of the Church

B. Consider the preparation and circulation of collections of prayers and hymns which in their content and form reflect the aspirations of the Indian community.

C. Consider means to accelerate the evolution of Indian Liturgies

TOPIC VI: FORMATION OF HIGHER CADRES OF
LEADERS FOR CATECHETICAL APOSTOLATE
AND LITURGICAL RENEWAL

- A. Consider expanding the National Catechetical and Liturgical Centre bearing in mind
- personnel requirements
 - capital and maintenance expenditure
- B. Suggest means for the setting up of
- Regional Service Centres
 - Diocesan Service Centres
 - Parochial Service Centres

WORKSHOP-III

Evangelisation

INTRODUCTION

I. Subject Matter

1. *The word "Evangelisation"*, taken literally, means preaching the Gospel—whether to Christians or non-Christians—so that the Light and the Life of Christ might germinate or mature in them upto a dedicated love of God and men. As such it is the substance and summary of the Christian task in the world, and the basic aspect and measure of its growth and renewal of the Church.

But even taken in its more specific and restricted sense, as the sum-total of these activities and aspirations concerned with the direct apostolate among non-Christians, this effect of evangelisation (or missionary activity) on the maturity and the youth of the Church remains. As Pius XII reminded us :

“Wherever the Church is exclusively absorbed in the care of herself, whether in a mission area, a parish, a diocese, a region, a nation or a religious community, there she signifies nothing but her own death” (Evangelii Praeconii)

If we use the term “evangelisation” in preference to “missionary activities” it is because it helps to bring out more the substance and purpose of the mission-work itself, as well as its link with the totality of Christian life. Also, it indicates better that we are concerned more with the direct aspects of the apostolate among non-Christians, as distinct from the fields of dialogue and ecumenism, which are covered by special Workshops.

2. *The following topics* seemed, in view of the Seminar, to be the most important and comprehensive of the various aspects of the subject, and also sufficiently representative of the different interests in this field:

- (a) *Evangelisation in the Light of our Faith*: facing the new awareness of herself as the “People of God” and the “light of the nations”, how must the Church conceive and execute her task of preaching to all nations” ?

- (b) *Evangelisation as a task of all believers*: the call to the universal apostolate implies that every member of the Church must take his share in its mission: hierarchy, clergy, religious, laity. How can their respective efforts be intensified and co-ordinated ?
- (c) *Evangelisation and the Indian people*: in terms of integration and adaptation of the garb and contents of our Gospel—presentation in the Indian religious and social environment—this is the question both of image and of message.
- (d) *Evangelisation as an operational assignment*: evangelisation being more than a mere over-all motivational issue, its definite organisational set-up its planning and resources are to be evaluated and formulated in terms of priorities and possibilities, alternatives and improvements.

3. *The pattern of presentation*: Being a guide mainly for discussion, this handbook does not offer the comprehensiveness of a textbook nor the rationalisations of an essay. Instead, keeping in view the various categories and interests of the participants, and within the limits of the available time and scope of discussion, it offers:

- (a) background information and data, useful for reference and argument;
- (b) a formulation of problems in view of the evaluation expected in the workshops
- (c) a presentation of planning priorities and alternatives for action in India.
- (d) suggested readings or representative comments on the topics proposed.

EVANGELISATION IN THE LIGHT OF OUR FAITH

A. Introduction: on “image”

It should be kept in mind that when we speak about “image”, we ought to be much more concerned with ‘reality’ than with ‘appearance’, less worried about being rightly understood and more about rightly understanding ourselves. Only in its outward sense can ‘image’ be taken as the ‘total impression created in the mind of others by our behavioral pattern’; primarily and in its deepest sense ‘image’ means a ‘virtual synthesis in depth of all the elements of our calling and conviction.’

The problems and priorities indicated below are, therefore, more concerned with aspects of the Christian perception of the task of evangelisation, than with the appreciation of non-Christians for the Gospel and its preaching by the Church. It is evident that these are not identical or mutually inclusive aspects: circumstances, obsessions, prejudices, intermediaries, misunderstandings may always thwart or obscure the "inward" as well as the "outward" image.

We have grouped the reflexions and suggestions regarding the latter aspect under topic three.

B. Problems (for evaluation)

1. (*Terminology*):—Should the term "mission" (and its derivatives) be replaced by "evangelisation", for practical reasons ?

—What is the place of "christian" and "non-christian" in the concept of the "people of God" ?

—What insistence should be made on baptism in respect of conversion ?

2. (*Urgency to-day*):—Is "the missionary age" over ? Should a moratorium on conversions be imposed as a temporary measure ?

—Is it more important now to have, if necessary, fewer but better Christians, to consolidate rather than to expand ? Or is an expansive Christianity the best guarantee of its vitality ?

—Should we consider the "building up of a right social order" a more urgent task of the Church to-day than to evangelise and extend Church-membership ?

3. (*Contents and motivation*):—Should we preach "Christian values rather than the Church" ?

—Is the "preparation of the milieu rather than baptizing" our immediate task in India to-day ?

—What are the causes of the drying up of apostolic zeal or lack of preparedness for "mission work", especially among young priests ?

4. (*Stages and levels*):—Is 'conversion' a simple process initiated or terminated by baptism ?

—Is there a danger that the prefix "pre" in pre-evangelisation will gradually absorb all the substance of the word ?

—Is it meaningful to distinguish the various stages of evangelisation as “the humanising stage”, “the stage of moral transformation”, “the acceptance of Christ” and “the acceptance of the fellowship in the Church of Christ”? Are these chronological or spiritual aspects?

C. Priorities (for action)

1. (*Understanding*):—Opportunities for dialogue between missionaries and theologians to be created, on the basis of the Vat. II “Decree on the Missions”.

—Organisation of missionary symposia, and consultative meetings between missionaries with common evangelisation areas or problems.

—Preparation of an integrated and up-dated handbook on Missiology, together with practical spiritual guide for missionaries (in India).

2. (*Training*):—In all houses of clerical or religious formation, courses on missiology to be made compulsory for all (together with specialisation-courses for some)

—Re-orientation courses for active missionaries to be organised regionwise as far as possible.

—Opportunity to be given to all clerical, or religious students (even to parish-clergy, to sisters, and brothers) to visit real mission fields and share, for some time, in the work of direct evangelisation.

3. (*Motivation*):—A chapter on the “missionary character” of the Church to be included in all catechetical instruction.

—Use of retreats, conferences, sermons by visiting or home-coming missionaries in parishes, schools, to stimulate interest in evangelisation work.

—Publication of studies (biographies, monographies) on missionary pioneers, movements, or problems, for a wider (specially youthful) Christian public.

4. (*Link to social work*):—Should the Church undeterredly act primarily as the champion of the poor, or (under the present circumstances) rather concentrate on higher educated classes?

—Should the function of “missionary” and that of administering “social works” be separated as a matter of principle or prudence or efficiency?

—Should we call for an end to all foreign material aid, specially in the field of socio-economic development (at least if channelled directly through the Churches) ?

—Christian social services (hospitals, etc.) to be primarily started in less-serviced non-Christian areas, or in co-ordination with Government services ?

D. References/Documentation

1. Vat II: Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity nos. 38, 29, *et al.*

2. Vat II: Constitution on the Church: no. 17 (missionary character of the Church)

3. Vat II: Declaration on relationship of the Church with non-Christian Religions: nos 2 ff.

4. Suenens, L. Card: Inaugural address to Louvain Missiol. Week, 1965.

5. Claude, H. Fr: The Secretariat for non-Christians.

1. EVANGELISATION AS A TASK OF ALL BELIEVERS

A. Introduction

Noting the essential need of 'missionary activity' for the pilgrim Church, and the magnitude of the task, the 2nd Vatican Council insists that "every disciple of Christ has the obligation to do his part in spreading the faith" (ch. IV, nr 23).

There are those who, responding to God's call, want to devote themselves wholly to the work of the Gospel, whether in their own countries or abroad, individually or as organised groups. They are to bear witness by a true evangelical life, in a spirit of self-sacrifice and unaffected love, if need be 'to the shedding of their blood'. They need to be men of initiative, ready to adapt themselves to strange customs and changing circumstances, with a sympathetic mind and responsible heart, co-operative and 'with great esteem for the patrimony, language and customs of other peoples'.

To the greatest number of Christians, however, a more limited but not less essential task and share in the work of evangelisation is reserved. Whether through their individual family-lives, or within the context of their parish-activities, or of organised diocesan-sponsored assistance to the missions, all—bishops, priests, religious, laymen—are to exert themselves for the evangelisation of the world.

Taking our lead from these directives, four major problems confront the members of the Church in India in their effort towards a more effective and intense preaching of the Gospel to the multitudes ignorant of Christ in this country: the stimulation of more and better vocations for the full-time evangelising groups (whether clerical or lay), the adequate planning of resources and training of personnel available for this task, the activation and integration of (even part-time) laymen in the various aspects of evangelisation work, and the establishment of a greater ecumenical unity and understanding with other Christian groups in this respect.

B. Problems (for evaluation)

1. (*Role of Parish*):—What are the main pastoral opportunities for priests to make their parishioners more mission-minded ?

—How to keep (or make) the parish clergy more mission-minded, both on the level of personal engagement and parish involvement ?

2. (*Attitude of laity*):—What are the causes of (and remedies for) the existing lethargy and indifference among many Indian Christians with regard to spreading the faith ?

—For which kind of lay-assistance in the work of evangelisation is there the greatest demand, or opportunity ?

3. (*Mission organisations*):—How can the efficacy and participation of the existing Catholic Action organisations be increased in evangelisation work ? (division of labour ? training ?)

—Should new ad-hoc lay missionary association(s) be formed ? How to orient, finance, equip them ?

—Are the Missionary Societies of the Holy See still adapted to our times (in set-up, aims, control, etc) ?

4. (*Difficulties*):—What are the main handicaps in the employment of lay-personnel within the framework of the “mis-

sions" ? (financial, spiritual, occupational, administrative ?)

—What are the main obstacles in the way of a greater ecumenical co-operation in the various aspects of evangelisation ?

C. Priorities (for action)

1. (*National level*):—Need for an agency (under, or side by side with, the CBCI Commission on Church Extension) to organise the supra-diocesan missionary co-ordination.

—Establishment of a national authority to recruit volunteers (clerical, religious or lay) for evangelisation in every part of India.

2. (*Diocesan level*):—Every Diocese to have its own Evangelisation-Council (possibly as a section of the Pastoral Council) with an executive Director of Evangelisation, to stimulate and co-ordinate evangelisation work in the Diocese.

—Creation of a Diocesan information—and vocation—bureau for assisting and promoting missionary initiatives and vocations.

3. (*Ecumenical level*):—Formation of joint mission-councils, organisation of mission-symposia, joint missionary meetings wherever possible.

—Fostering of inter-religious meetings, on special occasions, or for special purposes, to increase the opportunity and improve climate for dialogue with non-Christian religious.

4. (*Special groups*):—A radical and far-reaching availability of religious sisters to be made possible (by CRI, or other competent agencies) for mission work in non-institutional evangelisation (villagers, industrial towns, etc.).

—Entrusting more enquiry-centres and catholic information bureaux to laymen (even part-time); similarly an increased responsibility to be given them in pre-evangelisation or para-missionary tasks (social work, etc.).

—Encouraging the practice of "missionary adoption" (of individuals, converts, areas) by various organisations (dioceses, parishes, lay-organisations, families, etc.).

D. References/Documentation

1. Apostleship of Prayer Intention, May 1969
2. McGRAVAN, D. A.: "Bridges of God"

3. Vat II: Apostolate of the Laity (nos 9-30)
Decree on the Missions (ch VI, 41 *et al.*)
4. Resolutions of Regional Missionary Consultation (Sitgarha, 23-26 March 1969)

2. EVANGELISATION IN THE INDIAN SCENE

A. Introduction: on "Integration"

The Church's duty is to evangelise, to make herself present to all men and all nations" (AG. 5), though "it is one and the same everywhere and in every situation", yet "the variety of situations keeps it from being exercised in the same way". These circumstances depend sometimes on the Church, sometimes on the peoples or groups or individuals to whom the mission is directed. Although the Church includes within herself the totality or fullness of the means of salvation, she does not and cannot always and instantly bring all of them into action.

This adaptation requires fundamentally a socio-cultural and psychological assessment of the people to whom Christ's message and calling to the Church is to be made known. This assessment itself can be made on the basis of the experience (positive or negative) gained in the course of past evangelisation-efforts in India, or on the basis of an evaluation of the present-day religious attitudes or expectations observed among dominant groups or individuals, or in public policy.

Apart from leading us to a better understanding of the mentality of the intended recipients, of the causes of 'lack of response' (if any), and of the relative value of various methods of approach, this "integrational" perspective also helps to bring out the deeper aspects of the Church's missionary assignment and to see the task of evangelisation not as a transplantation but rather, as an implantation, not as a mere sublimation but a compenetration of religious truths, not as the fruit of external organisation merely but rather as the work of the Holy Spirit.

B. Problems (for evaluation)

1. (*Lessons from the past*):—Which areas have been most responsive to the preaching of the Gospel, and why?

—Which groups, regions, have been *de facto* most neglected (even if nominally occupied) or overlooked? Why?

—Have any 'errors' been made which can or need be corrected even to-day, to 'make plain or straighten the road' to the Gospel.

2. (*Lessons from other religious evangelism*):—Does the experience of Protestant evangelism bring out any points of danger or opportunity faced by us also ?

—Do the contemporary non-Christian religious revivalist movements (their appeal or decline) have anything to teach us ?

3. (*Depth of opposition*):—To what extent is opposition to Christianity in India local or general ? transitory or traditional ?

—Is religious indifferentism a greater factor than religious orthodoxy or intolerance ? among which groups ?

—How should the increasing administrative, legislative, political, bias against conversions be understood and met ?

4. (*Sore points*):—Which aspects of the Christian message itself are most resented, or misunderstood, or misrepresented ?

—What is there in the personality or way of life of the gospel-messengers that offends or repels people in India ?

—Which aspects of the Church's structure or organisation is a hindrance to evangelisation in India ?

C. Priorities (for action)

1. (*Respect for religions*):—Need for continued and intensified study of and search for religiously sound elements in other religions in view of their adoption or incorporation in Christian worship or devotions or practices.

—Greater participation, to the extent permissible, in non-Christian festivals of a national character, and occasionally also joint prayer-meetings.

—Teaching of comparative religion in our schools, in higher classes, side by side with increased instruction in the Catholic doctrine.

2. (*Indianization*):—Compulsory and extended teaching and daily use of national language (besides regional and English) in our ecclesiastical training centres.

—adoption of surrounding community-pattern of living (dwelling, clothing, board) as the proper pattern of common living for those engaged in evangelisation.

—Appointment of study-commission (broad-based and broad-minded) to advise on principles of cultural and socio-religious integration.

3. (*Christian defence*):—To set up effective, lay-administered, vigilance units regionwise for advising on and organising of Christian social defence, at all levels.

—Publication of an ad hoc weekly magazine, intended for wider and official use, for enlightenment of public opinion on Christian rights, achievements, attitudes.

—Formation of operational minority-alliances for special fields of social defence (education, etc.).

4. (*Missionary policy*):—Catholic participation in national movements (such as sarvodaya, national integration, political secularism).

—Maximum—and priority—use of Indian personnel in direct evangelisation, wherever possible.

—Monographs of missions and missionaries to be prepared for every region.

—While following the lead of the Holy Spirit, using the opportunities existing to the utmost, give primary attention to the poor and to the youth.

D. References

1. H. Staffner: *The Christian Hindu* (CMS 1954)
2. F. Lederle: *Hindu Christian* (Quest, July 1968)
3. Van Troy: *Meeting Hindus in a University* (CMS, 1967)
4. Le Joly E: *The Educated Hindu and Conversion* (CM 1949)
5. E. Manthara: *The Church in India not yet Indian* (World 1956)
6. O. Sevrin ; *Annotations to the Niyogi Enquiry Report* (3 part)
7. "Freedom of Religion Acts" of Orissa and M.P. (1968).

3. PLANNING AND RESOURCES FOR EVANGELISATION

A. Introduction: On "self-reliance" and upgrading in evangelisation

While in the previous topics the question of missionary policy and principles have been considered, there remains the question of means. In all activities with an urgency-character and a scarcity-of-means aspect, planning is imperative; in all planning the fixation of concrete targets, is little else than the maximum-utilisation pattern of the available means, in view of wider and progressive goal-achievement.

The idea of priorities is not new in evangelisation-programming: it was perhaps most markedly formulated by St. Francis Xavier in his successive appeals from India, for specified types of missionaries for priority-areas, for ad-hoc and long-term training (as in St Paul's Goa). But with the near-completion of the hierarchical establishment in nearly all parts of the world, the problem of priorities has tended to have a very local character, restricted to the boundaries of a Diocese or Apostolic Prefecture. In the process, the over-all planning on a national and international level as well as between various spheres and means of action (such as seminaries, mass media, social institutions, etc.) has become, if not more difficult, at least less attended to.

Training of personnel, allocation of resources, selection of areas: all these and other aspects of planning and organisation cannot be so fixed that timely adaptation and diversification becomes impossible. Flexibility and updating are the crying needs of the hour and age, as well as a mark of responsiveness to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who above all else is the Supreme Planner, who creates both the opportunity and the means, in this work of evangelisation.

B. Problems (for evaluation)

1. (*Lack of planning*):—Should evangelisation be planned on an all-India or regional basis? How and by whom?

—How should the co-ordination of the various institutional executive agencies (participating in the gathering, preparation and allocation of resources) be done?

2. (*Role of institutions*):—In what sense can or should our schools and hostels be instruments of evangelisation?

—Are parishes the most suitable type of institutions from which to organise direct evangelisation under the existing circumstances?

—What alternatives can be suggested to replace “institutions” (such as involve immovable property, buildings etc.) by more flexible and personalised “services” ?

3. (*Unbalanced distribution of finance*):—Should a moratorium on church-building be imposed temporarily, or on the foundation of new “institutions” ?

—Should any rules be universally fixed within the Church for equal remuneration for clerical and lay-staff (allowing for grades according to type of employment, married status) ?

—What alternatives can be suggested to replace foreign finance for strictly ecclesiastical or socio-cultural purposes ?

4. (*Special areas*):—How to plan and organise direct evangelisation work in (industrial or other large) towns ?

—What alternatives can be suggested for evangelisation among non-Christian youth (other than through our institutions for education) ?

—What can be done (or has been tried) for bringing the Gospel to the women of India directly, adapted to their social status and environment ?

C. Priorities (for action)

1. (*Fostering vocations*):—Establishment of mission leagues, missionary orientation centres or vocation bureaux in every diocese (or region), to promote missionary idealism among youth, laity, clergy, in parishes and organisations.

—Opening of an Indian Mission Seminary on the West Coast of India, to prepare and provide personnel for areas of scarcity and urgency.

—Inclusion of special training—or contact—programmes in view of mission-work (i.e. work among non-Christians mainly or exclusively) in all seminaries and scholasticates for religious.

2. (*More equitable financing*):—Allocation of a greater part of the external resources for Church-extension-work among non-Christians.

—Fixation of a minimum (10%) of internal diocesan resources for definite evangelisation work.

—establishment of productive—indigenous—farms or industries to finance, as far as possible, our Church-extension work from local resources.

3. (*Better use of mass media*):—Establishment of regionally co-ordinated joint production—and supply centres for audio-visual aids.

—Co-ordination of vernacular publications (translations etc.) for use at various levels and grades of evangelisation, according to language-regions.

4. (*Re-arrangement of personnel*):—Every Diocese to put aside at least one man specially prepared and apt for city-evangelisation and contact with industrial areas.

—A minimum of 10% of all available personnel (clergy, sisters, brothers, religious priests) to be set aside for evangelisation, or alternatively at least one man in every major parish to be assigned for direct evangelisation work among non-Christians.

—More mission territories to be made available in Northern India for priests from Kerala and other surplus-areas.

D. References

Le Joly: Planning for Evangelisation in India (1969)
id.: Witnesses of Christ (1967)

Report of the Regional Consultation (for N. India) on Evangelisation held at Sitagarha, March 23/26, 1969.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

TOPIC I. EVANGELISATION IN THE LIGHT OF OUR FAITH.

1. Is "the missionary age" over? Should a moratorium on conversion be imposed as a temporary measure?
2. Is an expansive Christianity the best guarantee of its vitality? Or should we, in India, concentrate more on "building up a right social order", "Christian values rather than the Church", as being a more urgent task?
3. What repercussions would the above have on "formation of priests, religious and the laity"; on motivation of the People of God? Please make practical proposals for action.

TOPIC II. EVANGELISATION AS A TASK OF ALL BELIEVERS

1. Make concrete proposals for mission-mindedness
 - of the parish and its clergy
 - of the laity (currently so lethargic and indifferent to spreading the faith); what about lay assistance in the missions?
 - of mission organisations and other pious associations
 - at different levels, diocesan, regional, and national.
2. Consider ecumenical cooperation in the various aspects of evangelisation.

TOPIC III. EVANGELISATION IN THE INDIAN SCENE

1. How should the increasing administrative, legislative, social and political bias against conversions be understood and met?
2. Which aspects of (a) the Church's structure, or organisation and (b) the way of life of the Gospel messengers, are a hindrance to evangelisation in India? What can we do towards gaining acceptance and trust in our *bona fides*.

TOPIC IV. PLANNING AND RESOURCES FOR EVANGELISATION

1. Should evangelisation be planned on the regional and/or national basis ? By whom ?
2. Can our institutions/parishes be used for evangelisation ? To what extent ? Is there a place for flexible and personalized "services" to replace "institutions" ?
3. How can we deploy (a) our personnel
(b) our financial resources
to reach the goal of our "evangelising" mission ?
4. Are there any areas where evangelisation has been neglected or should be taken up more seriously?

WORKSHOP-IV

Dialogue With Other Religions

The Context

(1) Before we consider the actual nature of the “dialogue” demanded of us and its practical working in the Church in India, it is necessary to insist that the “dialogue” approach to other religions is something new in the life of the Church and it makes great demands on all Christians. Since the days of Pope John dialogue has become an all embracing reality in the life of the Church ; it is the rule for the Church’s dealings with other churches, with other religions and with the world at large. Today the Church has come by a deeper understanding of her call to serve ; a more profound insight into the Mystery of Jesus as world-redeemer; a clearer vision of the radical universalism of Salvation history ; and a finer appreciation of human solidarity, human destiny and the complementary character of human cultures. These have combined to quicken in the Church the sense of dialogue and made her turn to the other religions which enfold the majority of men, whom the Church is meant to serve.

(2) Pope Paul (Ecclesiam Suam) and the Council have laid great emphasis on dialogue with other religions and for the first time in the history of the Church a solemn statement concerning them has been made. Added to this is a growing awareness of the world as an evolving answer to God’s unceasing creative call ; of the many factors in our situation that are making men aspire towards greater unification in spite of religious and cultural pluralism. It is becoming increasingly clear that in our modern world the mission of the Church must be carried out in the spirit of dialogue ; i.e. a spirit of openness to others and readiness to learn from them in order to serve them better.

(3) Pope Paul contrasts the dialogue approach to the world with other possible ways, such as were followed in the past ; isolation and aloofness, condemnation of and crusade against what was regarded as false and evil, seeking influence even by

way of theocratic power. These ways, the Pope says, are no longer in keeping with the situation of the Church in the world today. Her relation to the world is best expressed in dialogue adapted to various questioners and circumstances. Dialogue demands on our part courtesy and kindness and excludes a prior condemnation and polemics. Without aiming at immediate conversion this dialogue seeks to offer spiritual help, and its qualities must be clarity, meekness, prudence and confidence.

(4) In its call to dialogue between all men the Council has the following : "By virtue of her mission to shed on the whole world the radiance of the Gospel message and to unify under one spirit all men of whatever nation, race or culture, the Church stands forth as a sign of that brotherliness which allows honest dialogue and invigorates it." Then having mentioned, the dialogue that must obtain within the Church herself, and the ecumenical dialogue with non-Catholic Christians, the Council speaks of the Church's dialogue with non-Christians : "We also turn our thoughts to all who acknowledge God and who preserve in their traditions precious elements of religion and humanity. We want frank conversation to compel us all to receive the inspirations of the Spirit faithfully and to measure up to them energetically".

(5) This dialogue with all men is something new even in the recent history of the Church. The great Papal Encyclicals on the Missions till the last "Princeps Pastorum" of Pope John inclusively, do show respect for the *cultural values* found among non-Christians, but they do not mention their religions. As the Council progressed, the Church developed a deeper insight into the universal Mystery of Salvation and of her role in this unfolding Mystery. The two Council Documents "Nostra Aetate" (Non-Christian Religions) and "Ad Gentes" (Missions) speak reverently of the non-Christian *religions*. The former Mission Encyclicals called only for adaptation, not for dialogue, on the religious level. This dialogue spirit therefore supposes a new attitude on the part of the Church towards the non-Christian religions. These are to be viewed in the perspective of Salvation History, in which God uses the Church as His instrument. The Council has declared that the Mystery of Salvation enfolds all men and all their religious strivings for God, because 'God has ceaselessly kept the human race in His care in order to give eternal life to those who perseveringly do good in search of

salvation.” (Revelation 3). Consequently Christians must re-assess their attitude towards the non-Christian religions, which in God’s saving design are mysteriously related to Christ and His Church as fore-runners, precursors, preparations.

(6) Dialogue then is part of the life and duty of the entire Church and must be engaged in at all levels. The basic reason for this is the fact that the Church is the sign and sacrament of the Kingdom of God. The Church is not perfectly identical with the Kingdom. The Kingdom is larger than the Church. Yet the two are not perfectly distinct. The Church is related to the Kingdom in a unique way ; for the Church is both the sign of the presence of the Kingdom and the promise of the perfect fulfilment of the Kingdom still to come. At the same time the Church is the instrument by which God brings about His reign among men. “So it is that this messianic people, although it does not actually include all men, and more than once may look like a small flock, is the sure seed of unity, hope and salvation for the whole human race. Established by Christ as a fellowship of life, charity and truth, it is also used by Him as an instrument for the redemption of all . . .” (Lumen Gentium, 9)

A Historical Sketch

(7) The history of the Church’s attitude to other religions is briefly outlined here in the conviction that a historical perspective is usually vital to a true grasp of the issues at stake. Tillich notes that the attitude of Christian thinking and acting towards other religions and quasi-religions has not been consistent. It could however be said in general that the attitude has not been one of total rejection and hostility, as is usually believed, nor one of partial acceptance and partial rejection, but rather a dialectical union of acceptance and rejection with all the tensions, uncertainties and changes such dialectic implies. It is not quite true that Christianity always had an exclusively negative attitude towards other religions. In the Middle Ages the Church was much kinder to the religions than to Christian heretics. The theological thinking responsible for this fluctuation related the Christian faith and the religions variously as true and false, perfect and imperfect, revealed and natural, or as crown and body, as Gospel and preparation for Gospel. (P. Tillich, op. cit., p. 29.31 ; P. T. Thomas, *Theology of Chakkarai*, Bangalore, 1968, p. 118-9).

(8) Roughly three periods may be distinguished in the story we are telling (Kaj Baago, *Dialogue in a Secular Age*, in Herbert Jai Singh ed., *Inter-religious Dialogue*, 1967, p. 127-141). The first four hundred years of the Church showed an openness to religions and a willingness to dialogue and to learn. Having broken free of Jewish religious nationalism and not yet encumbered with institutional superstructures, the Church was free to approach men and borrow from Jewish tradition, Greek philosophy, the mystery religions and Roman law. The Fathers spoke of the Church as existing from the days of Abel and Adam. Augustine in his mature years wrote in his *Retractationes*.

“I said in *De Vera Religione* that Christianity is the safest and surest way to God. I referred only to the true religion that now is called *Christian*. I was not thinking of true religion as it existed before the coming of Christ : I was referring to the *name* and not to the reality to which the name belongs. For the reality itself, which we now call the Christian religion, was present among the early people, and up to the time of the coming of Christ in the flesh was never absent from the beginning of the human race : so the true religion which already existed, now began to be called Christian. For when the apostles began to preach Christ after His resurrection and ascension into Heaven and many believed, it was at Antioch, as it is written, that the disciples were first called Christians (Act. 26). So I said : now in our day this is the Christian religion... not that in former times it was not present, but because it received this name at a later day.” (quoted from Fransen, *op. cit.* p. 82-83).

(9) From the fifth century on to our own times we have a long second period when the Constantinian alliance between Church and State led to an identification of the interests of the Church with those of the State. As rulers began to enforce doctrinal uniformity and wipe out non-Christian religions, the Church became a closed system of beliefs and observances, hostile to whatever was foreign or different. The appearance of Islam in the 7th century strengthened this attitude and produced the Crusade mentality. In this period it came to be generally assumed that the aim of the Church was the victory of Christianity, everywhere, which should therefore replace all other religions. It was in this spirit that missionaries met the great religions of newly discovered continents : Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism were to them no more than errors to be combatted

and destroyed. There was little or no question of dialogue. The western version of Christianity, they believed, had exhausted the possibilities of religious truth, religious experience and religious expression! Biblical and patristic ideas continued through the Franciscan school and men of insight like de Nobili, but as a trickle which really had no chance.

(10) But today the Church is resuming the broken dialogue, and that in a larger world, on a new key, with profounder resonances. She has been brought to it by the sight of endless stretches of pre-Christian history and pre-history, which she has to understand in terms of God's effective will to save all men. The religious situation of mankind today and its prospects for tomorrow oblige her to re-examine the old, Biblically unfounded, assumption that her vocation is to replace all other religions. She has enough intimations of the complexities of the religious fact and the psychology of faith to know that she could no longer meet with simplist answers the question of relationship between herself and world religions. The religions themselves have become better known to her, with their wondrous wealth of spiritual experience, religious wisdom, moral values and liturgical creations. Biblical studies too are continually shattering our nice little mental pictures of God's designs for His world and the Church's place in it.

(11) As a result then the Church's attitude to other religions has changed considerably. For too long her attitude had been one of condemnation, hostility and crusade, of contempt and neglect, of aloofness and isolation. She used to avoid them as dangers to the purity of her faith and to the strength of her adherence. This fear is now being replaced by maturer attitudes, a worthier view of Truth, and a larger view of God's ways with men. In a real sense therefore the present dialogue approach to religions is something new in the Church. The great Mission Encyclicals, including Pope John's "Princeps pastorum" had only enjoined appreciation and respect for the cultural values found in other religions. The Council document on Liturgy speaks only of elements from the traditions and cultures of individual peoples. "Lumen Gentium" speaks of rites and cultures of peoples. But finally the Mission documents make mention of "national and *religious* traditions of peoples", and the seed of the Word lying hidden in them, and a secret presence of God. The Church has slowly come to recognize that world religions

are to be respected and loved, and in place of the old call for adaptation, she now encourages religious dialogue.

(12) Before entering into dialogue with other religions the Church must enter into her own mystery ; she must know her own nature so as to be able to preserve her identity. This is what Pope Paul in "Ecclesiam Suam" calls for in the first place, and this is what the Council did in its great Constitution on the Church, "Lumen Gentium". All the faithful must be instructed and made alive to their share in the Mystery of the Church. It is true that the dialogue will be at different levels, but at every level a certain maturity in faith is necessary. Without arrogance, but in a spirit of humility and gratitude, Christians must recognise the absolute and unique claim of Christianity. This claim of absoluteness is made for Christianity, not for the Church at any stage of her history. The Pilgrim Church is always in need of renewal and repentance—"ecclesia semper renovanda, semper reformanda". The absoluteness of Christianity means that Christianity is not only de facto the noblest of all living religions, but it is God's one ultimate self-disclosure, completely valid for all men in whatever age they may be living, essentially definitive, never to be superseded. (*Sacramentum Mundi* vol. I. p. 311)

(13) It is not correct simply to identify Christianity with the Catholic Church. Nor is Christianity the sum of all actual Christians and their opinions or religious experience. The saving act of God in Christ which founded Christianity is present, with the full embodiment (in principle) which it implies, in the one Catholic Church. Because of its absolute character Christianity contains within itself, in its fullness, man's possible religious relationship to God. Hence no genuine, authentic religious value or experience is alien to Christianity ; hence again Christianity is less an exclusive than an inclusive religion ; instead of repudiating other religions and other efforts to discover truth it embraces them, and therefore its very nature disposes Christianity to dialogue with other religions of the world. On the other hand, Christ, the fulfilment of the law, is also its end (Rom. 10 : 4) ; He fulfils the law by annulling (rather by transcending and sublimating) it (Eph. 2 ; 15. Col. 2 ; 14), because fulfilment here is the wonderful doing of God, it is something creative and incalculably new. Thus Christianity in spite of its inclusiveness must always seem a paradox in this world, and a scan-

dal. It must both affirm and negate, fulfil the religions and culture of mankind and sit in judgment on them. (Sac. Mundi. I. p. 312.)

(14) The Church, which is catholic in essence, must ever strive to realise the universalism of which she is the sign and sacrament. She is driven to this by her very nature. She (i.e. all Christians) must therefore go out to other religions in a spirit of openness and love. Here we must make an important distinction between religions and the systems of religion with their doctrines, rites and traditions. *Religion* is the fundamental option a man makes, by which his life is (implicitly at least) set on God and oriented towards God. It is a decision of total commitment to God in faith and trust and love. It is a process of dying to self and living to God (Augustine's two loves in the City of God). This religious experience, so personal, so inward and ineffable is expressed imperfectly in the religious systems with their doctrines, rites and traditions. We see at once how important it is to make this distinction, because many difficulties in the matter of dialogue with religions are created by confusing religion itself with religion's expressions.

(15) Thus *religion* entails an ultimate concern for and a commitment to an absolute. This absolute is not always conceived as God, the Creator and Lord, nor as a supramundane being. Earthly ideals are at times treated as absolute. Hence we have not only theistic religions, but also non-theistic religions (like Buddhism according to some), and also quasi-religions like secular humanism, and Communism. Our dialogue is with all these, with religions like Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, and with quasi-religions like secular humanism and Communism. Towards the religions the attitude of the Church has changed in recent times ; but she is still hostile to the quasi-religions. In India today there are many educated non-Christians, who profess to be humanists and secular atheists, but quite often they reject not God but a particular conceptualisation of God. These too are persons with whom we must enter into dialogue.

(16) *Dialogue* will necessarily be progressive and have many stages. It is important first that we aim at creating an atmosphere of mutual trust, appreciation and love in order to win the sincere good will of those with whom we converse. Because of many factors, some historical, others institutional and still others personal, there are barriers of suspicion and mistrust

that divide us from non-Catholics, whether Christian or non-Christian. These barriers must be crossed by our sincerity and out-going love for the others as persons ; prejudices must be removed ; the false image of the Church must be corrected. We should, from the start, be ready to accept the social habits, customs and cultural values which are in agreement with the Gospel. The most powerful idea inspiring dialogue is that of the unity of the human race, one in its origin, one in its history and development, one in its destiny ; sin shattered the original unity and harmony of this family—by charity, expressed through dialogue, God wants us to restore this unity. Therefore we must have a great spiritual hunger to achieve full unity of all men according to God's plan which is revealed to us in Jesus Christ.

(17) Dialogue means conversation, exchange, mutual sharing of ideas and life. Sincere co-operation in any good work (Sarvodaya) is lived, existential dialogue. As the work is based on commonly accepted values and ideals, there is present in such co-operation a meeting of minds and hearts. We meet the other and appreciate the other as "person", one to be respected, loved, cherished, served for himself, and not for some ulterior motive. Both partners to such lived dialogue are sure to undergo change, which at times can be quite profound. From collaboration can blossom formal dialogue which seeks to understand and spell out the moral and human values underlying our common life and action ; and to explore ways of building a society which would enshrine these values. In the Council Document (Aetate Nostra) para. 2. we read "The Church therefore has this exhortation for her children ; prudently and lovingly, through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, and in witness of Christian faith and life, acknowledge, preserve and promote the spiritual and moral goods found among these men, as well as the values in their society and culture".

(18) In the same document the Council explains what these values are : *first* : the function of the religions, or what men expect of them is to "give an answer to the unsolved riddles of the human condition", about the meaning of life, of good and evil and "the ultimate mystery which enfolds our existence".

Second : the answer to these basic questions, common to all religions, is the perception and recognition of a hidden power

hovering over the course of things and the events of human life, of a supreme divinity or even a supreme father", that is, the more or less obscure perception, explicit in various degrees, of a personal God. Religion is the "agnitio Dei" and the religious man takes the basic option regarding God.

Third: "the teachings, rules of life and sacred rites" found in the religions "contains things which are true and holy". Though much in them differs from what the Church believes and teaches, "yet not rarely those things reflect a ray of the truth which enlightens all men" (Aetate Nos. 3tra 3.)

(19) All these statements of the Council add up to a very positive appreciation of non-Christian religions. But the Council goes still further. Some of the statements in the Documents suggest that the religious values found in the non-Christian religions are part of the History of Salvation. "Lumen Gentium" (16) speaks of non-Christians "to whom divine Providence does not deny the necessary helps for Salvation, when (not without the help of grace) they live a good life". The Mission Decree (Ad Gentes 7.) speaks of God leading men by mysterious ways to salvific faith. Again (no. 11) where the "seeds of the Word" found in non-Christian religions are said to be part of the riches which the bountiful God has distributed among the nations. In the light of this Council teaching we cannot dismiss the non-Christian religions as merely man-made, and containing only errors and evil practices. While it is the task of theologians to study more precisely *how* God has helped these non-Christian religions, the *fact* that God *has* helped them is sufficient doctrinal basis for our workshop. Basing ourselves on the Council teaching we can, and indeed must, regard the religions as a Providential preparation for the Gospel, previous stages in the one, universal Mystery of Salvation which culminates in Christ.

(20) Dialogue does not consist merely in collaboration in good works, though it often must start from there. Along with co-operation in promoting the human goods there should go religious co-operation in common prayer and meditation, also some degree of common worship (para-liturgy) leading to an ever fuller sharing of spiritual experience, learning from each other and seeking to understand each other's inner faith and life. We cannot expect our non-Christian partner in dialogue to admit us into the innermost, secret sanctuary of his

soul, where he meets his God, unless we approach him with love and reverence. Yet, in depth, true religious dialogue is a sharing of the faith-commitment and God-experience of both the partners.

(21) Dialogue then is spiritual and religious communion, the experiencing together of the religious reality. It consists in experiencing together the fact that we are both seekers after God and witnesses to each other of God's mystery and love. Therefore we meet at the deepest level of our lives. There we aim to share both what is common and what is different, personal, for our mutual enrichment. In dialogue we share what God is for both of us, what He means to each of us, and what He expects from us. The drive behind dialogue must be a genuine concern for God, for God's truth and love, because in religion we seek not our human interest but only God's interest. The heart is set on seeking and discovering, meeting and worshipping God wherever He is present and acting, especially where He is claimed to be present, worshipped, loved and served. In religious dialogue the interlocutors seek to penetrate the obscuring veils of words, and symbols and rites and come to the "heart of the matter", the truth, "which is often a ray from the Light that enlightens every man" (N.A. 3), the good, which is the fruit of God's grace (Lumen Gent. 16).

(22) In religion, as indicated above, there is first the fundamental option, the personal commitment to God, then its expression in a personal creed, and finally the ecclesial creed in which the faith of the community is enshrined. All three can be the sphere of religious dialogue, but the genuine religious dialogue will aim to go beyond the creeds so as to reach the God-experience enshrined in them. From this it follows that dialogue need not be, and at its best it is not, talking about religion, exchange of ideas, or an exercise in comparative religion. Since the Mystery of God transcends all human formulation, genuine dialogue will lead to a new experience of this ineffable, divine Mystery present in both parties. Therefore dialogue is also a challenge. It challenges both partners, makes them profoundly aware of God's presence, and calls for a change of heart. It is a shared experience of conversion, of being torn from ourselves and our idols—whether these are ideas, or formulas, or practices with which we are content. There is no stopping on the road to God.

(23) Religious dialogue with believing Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and others is necessary, but this should not blind us to the urgency and importance of dialogue with the growing number of educated non-believers, who claim to be secular humanists. These form a very influential section of the society in modern India. In many cases they reject not religion as such, but some particular expression of religion, which they find to be incompatible with their reason, or their human aspirations, whether individual or social. In the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the World Today (*Gaudium et Spes*, no. 21) the Council has the following. "While rejecting atheism, root and branch, the Church sincerely professes that all men, believers and unbelievers alike, ought to work for the rightful betterment of this world in which all alike live. Such an ideal cannot be realised, however, apart from sincere and prudent dialogue. .The Church knows that her message is in harmony with the most secret desires of the human heart when she champions the dignity of the human vocation, restoring hope to those who have already despaired of anything higher than their present lot."

(24) In his Encyclical "Pacem in Terris" (158, 159) Pope John laid a basis for this dialogue : "One must never confuse error and the person who errs, not even when there is question of error. .in the moral or religious field. .It must be borne in mind, furthermore, that neither can false philosophical teachings regarding the nature, origin and destiny of the universe and of man be identified with historical movements that have economic, social, cultural or political ends, not even when these movements have originated from these teachings." It is for us in a spirit of true charity to try and discern the genuine religious value that often motivates their aspiration for human values. It has been pointed out above that these movements are quasi-religions, and they must engage our attention.

(25) It should really be unnecessary to ask whether dialogue is an end in itself or a means. As an exercise of charity and a witness to the charity of Christ, dialogue is a genuine act of religion and can be called an end in itself. Without making dialogue a technique for winning converts, the Council in the Decree on the Missions (*Ad Gentes*, 11-13) shows how dialogue is related to evangelisation. Dialogue tries in true charity to discover what is true and good in non-Christian religions (11) ; the presence of charity in imitation of Christ is to be a witnessing, at least im-

plicit, to Christ (12); but as soon as an opportunity for it is offered there must follow the preaching of the Mystery of Christ, or the proclamation of the Gospel, which seeks to lead to conversion (13) and this in turn to Baptism and incorporation into the Christian community. Therefore, while it may happen that one has to stop at the dialogue of charity, wherever possible the dialogue leads to Christ and the Gospel. Since dialogue is a mutual exchange and sharing, the Christian partner impelled by charity seeks to give the best he has, i.e. his faith in Christ. The fear of some that dialogue will replace evangelisation and thus kill missionary zeal in the Church is groundless. Dialogue is itself a form of the missionary apostolate in modern conditions, and it makes for greater demands on the charity and zeal of Christians fulfilling the mission of the Church.

(26) *Basis of dialogue* : the philosophical, sociological, scriptural and theological bases of dialogue with other religions must be clarified and brought home to the whole Church ; only in this way will the dialogue spirit become part of the daily life of the Church. Philosophically, dialogue must be placed in the context of the personalist view of life. Persons are open to one another and are destined to live in communion, mutual sharing, in dialogue. It is through dialogue give-and-take that man develops into a full person. That is why man is born into a net-work of relationships in family, society, with rights and duties, with needs to be supplied by others and talents with which to enrich others. Human life is dialogue lived, and Christian life must be communion, dialogue perfected.

(27) Sociological basis : (i) The Church is one among several religious groups which exist in neighbourhood conditions and influence one another. It is neither permitted nor possible for such groups to live in spiritual or cultural isolation ; that would result in impoverishment and stunted growth for all. Christians must be neighbourly. (ii) Religious pluralism is a fact, and, for all we know, it will be a permanent fact. The Church must accept this fact and come to terms with it to the best advantage of persons and of truth. In this situation the Church cannot merely co-exist with other religions, but must pro-exist for them, since service is her vocation ; service of persons, service of conscience, service of truth. (iii) It seems clear that only in dialogue, mutual enlightenment and mutual support can religions adequately meet the present upsurge of irreligion.

(28) Sacred Scripture is clear about the universalism of the Mystery of Salvation. The inspired writers never dreamt of restricting salvation to Israel alone. Salvation was open to all men from the beginning. All the nations come under the cosmic covenant (Gen. 1, 3, 9, 10). Through His works God reveals Himself to all men (Wis. 13; Rom. 1). Scripture recognises that truth and moral goodness exist outside Israel, and sanctity too. In the teaching of Jesus, entrance into the Kingdom is a matter of faith and repentance, and not of racial or cultural belonging, nor of confessional labels. True religion expresses itself in faith, repentance, obedience love and mercy, and these may be found in a higher degree among the gentiles. e.g. the centurion, the Samaritan woman. St. Paul affirms God's Self-revelation and Self-attestation in creation, which is at the same time a summons to its acceptance (Rom. 1; Acts. 17.) A clearer revelation is give in conscience. Conscience and revelation are intimately connected in St. Paul. Glory, honour and peace to everyone who does good, for God shows no partiality. What is ultimately important, therefore, is not who has or who has not received a special revelation, but who obeys God, and is obedient to whatever light God has given him. What matters is not the manner in which God's truth and God's will have been communicated to us, whether in Sacred Scripture or in conscience, but whether we live by it. (Rom. 2) In the religious desire and worship of the nations there is an unconscious seeking for the true God. (Acts. 17) The theological basis is the universality of the Mystery of Salvation, which embraces all men, and all the religious strivings of mankind. This is sufficiently brought out in the Council Documents mentioned above. This teaching rests on the ground that the Creator-Logos is also the Revealer and Redeemer ; creation is in view of Christ ; all things are made by Him, are for Him, and oriented to Him (cf. Col. 1) and Chris is also the light that illumines every man. (Jn. 1,9)

Preparing the Church for dialogue with religions

(29) In this we are faced with a gigantic task. The whole Christian community, the entire "people of God" is called upon to play their proper part in the dialogue with non-Christians. The first requirement is real and deep commitment to our faith. God has spoken to us in Christ, and calls us to dialogue with Him. This dialogue is the Christian response to God in faith and total surrender. Our Christianity must not be a mere

profession of faith with the lips, but a live faith in God's saving act in Christ. We must be unshakably rooted in Christ and responsive to His Spirit, only then shall we be sensitive to the working of the Spirit in others. This clear and sincere faith-commitment is required on both sides. Our Workshop may well ask whether our present Catechesis, Pastoral ministry, and Spiritual Direction are promoting this living Faith, this "person to Person" commitment to Christ, or whether instead they tend to produce external observance and conformist Christians.

(30) Dialogue has an ecclesial dimension, it is an expression of the life of the Church, i.e. the Christian community. Two important points come up for heart-searching consideration. First, to what extent are our activities directed to building up the *community*, the body of Christ? Secondly, what is the *image* that this community projects? Is it a *spiritual* image? and is it an *Indian image*? because the Church in India must be an intelligible *sign* to India of God's saving love. Other Workshops will deal with the first point; our Workshop may find it necessary to suggest concrete proposals regarding the second point. What are the things, if any, that give the Church an alien image? in the social habits and customs of Christians? in their cultural tastes? in methods of prayer and worship? the emphasis on well run institutions that give an impression of wealth? the secure life of priests and religious in large institutions? the structural rigidity of the Church? the emphasis on law rather than on love? These and similar considerations will come up at the Workshop.

(31) Dialogue requires that our Christians change their attitude towards non-Christian religions. The purely negative and condemnatory attitude that was common in the past is contrary to the Council teaching. We must consider how at every level our Christians are to be educated to play their part in the inter-religious dialogue. In our schools? in our seminaries and scholasticates? in the parishes? Dialogue means not only living together, and working together, and suffering together, but also and above all praying together. Christians will share the social and cultural life of non-Christian neighbours, and on certain occasions they will also pray with them. In these common prayers use can, and should be made of the devotional books and spiritual writings of non-Christians. We must study prayerfully how the various factors that contribute to our Christian forma-

tion, catechesis, schools, worship, parish activities, can help us to be rooted in Christ by personal commitment, and open to others. The more we know Christ, the less narrow and bigotted we will be. Our Christians therefore must learn to know, respect and appreciate the *religious* values and customs of their non-Christian neighbours.

(32) We Christians have tended to stress external observance, ritual and authority, to the neglect of the sense of the sacred and contemplation. Indian spirituality is deeply contemplative, and if they are to take us seriously in religious dialogue our fellow Indians must see us as recollected men of prayer, of detachment, of serenity and peace, men who live for God and with God. We must develop more and more the interior life, the "better way of the Gospel". In this matter priests and religious have to give the lead. Instead of multiplying busy "mission stations" could we not, with profit, have simple Ashrams of Contemplative religious, where non-Christians are welcome? The Indian soul is well attuned to the monastic ideal, and it would be a great contribution to the life of the Church if Christian monasticism on the Indian pattern were to flourish all over the country. The monastic ideal of combining work and prayer, action and contemplation, is the answer to a profound need in India. It will show by a living witness how to harmonise withdrawal with involvement, how to invest labour with personal and religious value without linking it to caste. These are acute problems today and call for dialogue, which monasticism can supply.

(33) In order to be the leaven our Christians must be thoroughly integrated, socially, culturally, intellectually, and spiritually. Would it not be helpful for some priests and qualified laity to spend some time in Hindu Ashrams, and so learn by experience the spirituality of our non-Christian brothers? In this same connection should not our youth be encouraged to take up seriously the study and practice of Yoga? We must acknowledge that intellectually and culturally our preparation for dialogue is inadequate. The priest for India must be a scholar and a saint in the best Indian tradition. Instead of taking a cheap university degree for the purpose of qualifying to teach in a school, should not our priests be encouraged to take up cultural studies in matters Indian, language, history, art, music etc? With proper personnel we could open centres for local groups, consisting of Christians and non-Christians, for discussions and

study of social, cultural and religious topics. Thus, at a centre in North India such discussions were conducted by mixed groups on the Encyclicals "Pacem in Terris", and "Mater et Magistra"; on the question of the relevance of religion in modern India etc. Such occasions can and should be multiplied. Good and scholarly articles in the secular press could be a feature of our dialogue.

(34) There are various groups that require special consideration. Thus (1) the non-Christian women normally can be approached only by Christian women, chiefly Religious. Therefore our Religious women should be trained for this essential dialogue. They can render an invaluable service of charity to their non-Christian sisters. (2) Our University students are in contact with the future intelligentsia of the country. Through the C.S.U. and the Newman Association, they must be trained to bear witness that genuine religion is not obscurantist, nor the enemy of science and progress, nor opposed to integral humanism and human values. Of great importance is their living witness to the dignity and value of the human person and to responsible freedom.

(35) Christian workers must be trained for their responsible apostolate in the world of labour. From them is demanded full involvement in this world with its problems, especially regarding justice. This is a very important sphere of dialogue, and it cannot be effectively conducted by priests.

(36) At a higher level our priests and religious should be true *gurus* to the non-Christians who approach them. They should be simple, kind, tranquil, detached, recollected, able to enlighten non-Christians on the mystery of existence, suffering, sin and death; able to guide them in prayer, and help them towards contemplation. For this dialogue there is great need that ascetical and mystical theology be more seriously taught in our Seminaries and study houses, and also that the riches of Christian asceticism, devotional and mystical literature be made available in translations. A thorough grounding in Christian mysticism would be of the greatest use in our dialogue with religious Hindus, whose entire approach to the religious reality is some sort of mystical, or semi-mystical experience. Our present training does not fit us to guide them.

(37) The scholastic formation which is given in our seminaries is strictly rational, and our approach to religion, too,

tends to stress the rational at the expense of the numinous. There is real danger that our method of theology lessens our sense of mystery. God becomes an object of speculation, rather than the Presence to be worshipped in silence. The result is that we are apt to offer to our non-Christian partner in dialogue "the God of the philosophers" and not the "living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob". Card. Newman also complained about the over-rational character of the scholastic approach. Now that the reform of seminary formation is under consideration, the Seminar can help by offering positive ideas and suggestions on this matter.

(38) The need for many more specialists has often been expressed for many years past ; it is to be hoped that the Seminar will help to change this pious wish into a reality. Until we have many more experts in the non-Christian religions and cultures, we should make better use of our limited resources in personnel for the benefit of the Church in India. These experts should not be tied down to some pastoral post, or teaching in a school—as is frequently the case. They should be mobile, at the service of the whole Church, wherever they are needed. For their specialised studies there should be institutes, well equipped, and in touch with non-Christian religious or cultural centres, as the case may be.

(39) A point worth making is that in the dialogue with Hindus of the Vedanta school, the meeting will take place on the common ground of pure spirituality. To quote Karl Rahner (*Sacramentum Mundi*, I, p. 304) : "Christianity therefore possesses a formulated doctrine as well as a teaching authority in the Church's Hierarchical leaders and this distinguishes it from religions which do not aim at doing more than producing a numinous experience by means of their rites, and from religious and philosophical interpretations of human life, (and from Christian sects), which in sceptical resignation falsely hold that the Absolute impinges on human existence and disposes over a human being's whole actual, concrete reality when it is simply "honoured" in mute remoteness and awe of its ineffability. Views of that kind reduce the religion of man in his whole nature to an ethereal "other-worldliness". The saving act of God in Christ is not a theology, but a fact. And we may not betray this fact by taking as genuine any expression of religion that claims to transcend Incarnation and Sacrament".

(40) Experience drawn from the diocesan and regional Seminars teaches that our Christians in general are very imperfectly prepared for the inter-religious dialogue. Our National Seminar cannot hope to launch the whole Church in India into dialogue at once. What we can hope for, and work for, is to start a movement for educating our faithful for this new and responsible form of apostolate, Dialogue.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

TOPIC I : THE AREAS OF DIALOGUE IN INDIA

A. The level of religion or spiritual level :

(i) In our dialogue we have to consider not only Hindus of the Vedanta School, but also the many modern and popular forms of Hinduism. What should be our attitudes in respect of these two groups ?

(ii) We must also consider the non-Hindu religions :

—Islam

—Sikhism

—Zoroastrianism

—tribal religion, etc.

Make specific suggestions.

(iii) How can the Church, emphasising her own spiritual mission (vis-a-vis the accusation of Institutionalism) dialogue with other religions so as to combat the evil effects of materialism ?

B. The level of socio-economic and humanitarian endeavours :

(i) How can we dialogue with other religions by entering into common endeavours with them on the socio-cultural and humanitarian level ?

(ii) In what way can these joint endeavours be made the point of entry into mutual understanding, appreciation and acceptance ?

(iii) Could our Bishops (the CBCI) form a permanent body, with the leaders of other religions, to study and give joint guidance on basic moral and religious problems e.g. marriage, family-planning, justice, fundamental rights, education, etc.

TOPIC II : PREPARING THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY FOR DIALOGUE

It is the entire Church, the whole Christian community, through each of its constitutive elements that must engage in the inter-religious dialogue. There is a role to be played by the experts and a role to be played by the simple faithful.

- (i) Could guidance in the form of a "Directory for India" be given to the movement of dialogue ?
- (ii) What facilities must we provide for the training of competent personnel for dialogue ? Research institutes ? A permanent Secretariat at the highest level set up by the CBCI to promote and co-ordinate dialogue in the entire Church in India ?
- (iii) Would the establishment of prayer-centres help in the work of dialogue ? How should these be organised and where ?
- (iv) In particular how can our youth, especially workers and university students, be prepared for the work of dialogue ?

TOPICS III : HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES

1. The Church in India can boast of a very limited number of scholars in things Indian. What suggestions have we for their training ? their effectiveness ? their mobility in the service of the *entire* Church ?
2. Can we provide "dialogue centres" with well equipped libraries and full-time personnel ? What should be the nature and function of these centres ? and how could they be supported in their work ?
3. Should we open our centre of higher studies (Indian) not only to priests but also to religious women and the laity ? Have you any practical suggestions e.g. scholarships ?
4. Would it be advisable to collaborate with non-Catholic scholars and enlist their services to train our Catholics ?

WORKSHOP-V

Indian Culture : Traditional and Modern

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

(1) Relation to Aggiornamento:

The main purpose of the National Seminar on the Church in India Today is to plan for the *aggiornamento* of the Church at all levels, according to the Decrees of the Second Vatican Council.

All endeavours at *aggiornamento* can be conceived as the salutary adaptation, based on the genuine and guiding spirit of the gospel, of the Church in her attitudes, activities and structures to the changing human culture.

When we speak of changing human culture, it is important to stress, with correct balance and proportion, both the traditional and modern aspects of the same. The traditional values, crystallized in the course of long history, give meaning, beauty and individuality to the life and activities of a people and form the very core of the cultural heritage and genius of a nation. At the same time, due weight and importance have to be given to the beneficial aspects of the modern technological and scientific revolution that is sweeping the face of the world, destroying or altering some of the old cultural patterns and giving rise to new ones, creating, in the process, a situation that calls for a greater unity among peoples of this world and a stronger emphasis on human dignity.

Before embarking on the question of cultural adaptation as applicable to the Indian situation, it would be helpful if we (i) summarised briefly the guiding principles drawn up by the Vatican Council II regarding the relation of the Church to culture; and (ii) enumerated rapidly the important factors one has to take into account in the Indian context, as described in the

Orientation Paper D on *Cultural Forces Shaping India Today* and its Supplement. Such a brief resume here will give us, in one glance, a general perspective of both the framework in which cultural integration has to be achieved and the complexity of the situation, with all the present and emerging problems that call for solution.

(2) Vatican II on Church and Cultural Integration.

A careful analysis of the documents of Vatican II on the relation of the Church to culture in its individualistic and pluralistic aspects, would give us many guiding principles in this area. Some of the important ones are outlined below.

Since the problems that arise when the Church has to deal with culture singly and separately are quite dissimilar to those she has to face in a situation of plurality of cultures vying for recognition and competing for dominance, these two situations are treated separately below:

(i) Relation of the Church to culture in its individualistic aspect.

(a) *The Church is not bound or identified with any culture.*

“The Church, sent to all peoples of every time and place, is not bound exclusively and indissolubly to any race or nation nor to any particular way of life or any customary pattern of living, ancient or recent.” (G.S. 58).

(b) *The Church however should become incarnate in all cultures.*

“God revealing Himself to His people to the extent of a full manifestation of Himself in His Incarnate Son, has spoken according to the culture proper to different ages.

Living in various circumstances during the course of time, the Church too has used in her preaching the discoveries of different cultures to spread and explain the message of Christ to all nations, to probe it and more deeply understand it and to give it better expression.” (G.S. 58).

(b) *The Church therefore is involved in every aspect of cultural progress.*

“Nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in the hearts of the people of God.” (G.S. 1).

“By the very fulfilment of her mission, the Church stimulates and advances human and civil culture.” (G.S. 58).

(d) *In this attempt a correct balance between fidelity to tradition and openness to progress should be fostered.*

“How can the vitality and growth of a new culture be fostered without the loss of living fidelity to the heritage of tradition? This question is especially urgent when a culture resulting from the enormous scientific and technological progress must be harmonized with an education nourished by classical studies as adapted to various traditions.” (G.S. 56.).

(e) *In this process the Church as well as the culture is enriched.*

“Faithful to her own tradition and at the same time conscious of her universal mission, she can enter into communion with the various cultural modes to her own enrichment and theirs too.

“The good news of Christ constantly renews the life and culture of fallen men....It never ceases to purify and elevate the morality of peoples. By riches coming from above, it makes fruitful, as it were from within, the spiritual qualities and gifts of every people and of every age. It strengthens, perfects and restores them in Christ.” (G.S. 58).

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(ii) **Relation of the Church to culture in its pluralistic aspect.**

(a) *Each culture, especially the weaker ones, enjoy inviolability and freedom for growth and development.*

“Because it flows from man’s spiritual and social nature, culture has constant need of a just freedom, if it is to develop. It also needs the legitimate possibility of exercising its independence according to its own principles. Rightly, therefore, it demands respect and enjoys a certain inviolability at least as long as

the rights of the individual and of the community, whether particular or universal, are preserved within the context of the common good." (G.S. 59).

"What must be done to prevent the increased exchanges between cultures, which ought to lead to a true and fruitful dialogue between groups and nations, from disturbing the life of the communities, destroying ancestral wisdom or jeopardizing the uniqueness of each people?" (G.S. 56).

"What can be done to make all men on earth share in cultural values, when the culture of the more sophisticated grows ever more refined and complex?" (G.S. 56).

(b) *The Church has to play her due role in the shaping of a more universal form of human culture that is emerging with the birth of a new humanism.*

"Living conditions of modern man have been profoundly changed.....New avenues have been paved. The so-called exact sciences...recent psychological researches and historical studies bring men to see things in their changeable and evolutionary aspects... Industrialization, urbanization.....create new forms of culture (mass culture).

"Thus little by little a more universal form of human culture is developing, one which will promote and express the unity of the human race to the degree that it preserves the particular features of different cultures." (G.S. 54).

"We are witnesses of the birth of a new humanism, one in which man is defined first of all by his responsibility towards his brothers and toward history." (G.S. 55).

(3) **Resume of important issues discussed in the Orientation Paper D**

The reference is to pages.

(i) *Cultural situation in the country:*

(a) India is multi-cultural and multi-social (D 136)

(b) The pluralism of culture in the country is based on
(a) religion (b) region or language (c) race and (d) caste. (D 136-37)

- (c) This pluralistic culture can perhaps be divided vertically into North, South, East and West, and horizontally according to the cultural layers in history into tribal, Dravidian, Aryan, Buddhist, Islamic, Christian and Western Cultures. (D. 136-37).
- (d) Indian culture is the fusion of different cultures. Gandhiji said "Indian culture is neither Hindu nor Islamic, nor any other wholly. It is the fusion of all." (D. 153)
- (e) The following are the main cultural forces at work in India: Modernisation, Westernisation, socialism, secularism, secularization, sanskritization, casteism, regionalism, linguistic rivalries, atheism, communalism, revivalism, traditional values and Gandhism. (D. 137-167)
- (f) Among the above-mentioned cultural forces some are conducive to cultural integration (Westernisation, modernisation, socialism, secularism, secularisation, sanskritization, atheism and Gandhism) while some others are forces of separation (casteism, regionalism, communalism, revivalism and traditional values). (ibid.)
- (g) The Traditional values of Indian culture are the following: Artha, Kama, Dharma, and Moksha are the basic aims of man's life; the theory of five debts; the distinction of society into four classes; guru-sisya relationship, holiness of marriage; family; (caste group) village and state are institutions of divine origin; the main virtues that characterise ideal men are austerity, self-control, truthfulness, peace, freedom from malice, non-violence, compassion, etc. the doctrine of Maya and Karma. (D. 163-166).

(ii) *Cultural Change in India*

A. DYNAMICS OF CULTURAL CHANGE IN GENERAL.

- (a) Any change initiated within the cultural whole triggers off changes on other parts of the culture. (D. 168).
- (b) Favourable attitudes, freedom for enquiry and especially powerful elite groups favouring desired change, contribute very much towards cultural change. (D. 169-170).

- (c) Establishing continuity with traditional values is necessary for the general acceptance of new patterns. (D. 175-76).
- (d) Along with any major cultural change a re-organisation of status and role systems also occurs. (D. 171) In the process personality disorders increase significantly, especially among lower income groups. (D. 172).
- (e) Cultural integration can be of three types or states: state of cultural symbiosis, state of stabilised pluralism and state of assimilation. (D. 173).
- (f) Cultural change must be seen as an on-going process. (D. 174).

B. FORECAST OF THE INDIAN SITUATION OF THE FUTURE.

In the next thirty years the following trends may become more and more prominent:

- (a) Greater industrialisation, urbanisation, mass education, socialism (D. 174)
- (b) Nevertheless, India may remain for many more years predominantly agricultural, with landed peasantry standing for the status quo. (ibid.)
- (c) There will be increasing threat to the law and order situation, because of regionalist, revivalist, linguistic and casteist pressures. (D. 174-75).
- (d) Economic growth will determine whether democratic methods will succeed or violent revolutionary means would be adopted. (D. 177).
- (e) The Indian nation as such will tend to approach a federation (federalism) more and more with a weaker centre and stronger linguistic regional states. (ibid.)

(iii) *The Church and Indian Culture.*

A. PROBLEMS

The following are the main problems that the Church may have to face in the process of cultural integration:

- (a) To begin with, the Hindu majority community is suspicious of the very idea of "indianization" by the Church. (D. 188).
- (b) The Church in India does not project an acceptable image to the public (D. 188 & 191).

- (c) The complexity of Indian culture makes all process of integration very difficult. First of all, traditional values are being eroded by new trends. Secondly, regional differences are beginning to assert themselves against unifying forces. In this changing situation, it is extremely difficult to plan a correct and well-balanced course for integration. (D. 189-90).
- (d) The complexity of the Indian situation is not known well by the people themselves, which makes all attempts at integration by the Church more difficult. (ibid.)
- (e) The complexity of the Christian communities themselves in India add to the difficulty, both with respect to their origin and their Indianness or westernization. (D. 187-8).

B. SOLUTIONS

To meet, the above-mentioned problems, the following lines of approach are suggested:

- (a) The Church in India should try to integrate herself with the changing culture of India and as a point of insertion one could perhaps take 2000 AD and plan accordingly (D. 192 & 194)
- (b) Any action programme must be highly flexible and regionally and locally based. An "All-India" detailed plan, be it for liturgy, education, etc., would seem to be ruled out. (D. 193).
- (c) Areas of culture-continuity have to be strengthened and developed (D. 193)
- (d) Highly visible factors of differentiation have to be discouraged (D. 194).
- (e) Greater involvement of Christian individuals and groups in Indian social, political and public life is necessary (D. 195).
- (f) Our educational institutions should be geared to meet the needs of cultural integration (D. 193-94).
- (g) Our clerical, religious and lay personnel should get better training in this line (D. 195-6).
- (h) More research and experimentation on local and regional levels has to be conducted (D. 196).

(4) Subject Matter of the Workshop

After having summarised the main points from the Decrees of the Vatican Council and the important issues raised by the Orientation Paper, it remains now to specify clearly the area which will be covered by this Workshop.

As mentioned in the beginning, all attempts at *aggiornamento* can be conceived in one sense as cultural adaptation and hence the theme of the present Workshop in its full amplitude would cut across almost all the Workshops. It is important, however, that at the very outset, we treat the general principles applicable to all areas of cultural integration. These then can be the basis of discussion for other Workshops.

Besides this general issue, the present Workshop will have to consider also those important areas of cultural adaptation which are not specifically included in the other Workshops.

The following are the areas of cultural integration tackled by other Workshops;

(a) *Spiritual integration.* India expects that we give primacy of importance to our spiritual life and that we integrate Indian spirituality in our Christian life. This is being studied in Workshop No. I.

(b) *Authentic Indian Liturgies.* This is the subject matter of Workshop No. II.

(c) *Adaptation in the methods of Evangelization.* Evangelization should not be a transplantation but an implantation. This is discussed in Workshop No. III.

(d) *Cultural approach in Dialogue with non-Christians:* This is the special study of Workshop No. IV.

(e) *Study of Indian languages.* The teaching of Indian languages and creating of interest in students for our Indian heritage comes under the scope of Workshop No VI, on Education.

(f) *Indian art and literature in social communication media.* Workshop IX studies Indian Art and Literature as far as they pertain to the Social Communication Media.

From among the areas not covered in the other Workshops we are singling out three issues of specific importance in this

regard. These, with the general theme mentioned above, form the topics of our Workshop. They are the following:

1. Indian Theology
2. Isolation of Christian communities
3. Indian Literature, Art and the Church.

(5) Method of Procedure

The above mentioned topics are taken up one by one, and in each instance the following points may be considered:

- (A) Reasons for including the topic
- (B) Scope
- (C) Problems
- (D) Solutions: Suggestions for Discussion

After having discussed these topics separately, a general conclusion is given with a concrete programme incorporating many of the things discussed. This is described and presented in the general frame work suggested for all Workshops, namely relating to (a) projection of the correct image of the Church, (b) in a culturally integrated fashion, (c) as the outcome of our common endeavour, (d) with a spirit of self-reliance.

I. CULTURAL INTEGRATION AND THE CHURCH: GENERAL ISSUES

A. Reasons for including the topic

In the following topics, we will take up specific areas of cultural integration and try to study the problems that arise in those areas. We are concerned here with the general approach we should have towards culture. These issues would be applicable, according to the nature of the subject, to all areas where cultural integration has to be achieved.

There are several reasons which make a discussion of the relation of the Indian Church to the national culture in general a matter of extreme importance.

1. Although the Christian message and the Church is not tied down to any culture, nevertheless, if it has to be fruitful, it has to become incarnate in every culture. The mission of the Church to communicate the message of God to all nations

demands that the Word of God is communicated through human media. The transmission, therefore, of the message of God is conditioned by the suitability of the human media. Every mode of expression of culture is a human medium capable of making the Divine Word intelligible to those who belong to the particular cultural milieu. God's word does not sound purely from outside, but also and more especially from within. Hence it is in keeping with the divine mode of communication that the message of the Church should be conveyed in and through the modes of cultural expression of each country. The Church recognizes and respects the working of the Holy Spirit in every human heart irrespective of the time and clime and looks for the fulfilment of the providential course of the religious culture and history of each country and nation.

2. If what is said above is true of every age, it has special significance and relevance in our modern times.

(a) This need for a deeper involvement of the Church in culture is more acute in modern times when we have reached, as the Vatican Decree on the Church in the Modern World says, a "new age in human history" (G.S. 54), and are "witnesses of the birth of a new humanism, one in which man is defined first of all by his responsibility toward his brothers and toward history" (G.S. 55). More than at other times, the divine should be presented and seen in the modern age, as the fulfilment of the developing creativity and aspirations of man.

(b) The Church has a very special role and function in our times when due to the technological and scientific revolution that is transforming the whole world, everything is seen in its evolutionary and changeable aspect and every tradition, irrespective of its antiquity or role is being questioned. It is the duty of the Church to help modern man to strike the correct balance between fidelity to tradition and openness to change.

(c) In an age when so many different cultures, regional, national etc., some of them very sophisticated; are aspiring for dominance while others are struggling to keep their identity and independence, it is once again the special role of the Church, the Sacrament of unity of the human race, to usher in a new form of universal culture, safeguarding the particular features of each culture.

3. There are special grounds for considering the question of cultural integration in our Indian Context.

(a) Modern India has a cultural complexity which no other country in the world may have. This complexity has two dimensions one of space and the other of time. Geographically or spatially, India is divided into different regions, each of which can boast of our ancient and developed culture. At the same time a common culture, that can be truly called Indian, has been always taken for granted. The regional and national pressures on culture, sometimes with opposing trends, are now being felt more and more and the Church should have a clear idea of her position vis-a-vis these cultural trends. Similarly, there is also the problem of change, being introduced by the division of time. Ancient cultural values, customs, attitudes, etc., are all being questioned, making room for modernity. Industrialization and urbanization are bringing in their wake many social problems that cry for solution: The Church has to be fully alive to the situation, if her salvific mission has to appear meaningful.

(b) The past history of the Church in India is another reason compelling us to consider the cultural problem with great urgency and priority.

The Church has appeared foreign to the general public and this stigma has to be removed to the extent possible, as this has been a serious obstacle in her mission.

B. Scope

The scope of discussing the topic is two fold. Some of the questions that face the Church are of a theoretical nature and it is important to have clear solutions for the same. It is evident, that these theoretical questions cannot be fully solved immediately. It would be, however, a big step forward, if the main issues are clearly identified and a way for their serious study planned. This is the first aim of the present discussion. Secondly there are some urgent practical issues that have to be studied and these may be also fruitfully discussed along with the theoretical orientation, as they are sometimes, intimately connected with them.

C. Problems

(i) First of all, since India is a melting pot of different cultural traditions, the concept of cultural integration itself has to be

demands that the Word of God is communicated through human media. The transmission, therefore, of the message of God is conditioned by the suitability of the human media. Every mode of expression of culture is a human medium capable of making the Divine Word intelligible to those who belong to the particular cultural milieu. God's word does not sound purely from outside, but also and more especially from within. Hence it is in keeping with the divine mode of communication that the message of the Church should be conveyed in and through the modes of cultural expression of each country. The Church recognizes and respects the working of the Holy Spirit in every human heart irrespective of the time and clime and looks for the fulfilment of the providential course of the religious culture and history of each country and nation.

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C. Problems

(i) First of all, since India is a melting pot of different cultural traditions, the concept of cultural integration itself has to be

thoroughly investigated. Without a very clear concept of the nature of cultural integration, we may not have a correct orientation in our practical programmes. This is one of the most important issues at hand.

(ii) Then there is the question of the unity of Indian culture in its regional and tribal diversity. How has one to conceive this unity? What is the nature of autonomy that has to be granted to regional and tribal cultures? How and in what manner should, in this context, the Church foster national integration? How should the Church further work for the emergence of a world community and a "more universal form of human culture."

(iii) Finally, there is the issue of the traditional values of Indian culture that have to be preserved while adjustments have to be made for modern trends. Has the Church a role to play in bringing the country forward through the industrial and technological revolution as speedily and in as orderly a manner as possible? These two then are the fundamental issues: (a) What are the values that have to be preserved?

(b) What is the mission of the Church in modernising India?

D. Solutions—Suggestions for Discussion

Each of the problems above can be taken separately.

(i) *Nature of Cultural Integration*

1. Once it is accepted that the Church has to integrate herself with the culture of the place where she is present, the first question that will arise is, what is the type of cultural integration called for here.

The Orientation Paper D speaks of states (a) of cultural symbiosis, (b) of stabilised pluralism and (c) of assimilation (D. 173), and avers, "As regards the present situation in India and the possibilities for the future, we can say that at present the Christian Muslim and Hindu unity in India seems to approach most closely the symbiotic model of cultural integration... Stabilised pluralism seems to be the model most suited to the Indian situation and indeed to be most in accord with the secular and nationalist ideals of the Constitution. Further it most agrees with the controlled borrowing which the Church has set herself on, in her drive to Indianise. (D. 173).

To begin with the example given is there not a Hindu culture and a Muslim culture in India and an Indian culture, which is influenced by both but is not entirely the juxtaposition of these two? "Indian culture" wrote Gandhi "is neither Hindu nor Islamic, nor any other wholly. It is a fusion of all."

There is another important concept that has to be clarified in this context. Can we speak of an Indian Christian culture? What is the meaning of the term? What is its present position vis-a-vis the dominant culture? What are its future possibilities? Is such a mode of conception legitimate and happy?

What about the different cultural waves, Jainist, Buddhist, Islamic, Aryan, Dravidian, that have transformed the Indo-Gangetic plains down the centuries? How have they interacted among themselves and have been influenced in producing the composite culture of India as it is today. The dominant values of Hinduism today are said to be not Aryan, nor even pre-Vedic but those of pre-Aryan religions which re-emerged after a period of domination by the new-comers. Can these lines of interaction be applicable in the case of integration of Christianity in the Indian cultural context?

Should not a much deeper integration be thought of, at least as a long range goal, than a mere stabilised pluralism or symbiosis? If in Christianity every cultural aspiration can receive its final fulfilment, are the concepts of "stabilised pluralism," "symbiosis", or mere "assimilation" rich enough to include this unique phenomenon? And is it not important to have very clear ideas of our goal in this process of adaptation?

These are some of the main problems that have to be studied while dealing with the fundamental nature of cultural adaptation, as far as the Church in India is concerned. Without arriving at clear ideas regarding these, it will not be possible to give an intelligent, clear or steady direction to the process of cultural adaptation.

2. Then, there are many issues which may seem to be of less fundamental character but which, nevertheless, because of the immediacy and urgency of the problems, affect us vitally:

(a) The Church "has to be resigned to the fact that she will have to live in a pluralistic society for many years to come." (D. 188) What is still more important to remember is that she will also remain almost as a negligible minority in this pluralistic so-

ciety in the foreseeable future. This fact may profoundly influence our cultural adaptation. In what ways ?

(b) It is also important to take into consideration the attitude of the majority community towards our whole programme of cultural adaptation. On the one hand the Indian Church is projecting a foreign image to the majority Hindu community while on the other it is said that Hindus themselves would tolerate or even like co-existence of the Church, but would not like Christian adaptation to Hinduism which is considered as unlawful intrusion into their field. (D. 188). The author of the Orientation Paper D concludes "Thus the Church is accused as being un-indian and foreign because she has not indianised herself and yet is suspected when she does attempt to shed her foreignness." (D. 188). Is this a vicious circle as it may seem to appear ? Or rather, does not this very paradoxical attitude of the Hindus show the correct path of indianisation ? Should not this help us to keep to an authentic indianization ?

Many of the problems discussed above are of a theoretical nature and only a deep and sustained study will give the correct insight into the nature of things or offer clues for solution.

How can we prepare the ground for such serious studies ?

(ii) *Unity and Diversity of Indian Culture*

One of the most serious challenges the Church in India will have to face in the matter of cultural adaptation will be the striking of a correct balance between regional and national cultures. On the one hand regional cultures are coming to their own and they deserve full sympathy and support. They are bound to assert themselves strongly if they feel insecure under national pressures.

Another grave problem is posed by the tribal cultures. Often they are in a state of neglect and decadence under the impact of modern ways of living. Their positive values and rich heritage may be easily lost. The Church in her catholic mission is called upon not only to tolerate them, but also to preserve and foster them. From the Catholic side there have not been serious attempts to study these cultural patterns in depth and develop them fully. What positive steps can be taken to remedy this long standing neglect.

The regional and tribal cultures, wedded as they are to languages that have rich heritages and are now fast developing, pose serious problems for planning on an all-India level, in the field of liturgy, methods of evangelization, spirituality, etc..An All-India pattern may have to be ruled out. Greater initiative might have to be given at the regional levels. The complexity of the Indian cultural situation may not permit even an uniform regional pattern. Local circumstances have to be carefully studied before any attempt at standardization is made.

While fostering and patronising the regional and tribal cultures, the Church in India has also the obligation to work effectively towards national integration, and further, for international understanding and the emergence of a world community where all nations can be equal partners *de facto* and *de iure*. The Catholic Church being the sacrament of unity of the whole human race, is admirably placed to usher in this world community, keeping however in tact the cultural traits of each country or region. In fact, although for historical reasons the Church should now lay great emphasis on integration with regional and national cultures, nevertheless one might perhaps say that the special role *par excellence* of the Church in this area coincides with cultural integration of an *international dimension*. This is the challenge before her. How is she going to stand up to this challenge in India ?

(iii) *Traditional Values and Modernisation*

Another major problem the Church has to face in the process of cultural integration is the keeping of the proper balance between tradition and modernity.

(i) Everything old is being questioned due to modernising and secularising tendencies. Religious attitudes are being replaced by an agnostic outlook and lack of faith in traditional values, and the pressure of industrialisation is depriving people of conditions for decent living. How should the Church react in such a situation ?

Are there not traditional values of our Indian heritage that have to be preserved by all means, which are not subject to the vagaries of modern cultural changes—the traditional values that form the core of our precious Indian heritage ? What are these values that we should treasure at all times and by all means ?

A tentative enumeration may include the following: great emphasis on the importance of experiential knowledge of God; renunciation as a means of liberation; importance of intuition in the process of knowledge; peace; simplicity of life; austerity; self-control: tolerance; modesty; silence; etc. These are characteristically Indian virtues and should blossom fully under the influence of grace.

(ii) As far as modernity is concerned perhaps we could distinguish two areas: the general thrust the Church has to give in the direction of modernity; and the solution of specific problems that arise out of modernisation.

(a) *Church's involvement in modernising India.* The Church has definitely her role in shaping the future of India. Her future will, to a large extent, be shaped also in the laboratories where modern scientific researches are being conducted with increasing intensity, speed and diversification. Unless the Church is sensitive to the national yearning to forge ahead, and plays her role fully, she will not only lose her hold on the people, but she may also be discredited. This points to the necessity of giving very high priority to the preparation of some of our most capable men and women to move in this direction. What concrete steps can be taken in this regard ?

(b) *Meeting some of the important problems arising out of modernisation*

(1) Care must be taken to distinguish what is genuinely modern from what is a false imitation of Western civilisation.

(2) Our Christian youth should be in a position to meet the challenge of the times and face the problems created by secularising tendencies. They need a deeper understanding of their faith and the rational basis for their belief. In this context, greater stress has to be given to the promotion of the philosophy of science.

(3) The Church should throw in all her weight on the side of scientific development and the cultivation of the scientific attitude.

(4) The Church can mightily contribute to the progress of India by presenting her philosophy of work in an effective and attractive way.

(5) The Church, with her experience in other countries, should try to do what she possibly can to make the painful process of

industrialisation less inhuman, keeping aloft the dignity of the human person and human labour, and soothing the afflicted and the forlorn by her all-embracing charity.

II. INDIAN THEOLOGY

A. Reasons for including the topic

(a) Pope John XXIII stated in his inaugural address to Vatican II on October 11, 1962 that the main function of the Council was to make the message of the Church intelligible to the modern age (AAS 1962 pp. 791-792). In view of the fact that "recent studies and findings of science, history and philosophy raise new questions which influence life", Vatican II invited theologians "while adhering to the methods and requirements proper to theology to seek continually for more suitable ways of communicating doctrine to the men of their times." (GS 62). Integration of the Church in the Indian context should not stop on a superficial plane; it must reach the depth of religious experience, in which man's ultimate concern for union with the Absolute is involved. This is the field of Theology.

(b) The very task of communicating the message of Christ to nations demands an encounter with them not merely on the plane of cultural and social life "by various exchanges and enterprises of human living", but at a deeper level of thought. The messenger of Christ should, profiting from his familiarity with national and religious traditions, "gladly and reverently lay bare the seeds of the Word which lie hidden in them." (Ad. Gentes 11). This is precisely the task of an Indian Theology, to announce the Word of God not in the language of Aristotle or Plotinus, but in and through the concrete religious experience of the Indian tradition, at the same time also taking into account the impact of modern developments.

(c) The greatest service the Church can render each nation is to help it attain God from within its own concrete cultural experience. For this a theology, developed according to its thought patterns and modes of expression, is necessary.

(d) The purpose of the catholicity of the Church is "to bring people of all times, of all races, of all places, of all conditions, into an organic and living unity with Christ by the Holy Spirit under the universal fatherhood of God." (WCC Upsala-Report

on Sec. in 6). This must be done without impairing the uniqueness and individuality of each tradition, and at the same time without ceding to any kind of egoism or particularism.

India cannot become Christian without making its own contribution to the Christian message. So far India was never given an opportunity to offer the riches of its traditions to give intelligibility and human appeal to the message of Christ. Only by such an active involvement in the universal mission of Christ can India claim the Church as its own. A theological rethinking in the Indian context should form the solid basis for all forms of Church renewal, less they end up as shallow adaptations.

B. The Scope

That a great deal of progress has already been achieved in the theological encounter between Christianity and Hinduism should be a matter of great satisfaction for us at this moment. Long past is the age of militant missionary adventures when certain people thought it their Christian duty to undertake holy wars of religious liberation against "pagan perversity" for the sake of Christ.

Gone is the age of mere negative apologetics by which missionaries strove to prove the truth of Christianity by exposing the error and immorality of pagan idolatry, temple prostitution and other abuses.

Equally mistaken were those who wrote off non-Christian religions, with all their alluring features, as merely a work of the devil. According to them even the good elements in them could find only a "subversive fulfilment" in Christ.

On the other hand, the adventurous approach to Eastern religions advocated by a good many comparative religionists of the rationalist, humanist, sociological and phenomenological schools, who easily found them far superior to Christianity as spontaneous expressions of the indomitable human spirit, is also a matter of the past.

The Christian missionary outlook itself has now shed its triumphalist attitude to a great extent. The dream of world domination and the emergence of a world Christendom is now abandoned. No one now waits for the day when under the pressure of the modern era Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Judaism, will crumble down in order to build the Church out of their ruins. With the Vatican II Declaration of Religious Freedom, we realise that

the world religions are not necessarily competitors with Christianity, but belong in a way to the total response of humanity to God's invitation. This does not mean that conversion has lost all religious sentiment and motivation. Conversion is not perversion, the total denial of one's religious past, but rather the return to the authentic ground of one's religious consciousness in order to build on that solid foundation.

Still, the big missionary task remains unfulfilled: to make Christianity at home in India, preach the good news of Christ in a way intelligible and appealing to the Indian mind. Practically very little has been done in this direction. Positive thinking on the Christian Mystery on the authentic lines of Indian tradition, initiated by Brahmanandha Upadhyaya, V. Chakkarai and others has to be carried forward.

Coming now to define more precisely the scope of Indian Theology, it is not merely to pick up a few suitable Indian terms, to translate a theology manual composed in the West to serve as a text book in our Indian seminaries, nor to produce Indian editions of some foreign catechetical text books.

Nor is it even simply to formulate a few points that would be particularly appealing to the Indian mind, to be added as scholia or appendices to Western manuals of theology.

The scope of this discussion is to make the whole Christian message take flesh and blood in the Indian tradition both ancient and modern. This is not to ignore totally the twenty centuries of the life of the Church in Palestine, in Greece, Alexandria or in Europe, nor to imagine an incarnation of Christ solely for India. Fully realizing the wholeness of Salvation History from the beginning of the world and recalling the great deeds of God for man in the O.T., and in the N.T., and in the era of the Church, we have to make the proper emphasis that will integrate the evolution of religious thought in Indian history under the provident guidance of God, with the seamless garment of the Bride of Christ.

There are many facets of the Indian religious tradition that could blossom into full perfection under the influence of Christian revelation. Such a realization would also contribute towards our knowledge of the mysteries of our divine calling. It will be the task of Indian theology to highlight these aspects. One may perhaps mention in this connection, in a special way, the yearnings of the Indian soul for the presence of God and union with

Him, the continuous struggle for liberation, the supremacy of the spiritual over material values etc. etc. All these perfected under Christian inspiration, can enrich the common heritage of the Church universal and of the human race at large.

C. Problems

This attempt to create a genuine Indian Theology involves a number of problems which have to be squarely faced by the Seminar.

(1) The first problem is the general apathy of Indian Christians themselves. Laymen in India very seldom engage in any deep study of Theology. Indian Christians in general are rather cold towards Indian culture and its peculiar thought process. The elite, trained in a Western type of educational system, has very little taste for the Indian tradition. The Indian Clergy formed and trained in the stereotyped system of the seminaries feel rather awkward and ill at ease in facing the Indian cultural situation. Hence, the question arises: for whom is this Indian theology? Indian theology will be more foreign to Indian Christians than Western theology itself.

Perhaps one should take into account the fact that no theology, Indian or Western is actually exerting any deep influence on the Church in India. There is very little original thinking on the vital problems of theology in any section of the Church. It is just living on the periphery of Christianity, passively following the lines of thought marked out in the West and unquestioningly accepting their conclusions. This is precisely the situation that has to be altered if the Christian community in India is to become a living Church. For this it has to break away to a certain extent from the apron-strings of Western tradition and feel the urgings of a new challenge arising out of the Indian situation. Thus the task of creating a living Indian theology should become the motivation for a radical renewal of the Church in India.

(2) Another problem is the leadership of the European missionaries. The pioneers in the Christian dialogue with Hinduism were mostly, if not entirely, European missionaries. Johanns, Dandoy and others on the Catholic side; Rudolf Otto, Farquhar and others on the Protestant side, strove hard to initiate this active encounter between Christianity and Hinduism. But this European initiative did not receive an active support from the

Indian Christians. Trained almost exclusively in the traditions of Western philosophy and theology they found the whole attempt rather queer. Even today the great majority of those who take an active interest in the integration of Indian culture to Christianity are Europeans. But with the restrictions placed on the entry of foreign missionaries their number is dwindling. Thus the whole attempt appears doomed to failure.

On the other hand, this itself should serve as an urgent appeal to Indian Christians to take up the lead and keep up the continuity. The sign of a Church come of age is that it has formed its theologians from its own soil. How soon and how efficiently this can be achieved is the problem.

(3) Syncretism is a danger to be anticipated and avoided in any religious dialogue. In the over-anxiety for unity, radical differences may be blurred and remote analogies and apparent parallels exaggerated as identical positions. Nay, even in translating the Gospel message from the original language to another, there is involved a subtle syncretism. Every word has its own historical past, and every religious term its special implications of beliefs and traditions. Hence when a statement is taken out of the original context of Divine Revelation and translated into, say, an Indian language, every word newly made use of, comes loaded with its own religious implications. So there is naturally a certain overlapping between its traditional meaning and the new meaning in the message of God which it is made use of to convey. Only with difficulty, and only through proper choice of words and proper explanations can this danger of syncretism, be avoided.

On the other hand, syncretism is not a total evil. It is part of humanity's meditation on the Word of God. Every new word used to express the message of Christ can bring with it, from its particular religious background, a deeper understanding of the saving action of God. Thus a certain amount of syncretism may be tolerantly looked upon just as a step towards a fuller understanding of God's word.

(4) Some question the very usefulness of building up a Christian theology against the background of Hinduism. There is no single religion that can be designated as Hinduism. Hinduism is just a league of religions; every tenet and custom, every Vedic statement and religious principle, has a multitude of inter-

pretations according to the traditions of different schools. Hence no particular interpretation can be authoritatively representative of Hinduism. Besides, very few Hindus are now truly interested in the Scriptures of Hinduism and very few have any deep understanding of its tradition. Most people follow a popular mode of religious life loosely designated as Hindu. So it will be ironic for Christians to champion the cause of Hindu religious tradition which Hindus themselves have mostly abandoned.

But there is another side to the question. The wealth of Hindu tradition is not a monopoly of the Hindus, but the common heritage of humanity. The Christian good news has to redeem it and make it a vehicle of Christ's saving action. The multiplicity of interpretations and the absence of any authoritative position make Hindu tradition more amenable to an integration with Christianity. Any right interpretation, provided it agrees with the norms of an objective study, can be assumed as authentically Hindu. This facilitates the work of "purification" of the non-Christian elements before integrating them to Christianity.

(5) Some may question the very wisdom of taking up national cultures and religious traditions in this age of internationalism. What we need today is a "world theology". Hence the study of ancient religious traditions and values may smack of antiquarianism. Efforts to build a purely Indian theology will only isolate the Indian Church from the rest of the Catholic world.

Yet today, Indian religious thought seems to have gained a special world significance. Scholastic philosophy which was the greatest contribution of Medieval Europe to the world, is not so well appreciated nor even understood by the modern man. With that the whole Greek philosophical tradition has lost its influence to a great extent. Today man is turning his attention away from the objective nature and its laws to himself the conscious subject, and his community with other conscious beings. Man's suffering misery, and ignorance, constitute the orbit of philosophical thought today. In this manner world thought may be said to be coming closer to the position of the Indian religious tradition, which started inquiring into the nature and causes of man's suffering and bondage and the means to get rid of them. The 'Death of God' theologians like Altizer and Vahanian, are, in fact, to a great extent, following the footprints of Buddhist thinkers. Even a Jewish philosopher like Martin Buber with the

personalism of the Bible for tradition, has frequently quoted the Upanishads to reveal the depth of the "I". Thus, Indian theologians have an excellent opportunity to take an active part in the present day world thinking on various religious problems and make their own valuable contribution.

(6) Perhaps the greatest difficulty is with regard to an agency competent and capable enough to work out a theology against the Indian background. The best minds and talents are located in Colleges and Seminaries. Lack of sufficient personnel to run the existing institutions leaves no one free to pursue an independent line of research. Colleges in India generally pay very little attention to problems of religion and philosophy. In the stereotyped schedule of the Seminaries there is very little scope for original thinking. Some object, on principle, to any kind of experimentation especially in theology, that may create obscurity and confusion in the minds of future priests. So some have gone to the extent of calling theological seminaries "theological cemeteries" since their system and concepts, they say, are sort of tombs that hold the remains of a long dead theology.

On the other hand the task of the Seminary is not to turn out cocksure theoreticians who have a ready answer to every problem under the sky, but to form active messengers of Christ who will, in all humility, endeavour to find out and fulfil, the salvific plan of God in the daily lives of living men. A theological openness to new ideas and modes of expression to realize and convey the message of Christ is one necessary and integral part of priestly formation, and should go along with genuine fidelity to sound tradition.

D. Solutions—Suggestions for Discussion

There are no easy and ready-made solutions to the problems stated above. Creation of an Indian theology is necessarily a long process, which will take many, many decades and even centuries. Here the principal concern should be to avoid easy solutions and keep the doors open for new possibilities:

(a) An easy solution may be to set up a commission of a few competent individuals to produce a set of manuals to serve as standard works in the Indian elaboration of Christian theology. But the defect of such a solution is that it may not be the beginning of anything big, but only a dead end. It will only kill all initiative and dampen all fresh thinking.

Any solution should aim at involving the whole Church and every single member in an active search for the will of God concerning the The Church in India. Since the Church needs continuous renewal, this machinery for rethinking theology should be continually in operation.

(b) A big central Catholic theological institution to organize and co-ordinate all the available talents and all fresh thinking may be a useful venture. But here again there is the danger that it may end up as a mere institution, shut off and isolated from all real talent and all genuinely fresh thinking. No man of talent will allow himself to be "institutionalized." Organization and co-ordination are the end of a process and not the beginning. Hence the function of a central theological institute, if one is contemplated, should be to create the proper climate in which all will be encouraged to make their own willing and spontaneous contribution to the common effort.

(c) The same should be said about theological journals. Too much insistence on ecclesiastical censure and approval and over-emphasis on conformity to standard text-book models will affect their usefulness. They should serve as forums for scholarly exchange of ideas on the vital religious problems without fear and prejudice.

(d) Theological congresses, seminars, study weeks and colloquies to discuss religious problems against the Indian background should become a regular feature to maintain the active interest of all concerned in living religious problems.

(e) Permanent organisations like an Indian Catholic Theological Association will be able to provide a continuous and consistent encouragement to fresh theological thought in India.

(f) Scholars engaged in teaching in our Seminaries and Colleges should be granted leave of absence at regular intervals for fresh research of their own Theology.

III. ISOLATION OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

A. Reasons for including the Topic

It is evident that one of the most important areas where cultural integration has to be achieved is the social and civic life of Christians, for this is the area where Christian life is most visible

to the public, and where they appear, as a community, very much isolated from the rest.

Besides, for historical reasons, it is in this sphere that a negative image of the Church has been created mostly because of the foreign cultural traits and customs adopted by many of our Christians. It is to be admitted that this remark does not apply in the same way to all our Christian communities; but it is generally true of the Church as it exists in the North, and it is there that it is imperative to forge a true and authentic image of it.

There is a further reason to include this topic in the workshop. Although some of the elements that create a foreign image of the Church in the mind of the public are more deep-seated, the external and visible signs of foreign culture are greatly responsible for this prejudicial outlook and these can be corrected comparatively more easily. Hence a certain amount of priority has to be given to this question.

B. Scope

The scope of the discussion is to identify the problems that the Church has to face in this area of cultural accommodation or integration, trying to find out the true nature of her isolation. Such a discussion would, while exploring the underlying causes, open up also the avenues for the solution of many of the problems.

C. Problems

To even a casual observer, three or four things stand out prominently regarding the Indian Church which leave her very much in isolation:

1. Foreignness

The most conspicuous thing about the Indian Christian communities is that they are, generally speaking, a group of persons that do not fit very well into the Indian scene or context. A good many Indian Christian communities often appear as patches of foreign traditions stranded on Indian soil. Some of the Western traditions followed by these Christian communities make them not only appear as strangers in their own land, but brand them as morally lax. This foreign appearance is further reinforced by an official liturgy, Church discipline, Church ornaments, music, architecture, etc. This is because of the foreign dependence of Church government; people consider Christians to have divided

loyalties, and to be covertly anti-national. The previous history of the Christian communities has many things to corroborate such a view. All this "foreignness" of the Church is a great obstacle to the fulfilment of the mission of the Church.

2. *Isolation*

In spite of the fact that the Christians have the finest educational institutions in the country, with many highly educated men and women, they do not form part of the mainstream of public life in India. Their involvement in public life is far from being proportionate to their strength or number. They do not appear to identify themselves with their countrymen in the work of nation building, or in national aspirations and interests. This isolation and the general apathy of the Christians in the affairs of their country have been greatly responsible for the negative image of the Church in the minds of people in India.

3. *Exclusiveness of our Christian Communities*

To add to all this even the Christian communities themselves present a picture of disjointed, exclusive, entities not only unrelated to the mainstream of the Indian population, but also very much divided among themselves. Even within the narrow limits of a single parish, there appear totally disparate Christian communities with social, cultural and economical inequalities which adversely affect the harmony of the one Congregation gathered around the Altar of Christ.

4. *Immigration*

This exclusiveness of the Indian Christian communities in all likelihood is bound to create more serious problems in the future because of the ever increasing tempo of immigration of Christian communities from the South, especially from Kerala and Tamil Nad to North India, in search of job opportunities.

D. **Solution: Suggestions for Discussion**

(i) *Foreignness*

One can perhaps distinguish three layers in the foreignness of the appearance of the Church :—

1. in the external social life of the Christians,
2. in the worship and religious practices of the faithful,
3. in the very nature or administrative structure of the Church.

We are primarily concerned here only with the first category. There are several things which are externally very noticeable and which brand Indian Christians as a distinct community, out of tune with the Indian surroundings. His name, his style of dress, his eating habits, other social customs related to marriage, family life, etc., sound jarring to the ears of other Indians, and some of these customs, at least in some situations, become scandalous to them. These make them think of Christians as a group of people with loose or lax morals. Although many of them have high regard for the principles of Christianity, the lives of Christians stand as a road block to their genuine appreciation of the Christian way of life. Concerted efforts have to be made in this direction to remove those signs and customs which may appear disagreeable to outsiders.

It may be difficult to define clearly what these customs are, especially in the present context, when many of the habits and customs of the non-Christian communities themselves are under going change. Our good sense and the trends of the nationally minded elite of the country can help us to make correct decisions in the matter. The foreignness in worship and religious practices will be taken care of in the workshop on Liturgy. A passing mention, however, may be made regarding the more fundamental foreignness the people in this country attach to the Christians. Christianity is considered a religion of foreign origin and Indians feel and think that the Centre of gravity of the Church is outside India. This is a very serious problem and the right approach towards meeting such a mentality has to be very carefully studied. All that is intended here is just to give pointers in the direction in which a satisfactory solution perhaps may be found. We are fortunately living at a time when nationalism is itself paving the way of an international community. The foreign stigma of the Catholic Church can be very greatly minimised, if the Catholic Church *de jure* and *de facto* appears as a truly representative international body. It is fortunate that the hierarchy in this country is almost fully Indianized. The true image however of a representative international Catholic Church will appear before the minds of Indians, only when capable people from here are given places of great trust and responsibility in the Central Administration of the Church, such as those of senior officials in the Central Curia, or representatives of the Holy See in different countries. Such a step would be greatly helpful in creating a

favourable opinion regarding the real international posture of the Catholic Church.

(ii) *Isolation*

Great effort has to be made by all people concerned to encourage Christians to take active part in the social and civic life of the country. Christians should cast off the ghetto mentality and join common clubs, associations, projects, etc., and work together for the welfare of the country.

Christians have to identify themselves with the rest of the country and get fully involved in all spheres of nation building. The Christian concern should plunge them deep into the foray of the everyday civic and political life of the country prepared to sink or swim with the nation. This Christian selfless concern, if it were forthcoming, could be very helpful in arresting the speedy deterioration in standards of behaviour in public life and the fissiparous tendencies that are threatening the stability of the nation. Only in this fashion can we become accepted as an authentic Indian community.

(iii) *Exclusiveness of Christian Communities among themselves*

The multi-racial and multi-cultural nature of the Christian community is a long standing problem as old as the Church itself. Converts to Christianity came from different races and different castes and they brought with them into the Church those same distinctions more or less intact on the socio-cultural plane, in spite of the fact that they were all made equal in the participation of the Eucharistic banquet.

To the communal distinction should be added also the distinction due to Rites. This is a very complex issue and all that is intended here is to draw attention to the complexity of the situation. It can perhaps safely be said that a realistic and mutually agreeable solution to the thorny problem of rites, may pave the way for a strong and united Catholic Church in India. Leaving aside the question of rite, the multi-lingual and sometimes multi-racial communities existing in the same locality or even parish create serious problems for cultural integration.

Can it be said that the general trend should be towards the cultural integration with the dominant community of the area, keeping however the particular traits of each culture? Will

such a policy bring in the desired result ? Will such a policy be acceptable ? Because of the strong communal feelings among the people, the integration process has to be attempted carefully and cautiously and things carelessly attempted can cause serious setbacks to the very cause of integration.

(iv) *Immigration.*

It is, however, imperative that we take serious note of the immigrant communities. In recent times this problem has been accentuated with the massive immigration of Christians from the South to various industrial and urban centres in quest of job opportunities. Thus there are in cities like Bombay, Calcutta, Jamshedpur, Bhilai, etc., large groups coming from other regions. These groups remain uprooted from their original parishes, but never properly integrated with the local congregation of the new place. These Christians have to be made to feel at home in their own new surroundings, one with the local community; their spiritual needs also have to be attended to. Language may be a serious problem for many in the beginning. Because of the fact that such immigration waves are bound to move northwards, for very many more years to come, it is important that the serious problem connected with the integrant communities is carefully studied and permanent machinery provided to meet their demands. Perhaps a short term programme to cater to their needs in their original language and long term projects to help them integrate in the new surroundings, could meet the problem arising out of these immigration waves.

IV. CHURCH AND INDIAN LANGUAGES, LITERATURE AND ART

(Music, dance, drama, Graphic arts, sculpture, architecture, etc.)

A. Reasons for including the Topic

(a) Though Christianity has a long past in India, longer than that of the Muslims, and of many prominent Hindu communities, still it never took an active part or dominant role in the cultural evolution of the country. The pre-Portuguese Church, integrated in a way into the Hindu caste hierarchy, made a kind of compromise between the Indian situation and the foreign Christian art forms without rousing any antagonism. But here too there was

little of creativity. When Western missionaries started arriving in India, in the 16th and 17th centuries Indian art was on the decline with very little originality or vitality left in it. Hence without even stopping for a moment to consider the merits of Indian artistic tradition, with their sense of cultural superiority, Western Missionaries introduced among Indian Christians all forms of Western Church art. Only with India's independence and the emergence of the nationalist feeling did we realize how awkward it is to be detected in the worn out cultural shoes of the Portuguese or British. Some of the missionaries of the 18th and 19th centuries realized the importance of Indian languages for their preaching and did some very important pioneer work, especially in writing grammars. But those were rare exceptions and their work was not followed up.

(b) After India gained her independence, foreign languages like English and Portuguese, which held places of prestige, have lost their prominence, and the Indian languages especially the regional ones, are taking their place. Indian arts in general, particularly Indian music, sculpture and handicrafts have also attained a certain international prestige today. The remarkable poverty of the Church in India is that during the long centuries of her existence here, she has made no significant contribution in any of the fields of language, literature or art. This is in remarkable contrast to what she has done in some other countries, where she strenuously cultivated and fostered these forms of human self-expression and gave them a particular importance as vehicle for communicating God's salvation to men.

(c) Traditional Indian Art with its insistence on all the aspects of human sensibility was almost wholly religious. It formed an integral part of divine worship. So Christianity can never be at home in India until it takes up the same fostering role towards Indian Art. Similarly, traditional Indian literature, perhaps one of the richest and most voluminous literary heritages in the world, is mostly religious in character. Christianity as a world religion can never afford to keep herself aloof from such a rich tradition. She has to profit from its past and also to contribute her share to its future.

(d) If the word of God is communicated to man through the human word, according to the latter's inherent laws, the Church has to take seriously the languages in which she has to preach the Gospel. They present a great many shades of meaning and his-

torical underlayers which can either distort the meaning of the original message of the Gospel or make their own contribution in making it more intelligible. In this interaction between the Gospel and the language, the latter too should profit, by a deepening of meaning for its words and by an enrichment of its literature. That such a process of interaction and enrichment has not taken place to any appreciable extent in our Indian languages speaks badly for the evangelical task of the Church.

Like all other cultures, Indian Culture has been mainly created, preserved and transmitted by means of Indian languages, literature and arts. If the image of the Church has remained foreign here in India, it is mostly owing to the fact that she has neglected to foster Indian languages, literature and the arts.

B. Scope

The scope of the discussion should be:—

- (a) To propose practical and practicable means for training Christian writers, poets, musicians, painters, sculptures and architects.
- (b) Suggest means of inspiring the prominent artists both Christian and non-Christian, with Christian ideals.
- (c) Provide sufficient encouragement to originality and creativity.
- (d) And indicate procedures that will ensure that Church architecture, liturgical and social music, and Church decoration will maintain a high artistic standard in tune with India's tradition, on the one hand, and be thoroughly modern and Christian on the other.

C. Problems

Prominence and prestige in literature and art do not come with wishful thinking. An aculturation of Christianity in the Indian esthetic situation is a slow process and beset with many problems. (a) While Christian art in India today is strongly denounced as foreign, Indian art in general itself, is in a quandry. It keeps only a very thin veneer of the Indian tradition. Behind this hollow facade, all the inspiration for modern creativity in art and literature comes from Western masters. Among the living Indian artists it may be difficult to find many who take Indian tradition as a source of inspiration for new creativity. Hence

any blind copying of old Indian patterns in Church art will be blatant archaism. Great discretion is needed in this area. It may not be also very safe to follow closely in the footsteps of modern Indian artists who draw their inspiration mainly from the West, for the simple reason that they may not be truly creative in their approach.

(b) This Western leaning of Indian artists creates another problem: Western literature and art as a whole are profoundly secular. Every supernatural, religious and moral element has been consciously and systematically excluded from the field of Art. Western novels like "Dr. Zhivago" are being translated into Indian languages and are giving inspiration both to the reading public and to the creative artists like writers and film producers. Masters of Modern Western Art like Picasso, Braque and others are being blindly followed by Indian painters. This state of affairs threatens to destroy the deeply spiritual influence literature and art forms have on the general public and especially on the youth. The Church cannot shy away from this challenge.

(c) But, the Church is not an art academy. She is not expected to create new art forms. She however can foster creativity in this direction by choosing art forms that are congenial to her nature. In the present situation, however, there are not many such arts forms to be readily borrowed. Coming from a purely secular background, they all need a certain radical purification before they can be assumed by the Church. But this task of purification is only an aspect of the work of consecrating the world to the salvific influence of Christ.

(d) In all the above mentioned spheres, it is very important that the regional aspects are emphasised duly.

D. Solutions: Suggestions for Discussion

The all important question of introducing Indian languages in our schools is left to the Workshop on Education to tackle. This subject is of such importance, especially in the changed context of the new role given to the regional languages as the medium of instruction. Hence, as far as this Workshop is concerned it has to rest satisfied with drawing the attention of the Workshop on Education to this all important subject.

Only issues other than study of languages are being dealt with here, namely literature, art, etc. Adequate solutions in each of

these fields can be suggested only by experts. A few general suggestions may, however, be offered here:

(a) One immediate step should be to emphasize natural simplicity and functionalism in Church art. Indian art should grow out of the simplicity of Indian life and should not be superimposed from the outside.

(b) Seminars and workshops to train writers both to inspire them with the Christian ideals and also to initiate them to modern techniques are a must for real progress in Christian literature.

(c) Priests who are to be leaders of the people should be initiated through their seminary training to different forms of Christian art. They may not turn out to be big artists, but they should learn at least enough to discern true art and to have recourse to real artists as occasion arises. Optional courses in different arts should form a part of the Seminary curriculum.

(d) The Church should recognize the merit of real Indian artists even when they are non-Christians. It is far better to secure their services for Church decoration than to parade a few available but mediocre Christian artists as the great masters of art. This apparent sectarianism in Indian Christian art brings the Church itself into ridicule.

(e) An art Institute to design Church vestments and Church decorations in tune with the genuine Indian tradition is urgently needed.

(f) Indian music is an area where there is scope for immediate adoption into Church singing. Indian music is greatly appreciated even in the West and it is relatively easy to have a well-trained group for our Churches. For this, each region should try to sponsor an institute of music where Church singers could be trained under competent masters. These Institutes can also undertake to compose new melodies for Church singing.

(g) Dance, dance-drama and drama constitute an area which cry for integration with Christian cult. Indian dance and drama are basically religious. Steps have to be taken to explore means and methods of integrating these cult forms to Christian worship.

General Summary and Conclusions

We have discussed all the four topics set forth in the beginning and have highlighted many of the inherent problems and have suggested some possible solutions.

It would be worthwhile if, at the end, we could pin-point our attention on some single concrete measure that would somehow trigger action in most of these areas and be instrumental in bringing about much of the desired results. It would be appropriate, if we could relate this measure to one or all of the main objectives set for the Seminar, namely (a) the projecting of the true image of the Church (b) Common endeavour and (c) cultural integration and (d) self-reliance of the Indian Church. This is the last task before us.

The whole range of problems and solutions in the area of cultural integration can be neatly divided into problems and solutions bearing on (1) the theoretical aspect of culture and (2) the practical application of conclusions arrived at in concrete life. The theoretical discussions can centre around (1) the nature of culture in general (2) the characteristics of Indian culture in particular (3) especially its unity in the regional diversity and its stability in the process of industrial and technological change (4) the very nature of cultural adaptation as far as the Church is concerned and (5) the various problems arising out of the progressive integration of the Church with the developing and changing Indian culture and (6) in a specific manner problems connected with the evolution of an Indian theology, full participation in cultural social life by Christians and the promotion of Indian languages, literature and art. As regards the practical measures needed to implement the findings that would emerge from the above mentioned areas of study, we would need means or machinery for (1) disseminating and popularizing the ideals that have to be set before us (2) inculcating these especially in our children through education (3) preparing the public through social communication media for the emergence and acceptance of a more integrated Christian community by breaking the barriers that separate them from the masses (4) getting Christians fully involved in the social cultural and civic life of the country (5) breaking the exclusiveness of our different Christian communities among themselves and finally (6) preparing thoroughly our clerical, religious and lay personnel involved in these activities, so that they may take the necessary shifts and steps in each field of apostolate, spirituality, evangelization, education, social communication media etc.

It is left for the Workshop to single out some measures that will soon make their influence felt in all the above areas. The following proposal is merely presented tentatively for consider-

ation in the Workshop. To meet all the needs enumerated above, it is suggested to form a National Commission or Board of Culture to advise the Church and the CBCI on issues related to culture.

The objective of this commission is to study and plan in an appropriate way the all-round cultural integration of the Church, by co-ordinating all existing activities, giving a fillip in areas wherever quicker results are possible, creating situations in which greater initiative would be forthcoming, and giving a general orientation to all such activities.

As for the constitution of the Commission, it should have a strong regional basis, with also tribal representatives taking their due place. Thus the main body should consist of experts representing these cultures. There could be, for the sake of co-ordination of activities, representatives from fields of apostolates ultimately connected with culture, like evangelization, education and social communication media. There could be such commissions to study (1) special issues arising out of the proper understanding of the concept of culture, such as e.g. a strong emphasis both on the invaluable traditional values and scientific progress through stress on fundamental research, (2) community integration, (3) Indian theology, (4) Indian music, art, etc.

Such a body can, with the least amount of capital investment and minimum possible centralisation, give full impetus to people already working in the fields and prepare the way for greater and greater involvement by all in similar activities by giving them the necessary orientation.

The constitution of such a commission will fulfil also the four main objectives set before the National Seminar.

First of all, the commission would be an efficient means of projecting the correct image of the Church. Cultural integration properly conceived should give the primacy of value to the Christian approach. It is in the Christian revelation that cultural traits receive their fulfilment. All culture has to be chastened, enriched and elevated by the mystery of Christ's redemptive mission. Cultural integration understood in this true sense, should be an effective means of projecting the true image of the Church. Besides, cultural integration has not to be conceived in a narrow nationalistic manner. As explained earlier, cultural integration should at the same time prepare the

way for the emergence of a more universal human culture which is the concrete expression of the common brotherhood of men. Finally cultural integration conceived on a national or regional level is a means for the projection of the correct image of the Church. Only when the Christian message comes presented and clothed in the flesh and blood of the culture of the country does it have the touch and appearance of authenticity and becomes a vessel of salvation for its people. Nothing need be specially said of the second objective, namely the integration of the Church with the culture of the country. This second objective is the very theme of this workshop.

With regard to common endeavour, the third objective proposed for the Seminar, the present proposal for forming a Commission is precisely to make this venture an exercise in common endeavour, pooling all the talents available and making the best use of them in the service of the Church, giving each region, institution and individual as much autonomy, freedom and initiative as possible.

Finally, for self-reliance, the last objective proposed for the National Seminar, the very idea of the necessity of cultural integration springs from the Church's confidence in her own native riches and her will to utilise them fully for the proclamation of the message of Christ. Besides it should be the avowed policy of the commission to unearth and encourage local talents and tap all local avenues for support for the effective implementation of the grand design before them— that all cultures may receive their fulfilment in Christ.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

TOPIC I: CLARIFICATION OF THE MEANING OF INDIAN CULTURE IN VIEW OF INTEGRATION AND SOME ALLIED PRACTICAL PROGRAMMES.

- (a) What would 'cultural integration of the Church' mean in the context of the cultural complexity of India.

What sort of cultural integration is called for in practice. Are the categories, 'cultural symbiosis', 'stabilised pluralism', 'assimilation' adequate to express the reality?

- (b) Can we speak of an 'Indian Christian culture'? How does the fact of Christians being a 'negligible minority in a pluralistic society' looked upon as 'un-Indian and foreign' by the majority community, affect our attempts at cultural integration?

How should the unity of Indian culture, in its regional and tribal diversity be understood? What practical conclusions are there if we are to deduce in our action reoriented programmes because of this situation?

- (c) How is stability to be obtained between modern and traditional values in the Indian situation and what are the traditional values that have to be fostered? How should the Church be wholeheartedly in the forefront of scientific progress and lend all her weight for a speedy technological break-through?

TOPIC II: TOWARDS AN INDIAN THEOLOGY.

- (a) Preparing Indian Christians for an 'Indian Theology'.
—analyse the dimensions of the problem
—propose guide-lines for the remedy.
- (b) Preparing Indian leadership for initiating an 'Indian Theology'

- (c) Some specific problems that need careful attention :
 - Syncretism, its dangers
 - Hinduization or Indianisation.
- (d) Consideration of the need of a competent agency (or commission) to work out such a 'theology.'
- (e) Other practical means towards achievement of the goal.

TOPIC III: INTEGRATION WITH THE SOCIAL AND CIVIC LIFE OF COUNTRY.

- (a) The true nature and extent of the 'isolation of the Christian community ?'
 - foreignness
 - non-involvement in civic and social life
 - exclusiveness, both of groups within the Christian community, and with regard to other communities
 - immigration to employment/commercial centres.
- (a) How can Christians be spurred on to greater involvement in the civic and social life of the country ?
- (c) How can the Christian community at all levels — clergy, laity, students — be prepared and initiated into such involvement ?

TOPIC IV: THE CHURCH AND INDIAN LITERATURE AND ART FORMS.

Consider : practical and practicable means for training Christian writers, musicians, etc.

- means of inspiring prominent artists, both Christian and non-Christian, with Christian ideals.
- encouragement of originality and creativity.
- active promotion of Indian Christian art forms (architecture, painting, music, drama, dance etc.)

TOPIC V: A SPECIFIC SUGGESTION—A NATIONAL COMMISSION OR BOARD ON INDIAN CULTURE TO ASSIST THE C.B.C.I.

Consider the nature and scope of such a commission and its practical usefulness in achieving the desired Church renewal in the field of Indian culture.

WORKSHOP—VI

Education

The Church today is confronted with the task of renewal. On the educational front this is tantamount, in places, to a revolution, in others, to a re-orientation or a re-enunciation. The educational venture within the Church is not an accident; it is a deliberate enterprise rooted in the belief of a mission, a semi-secular apostolate.

Today the enterprise is beset with problems. It is proposed in the four Workshops to deal with those relevant to each, and to outline possible solutions. No one expects that every issue will be discussed and every problem studied in the space of a conference, however comprehensive. In choosing the undermentioned topics for study this Service Centre has tried to do two things— firstly, to telescope a large complex of problems under a few headings, and, secondly, to avoid overlap with problems and issues selected for study by other Service Centres. The process of selection may be questioned, the topics themselves may seem either hackneyed or unwarranted, in short, opinion is bound to be varied as to the situation visualised in the Workshop Papers. This, however is no more than reasserting the old truth; 'many men, many minds'.

The members of the Service Centre found the division appropriate. It is in the spirit of students and apostles intent rather on action than on mere discussion, that they present the results of their joint efforts of the diagnosis and cure of the ills that beset Catholic education in our country today..

The four topics to be studied by the Seminar are :

1. The Purposes of Catholic Educational Institutions in India today.
2. Freedom Discipline, and Leadership Training.
3. Teachers Parents, and the Community.
4. Development, Planning and Research.

Each topic has been studied in the light of one or more of the focal points towards which it was felt by the organisers, Christian thinking of the Church of the 'Aggiornamento' should be directed:

- (i) Projecting the Christian image
- (ii) Common Endeavour
- (iii) Integration of the Church with the life of the country
- (iv) Self-Reliance.

Two references in the following order of priority should be kept in view throughout the Workshop discussions :

- (i) The teaching of the Church, as reiterated and emphasised by Vatican II; and
- (ii) The National and International points of view, as represented by the report of the Education Commission of 1964—1966 and other world body reports.

THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH

'A true education aims at the formation of the human person in the pursuit of his ultimate end, and the good of the societies of which as a man, he is a member, and in whose obligations, as an adult, he will share.

Therefore children and young people must be helped with the aid of the latest advances of psychology, and the arts and science of teaching to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual endowments so that they may gradually acquire a mature sense of responsibility in striving endlessly to form their own lives properly and in pursuing true freedom as they surmount the vicissitudes of life with courage and constancy. Let them be given also, as they advance in years, a positive and prudent sexual education. Moreover they should be so trained to take their part in social life that properly instructed in the necessary and opportune skills they can become actively involved in various community organisations, open to discourse with others and willing to do their best to promote the common good.' (Vat. II Declaration on Christian Education)

'All men of every race, condition and age, since they enjoy the dignity of a human being, have an inalienable right to an education.—(ibid.)

'Amid pre-occupations with school buildings, curricula, finances, teacher needs, school boards and administrative duties, there is always the danger of overlooking the key person with whom all this 'to-do' is concerned, i.e. the student.

'All these are necessary and justified to the extent that they keep the development of the individual student first and foremost, to help him become the complete person God intended him to be. If this is done then students are more likely not only to become a significant force for good, but also to benefit personally by the well-rounded education aptly alluded to by Joseph Addison in the London Spectator—No. 6, 1711.'

'Education is a companion which no misfortune can depress, no crime can destroy, no enemy can alienate, no despotism can enslave.

'At home a friend, abroad an introduction, in solitude a solace, and in society an ornament.

'It chastens vice, it guides virtue, it gives, at once, grace and government to genius.

'Without it what is man? A splendid slave, a reasoning savage.' (Christopher Newsletter No. 143)

'A Christian Education does not merely strive for the maturing of a human person...but has as its principal purpose this goal: that the baptized while they are gradually introduced to the knowledge of the mystery of salvation, become ever more aware of the gift of Faith they have received, and that they learn in addition how to worship God the Father in spirit and in truth.' (G.E. 2)

'In fulfilling her educational role, the Church...is concerned especially with those which are her very own. Foremost among these is catechetical instruction. (G.E. 4)

'The Sacred Council of the Church earnestly entreats pastors and all the faithful to spare no sacrifice in helping Catholic schools

fulfill their function....and especially in caring for the needs of those who are poor in the goods of the world.” (G.E.9)

‘Therefore....great importance is to be attached to those (schools) which are required in a particular way by contemporary conditions.....for the retarded in need of special care. (G.E. 9)

THE NATIONAL POINT OF VIEW

‘The Government of India is concerned that a radical reconstruction of education on the broad lines recommended by the Education Commission is essential for economic and cultural development of the country, for national integration, and for realizing the ideal of a socialist pattern of society. This will involve a transformation of the system, to relate more closely to the life of the people, a continuous effort to expand educational opportunity; a sustained and intensive effort to raise the quality of education at all stages; an emphasis of the development of science and technology, and the cultivation of moral and social values. The educational system must produce young men and women of character and ability, committed to national service and development. Only then will education be able to play its vital role in promoting national progress, creating a sense of common citizenship and culture, and strengthening national integration. This is necessary if the country is to obtain its rightful place in the community of nations in conformity with its great cultural heritage and its unique potentialities.’ (Resolution of Government of India, Ministry of Education dated 24th July 1968.) ‘Education from the earliest school years should be directed to the all-round development of the human personality, and to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and economic progress of the community, as well as to the inculcation of deep respect for human rights and fundamental freedom. Within the framework of these values the utmost importance should be attached to the contribution to be made by education to peace and understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and among racial or religious groups.’ (Special Inter-Governmental Conference—UNESCO—Paris 21st Sept to 5th Oct. 1966)

‘The most important problem of the next half century is to reconcile science and religion, to integrate the two into a com-

mon philosophy. I think the Christian private enterprise has to make its own contribution in bringing about this synthesis. It is a challenge to all the religions of the world and also to Christianity." (From Shri J. P. Naik's address to Principals of Christian Colleges at Tambaram, Madras Jan. '66.)

THE CURRENT SITUATION

The number of Schools, Colleges, Seminaries and Boarding Houses run by the Catholic religious orders of men and women compares very favourably with similar institutions run under the aegis of other religious bodies. But a dispassionate look at them will convince us of our deficiencies, and the areas we have neglected.

1. Firstly let us consider our duty to those of the 'household' of the Faith."

How are the ideals set forth by Vatican II to be realized?

Are text-books at present in use for Catechetics adequate?

What is the greatest lack in the religious courses prescribed?

Are there competent teachers available in sufficient numbers to teach religion?

As a short term policy, what can be done by way of training teachers who are already in the field?

Is it possible to establish theological courses in our Christian Colleges.

Can Seminaries be asked to open courses in Catechetics for the laity?

What of the problem of students attending non-Christian institutions?

2. If we believe that Christian institutions should give witness to the charity of Christ by their outstanding service to the poor, are we fulfilling this ideal? What is the current image which our Catholic schools and institutions project? Catering to the well-to-do and middle-class? Business concerns? Bearing the stamp of wealth in the magnificence of their buildings? How can this image be altered? Does the 'Neighbourhood

School' provide the solution? Will this change mean greater dependence on Government grants with a certain loss of freedom? What impact should this approach have on educational planning at a diocesan level?

Regarding schools for the handicapped, is regional co-operation between several dioceses called for? What personnel are at present available for:

- (a) Training of the Blind.
- (b) The Deaf and the Dumb.
- (c) The Retarded?

Can Religious Congregations readily make such personnel available? What practical steps can be taken at the (a) Diocesan (b) Regional (c) National level in this matter?

3. In respect of the Church's concern for the secular part of man's life and the betterment of the society to which he belongs, has the Church shouldered a fair share of the burden?

How can the Catholic school and college contribute to the national effort, which as the Education Commission emphasizes, must be aimed at production? What is the over-all contribution of Catholic schools and Colleges at present? Are our schools by and large, providing an academic training? As a first step can many of our schools be converted into Multi-Purpose Schools? Is the establishment of Junior Technical Schools the answer? How popular are such technical schools at present? Do Agricultural Schools offer greater promise?

What personnel are available for the running of (a) technical (b) agricultural (c) trade (d) commercial schools? Can we make use of training facilities provided by Government to train personnel?

Would it be possible for the laity and religious congregations to establish a greater number of rural schools?

How could catechists in rural areas be prepared on the lines of Egypt's Assint experiment? Why not make more use of school facilities for adult education, mobile adult education units, Evening or Night Schools?

4. From the standpoint of dialogue, there is much to be desired. How far are our schools responsible for giving the im-

pression of the Church in India as essentially 'foreign'? Is the attitude of non-Christians justified wholly or in part?

How much do we depend on foreign capital and foreign aid in our educational enterprise? Can we do with progressively less by creating our own sources of income? How far is Hindi or the regional language made the medium of instruction in our schools? How can a sense of 'Indianness' be developed in both parents and pupils? What effort are made to introduce Indian song, dance, culture, participation in festivals? What is the attitude of the Catholic teacher towards this culture? Does the separation of classes for religious and moral instruction militate against integration?

5. What do we consider to be our lacks in the area of teacher-training? How, in view of the comparatively small monetary advantage, can the best of our young men and women be attracted to teaching? How present to them the idea of teaching as a vocation? Do our Training Colleges at present draw on the best that the diocese/Region has to offer for Staff? Is more common endeavour called for in this matter? (a) between Religious Congregations? (b) between religious and laity? What provision is made for In-Service Training? Is the staffing of our Catholic schools (particularly in the North) becoming a problem because of the lack of suitable teachers?

What efforts should be made to give a greater share of responsibility to lay teachers in schools under clerical or religious management?

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1-A. THE PURPOSE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA

INTRODUCTION

There is hardly any need here to stress the massive involvement of the Church in Indian education. With nearly 7,000 institutions ranging from the elementary to the university, and with one quarter of her priests, 70% of her brothers and 40% of her nuns engaged full-time in this task, it is true to say that in no other country of the world has the Church committed such a large proportion of her human and material resources to the task of education. In fact the question is persistently asked whether such an outlay is justified and whether the Church should not be devoting her personnel and finance to other, perhaps more important, purposes.

Another fact that needs to be recalled is the massive increase in Catholic involvement in education since the Independence of the Country in 1947. The number of colleges has increased 2½ times from 42 to 109 and the schools have more than doubled in number. The number of religious personnel engaged in these institutions has, of course, gone up proportionately. Moreover there seems to be no doubt that the increase in the number of institutions, particularly in respect of colleges in certain regions of the country, has been uncoordinated, without reference to actual needs and without serious thought about their effectiveness. This also explains the fact that our colleges, particularly where they are most numerous, are today facing a very serious crisis which imperils their very existence and more immediately their ability to function in any meaningful manner. Discipline among the students has broken down; the teachers are disaffected and openly campaign for a government take-over and the leaders in the movement are often the Catholic teachers themselves.

All this points very clearly to one fact : the whole question of Catholic educational institutions in India has to be seriously re-examined in an objective and courageous manner. In this re-examination, the most important point is to get a clear picture of what we are aiming at in conducting schools and colleges.

It seems certain from several studies (Cf. the ISS-FERES study on CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION AND INDIAN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT) that there is among many of our educators and even among the ecclesiastical authorities what could be called a "crisis of goals," i.e. many of them have no clear idea why their institutions were started in the first place, and still less what they are precisely aiming at in conducting them. We find ideas like prestige, power, influence of the Church; the education of Catholics; the spreading round of the knowledge of Christ sometimes bandied about; at other times, the educators simply content themselves with saying that they are aiming at doing the same thing as any other college in the country tries to do. Now it is certain that no serious planning in our educational work is possible unless we have clear goals. Goals define methods.

It is for this reason that we believe that the most crucially important task for the Seminar to do is to get to grips with the central question: *Why do we open and conduct schools and colleges in India?* Surely this question is extremely complex and admits of no cut and dry answer. A number of factors have to be taken into consideration; different points of view have to be considered. In the end we may hope that a picture will emerge which will give some idea of the basic reasons why Christian institutions are opened and conducted.

THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Christian educational work in this country began in a major way in the second half of the last century when the then British government made it known that it would encourage and assist private agencies to open schools and colleges in India. Almost every major Christian Church immediately rushed into the virgin field with the result that before the end of the century, there was a network of Christian institutions through the length and breadth of the country. The motives which the founders of these institutions (mostly foreigners) had before them were simple and clear; *first* the education of Christians themselves in a Christian atmosphere, so that they could be good members of their Church and also occupy important positions in secular society, *secondly* the institutions were definitely considered to have a missionary purpose. They were to be an extension of

the pastoral functions of the Church, an auxiliary in the task of preaching the gospel to the nation. It may even be said that the second aim gradually came to assume primary importance. The apostolic efficacy of a Catholic institution was taken to be its main or even only justification for existence, chiefly in the case of those schools and colleges which had a majority of non-Christians in their student body. This trend came to a head with the appointment by the Holy See of Cardinal Lepicier as Visitor to India to evaluate the Christian effectiveness of our schools and colleges. The eminent cardinal spent some time studying the situation in the country and came to the conclusion that the majority of our institutions simply did not serve any apostolic function; hardly any conversions had been made through their influence; they were really not helping in any substantial measure the spread of the gospel among non-Christians. The obvious conclusion was that many of these institutions simply did not serve the purpose for which they were started and hence should be closed down, so as to enable the deployment of the resources in personnel and money in a more rational and effective manner for the pastoral work of the Church. Logically, the cardinal's conclusion was perfectly correct if we accept the premise that the main or at least one of the primary purposes of our schools and colleges was to help in the propagation of the faith among their students and the public in a visible manner through the winning of converts.

No action was, of course, taken on the Lepicier report. It is extremely difficult to close down institutions, at least among us Catholics; vested interests of various kinds are built up and resist any attempt at closure. Our Protestant brethren, however, who came to more or less the same conclusions as Cardinal Lepicier, took action and shut down one third of their colleges in the country in order to concentrate their resources on those that remained. This was the result of the celebrated Lindsay Commission's Report. As a consequence, ancient and venerable institutions like Bishop Heber's college, Tiruchirapalli, Finlay College, Mannargudi, Noble College, Masulipatam, passed out of existence.

Cardinal Lepicier contented himself with an evaluation of the missionary achievements of our schools and colleges; he said nothing about their potentialities in this direction. Logically we should go further and flatly state that our institutions have

not only been unable, in the past, to make converts in any significant numbers. A realistic appraisal of the Indian situation, today more than ever before, must lead to the conclusion that winning converts through educational institutions is a hopeless task, even if it were a legitimate goal. If, therefore, we consider that an important aim of our colleges and schools is their apostolic efficacy, then we should logically close down the majority of them.

PRESENT POSITION

In the last twenty years, however, and chiefly during the post-Vatican Council era a new view of Catholic educational work has gained ground together with a new theological understanding of the role of the Church in the modern world. The Church now views herself not merely as the guardian of faith and morals and the teacher of the gospel to humanity, but equally as the servant of the world. The mission of the Church consists in service to the world beyond the boundaries of her own community. The Church does not view the world with suspicion as something to be fought against and overcome, but as God's handiwork where his wisdom and love are manifested and which the Church has to work for and develop. Purely human values have now taken on a different aspect. They are not something to be afraid of or to be submerged in the "supernatural"; they have an authenticity of their own, they are precious in their own right and indeed they form the only basis on which a supernatural structure can ever be built.

In the light of the new trends in Catholic theology there is also a new understanding of the significance of such secular tasks as education, medical work, etc. In order to be justified there is no need for us to be able to show that they contribute directly to the spread of the gospel and still less to the visible conversion of non-Christians to the Church. Secular works of service have a value of their own and do not need any buttressing from other motives and purposes. When healing the sick, curing the blind, feeding the hungry, Our Lord was not always thinking only of the salvation of their souls; he was also interested in their purely human welfare.

GOALS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN INDIA TODAY

In the light of what has been said above we may proceed to consider the goals of our educational effort in India today. We may begin by stating what are not the goals.

What a Christian Institution is not

1 *A Christian institutions in India is not necessarily an institution only for Christian students* : Factually it is not so in most cases, since the majority of the students and faculty are not Christians. Nor need it be so in theory either. It is true that some preference is shown and should be shown to Christians ; no Catholic institution should be run on the assumption that all Catholics must get what they want out of it, others being content with what is left over. There is real danger in the oft-repeated statement that Catholic schools and colleges were founded for Catholics. If interpreted in a narrow, exclusivistic sense, this would result in a communalistic attitude which we are the first to protest against and deplore in others. Nor will it do to insist on the privileges which our constitution generously gives to minorities. The communalistic attitude is basically opposed to the Christian spirit of universal love and service, to the human right of brotherhood and equality and the secular spirit of the Indian Constitution. One of the great contributions which our institutions have made in the past is the integration of students belonging to different linguistic and religious groups. We have to develop this service still further for the good of the whole nation. We shall surely not have cause to regret our large-heartedness and generosity in this matter. Moreover even academically speaking, it would not be advisable to bring up Catholic students in an all-Catholic school since this would not prepare them for life in a multi-religious society such as India.

2. *Similarly, a Catholic institution is not necessarily one in which the Staff are entirely or in majority Catholic.* Surely, other things being equal, there will be some preference for good Catholics, for without a core of dedicated Catholic teachers it will be difficult to maintain that indefinable something called a Catholic atmosphere. But we have to remember that the main purpose of a Christian institution is not to provide employment

to Christians, but to provide first rate education to the students. Hence in the selection of staff the stress should always be laid on quality, competence, dedication; and if a person is a good Catholic, this must be considered an added competence.

3. *A school or college is not Christian if it professes to offer secular education, but in reality looks upon this merely as a bait to bring about religious conversions*: A school is a place for teaching. Teaching is not indoctrination; it is not even preaching. With the Church's new emphasis on the need of respect for the conscience of others and their human freedom in matters of religion, we cannot do anything that would smack of bringing undue pressure on young minds to produce premature or immature decisions. We must also recall that we have a tacit understanding with the parents of our non-Christian students that we would respect their beliefs and freedom of conscience in our institutions. Moreover a considerable number of reputed Catholic educationists today consider that it is not a legitimate goal of our educational work to aim at making converts through it.

All this, however, does not amount to saying that the Catholic teacher must be totally indifferent to his bounden duty to spread the Good News. Every Christian must preach, by the means available to him. Apart from prayer, there is also the power of example. At many points in many ways, often unconsciously, a Christian teacher will reveal what he believes and its importance for him. He can scrupulously respect the religious beliefs of his students, allowing his own beliefs and actions to make their own proper effect in their own time.

What a Christian Institution is

A school or college may properly be called Christian if those responsible for its policy and a fair proportion of its teachers are moved mainly by their love of Christ and take him as their standard of goodness and truth. The motive, the spirit, the attitudes must be Christian, *but the object is undoubtedly secular*, not indeed in a sense incompatible with religious teaching but in the sense that it does not belong to the sphere of Christian pastoral work.

1. The implications of this statement are far-reaching. It would mean that the primary purpose of a Christian institution

is to do the same as any other good school or college, i.e. give a total education which will enable the student fully to use his human talents and abilities for his own complete welfare and for that of the society in which he lives. The Christian school like any other good school, must produce young men and women able to think and act for themselves from principles which they understand and freely hold; men and women who have a commitment to society and to their neighbour.

2. If what has been said above is accepted, it would follow that a Catholic school or college would not be fulfilling its primary purpose if it did not impart good secular education, even if large numbers of students in it embraced the Christian faith every year, just as a Catholic hospital would not be worth running if most of the patients in it died even though they were baptised before their death!

3. All this is not to deny, however, that a Christian institution has its own distinctive purposes. For, as the Vatican Council reminds us, "no less than other schools does the Catholic School pursue cultural goals and the natural development of youth." But it has its several distinctive purposes. It aims to create for the school community an atmosphere enlivened by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity. It aims to help the (Catholic) adolescent in such a way that the development of his own personality will be matched by the growth of that new creation which he became by baptism. It strives to relate all human culture eventually to the news of salvation, so that the Gospel will illumine the knowledge which students gradually gain of the world, of life, and of mankind."

"So it is that while the Catholic school fittingly adjusts itself to the circumstances of advancing times, it is educating the students to promote effectively the welfare of the earthly city, and prepares them to serve the advancement of the reign of God. The purpose in view is that by living, an exemplary, an apostolic life, the Catholic graduate can become, as it were the saving leaven of the human family." (Declaration on Christian Education, no. 8).'

4. The education we are aiming at is, therefore, *fully* human, but Catholics maintain that "there is no true humanism but that which is open to the absolute and is conscious of a vocation

that gives human life its meaning." (Decree on Education). Hence though the goals of a Christian institution are human, they are, by the very fact, essentially related to man's religious aspirations and to the universal call of all men by God in and through Jesus Christ. This is the dynamic tension which must necessarily exist in every good Catholic school or college : it consciously pursues secular and human goals, yet does not limit the "human" to this world, but strives to produce a humanism that is always open to the demands of the more than human. So long as the tension exists we can confidently state that the school is fulfilling its true Catholic purpose. The danger arises when one or other side of the apparent dilemma is neglected. Then the school will cease to be a fully Catholic institution even though its staff and the majority of its students are Catholics. It either reduces itself to the same state as any good government school or it becomes merely an appendage of the pulpit and the Sunday School.

5. The total view of education as propounded above necessarily brings in certain corollaries, which should characterise every Catholic school and college.

(a) Christian institutions should endeavour to *give religion and theology their rightful place* in the curriculum. Other disciplines are not to be subordinated to theology, but it should at least find a place among the subjects taught, at least in colleges. Religion and religions are undoubtedly as much a matter of human intellectual knowledge and formation as physics, chemistry or economics; though not so immediately useful. Of course special difficulties exist in India in the way of setting up full-fledged faculties of religious studies in our colleges not the least being the almost certain fact that students will be lacking. At least, every one of our schools and colleges must give to the department of religious and moral instruction the same importance as to other departments.

(b) In India a Catholic institution is often conceived as one in which "catechism" is taught and students attend Mass frequently and make an annual Retreat. This is evidently a caricature of the reality, but it contains an element of truth. Though we cannot identify the goals of religious education with those of a Christian educational institution, it is difficult to conceive of an institution being truly Christian if the teaching of at

least the Christian religion to the Christian students is not taken seriously. Religious education is the point of contact between the pastoral and pedagogical aspects of Christian educational work. Moreover, a Catholic institution cannot be completely satisfied with providing religious instruction to its students ; it must go further and attempt to provide facilities and an atmosphere conducive to the practice of the faith. In doing this, there should be respect for the freedom of the individual, chiefly in colleges where we are dealing with adolescents or young adults who are just beginning to appreciate and value the freedom of choice, and independence of action which is their God-given human prerogative.

(c) The existence of a strong department of religion with well-qualified staff will help bring about that *confrontation between religious and secular values and knowledge* which should be one of the special features of a Catholic institution, chiefly a College. A Christian college has not to adopt a defensive or timid stance with respect to secular knowledge. It has to accept the inherent value of human progress and endeavour to show that radical optimism characteristic of true Christianity which faces the modern world with the confidence that all human values can and must be harmonised with the essential attitudes of Christianity. Let us remember that "God loved the *world*" and this must mean for us the *modern world* with all that it implies. Today's world is characterised by the forward thrust of science and technology which have given a certain autonomy to human life and ambitions and have freed them from the control of spiritual ideals and ecclesiastical institutions. A Catholic institution has to believe that all this is in God's plan for the development of the world and that technology is only the working out of Christ's redemptive love for men in its human dimensions.

(d) The Christian institution must display a constant pre-occupation with making its education relevant to the needs of the actual hour. Only such education is of value in promoting the development of a nation, chiefly one that is still underdeveloped. Newman's ideal of knowledge for its own sake may be an ideal still worth pursuing in the abstract, but hardly for a developing nation where all knowledge and education should be put to social purposes. In other words, knowledge, for a Christian institution in India today, must be something that is

action-oriented and leads to the pursuit of the "good life" in the full sense of the word.

6. The Christian school or college must be one in which *human personalities and freedom are given the highest respect*. The Declaration on Christian Education of the Vatican Council has the following significant words: "What is proper to the Catholic school is that it creates in the school community a Christian atmosphere animated by the evangelical spirit of freedom and love and that it helps young people to develop their own personality" (No. 8). In fact it may truly be said that the Christian way of life is a rare combination of knowledge and freedom in a spirit of love. This means that a Christian school (particularly a university) should not exercise censorship of mind and opinions among its staff and even among its students on the plea of ensuring orthodoxy of views. Freedom is man's highest prerogative and there is no place where it has greater right to exist than in an educational institution. The conflicts, which respect for freedom necessarily brings in its wake, must be considered part of that confrontation between different opinions and between the religious and the secular which our institutions have a special function to promote.

In dealing with students, Catholic schools and colleges must proceed with great respect for their inner freedom. True education, whether Catholic or not, implies not so much the transmission of convictions as the creation of an atmosphere where convictions can be born and strengthened. While character training necessarily implies the use of certain constraints and the inculcation of habits of discipline, the constraints must all ultimately lead to the idea that the only discipline worth talking about is self-discipline and that no education is complete unless it includes formation and training in the use of personal freedom.

In all this the characteristic Christian attitude should be to proceed on the assumption that the heart of man is interiorly orientated to the good and the true, i.e. to God, through the action of his Spirit. This does not deny the influence of Original Sin, only it gives radical optimism to our task. If we cherished any other beliefs, education would not have much meaning, and the jail would be the best educational institution. It is unfortunate that in the past many of our schools and colleges

have gloried in maintaining an atmosphere of restraint and external discipline not too far removed from what obtains in a penitentiary or a barracks.

We live in an age when there is a much greater understanding and appreciation of the value of freedom for the development of the individual and of society. The problems connected with the respect for freedom in education are not simple. Christian institutions with the traditional Christian respect for human freedom should be pioneers in experimenting along these lines.

The Christian School a Service to the Nation

Catholic Education conducted along the lines mentioned above will be a tremendous service to the nation. It is a proven fact that the most important single factor in the economic growth and national development of backward countries is education of the right type. If the Church is interested in the progress and prosperity of the 530 million of God's children living in India, there is hardly anything better she can do for them than help provide them with the right type of education. Let us remember the wise words of *Populorum Progressio* : "Development cannot be limited to mere economic growth. In order to be authentic, it must be complete, integral that is, it has to promote the good of every man and of the whole man" (14). Now the Church possesses as her special characteristic a global vision of man and of the human race and an understanding of the relation between man and God. It is with this vision that Catholic education can really "contribute to the total formation of the human person in the perspective of the ultimate goal and at the same time of the welfare of the societies of which he is a member" (Decl. on Ed. 1). This is the specific mission of the Church in the world : "to lend her help to all peoples in promoting the complete perfection of the human person, the good of the earthly society and the building-up of a world that is more than human" (Decl. on Ed. 3), while also being fully and authentically human.

There can be no doubt that in today's context and perspectives, one of the *principal purposes* of Catholic schools and colleges is to render a human service to the community in the spirit of

Jesus Christ. This purpose, kept constantly before our minds, will dictate policies and attitudes radically different from those of the past. It will liberate us from much of the narrowness that has often characterised our educational institutions in years gone by. If we sincerely give ourselves to the task of serving the nation through our schools and colleges, there is no doubt that slowly, but surely a new attitude will appear among our non-Christian brethren who presently feel convinced that in all the educational, medical and other charitable work which we, do we have only one dominant motive, an ulterior one, namely to make conversions to the Church and thus augment the number of Christians in the country. It will take long for this suspicion, to die down, but given the integrity and decency of most of our fellow-countrymen, it will.

Some Practical Points

(1) Admission of Catholics

So far we have only indirectly treated of the vexed and down-to-earth problem which agitates minds as the annual period of admission to schools and colleges comes round: For whom are Catholic schools and colleges meant? The only answer that can be given to this question is : For all. This is not to deny that there may be some order of priorities. In schools, the claims of Catholic children for admission cannot easily be overlooked, though even in this field we cannot accept the principle that a Catholic school must necessarily take all the Catholic children who apply, nor the converse, that every Catholic child must necessarily go to a Catholic school. Considerations like maintenance of standards, economic difficulties, distance cannot simply be ignored.

Colleges, chiefly those that are aiming at maintaining a truly university level of instruction and achievement may not be able to admit every Catholic student. Catholics cannot claim university education as a right, even if they are unfit for it. A college must necessarily lay considerable stress on the academic fitness of the students it admits. Otherwise the Institution would not be rendering any service to the country or to the Catholic community or to the unfit student himself. Other things being equal, of course, there will be preference for Catholics.

(2) *Recruitment of Staff*

In the recruitment of staff, things are somewhat clearer. Institutions have a clear *duty* to themselves, to their students and to the community to select only competent staff. If these can be found among good Catholic candidates, a Catholic institution will, of course, be happy to employ them; otherwise it should not hesitate to take good men and women of other persuasions. This is particularly important in a university where besides all-round excellence in knowledge, teaching and research ability, character should be the deciding factor in the choice of the faculty.

(3) If one of the major purposes of Catholic schools and colleges is to contribute an important service to the development of India, then it is obvious that we should serve real needs and not proceed in an opportunistic, or selfish manner in opening and conducting institutions. Duplication of work must be avoided. It is meaningless to open scores of the same type of institutions in restricted areas when there is a crying need in other regions or other fields of education. To open colleges within a few miles of each other, all doing exactly the same thing, giving a type of education which really does not satisfy the actual needs of the country, simply for considerations of power and prestige, is surely unworthy of the Christian name. Similarly, to open English-medium schools just because there is a present demand for this type of education smacks of opportunism. The former policy has already landed the Church in a very sorry plight in certain regions of the country and the latter policy may also make us pay dearly in the future.

1-B. THE SOCIAL MISSION OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

The Social Dimensions of Education

This question has come to the fore in recent years in a very forceful manner owing to the changing times in which we live. Today society has become the focus of attention. Individual values are seen to be fully meaningful only in and through the human relationships they enable a man to cultivate. Thanks to the philosophy and political pressure of communism, the awakening sense of the unity and brotherhood of man, facility

of communications between different parts of the world which technology has brought about, there is a growing appreciation of the vital link that exists between the welfare of individuals and that of the society in which they dwell. Inevitably, there is also a greater understanding of the importance of the social dimensions of all good education. Education can no longer be considered exclusively in terms of what it brings to the individual. It must equally bring benefits to the society in which the individual lives. We could even go further and say that an institution which isolates the individual student from the ills and anxieties, the difficulties and problems of his community does him positive harm, regardless of the academic excellence that he might attain.

Traditionally, the school and especially the university was considered to be a community of students and teachers gathered together in isolation and enabled to pursue their scholarly avocations "far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife." This idea is reflected right through Cardinal Newman's treatise on "The idea of a University". It was to be found also in the whole attitude of unconcern which was generally adopted by university scholars and students with respect to the social problems of the community in which they lived. The college or school was considered with pride to be an island of learning in an ocean of ignorance. The situation has been even worse in India. Owing to our traditional ideas of caste and our conviction that learning was the privilege of the select few, belonging to the upper castes, the school became accepted as something existing on the fringe of the community where it was located. The village boy going to school for the first time was taken into an environment where the problems and difficulties of village life, its interests and hardships hardly ever penetrated. The parents of the students also accepted the position that their child in school was, for all practical purposes, lost to them and had entered a world different from their own to which he would never return in body or even in heart. The educated person, it was taken for granted, could not possibly be expected to return to his village or even to take any serious interest in bettering its conditions. As the Education Commission so forcefully states: "Indian Education is cut off from the realities of life in the country." It was the realization of this fact, thirty years before the time, that made Mahatma Gandhi think of a system of education that would bring together

the school and the village and would eventually help to improve life in the villages. This was the fundamental preoccupation behind his scheme of basic education.

Catholic Institutions

How do Catholic schools and colleges stand in regard to social preoccupations? First of all let us note that the majority of our secondary schools and practically all our colleges have been set up in urban localities. This itself proclaims our preference for a certain type of environment. Secondly, there seems to be no doubt that our schools and colleges also exhibit that same isolation from the realities of life in the country that is generally the characteristic of Indian education. The degree of isolation differs from one type of institution to another. The high class schools are at one end of the scale and the ordinary Indian language schools catering for the poorer classes of society are at the other. It is generally true, however, to say that Catholic schools on the whole have been preoccupied about this social isolation and have wanted the institution to make a positive contribution to the society in which it is situated. This is to our credit.

It is now time to state flatly that in the Christian school and college social preoccupations and considerations should be ever present in every aspect of the educational process, beginning from the policy adopted in making admissions and going through the type of discipline imposed, the life lived in the hostel, extra-curricular activities, dealings with parents and alumni and even the way in which the curriculum is handled.

Fulfilling our School Mission

(1) The first and most important point is *proper planning* in the opening of new schools so that they contribute to felt needs in the community and are not mainly instruments of power and prestige. This would mean opening schools in areas where they are most required concentrating on types of institutions which will immediately contribute to the country's pressing needs. Presently, 99% of Catholic schools and colleges are of the traditional type, imparting, what for want of a better name we would call, "liberal education". Every year they turn out thousands upon thousands of "educated" men and women for whom employment cannot be found because they are already in over-

supply in the country. On the other hand in fields where employment opportunities far exceed the supply of trained personnel (v.g. skilled artisanship), and where the country has the greatest need, (v.g. in agriculture), we are doing practically nothing.

Surely a rational educational policy that is truly Christian, and that understands the implications of the Church's involvement in education, must revise these procedures. There is need for much greater cooperation between religious orders among themselves and with the dioceses, so that jointly the institutions needed for the more complete and effective service of the local community are provided without wastage and useless duplication. This is no easy thing to achieve given the present structures of the Church and chiefly the present attitudes, where the ruling motive for opening an institution is sometimes the material welfare and the prestige of a diocese or a religious society, or a mistaken idea of the type of influence the Church should wield in the country. The first and most important step is to reach the conviction that the Church has no business opening schools and colleges which do not really serve the felt needs of the community, whether Catholic or non-Catholic. The second is that, before schools and colleges are started, a serious survey of the region should be made, in order to determine the type of institution that is really needed and that will do most good. Thirdly, we should not be led away by demands from the upper classes of society for the usual type of purely academic institution where their children can receive education in isolation from the masses. It is this type of schools which was forcefully condemned by the Education Commission. The Commission's Report does not hesitate to say that though these schools often attain high academic standards, they are to be considered to have done positive harm to the nation by perpetuating those class distinctions which the country wishes to obliterate. There seems to be no doubt that the predominance of such Catholic schools in North India has done the Church considerable harm by associating her, in the public mind, with the wealthy and often the exploiter classes of society.

(2) The second element of a complete social orientation is a *revamping of our admission policies*. Till now it has generally been accepted that the only proper norm for admission of candidates to both our schools and our colleges is academic merit as judged by entrance tests conducted by public authorities or by

ourselves. This would be all right if our institutions had only an academic task to perform. The result of this system of admissions is that whole sections of society are almost automatically excluded from our institutions because they cannot make the grade, not for lack of intelligence, but because their economic and social circumstances simply do not give them a chance to compete. These children have been obliged to attend inferior schools, they do not have a home environment conducive to study; their parents are mostly illiterate; they themselves suffer from constant physical privation; yet many of them undoubtedly do possess great potential which may never be developed for lack of schooling, in a good atmosphere, such as many Catholic schools and colleges provide.

This problem requires serious consideration. While we cannot rule out academic criteria for admission, we can use them in such a way that children from poor and backward surroundings are given some advantage over others. Thus a college could divide the schools from which it draws its students into clusters according to their location and relative quality and then admit the top five or ten students from each cluster. In this way we would ensure good potential talent, even though the actual performance of several students may not be exceedingly high before they enter the college. This would also bring into our institutions a good proportion of children from the under-privileged classes of society.

(3) The next necessary element in a true social orientation of our schools and colleges, chiefly in the case of the more expensive ones is to ensure that *poor students are not debarred from admission* by their inability to pay the fees. It is true that where schools and colleges are assisted by the state, scholarships are available in large numbers which would practically ensure that intelligent students can prosecute their studies; but even then there are always some cases where assistance from the institution is needed. All our schools and colleges should consider it a high priority to build up an endowment fund which would enable them to help poor students. This will be a concrete move in the direction of procuring greater social justice.

(4) All that has been said above concerns a re-orientation of our admission policies to demonstrate our social concern. The next step is to ensure that the same social concern is evident

in the *type of education we impart to our students*. For a variety of reasons, lack of social consciousness is a characteristic of Indian society. The upper classes have not bothered over-much about the lot of the poor and the latter have accepted their lot with stoic resignation, as their "Karma". But it is naive to imagine that the disinherited classes of India will continue long in their passive acceptance of injustice and misery. People thought the same thing about the Negroes of the U.S.A., till they began demonstrating their anger by destroying millions of dollars worth of public and private property in orgies of arson and violence. Our students should be warned that a social revolution is beginning in this country too, and unless the educated classes take a lead in the march towards social equality, they will be swept away and replaced by others who may not have had the advantage of education at all. We, too as a group cannot expect that our presence and our institutions will be tolerated much longer, if we do not identify ourselves with the people and with their hopes and aspirations. It is not, however, out of fear or expediency that we should act, but because this is the right thing to do, the Christian thing, in imitation of Jesus who had pity on the multitude.

Therefore, one of the important tasks of the educator in a Christian school in India is to inculcate in the students a lively understanding of the hardships suffered by the poor and a deep sympathy for them. This is particularly important where the major part of the student body consists of the richer classes who have no experience of what poverty or hardship is. This can be achieved through a well thought-out programme of moral instruction and through meaningful programmes of social service. The moral instruction must not be purely theoretical, but should be backed up with slides showing the actual conditions in the country. Social service must be an integral part of the curriculum in Christian institutions whether the government syllabus provides for it or not.

The government is pledged to the introduction of a scheme of National Service for students in colleges from this very academic year. Several Catholic colleges are likely to be among the 100 or so institutions to be selected for this purpose. It is a measure of our good standing with the Ministry of Education. While taking this as a mark of honour we should also view it as an opportunity and a challenge. If National Service is set afoot

after careful study and planning, it can well be the starting point of a movement like the American Peace Corps or Home Service Corps. Perhaps Catholic schools and colleges could aim at initiating a movement along these lines, so that our educated young men and women could give a couple of years of their life to volunteer service in backward villages.

(5) In a developing country however, educational institutions have not only the duty of educating their students in social consciousness. *They must also do something positive for the socio-economic uplift of the people.* This follows from the fact that education consumes such a large proportion of the national resources and that the educated form a small privileged section of the community. Even during the educational process, therefore, students should get involved in some meaningful projects of socio-economic uplift which will make a difference to the lives of the people among whom they dwell. It could, therefore, be suggested that every Catholic school and college should publicly and permanently commit itself to a well-studied and planned long-term project. The eradication of illiteracy is one such and perhaps no single project could be more necessary or meaningful in the India of today. We have a striking example of socio-economic work done on a large and most successful scale by our Protestant brethren. The well-known Rural Life and Welfare Department of the Christian College at Ahmednagar has attracted India-wide attention not only for the concrete good it has brought to all the villages surrounding the college but also for the positive contribution the scheme has made to a better educational programme for the students of the college who have, through it, been brought into contact with the problems of life in the villages and have been shown that much can be done to find suitable solutions.

(6) While talking about producing social conscience in our students, there is an allied topic which must seriously preoccupy Christian educators. It is universally remarked by perceptive observers, both Indian and foreign, that one of the greatest obstacles to India's social and economic progress is the apathy and lack of a sense of purpose displayed by her youth. They seem to have lost faith in the country and its future. This explains the waves of negative and cynical criticism which constantly sweep through the country, chiefly among the educated classes.

It is an important social function of our institutions to fill our young men and women with a real pride in their country and its achievements, to give them a conviction that India is worth working and even sacrificing oneself for, and a determination to see the country rise by at least one inch as a result of one's own effort. This should not prove difficult, for youth is naturally patriotic and responsive to the right urges. Our schools and colleges must, therefore, endeavour to give our students an appreciation of the gigantic problems faced by the country and its great achievements not merely in the dim distant past, but equally in the years since Independence. Many of our teachers are unaware of what the nation has achieved in the last 20 years and hence they indulge in reckless and bitter criticism. They thus communicate to their charges that negative and destructive approach which is the bane of the nation today. No external assistance can ever bring this country up in the absence of commitment, hard work and faith in the future on the part of the young people of the country themselves.

Inculcation of the right form of patriotism can be done in a large number of ways. Every Catholic school should consider this to be one of its important social duties. Then perhaps we may stop or at least reduce the constant flow of highly educated young men and women from India to other countries. It is said that the high class schools run by Christians produce a comparatively larger number of young men who have no motivation to work for the development of India and think only of migrating to lands where conditions of life are easier and less challenging. It is, therefore, important that in guiding our young people in the choice of a career, we do not all the time hold up monetary considerations before them as the sole incentive for economic activity.

(7) *Cooperation with other institutions is another important field of social concern and endeavour.* One of the important opportunities which Catholic schools and colleges have in this country is to contribute to an improvement in the general standard of education in the areas where they are situated. Unlike other countries where the Catholic schools cannot compare with state institutions in quality and facilities, here in India, our schools and colleges are often among the best in the land, and are recognized as such. Till now we have been content with running our own institutions well, without bothering to see whe-

ther we could do anything to help neighbouring schools to improve the education they impart. Such an attitude is of course natural and human, but it is quite out of keeping with the concept of the "Servant Church". In her educational and social work and indeed in all her activities, the Church wishes henceforth to be a servant of the common good and not a pressure group trying to promote only its own welfare. No longer confusing the Catholic good with the common good, the decision-makers of the Church in every country are progressively coming to ask themselves, with serenity and disinterestedness, how the whole youth of the nation will be able to receive the best possible education with the resources and the needs of the given moment.

In this spirit we must in future do our best to spread our influence to the schools and colleges that surround us. After all, the number of students who can be educated in our own institutions is pitifully small in comparison with the total student population of the country. Yet, we can multiply our influence for good several times over by trying to help other institutions attain the same high standards that several of ours have managed to reach. This can be done in a variety of ways : by offering neighbouring institutions the use of some of our facilities, encouraging contacts between their students and ours; inviting their teachers to activities aimed at improving their standards like seminars, discussions, study sessions, etc.

The ultimate in the direction of cooperation is to attempt to create a "*neighbourhood school complex*", as envisaged in the Education Commission's Report. This would imply working in close cooperation with other schools in the immediate vicinity and even sharing resources. The idea may seem Utopian and indeed it is beset with numerous practical difficulties, not least being the suspicion with which such a move on our part will often be greeted, owing to our tradition of aloofness in the past. But the attempt is worth making chiefly in village areas where school facilities are poor.

(8) One of the most significant ways in which Catholic schools and colleges can contribute to the development of India and fulfil their social mission is to *imbue our students with greater ambition, leadership qualities and achievement motivation*. It has been shown by a study of the literature and folk lore of different countries that periods where great determination, ambition and achievement-motivation are shown are also periods

of national growth and expansion in every direction. Now in India the ideal proposed for generations to the people is one of simplicity, renunciation, rejection of the world, duty done without quest of any reward, etc. These are all high, spiritual ideals, but there is no doubt that in a population fed on such ideals alone, the desire to achieve, to make a success of one's life even in material ventures, will be low. Our task is therefore, to build up achievement-motivation through work and example, through special courses and camps designed for this purpose and at the same time to preserve and develop the spiritual ideals for which the nation is justly famous.

(9) In keeping with the most urgent need of the nation today, our schools and colleges should consciously endeavour by every means at their disposal to strengthen the idea of Indian nationhood as opposed to regional, linguistic, communal and other partisan loyalties. It can be said without undue complacency that our institutions have on the whole done a fine job for the country in this direction. But owing to the tremendous stresses to which our unity is being subjected today, we must devise means of increasing the national spirit of our students and thus contribute to national integration. We shall be able to count on the support of government and all right minded people in this urgent task.

These, then are some of the points which would have to be attended to in any enlightened programme for the fulfillment of the social mission of our schools and colleges.

2-A. FREEDOM, DISCIPLINE AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING

The discussion on this topic is oriented in a sense to all the four main subjects of renewal, but in a special way to (1) the integration of the Church with the life of the country and (2) self-reliance.

The teaching of the Church

Since parents have conferred life on their children, they have a solemn obligation to educate their offspring. Hence, parents must be acknowledged as the educators of their children. Their role as educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it. For it devolves on parents to create a family atmosphere so animated with love and reve-

rence for God and men that a well-rounded personal and social development will be fostered among the children. Hence, the family is the first school of those social virtues which every society needs" (Decree on Christian Education No. 3)

"Beautiful, therefore, and truly solemn is the vocation of all those who assist parents in fulfilling their task, and who represent human society as well, by undertaking the role of school teacher. This calling requires extraordinary qualities of mind and heart, extremely careful preparation, and a constant readiness to begin anew and to adapt." (ibid. No. 5)

"Since every man of whatever race, condition, and age is endowed with the dignity of a person, he has an inalienable right to an education corresponding to his proper destiny and suited to his native talents, his sex, his cultural background, and his ancestral heritage. At the same time, this education should pave the way to brotherly association with other peoples, so that genuine unity and peace on earth may be promoted. For a true education aims at the formation of the human person with respect to his ultimate goal, and simultaneously with respect to the good of those societies of which, as a man, he is a member and in whose responsibilities, as an adult, he will share." (ibid. No. 1)

Comments

Moral education should be the complementary and directing force of all education, especially of Christian education in a non-Christian environment. The Kothari Report makes much of training our students in moral and spiritual values, among which it includes mutual respect and co-operation, honesty, integrity and social responsibility, all of which are not only recognised by all religions, but also have a distinct relevance to the social fabric of our nation. Moreover, all religions share a common concern about such things as man's need for self-knowledge, the meaning of life, man's relations with other men and with the ultimate reality behind the appearances of things. These considerations should form the basis of moral education.

St. Paul is fascinated by the freedom of the children of God; all the same, he urges on the faithful the discipline that becomes a member of the Body of Christ. We pride ourselves on the discipline in our schools, but tend to forget to develop the freedom of the children of God in our students. It is time we restored the balance, and no longer put asunder what God has united.

Two observations seem to be in place: discipline should be exercised as a function of a clear perception of the goals of education; and secondly, discipline should aim at the integration of the total man. On both scores we seem to fail.

Discipline and the Goals of Education

If education is a method of socialization, we must be sure about the sort of society we want. Such a forward looking view is of great urgency today since Indian society is in a state of profound transformation. In the agricultural society of the past, man patiently bore toil and labour, fortune and misfortune, as his personal share of "karma" in obedience to the community's customs, rules, and authority, which in the mind of the common folk were as eternal as the ebb and flow of the seasons. In an industrial society man emerges from the anonymity of the community as a person who creatively and in cooperation with others assumes responsibility for his own future and for the destiny of the nation.

The challenge of today is the establishment of the secular, democratic, welfare state. In a secular state the bond that binds the nation is not a particular religion or ideology, but the spirit of trust and partnership between people of different faiths in the service of the common good; its democratic character consists in the recognition of the dignity, freedom, and responsibility of the human person, and in the search for new structures which promote his effective functioning in his numerous social relationships; its welfare rests in the hands of man whose creative effort is meant to humanise nature. There can be no educational policy without a clear choice between the society of yesterday and the ideals of a secular, democratic, welfare state.

Such a choice of purpose seems to be lacking in our schools and colleges. Our education merely continues the past instead of shaping itself into an instrument of change. Boys complain that their college training is not related to life, not geared to the employment possibilities in the country; girls are allowed to pursue higher studies merely for the purpose of enhancing their marriage prospects. How insignificant is a degree or a better prospect of marriage in comparison with the qualities of an open, ecumenical mind, a cooperative attitude, a sense of values and responsibility, and a social and historical consciousness all of which make responsible living in a pluriform, progressive society possible.

The exercise of discipline is all of a piece with this view. If discipline is kept for the purpose of continuing the past, of securing the maximum number of ranks and passes, of maintaining the reputation of the school and of imposing the traditional views of the elders, what else can discipline be but unquestioning compliance with the wishes of teachers who know the past, and who, with the rules and regulations of the institute, perpetuate it. A characteristic example of such a form of discipline is found in many girls' colleges where often, at the request of the parents, discipline is exercised in conformity with the joint-family mentality which demands strict segregation of the sexes and seclusion for the girl till her wedding day, whereas, in class, these same girls learn the most modern trends in psychology and sociology.

Unless we adapt discipline to the demands of a changing society, education will fail in its attempt at socialization. This adaptation implies a shift of emphasis from external compliance to internal convictions, which persuade a student to accept restraints for the sake of the realisation of values, in order to grow in maturity and for the good of the group. Discipline must aim at responsible living in a pluriform society, at cultivating personal relationships, at living and working together in teams and groups. And Christian discipline demands that the student's values and convictions derive their content and inspiration from the Christ-event, as it unfolds itself in history.

Discipline crisis

The problem of student indiscipline is both complex and urgent. But perhaps here, more than on any other subject, there is danger of speculating in the air, since each state, each city, each school has its own particular causes of unrest and indiscipline which must be met largely on a local level.

Among the causes cited for student unrest in India are the following : intellectual frustration caused when students find their educational ambitions blocked by poor teaching and poorer reading facilities; inadequate teacher-student relationships; a crowd mentality, stemming from a lack of personal conviction and appreciation of values, and manifesting itself in the inability of the individual student to stand on his own feet and fight for his principles; the stark contrast between the western education taught in many classrooms and the reality of Indian life outside; over-rigid and authoritarian discipline leading to legitimate reac-

tion on the part of the student body; and political exploitation. This last cannot be overlooked especially in a country like ours, where students in the past have been encouraged to become involved in political struggles. It seems clear, however, that often enough students are being used by certain political elements to fulfil the latter's ambitions along communal, functional, and not national lines.

The situation in Christian schools and colleges

Christian schools have always boasted of a better record for discipline than other schools. This reputation for good discipline helps them to maintain their traditions. There are other reasons. Most Christian schools make a stricter selection at the time of the admission of students and have the sanction of dismissing a student for misconduct, a sanction that is denied to most, if not all, government schools. The greater sense of dedication to be found among the staff and administration of Christian schools, most likely, promotes better relationships between them and the students. The 'religious' atmosphere might also serve to subdue students, even to the extent of reverential fear.

Whatever be the present situation in our schools, all indications seem to point to the fact that we, too, can soon expect a discipline crisis as has already been experienced elsewhere. Preventive measures would seem to call for our acknowledging and even encouraging the legitimate aspirations of our students which are pursued in a mature fashion, instead of rigidly opposing their growing desire for freedom and greater responsibility. The principle stated, to what extent should it be out into practice?

Suggested remedies

Granting that much would depend on the individual situation, several suggestions can be made.

Along the lines of better teacher-student relations within our schools, our teachers should take a bigger part in co-curricular activities, so that they might get to know the students outside the formal atmosphere of the classroom. A word on the vital role of student-counselling. A distinct need exists for trained, full-time counsellors always at the disposal of the students. Hence, such counsellors should be freed from teaching and administrative assignments. Who is best equipped to fill this role? While their vocation would seem to make priests.

and religious ideal counsellors, other factors such as approachability and cultural identity could make suitable laymen, non-Christians as well as Christians, more effective counsellors. Hence they might be carefully selected, set aside from their teaching work and trained for this important work.

Some specific measures

1. Full-time student counsellors and vocational directors should be trained for each one of our schools.

2. Christian (Catholic) as well as non-Christian students should follow moral education classes together. Both groups should be given the opportunity for religious instruction in the school, outside class time.

3. Competent and suitable laymen as well as priests and religious, non-Christians as well as Christians, should be trained as teachers of moral education. Some should be set aside for the important work of counselling.

4. We should encourage the legitimate aspirations of our students for greater responsibility by granting them a greater participation in school matters that concern them. We could thereby hope to give them scope to develop important leadership qualities.

5. Intra-school and inter-school activities foster community harmony and co-operation.

Student counselling

There are two facts which draw our attention :

Firstly, modern youth matures earlier than heretofore. At the same time, they are kept in schools and colleges over much longer periods of time in order to equip themselves for life in a complex society. During all these years they are given few chances to assume responsibility, except that of passing examinations. But the students want to be 'involved'; they want their studies to be relevant and they want an opportunity of manifesting their views to an understanding society. The fact that they are kept away from the mainstream of life for such a long period, precisely at the time when they are determined to win a place in society and to assume responsibility, is the reason for the many problems which youth encounter.

Secondly, for the first time we face a youth which, from its early years, is exposed to the tremendous impact of the communication media. Schools and colleges are not equipped to solve the problems these media present for youth. Society, today, is so 'permissive'. Too often this permissiveness is due to lack of courage to tackle the problem, fear of hostility, and so on. Many adults retreat from the problems confronting youth because they feel incapable of tackling there.

Trapped in this situation which bristles with problems, youth is looking for help. Vocational guidance, psychological counselling and spiritual direction are means to render such help. Well-trained guides, counsellors and directors are essential in every sphere of youthful activity. They can help, not just the student, but also other staff-members, parents and the community to deal with the problems of youth. Parent-education and counselling are more important than student-counselling because the disturbed student is often only a symptom of a disturbed home

Guidance, counselling and direction will not solve all the problems of youth. In some countries, these facilities are provided, yet the students are restless as ever. It only shows that we, as well as systems and structures of education, have to be renewed and reformed in order that educational institutions and that all those responsible for the education of youth, should avail themselves of a more concrete evaluation of the problems of students and their needs; and then, all concerned must work together to create the proper atmosphere where youth may grow to mature manhood in Christ.

Educational authorities appear to be afraid to engage trained counsellors and vocational guides or else, they do not have the finance. Experts fill them with awe and they can never find money to pay for what they do not want. Some schools in Bombay have started a vocational guidance programme in a small way. It is suggested that schools in an area should get together with the help and guidance of the CTG, JEA and such organisations and form a Centre for Vocational Guidance and Student Counselling. This Centre should provide :—

(a) A clinic staffed by a psychiatrist, psychologists, vocational guides, spiritual directors and social workers who can be employed at least on a part-time basis. Some parents might well volunteer to give honorary service.

(b) A library of books and periodicals on guidance, counselling and direction; a library of visual aids which are too expensive for individual schools to buy e.g., films for the instruction of children and/or parents and teachers; a collection of certain kinds of expensive scientific apparatus, seldom used, but most useful when the need arises.

(c) The means whereby teachers and others responsible for the education of youth can be given talks and in-training courses, or participate in workshops on counselling or other educational topics.

Each school and college might volunteer to contribute 1% of its gross income through fees. In many institutions this will not amount to more than a month's pay of a senior member of the staff. Or a small fee could be charged to the bigger boys who avail themselves of the services of the psychiatrist and others as the Centre. If parents are involved in this scheme and are convinced of the benefits they are reaping from it, it will be easier to get their co-operation to raise funds for its running.

Integration of the levels of formation

Are we sufficiently aware of the plain fact that today boys and girls are educated on three different levels, and that there exists no concerted effort to relate these three levels to one another and to solve the conflicts that necessarily arise from such lack of integration? The student lives in three different worlds and he is left to make sense of it.

First there is the level of academic excellence. It is the world of the crowded classroom where qualified teachers lecture from a platform to an impersonal and restless audience. The subjects are taught according to the requirements of the syllabus with little or no reference to real life; the emphasis is on scientific objectivity rather than on value orientation, and the main appeal is to the memory of the student. The teacher is little interested in the student as a person, in his ideals and aspirations, in his doubts and conflicts. Even if he tried, his effort would be frustrated by large numbers. The overall aim is the maximum number of passes and the highest ranks.

Outside the watertight compartment of the classroom there is the more appealing world of extra-curricular activities such as sports, debates, camps, social work and leadership training.

Here the emphasis is on character formation ; the student is encouraged to take the initiative, to examine issues critically, to show interest in current needs and problems, to form judgements, to learn group living and to develop social concern. This department is very much oriented towards real life, is sensitive to the personal needs and talents of the students and alert to trends and movements in society. During the past twenty years much progress has been made in this field.

Finally, there is the student's unsupervised world of leisure and entertainment. They frequent cinemas and libraries and club together in coffee houses where they discuss the latest fashions, plan strikes, debate the causes of student unrest, criticize their elders, indulge in politics, plan outings, parties and picnics, and seek contacts with the other sex. It is a world with a particular style and dress, kept together by varying degrees of resentment and protest against the world of the adults which they eagerly seek to know, but are now allowed to enter.

Parents are ambitious with regard to the academic performance of their children; they generally approve of the extra-curricular activities but are deeply distrustful of and often negligent with regard to the world of leisure to which they have no access. Youth leaders do their best to instil in students correct views and attitudes and a sense of responsibility. But their efforts only partially succeed as they are hampered by a hardly disguised streak of paternalism which makes their enthusiasm suspect in the eyes of students. This applies particularly to priests and nuns, by reason of their inability to enter the student's own world owing to needless and obsolete restrictions on dress and time-tables. The interest of teachers is usually restricted to the class-room and private tuition.

It is impossible for a student to move at each level with ease and grace. Do many grown-ups suspect how impossible these years really are, and how trying are the doubts, conflicts, frustrations, uncertainties, and dilemmas for the solution of which no proper channels of communication exist? Youth needs a concept of life, a view of the world which inspires, and serves as a rallying point for their dispersed forces and drives, but there is none to impart this. The net result is drift. Discipline should aim at the integration of the total man. Such integration cannot be achieved without bringing these three different worlds in closer contact with one another.

For that we need a new type of youth leader who combines within himself something of the pastor, the teacher, the counsellor, the friend and the entertainer. If such a combination is rare in an individual, it can be created in a team. The problems cannot be solved by the appointment of trained counsellors only. Their interest goes out to the problems and conflicts which accompany growth to maturity. Many problems can be prevented by proper guidance.

Conclusion

In the present set-up of our educational system three things are needed ; better facilities for the growth of living faith which is fully oriented towards secular realities to leave them with its life-giving spirit; a definite choice of education as an instrument of change; and the integration of the various levels of formation. With these needs fulfilled there should be less fear of the freedom of the children of God on the part of the elders, and more respect for discipline on the part of the students.

2-B. TRAINING LEADERSHIP

It is obvious that apart from purely secular studies leading up to academic certificates or degrees, students in non-Christian institutions do not stand to gain anything more. The primary purpose of education, as we all know, is, besides the acquisition of knowledge, the formation of character and the refinement of morals in order to build up useful citizens. With little emphasis on character and morality in secular institutions, our boys and girls will slowly take everything easy and become mediocre men and women, taking up small jobs and resting content to eke out a humble living. Christians, being a small minority in the body politic, can ill afford to raise a generation of men and women who are not keen of intellect, virile and alert to every turn of events and who do not play an effective role in the affairs of the country. We are very much in need of persons who by their outstanding qualities of learning and leadership as well as the dynamic urge to serve the nation, will be able to champion the cause of the Christian community and protect and promote their rights and interests, in every walk of life. For this, it is essential that our boys and girls get a good grounding in Christian institutions.

The authorities of our schools and colleges should look at this problem in the correct perspective. It is well known that

the Church is particular about our children being given a sound Christian education and it is in furtherance of this objective that the Bishops as well as various religious congregations of men and women have spent enormous amounts of money to establish institutions of learning in various parts of India. In the day-to-day administration, however, to overcome practical problems for the maintenance and expansion of work in the educational field, the authorities of these institutions have overlooked this primary objective, as a result of which there is a steady flow of Christian students to Government or other non-Christian institutions.

Formation of Christian Leaders, lay and religious

As the moulding of the character and intellectual capacity of Christian students is the primary purpose of our institutions, the teaching staff should pay special attention to them, and wherever necessary special coaching should be given to them to facilitate excellent results being obtained by them at the examination. This could be tactfully done without giving cause to non-Christian pupils to feel that Christian students are being given preferential treatment. On the contrary, however, because they are economically backward, our pupils are neglected and are allowed to fend for themselves with the result that they are not able to secure academic distinctions, and consequently the whole community continues to deteriorate.

Sports and Athletics

In the field of athletics and sports, we have very few Christian boys and girls who are outstanding and have reached national or international fame. This is because sufficient emphasis has not been placed on this important aspect of a student's career, and potential candidates are not being encouraged to bring their talents in to full play. It is the responsibility of the institution to look out for promising students and to give them every assistance for practice and participation in State and national events. Cases have been reported where, when a student asked for leave to practice with State players for a couple of days, this facility was denied. Under such handicaps, how can we expect our boys and girls to become outstanding athletes.

A word on Vocations

Another important aspect which our educational authorities overlook is the fostering of vocations among our boys and girls.

Decades ago, when we had a number of foreign missionaries in charge of our institution, they took a personal and paternal interest in their charges, especially Christian boys and girls. Their influence over them was so captivating that there have even been instances of Hindus embracing our faith. Candidates to the priesthood and the religious life too, were numerous. Why then this sudden paucity of vocations? The primary reason appears to be that the indigenous clergy and religious sisters are gradually losing touch with their Christian pupils. Steps should be taken to re-double our efforts to foster vocations and to see to it that a steady flow of suitable boys and girls go into our seminaries and training institutes for women.

3. TEACHERS, PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

In considering the reform of any educational system, it is important to bear in mind that education takes place all the time whether we will it or not. It is not only educational institutions that educate, and it is not only teachers who teach. Education is like gravitation (or, at any rate, like the traditional view of it). Everyone is teaching, and learning from, everyone else. It may therefore happen that forces outside the classroom may undo what is attempted in the classroom. The school and college may therefore unwisely ignore the environment in which they work. They have a duty to study the needs and the aspirations of the community in which they function, involve the whole community in the work of the educational institutions that serve them, and perform the twofold function of correcting the community's shortcomings and of giving point and direction to the community's aspirations.

Educational institutions are sometimes unable to resist the temptation of using the community and its shortcomings as an alibi for their own inadequacies. In its most unabashed form, this attitude seeks to explain the decline in academic standards in terms of the circumstance that the majority of the students in our schools and colleges today belong to the first generation of learners in their families. Some would even offensively quote the old tag that it takes three generations to make a gentleman. But this end-product of the endeavours of three generations could hardly be the 'gentleman' of Newman's famous definition. And the true educator is not looking for this spurious product;

instead, he seeks to assist his young charge to learn to be in charge of himself, and ever to want to put into the common pool of well being more than he takes out of it. This product cannot await the slow growth of family tradition. And to the extent that tradition and environment are of value, the school and college should be able to accelerate the growth of healthy tradition and environment. What perhaps was done in three generations formerly could now be abridged into one generation, if parents, teachers and the community consciously set about it.

A school or college could be one of three things. It could be a refuge and haven from the wickedness and vulgarity of the world outside. It could, alternatively, be the focal point and vanguard of the community's ideals and aspirations. On the contrary, it could even be a cultural cesspool in which may be observed, in aggravated form, the weakness of the community. The choice among these alternatives belongs not only to an educational system as a whole, but even to individual institutions. There may be occasions when, in seeking the transformation of society and its way of life, a school or college may have to overcome not only resistance from the community and the environment, but also from the system of which it is a part. In this bold endeavour, there is need for teachers to enlist the parents' collaboration.

While school and college have a duty to set their sights high and give a bold lead, they may not be able to progress much faster than the community would let them. This is not to say that a community gets the schools it deserves. There may be an ultimate truth in this, but not a truth of any immediate relevance to present programmes of action. Educators have a duty to work on the principle that only the best is good enough for the children, and the question of what a community, with its many shortcomings, deserves, may be left to the judgment of God. Meanwhile, the content and process of education will be largely determined by the objectives that teachers, parents and the community at large propose to themselves. Two objectives are normally recognized. One is to impart to its recipients a certain quality of the mind that can take on the challenges of adult responsibility in various fields, and the other is the acquisition of the skills one needs for earning a living. But there is a third objective that is not ordinarily acknowledged in public, namely, the search for status and for mere material advantage, often un-

due advantage, over fellow men. Most of the ills of education can be traced to the impact of this unworthy objective on educational programmes and performances. If self-interest were the main objective in education, there would soon come a stage when one discovers that the pursuit of self-interest is best accomplished without the impediment of education. One of the functions of good education is to get beyond the precincts of the school and combat this heresy in regard to the goals of education.

Education should aim high. The most grievous mistake we make in education is to underestimate the capacity of the students. While there should be a co-relation between expectations and performance, it is equally important to ensure that the expectations are not mean-spirited. In adding more ambitious dimensions to educational objectives than the ones currently in vogue, Christian educational institutions could take the lead. This today should be reckoned a most important form of the apostolate. Vatican II declared, "What the soul is to the body, let Christians be to the world." It is not necessary to accept the Augustinian dichotomy between the City of God and the City of Man. As for the Christian academic, his right stance is at the intersection between detachment and commitment, where the true university functions.

And the true aim of the educator should be not only to achieve an intellectual community of learners, and teachers, but also to extend such an intellectual community and cover the whole of society. Without ambition, this cannot be achieved. With ambition and wisdom, the new mass media of communication, currently being put to such pitiful uses, could become a means of involving the whole community in the progress of education.

Catholic schools and colleges have achieved a certain reputation for efficiency, but within the framework of a not very ambitious system. In the urgent task of "replacing inflexibility with innovation, traditional or outmoded ideas with fresh approaches and new ventures," Christian education has not taken a sufficiently bold lead in our country. Even at its best, the Catholic educator has not been able to get away from the concept of 'formation', which is much less than the total function of education. It is interesting that an American journalist wrote an article some time ago, wondering if John F. Kennedy would have run for the President if he had gone to a parochial school. The earlier candidacy of Alfred E. Smith would make this observation less than

perspicacious. Even so, we should, in this country, examine whether our institutions help in producing the high quality leadership that will not hesitate to break with the old and lead the country to high levels of achievement, instead of being content to produce efficient functionaries to protect and cherish the status quo.

The effort to produce leaders may seem to lay stress on the so-called quality or prestige schools. While a large educational system could have room for many types of institutions, the truly Christian concern in education should centre on the unprivileged and the disinherited. Leadership will come from unlikely places, as it did once from a carpenter's house in Nazareth. It is important to remember that the first receivers of the good tidings of the birth of Christ were the despised shepherds in the desert. The new Dutch Catechism, commenting upon this event, says, "The gospel already sees all values reversed." Are there forces in Christian education resisting this reversal?

4. DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING, MODERNISATION AND RESEARCH

In this section of the Workshop Paper it is sought to relate planning to the ideals of integration with national goals and to common endeavour.

Some Urgent Problems

1. How can we get individual institutions, Orders or Dioceses to draw up effective short-term and long-term plans? How can co-ordination and active cooperation be established between the Orders themselves and between Catholics and other non-Christians? How can cooperation be established between Christian Teachers' and Heads' Associations and similar State and National organisations so that the former may exert a leavening influence on the latter? How can our schools get out of their 'ghetto-like' mentality in regard to other schools and to educational work in general?

2. Do our Christian schools exist for children or children for our schools? Do schools run by teaching Orders exist for the good of the teachers and children or the glory of the the Order? If the former is true, how can our single-track schools catering for a small intellectual elite develop into real comprehensive schools for all pupils and talents?

3. How can every Christian school develop an effective School Guidance Service so that the needs and problems, academic and psychological, of every child will be located and met ?

4. At the College and University level, do we try to develop a healthy, modern approach to learning and technology or are we content with unquestioning fidelity to tradition. How can we help our growing young men and women to fit themselves out for a changing world without losing their religious and moral bearings ?

5. What do we really need most and most urgently—more schools and colleges of the present type, more prestige schools, more technical institutions more agricultural and rural schools, more schools for the handicapped ? Which of these deserve the highest priority in the renewal of Christian education ? How do we decide ? What is our response to new education and its challenges ?

6. How can we ensure that more Christians are trained for high level service in University Departments of Education, training colleges, Research Bureaux, NCERT, Central and State Government Education Departments and Directorates. At these policy-making levels Christians are very poorly represented. How can this gravely unsatisfactory situation be remedied ?

7. At present our Administrators and Heads receive no special training. How and where can such training be provided ?

8. At present most of our Training Colleges for undergraduates and post-graduate teachers are relatively small, ineffectively staffed and inefficient, and we do not have any facilities for training students for higher research degrees. How can this unsatisfactory situation be remedied ? Unless it is, we will continue to execute bad policies instead of having an adequate share of the framing of good policies.

9. What should be the medium of instruction in our schools ?

10. How do Christian schools view the three-language formula ?

11. What should be the culture pattern of our schools ? Do we truly form part of the Indian educational scene or are our schools distinguished by their western or semi-western culture pattern ?

12. How can we correct our growing maladjustment to our environment ?

13. How can we ensure the maximum employment for those who pass out of the schools, colleges, technical and professional institutions ?

SUGGESTED PLAN OF ACTION TO REMEDY EXISTING DEFICIENCIES IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

Immediate

1. A scientific survey should be carried out all over India, on a regional basis, of all existing institutions and services and of available resources, material and human. This should be done by Catholics and other Christian bodies working in close cooperation. Only on the basis of such a survey can proper All-India and Regional plans be drawn up to prevent overlapping and duplication, to enter new fields of action and to pioneer new experiments and to pool resources wherever possible, so that Christians may cooperate closely with one another, and with all other agencies, Government and private in the field of education.

2. The most urgent and vital need is to co-ordinate, radically improve and upgrade existing training facilities provided by Christians. At present these are concentrated on training primary and secondary teachers, and the existing Training Institutions tend to be small, very inadequately staffed and relatively inefficient because no single Order or even denomination can provide an adequate staff. Hence the existing Training Institutions are generally not capable of producing real educational leaders.

The following remedy is suggested:—

- (i) An All-India National Institution of Education should be started and staffed by all the Christian Churches. Non-Christian staff may also be recruited but they should be in a minority and in tune with the ideal of the Institution. Priests, ministers, religious, nuns, and lay missionaries and lay people should staff it. This institution, which should be affiliated to a reputable University should provide graduate and post-graduate courses to train future secondary teachers, Heads, Administrators, Lecturers in Training Colleges, Research workers etc. The College should

be co-educational, mainly residential, and teach through the medium of English. All teaching Religious Orders for men and women should send their best people to be trained here, and Bishops should send promising laymen and laywomen on scholarships if necessary.

- (ii) Regional Comprehensive Colleges of Education to train primary and secondary teachers on the same campus, may also be started, in the Regional language if desirable. They should also be staffed on a joint basis by all the Christian Churches and be affiliated to local Universities.

3. A Catholic Educational Council should be formed for each diocese consisting of priests, nuns, brothers and lay people. This should work in close collaboration with other educational bodies of Christian Churches and the main educational agencies, private or Government. Regional or National Boards may also be started for co-operation on a regional and national basis with other Christian churches and non-Christian agencies, Government or private.

These Councils should be responsible for over-all planning on the basis of accurate research and data, and co-ordination of efforts in the total field of education so as to make the best use of resources and human material, and promote the planned progress on a regional basis in all the different sectors of the educational field.

(a) Each Council should set up a carefully thought-out streamlined planning implementation and devaluation machinery to get the maximum out of the present and future investment of human and material resources.

(b) Short term or long-term perspective plans should not only be drawn up to start new institutions, and new types of institutions where needed, but to ensure that the authorities make the fullest possible use of existing institutions by converting them into educational and community service centres so that they will not only be places of instruction but a powerful means to fulfilling the vital social mission of the schools and of the Church. (See Appendix)

(c) Plans should concentrate on essentials—fringe and prestige activities should be dropped. Top priority should be given

to activities which do not require much money but a good deal of organising skill and technical competence.

(i) High priority should be given to research and investigation into educational methods and problems.

(ii) Revaluation and streamlining of curricular and co-curricular activities, syllabuses, text-books, methods, teaching-aids, etc. is essential, to achieve maximum educational and socio-economic results with minimum input of money, equipment etc. Plans should aim at improving and making the fullest use of educational technology within the limited means.

(iii) More self-help projects, campus work schemes, work experience, school improvement drives etc.

(iv) Active School and College Teacher Organisations should be encouraged to take an interest in programmes of academic improvement through in-service training, refresher courses, etc.

(v) Efforts should be made to expand in desirable directions. Change in new directions should be tried out by pilot projects so that advances can be made with economy and efficiency. It is important to study the financial implications of new schemes and make sure of funds before launching out.

(vi) New schemes such as technical and rural schools at different levels, schools for the under-privileged and handicapped should be introduced after a careful study of pros and cons, expenditure, personnel and resources available. Proper co-ordination of effort will be essential, as between different orders, dioceses, parishes, etc. and between the Catholic educational effort and Governmental or other.

4. At the National level there should be a National Council of Christian Education established by C.B.C.I. and other Christian Churches to co-ordinate and stimulate the work of the Diocesan Educational Council. This Council should have a permanent staff of experts in various fields—Administration, Teaching of Catechetics and moral instruction, guidance and counselling, and be capable of providing supervisory and consultative advice to diocesan Councils and individual institutions. This N.C.C.E. should be in close touch with the Central and State Ministries of Education.

Long Range

The influence of Christians on the entire educational system in India will depend primarily on the quality and calibre of the Heads, Administrators, teachers and research workers they can mobilise, train and use to optimum effect at strategic points of this system.

The quality of our personnel will depend on four factors:

- (i) Attracting the right type of young men or women to work in the field of education and imbuing them with a sense of mission, dedication and service. This will need a well-planned, concerted and continual effort on the part of school and diocesan authorities to discover and foster vocations to this profession with the same zeal with which they attempt to discover and nurse vocations to the religious life, realising that the educator comes only after the priest in importance and nobility of vocation.
- (ii) Retaining able and talented laymen and women in education by attractive salary scales, fringe benefits, good conditions of service, adequate opportunities for professional advancement. All posts in Catholic educational institutions must be thrown open to lay teachers and religious on the basis of merit and experience.
- (iii) Providing really first rate training institutions for training teachers, administrators and research workers.
- (iv) Providing a continuous, effective, action-based programme of in-service training for teachers, Heads and research workers to keep them up to date with the latest developments so that they can be real torch-bearers and pioneers in their respective fields.

In-service programmes should include regular refresher courses, summer institutes etc. in India, and sending carefully selected religious and lay workers abroad on scholarships and exchange schemes with Catholic institutions in the UK., U.S.A. and Europe for advanced work.

APPENDIX A

CATHOLIC EDUCATION COUNCIL

1. Constitution (Diocesan level)

This Council should be the representative of all Teaching Orders, Organisations, Parish Priests, Teachers' Associations, parents, professional educationists etc. The Council should meet once a quarter to discuss general problems, but will do its main work through small expert sub-committees set up to examine major problems in depth and suggest suitable remedies for them for the consideration of the Council. It should have deliberative and consultative status. All decisions to be ratified by and subject to the approval of the local Ordinary.

The Chairman of the Educational Council should be the Bishop in order that its deliberations and recommendations may be given due weight. The Council should have a full-time Secretary and Inspector who will be responsible for supervising the teaching of Christian doctrine and moral instruction in the schools, advising school authorities on professional matters, and following the recommendations of the Council. Without a full-time Secretary the Council is likely to degenerate into a mere talk-shop, and pass only pious resolutions which nobody will feel obliged to implement.

Functions of the Council

(i) To consider educational strategy for the region or diocese. Efficiency and productivity are the two cardinal points in educational strategy.

(ii) To co-ordinate, improve and develop existing educational facilities of all kinds in the diocese.

(iii) To undertake studies to locate deficiencies and lacunae in the existing educational structure with a view to remedying the former and filling the latter.

(iv) To undertake a survey of existing material and human resources in the field of education with a view to making the maximum possible use of them.

(v) To promote greater co-operation between schools and other educational institutions run by different Congregations, and to encourage them to undertake joint projects if and where the occasion demands.

(vi) To plan the future development of Catholic educational institutions so that some parts of the diocese and some areas in education having been successfully looked after, other areas may not be totally neglected.

(vii) To prevent haphazard growth of institutions and unnecessary duplication.

(viii) To organise seminars, refresher courses and other programmes such as the writing and production of good text-books in certain fields that will improve the efficiency of teachers and schools and help to introduce the latest ideas into the schools. A course for clergy and laity in Educational Administration should also be planned and carried out.

(ix) To plan with national objectives in view and to evaluate effort in the light of these.

(x) To orient new schemes to productivity and ensure employment for the personnel it turns out.

Liaison with other bodies working in this field

The Catholic Educational Council should work in very close co-operation with the Anglican Diocesan Board of Education and similar Christian organisations as some educational problems can be solved by Christians as a body. It should also be in touch with the State Directorate and Department, State Heads and Teachers' Associations. This will prevent it from functioning in a vacuum or neglecting the over-riding needs of the State or remaining in isolation from individuals and groups engaged in promoting similar objectives.

It should enlist the support of Industry and international educational organisations like the UNESCO.

Some Tasks for C.E. Councils

1. To set up a Christian Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance and Counselling.

2. To set up a Diocesan Fund for the education of poor Catholic children—in school and post-school training.

3. To explore the possibility of setting up a Diocesan Educational Service and Training Course for Administrative Heads and their administrative personnel.

4. To build up a good Science Research laboratory and train the personnel for it.

5. To set up evaluation machinery and procedure to evaluate innovations and the educational strategy used.

National Catholic/Christian Education Council

This would be the apex of the structure and should co-ordinate the work of the Diocesan Councils of Education, build and operate a central front, disseminate information on all-India Catholic/Christian activities and basic directives on suggestions to ensure harmonious development in the right direction. This Central Council would be responsible for working out the phases of development for the country. A five or ten year plan might be considered. The control would be with the C.B.C.I. but the personnel should be representative of all levels in the educational field.

The expenditure to maintain the Centre would be borne by the confederating dioceses. The autonomy of the diocese should be guaranteed and protected.

APPENDIX B

A NOTE ON THE NEED FOR ACTIVE DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION BETWEEN CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND THOSE CONDUCTED BY OTHER CHRISTIAN AND NON-CHRISTIAN BODIES.

Until recently Catholic educational institutions tended to function in relative isolation not only from non-Christian institutions but even from other Christian institutions, and so did their professional organisations at the level of Management and of teachers. During the past few years some contact has been made with other institutions and professional bodies such as the A.I.F.E.A., and recently Christian professional organisations at the college and school level have merged to form a united front. But real contact and co-operation between the small minorities of Catholic and Christian educators and the vast majority of non-Christian educators and between their respective professional associations at the State and National levels, remains to be established. Christian Management Heads and teachers exert little or no influence on policy-making at the Governmental level, and on

professional bodies at the State and National level, and seldom make common cause with the latter especially in pressing for long over-due reforms and better service conditions for teachers etc. Steps should be taken for a real dialogue with all co-workers in the educational field, Christians and non-Christians, and to work out long-term and short-term plans for active co-operation and joint action.

Christian educators should form a 'creative minority' to influence Government policy-making at the Government level and in professional organisations at State and National levels.

Much closer and more continuous contact with other Christian educators should be established to work out a common policy and joint programmes to prevent overlapping, duplication, diffusion and wasteful competition at the State and National level.

Christian educators should seriously and objectively discuss problems of curriculum, methods of teaching and evaluation, the tone and ethos of Christian institutions, and in what respect, if any, these should differ in a Christian educational institution from those of a non-Christian institution. Deficiencies in Christian institutions should be critically analysed, and constructive remedies worked out.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

TOPIC I :THE PURPOSE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- A. What a Christian educational institution is NOT.
- B. What a Christian educational institution IS.
- C. Some practical points:
 - admissions.....Christians
 - on academic merit only ?
 - ensure that the poor student is not debarred.
 - recruitment of staff.....Christians & non-Christians
 - remuneration
- D. The role of the layman in the administration of the Christian educational institution.

TOPIC II: THE SOCIAL MISSION OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL/COLLEGE

- A. Proper planning for further development
 - expanding existing institutions
 - the type of education required in the area of a new venture.
 - co-operation between religious congregations and dioceses
 - influence in shaping the educational policy of government.
- B. The type of education we impart
 - a social consciousness among students.....social service,.... work experience.
 - an Indian cultural atmosphere in our institutions.
 - towards the socio-economic uplift of the people.
 - a healthy trend of patriotism.
 - media of instruction and language teaching.
 - provision of the education of the physically/mentally handicapped.

C. Co-operation:

- with educational bodies at all levels, in all areas.
- working towards the neighbourhood school.
- in educational institutions other than our own.
- towards national & emotional integration.
- with parents and non-educational bodies/institutions

**TOPIC III: DEVELOPMENT.....PLANNING.....MODERN-
ISATION.....RESEARCH**

A. Should we work towards an All-India Christian Council of Education ? If so give suggestions for

- the location of such an institute
- staffing it
- procuring the capital and maintenance that would be necessary
- the functions of such an institute

B. Should we have Regional Comprehensive Training Colleges for the training of primary and secondary teachers ? Give suggestions for:

- staffing such a college
- recruiting suitable student-teachers
- for raising the finance such an undertaking would involve

What would be the medium of instruction ?

Would the college be able to offer some in-service training courses ?

C. Consider Diocesan Education Commissions under the following headings:—

- membership
- functions
 - planning
 - evaluation
 - research
 - co-ordinating

D. Should we establish a National Catholic Education Council ?

- How should it be organised ?
- From whence the personnel to maintain it ?
- where would it be located ?
- from where the finance ?
- what could be its functions.....its departments ?

WORKSHOP-VII

Socio-Economic Activities

ISSUES CONCERNING THE CHURCH'S TEACHING

STRENGTH AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CHURCH'S ACTIVITY

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION IN THE FIELD OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

ORGANIZATIONS AND STRUCTURE FOR DEVELOPMENT WORK
FORMATION, MOTIVATION AND TRAINING

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION, FEBRUARY
14-16, 1969.

SECTION I

ISSUES CONCERNING THE CHURCH'S TEACHING IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ITS APPLICABILITY TO INDIA

1. Reasons for the choice of the topic

India today : India today presents a very mixed picture of hope and anguish; of remarkable advances and at the same time of inertia, of a new spirit and also the dead hand of the past and of privilege, of an overall and growing unity, and many disruptive tendencies. We have been going up the ladder of development with strain and difficulty; but achieving our goal of self-sufficiency depends on our self-sacrifice, self-help, self-reliance and self-endeavour. Faith and courage are needed to reach a new land-mark in our march for socio-economic development. Progress does not come in bursts: it is a slow and gradual process. We are only at the beginning; we have to march fast. However, with encouragement and hope we can look forward towards the future. The journey towards progress and prosperity includes in its strides all the inherent contradictions of a

society in transition. Diverse faiths, diverse political aspirations, diverse ethnological, cultural and social moorings—all find themselves huddled into one and placed in the furnace of time; to melt, to coalesce and to change into a new developed Indian State.

India tomorrow : Admittedly our achievements so far are not adequate to satisfy the revolution of expectation generated by freedom. More effective implementation of development programmes is called for. Tomorrow's India is going to be what we make it by today's labour. The country is passing through an exciting phase. It behoves us all to play our part worthily to build up the dynamic India of tomorrow.

Role of the Church: Thus the Church in India today has to play a high potential role in the socio-economic development of the country. The great scandal of the 19th century as Pius XI puts it was that the Church lost the working class. It did not strive to save them or protect them by laws against evasions and defiant violations constantly practised by big business. Concern of the Church in the socio-economic development, as it seems from history, was evidenced from the middle of the 19th century as social problems broke out consequent upon the social changes of the time, beginning with unemployment and miserable living conditions of the poor and working class.

The concern of the Church: It is true that the Church is not commissioned to give to the world a social system as such and bring earthly happiness. Her primary mission is to give Christ and his message of salvation to the world. But if the social conditions prevailing in the world are intimately connected with the spiritual message of Christ, the second cannot be realized without the first. Pope John of immortal memory at the very beginning of his "Mater et Magistra" clearly testifies to this. "Though the Church's first care must be for souls, how she can sanctify them and share in the gifts of heaven, if she does not concern herself too, with the exigencies of man's daily life, with his livelihood and education, and his general and temporal welfare and prosperity?"

Relation of celestial and terrestrial life: Celestial and terrestrial lives are so interrelated that one cannot totally separate one from the other or look to one without the other or vice versa. Man is composed of soul and body and they are so intimately

connected that one does not exist without the other. Thus the Church when she has the great concern as Mother over the soul of her children and their salvation is bound 'ipso facto' to be concerned with the exigencies of man's daily life, his family, domestic affairs, human society, development of his person in all aspects of life both spiritual and temporal, with his livelihood, various conditions of life, education, economic development, with his general welfare and prosperity.

Guidance of the Church: The Church is entrusted with the task of forming the conscience of men and public opinion in order to guide them in all subjects in so far as they have a moral aspect. Now, most of the actions of social life especially in the socio-economic field, besides the technical aspects, have some relationship with moral and religious life. Without the guidance of the Church, regarding social doctrine, men will not be able to live up to the principles of morality and the tenets of religion.

Claim of the Church: In these matters of a directly religious nature, the Church claims an authentic divine mission; she must study the temporal affairs of men, the possibilities and means of their socio-economic development and growth, provide ways and means and lay down rules as to how Christian faith and morality should be applied there. Her purpose in doing this is to assist those people whose right and duty it is to seek solutions for practical problems in conformity with the teachings of Christ.

Not exclusive : However she does not claim the sole right to direct men with any particular lawful solution from among several that may be available. Nor does she claim that she herself, alone, is able to tell men with certainty whether or not any given practical proposal will actually produce the political, social or economic effect hoped for.

As Leo XIII states "No practical solution of this question will ever be found without the assistance of religion and the Church." Pope John, understanding well the meaning of this forceful declaration and recommending warmly the teachings and directives of "Rerum Novarum" for a safe guidance of the world, writes : "Seldom have the words of a pontiff met with such universal acclaim. In the weight and scope of his arguments, and in the forcefulness of their expression, Pope Leo XIII can have but few rivals. Beyond any shadow of doubt, his directives and appeals have established for themselves a po-

sition of such high importance that they will never, surely, sink into oblivion." They opened up new horizons for the activity of the universal Church, and the Supreme Shepherd, by giving expression to the hardships and sufferings and aspirations of the lowly and oppressed, made himself the champion and restorer of their rights. The impact of this remarkable Encyclical is still felt today, so many years after it was written. It was discernible in the writings of the Popes who succeeded Pope Leo. In their social and economic teachings they have frequent recourse to the Leonine Encyclical, either to draw inspiration from it and clarify its application or to find in it a stimulus to Catholic Action.

It is discernible too, in the subsequent legislation of a number of States. What further proof need we of the permanent validity of the solidly grounded principles, practical directives and fatherly appeals contained in this masterly encyclical? It even suggests new and vital criteria by which men can judge the magnitude of the social question as it presents itself today and decide on the course of action they must take. We think that in India not only the State but all the individuals and institutions are in duty bound to co-operate in their own way in the task of raising the standard of the 510 million inhabitants. "Although the Holy Church has the special task of sanctifying souls . . . she is also solicitous for the exigencies of the daily life of men, not merely those concerning the nourishment of the body and the material conditions of life, but also those that concern prosperity and culture in all its many aspects and stages." This is why special emphasis is laid by the Hierarchy of India in the C.B.C.I. Reports on the social apostolate of the priest and of the laity, because of the peculiar conditions prevailing in India.

Motherly care : In the course of the last 100 years the Church has watched the development of social thinking, largely due to the continuous application of theological science by socially minded priests and laymen to the social problems resulting from the industrial revolution. As circumstances demanded, the continuous motherly care of the Church for her children unfolded more and more the true dimensions and implications of the social question and pointed out the required remedies.

The Popes in modern times from the pontificate of Gregory XVI, 1831-46, have made use of encyclical letters to impart the official doctrine of the Church to the faithful. Thus we have doctrines from Popes on different subjects such as

Human Freedom, Modernism, Communism, Family, etc. . . . Regarding social problems too, the Church has given in different times social directives through social Encyclicals: *Rerum Novarum* by Leo XIII in 1891, *Quadragesimo Anno* by Pius XI in 1931, *Mater et Magistra* by John XXIII in 1961. *Populorum Progressio* by Paul VI in 1967.

In fact if we make an analysis of the social encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*, we find that they deal with different fundamental principles of the social doctrine such as the rights of human person, the right of property, family, state, common good, authority. But these principles are laid down as the basis for the solution of the main or crucial problems of the social encyclicals namely the relations between capital and labour. That is to say of the rights of the workers or labourers and of the just remuneration of the workers against the exploitation of the capitalists. .

Had the rights and remuneration of the workers been properly enunciated when the industrial revolution started, capitalism, socialism and communism would never have been the nightmare they are. If the rights of the labourers and capital had been properly discussed and tackled in those days, very likely there would have been no chance for Marx to publish the Communist Manifesto in 1848, nor would there have been need of publishing the encyclical '*Rerum Novarum*' in 1891. But as things stand even now the problem of the relations between labour and capital is still the core of the social question.

Human approach: The encyclical '*Mater et Magistra*' can scarcely be said : to be strictly speaking a social encyclical in the same way as '*Rerum Novarum*' and *Quadragesimo Anno*', because the outstanding feature of '*Mater et Magistra*' is not the question of social justice in the relations of the workers and capital, but it is a human approach to the *socio-economic problems of the world* on the basis of national and international social justice. Whereas in '*Rerum Novarum*' the workers' problems predominated, '*Mater et Magistra*' touches on almost every social problem that faces the world. Only look at a few main headings, such as 'Agriculture, a depressed sector', 'Underdeveloped countries', 'the population problem,' and we will be convinced that '*Mater et Magistra*' is not merely a social encyclical,

but is the Charter of Mankind rather than a Charter of any single group.

'Populorum Progressio' is still another encyclical that gives us guidelines for economic development activities. The Church in India really needs clear guide-lines as to what kinds of activity are proper for it to take up, what should be left out for other agencies to perform, when to be content with exhorting, when it should resort to action, how such actions could be organised and coordinated to save it from the wastage of scattered efforts etc.

The Church in India today shall have a subsidiary role; She can cooperate with the major and minor projects of the state for the common good and benefit of the public and subsidise private enterprises of communities, groups and even individuals in a scientific and systematic manner. There lies success and development.

2. Background : The Church in the Modern World

One of the most significant and penetrating documents to emerge from Vatican Council II is undoubtedly the "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World." It is made up of two parts. In the first part, the Church develops her teaching on man, on the world which is the enveloping context of man's existence, and on man's relations with his fellow men. In the second part, the Church is more concerned with various aspects of modern life and human society. Specific consideration is given to those questions and problems that seem to have a greater urgency in our day. In many ways, this document summarises most of the teaching of the Church on the social question ever since *Rerum Novarum* and brings it all up to date.

The preface to the Pastoral Constitution is one of the most moving passages formulated by the Council. "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor, or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the followers of Christ." Indeed nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community composed of men. United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit on their journey to the Kingdom of their Father, and they have welcomed

the news of salvation which is meant for every man. This is why this community realizes that it is truly linked with mankind and its history by the deepest bonds.”

The Council then goes on to explain how it conceives of the presence and activity of the Church in the world of today. It finds mankind stricken with wonder at its own discoveries and powers and yet anxious about its place and role in the universe. The modern world is marked by the most disparate and contrary characteristics, great advance in science and technology and yet vast masses of ignorant and backward people, living in primitive conditions, great affluence and frightful destitution, great appreciation of freedom and yet so much psychological slavery, such mastery of nature and yet profound subjection to passion and a host of other vices.

Despite these great contradictions, the Council finds God’s presence and purpose in the happenings, needs and desires which the People of God share with the rest of mankind. Many of the values that are so highly prized by mankind today are exceedingly good and need to be related to their divine source. If wrenched from their rightful function, they taint man’s heart and stand in need of purification. But what must the Church think of man? How must contemporary society be built up on more solid foundations?

Human dignity

With almost all believers and non-believers, the Church stands for the dignity of man. All things on earth should be related to man as their centre and crown. Unfortunately, man is split within himself, and as a result all human life shows itself to be a dramatic struggle between good and evil, between light and darkness. Yet man is called to grandeur from the depths of his misery. Man is endowed with intellect and will and made in the image of God. In the face of existential challenges like pain and death, sorrow and disappointment, and failure to live up to his high calling, man learns to appreciate the need of the teaching of the Church with regard to the life, suffering and death of Christ, through which life receives its ultimate meaning and becomes tolerable. Man therefore needs God, and the recognition of God is in no way hostile to man’s dignity, since this dignity is rooted and perfected in God. Therefore all men,

believers and non-believers alike, must work for the rightful betterment of this world.

Of course, the complete answer to the meaning of existence can only be found in the incarnation of Christ and his redemption of mankind. Creation that has strayed away from God must be turned back to him, purified and oriented towards him. All things will thus proceed from the Creator and ultimately go back to him. This is God's plan for the world redeemed from sin. And the Church has a role to play within this scheme.

Now, one of the salient features in the modern world is the growing inter-dependence of men, one upon the other. This has been made possible and developed by modern technical advances, especially communications media and the mobility of men from one geographical area to another. Both *Mater et Magistra* and *Pacem in Terris* have been concerned with the proper ordering of this society in accordance with Christian principles. The Church holds that the purpose of all social institutions is and must be the human person, and its complete development. There is a growing awareness of the exalted dignity of the human person since he stands above all things, and his rights and duties are universal and inviolable. Therefore there must be made available to all men everything necessary for leading a life truly human, viz. food, clothing, shelter, the right to choose a state of life freely and to found a family, the right to education, employment, reputation, respect, appropriate information, activity in accord with an upright conscience, protection of privacy and rightful freedom even in matters of religion.

In its turn, the social order needs constant improvement. It must be founded on truth, built on justice, and animated by love; in freedom it should grow every day towards a more humane balance. God's spirit is not absent from this development. Much of this improvement and desire for a more humane existence is really due to the ferment of the Gospel.

The Council strongly insists on reverence for man. Everyone must consider his neighbour as another self. Furthermore, whatever is opposed to life itself such as murder, abortion, euthanasia or self-destruction must be condemned. Similarly, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torture, subhuman living conditions, deportation,

slavery, etc., should be banished from human society. In the same way, all kinds of discrimination based on sex, colour, race, social conditions, language or religion can have no meaning in this new concept of society.

The Council then goes on to discuss man's ceaseless activity to better his life, and attempts to provide an answer to man's query as to what is the meaning and value of such feverish activity. The Christian should regard these triumphs of the human race as a sign of God's grace and the flowering of his mysterious design. By this work, man not only alters things and society, but also develops himself. Thus all human activity must harmonise with the genuine good of the human race, and make it possible for men both as individuals and as members of society to pursue their total vocation and fulfil it. Religion is no barrier to human activity. On the contrary the Church recognizes the autonomy of earthly affairs and of the sciences within their own spheres.

All the same, the Council warns us that with the advance of human progress great temptations await man. For when the order of values gets jumbled, and the bad is mixed with the good, individuals and groups are tempted to pay heed solely to their own interests and forget the interests of others. The history of mankind is marked by this monumental struggle against the powers of darkness. The only way to overcome this unhappy situation is through the cross and resurrection of Christ.

Role of Church

What is the role of the Church in this developing world? The Church is at once a 'visible' association and a spiritual community' that goes forward with humanity and experiences the same earthly lot which the world does. She serves as a leaven and a kind of soul for human society. The Church believes that she can contribute greatly toward making the family of man and its history more human.

The Church has always stood up for the dignity of man and his rights. The modern movements by which these rights are everywhere fostered are appreciated by the Church. Yet these movements must be penetrated by the spirit of the Gospel, and protected against any kind of false autonomy, because in the final analysis these rights are not exempt from divine law. Fur-

ther the union of the entire human family is greatly strengthened by the spiritual unity induced by grace, and the fact of all of us being God's children. Christ did not give his Church a political or economic or social mission as such. The Church has a religious mission. But out of this religious mission flows a function, a light and an energy which serves to structure and consolidate the human community according to the divine law.

Nor is the Church tied to any culture. But by her universality she can be a very close bond between diverse human communities, nations and races. All Christians, as citizens of two cities, are exhorted by the Council to discharge their earthly duties conscientiously, and not shirk their earthly responsibilities. There should be no false opposition between professional and social activities and religious life. The split between the faith which many profess and their daily lives deserves to be counted as one of the most serious errors of our times. But on the other hand, the Christian who neglects his temporal duties and his duties towards his neighbour jeopardizes his eternal salvation.

Secular duties belong properly, *though not exclusively*, to laymen. Therefore they should become competent in their professional fields and work with men seeking the same goals. They must endeavour to inscribe the divine law into the life of the earthly city. They may have to find their own solutions to earthly problems in the light of the gospel. They must be witnesses to Christ in all things in the midst of human society.

Similarly, bishops and priests must so preach the news of the gospel that all the earthly activities of the faithful may be bathed in the light of the gospel. They must bear daily witness to the faith they profess. They must be able to dialogue with the world and with men of all shades of opinion, and try to erase every cause of division.

The Church must also humbly realise the yawning gap between the message she offers and the failings of those to whom it is entrusted. She must also realise that she has *profited* by the history and development of humanity. Every discovery of new truth benefits the Church.

Finally, since the Church has a visible and social structure as a sign of her unity in Christ, she can and ought to be enriched by the development of human social life, so that she can understand herself more penetratingly and express her message more

successfully in our times. She receives help from men of every rank and condition, for it is God's plan that everyone who works for a better world helps the Church itself.

Economic and Social

One of the important fields of social life in the modern world that the Church considers to be in need of urgent attention is that of economic and social life. Once again, it is noticed that the economy of today is marked by man's growing domination over nature, that relationships between citizens, groups and countries are increasing and their mutual dependence becoming more obvious, and finally that the state tends to intervene more and more in the life of the community. At the same time, methods of production have greatly improved and there is every hope of raising the world's standards of living rapidly. On the other hand, inequalities between nations are widening and while a minority, chiefly belonging to the West, lives in affluence, vast numbers in the developing countries are condemned to a life of acute poverty and destitution. Such inequality can at any time be a real threat to peace, because so many feel it to be basically a very unjust system. The Church can play a prominent part in bringing to men's minds the need and possibility of establishing a world economic system in which a fairer distribution of the wealth of the world could be made possible.

The Council was well aware of the urge and desire for development that was gripping the minds of men all over the world. It emphasised that the fundamental finality of increased production is not merely profit or productivity, but the service of man to satisfy all his needs and the demands of his intellectual, moral, spiritual and religious life.

Economic development must remain under man's determination and not be left to the judgement of a few men or groups possessing economic power, or the political community alone or certain powerful nations. Nor should growth be considered a mechanical process. The great economic inequalities of income must be removed both within and without every country. The same should be said for social discrimination. Farmers in particular need help both to increase their produce and sell it at a good price.

Some of the other more important fundamental principles laid down in the document are the following :

Human labour is superior to other elements of economic life. It has the stamp of human dignity. Through his work, a man supports his family, serves his fellowmen, brings the divine creation to perfection, and associates his labour with the redemptive work of Christ. Every man has the right to work and society must provide sufficient employment. The remuneration for work should ensure a sufficiency for the worker and his family, his productiveness and the common good.

Workers should not become the slaves of their work. They should be able to unfold their personalities and abilities through their work. The worker must also be provided with sufficient leisure outside his work for his own developmental activities.

Within the enterprise, the partnership of management and labour must be promoted and a fairer sharing of the fruits of the common endeavour. Workers have the right to form trade unions to look after their interests. They should not be victimized for participating in union activity. Socio-economic disputes should be settled peacefully. But a strike is justifiable as a last resort.

The social aspects of property need to be emphasised. The world belongs to all men and all should be given a share in its riches. What is strongly condemned is absentee landlordism on vast estates, which are tilled by poor peasants and the riches of which go into the pockets of the owner of the land.

Finally Christians who take a part in socio-economic development must realise that they are making a great contribution to the prosperity of mankind and to the peace of the world. In doing such work, let them give a shining example of their zeal for the establishment of God's kingdom and build up a more humane world.

The Development of Peoples

Since this encyclical appeared after the Vatican Council II, a brief summary of the issues raised by this document is appended here.

Pope Paul emphasizes the teaching of Vatican Council II regarding the need for the urgent relief of hunger, poverty and illiteracy that still haunt the lives of a major portion of mankind

living in the developing countries. For this purpose, he suggests a war against hunger, and wishes that part of the cost on armaments should be devoted to the relief of hunger. During the Eucharistic Congress at Bombay, he made a special appeal for the establishment of a world fund to relieve the most destitute of this world. He would also like to have a dialogue between the affluent and the poor countries, so that the rich nations could effectively help the poor. He makes some very practical suggestions regarding the manner in which aid should be given and how the poor countries should be helped. He prefers multi-lateral agreements to bi-lateral ones. He asks for a lowering of the rates of interest and a longer time for the repayment of the loan. He wants an improvement in the trade relations existing between rich and poor countries. He finds that the role of free trade taken by itself is no longer able to govern international relations. He also desires a considerable lowering of tariff barriers so that the poor nations who are producers of raw materials may be able to export them to the affluent countries and thus support themselves out of their own earnings.

Finally, the Pope is very anxious for the setting up of international organisations through whose instrumentality an order of justice, which is universally recognised, may be set up. It is obvious that Catholicism, which is a universal religion, can play a very significant role in bringing the national communities together into a world community.

As has been said above, no reference in this brief essay is made directly to previous encyclicals, like *Mater et Magistra* and *Pacem in Terris*, the main recommendations of which have been included in the document on the Church in the Modern World.

We may close this section with a few concluding remarks. In the first place, it is obvious that the Church now adopts a new attitude to the world. It does not keep itself away or apart from worldly concerns, but acknowledges that it owes much to the growth of culture and the advancement of science in understanding its own relevance. The Church realises that in its own doctrine of creation, incarnation, redemption and grace, it has an answer to the search of modern man for a more humane society and the existential challenges of scientific development, violence, revolution, pain and death.

One could possibly make a distinction between concern for development and involvement in the development process. Possibly, while it may be said that the whole Church is concerned with development, actual involvement in the development process is a special function of the laity. It should not be forgotten, however, that development is a multi-dimensional concept. On the other hand development even as an earthly reality is sacred and should be said to have a sacramental meaning in so far as the movement that takes place within it is, in reality, Christocentric, or directed towards Christ himself. The role of the Church in development is not merely one of witnessing to the Gospel but essentially one of service to mankind, in imitation of its Master, Christ, who came "not to be served but to serve."

It may be questioned whether the people of God are competent to meet the demands of development. It almost appears that in certain countries, the Church in its desire to ally itself with the legitimate government may have helped the rich to become richer, and forgotten its obligations to the poorer sections of the community. While the Council has not laid down specific guidelines for the great task of educating modern Catholics to fulfil their role in the modern world, it is obvious that this responsibility devolves on Catholic educational institutions. Further the Church must move to create public opinion and to establish new structures in accordance with the divine pattern. Obviously, the Church cannot give detailed prescriptions for every situation as it arises. Only certain fundamental principles can be laid down. But it is the work of individuals and groups of Christians 'to inscribe the divine light into the life of the earthly city.'

3. Problems

General Aspect : India is a vast country with numerous problems. Many of the problems we face are not peculiar to us but are being faced in every part of the world. The world-wide unrest among the youth has spread to the Indian universities and educational institutions also. As our President has pointed out it is due to frustrations caused by the failure in examinations and inability to secure employment. Hitherto, a special pride of India was the unity that held together her diverse classes of people. That unity helped her to face foreign aggression once. Today that unity is being seriously threatened. Waste of labour

and resources, inefficiency and corruption are obstacles in the way of economic progress. Scarcity of food materials, uneven distribution of income and undue concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, regional disparities in income levels, periodical droughts and floods are other major problems facing us. Above all these, some experts raise the problem of overpopulation.

Particular difficulties: The organizational set up of the people of India is also a problem to be tackled in developmental programmes. The people in rural areas live in small settlements, hamlets, villages and in some cases, towns. The people living in these settlements are seldom a homogeneous mass; they are in fact divided into several socio-economic groups on the basis of kinship, religion, caste, sex, profession, neighbourhood affinities, etc. The primary unit of these groups is the family. When there is change of membership from one group to another it is generally the whole family and seldom the individual, which shifts its allegiance. Making changes in the socio-economic disposition of the group is generally not a matter for individuals to decide but for the group as a whole, even though particular individuals may desire change.

Besides the socio-economic groups there are also power and prestige groups formed just for trial of strength and vindication of prestige. These groups also play a very important part in the life of the whole community. Such socio-economic and power groups in villages complicate matters and affect to a great extent the attitude of the people towards the adoption of development programmes. The inherent characteristics of castes, traditions, customs, beliefs, and outlooks also determine their attitude towards the sponsored programmes. The study of these factors in regard to their effect upon programmes is very necessary before making any beginning with the community. Utter ignorance or even lack of understanding may cause the group to reject an idea out-right although it may be technically, and also otherwise, sound and feasible.

4. Possible lines of solution

It is indeed a stupendous and urgent need to raise the standard of living of the millions of Indians who are in want and without security. It will not suffice merely to repeat the principles of the encyclicals concerning the dignity of the human person and the

exigencies of social justice and Christian charity. Christians should make it their duty to work out these principles into concrete programmes of social reconstruction adapted to the real pressing situations and crying needs of India.

When facing the social problems of India we must be aware that there are principles of Christian social order which are based on the eternal ethical values which are authoritatively expressed in the papal social encyclicals relating to the rights and duties of individuals, family, society, international relation and morality. These general principles of Christian social order are immutable. They are the same today as they were at any time in the past. But social problems change with the times. Besides, problems have to be solved by adapting ways and means not repugnant to Christian principles.

Solution of population problem: Let us, for instance, take the population problem which is considered the most serious one confronting the economic development of India. The theory put forward by experts is that while the supply of food increases arithmetically the population is increasing geometrically so that man may become a real concern on the face of the earth within the foreseeable future and that a policy of birth control is necessary "whether it is possible or not, whether it is normal or not". The policies of Japan and India aim at a drastic reduction of population—only too successfully in Japan, largely as a result of the high annual number of abortions. Although there is much really justifiable concern in the matter, the spearhead of the movement has often been the family planner. Some of the writings have given an anti-life bias to the campaign, as if children were a menace to a good family life and a liability to be avoided as much as possible. The Governments are advocating all kinds of unnatural and illegal methods for preventing births to the extent of legalising abortion which is really murder in cold blood. The Church cannot subscribe to such methods even if the fears expressed by the experts are real. Catholics also stand the danger of being branded reactionaries, incapable of absorbing progressive ideas, and obstacles to the progress of the nation. As the Holy Father has pointed out, the resources which God in His goodness and wisdom has implanted in Nature are well nigh inexhaustible and He has, at the same time, given men the intelligence to discover ways and means of exploiting these resources for his own advantage and his own livelihood. Hence

the real solution of the problem is to be found not in immoral birth control programmes but in renewed scientific and technical efforts to deepen and extend man's dominion over nature. The achievements already made in science and technology by the inventions of more and more effective agricultural implements, high yielding seeds, chemical manures and insecticides prove that food supplies can be geometrically increased as against the pessimistic views of some experts.

Agricultural and industrial development : What does a large country— populous, fertile and rich in mineral wealth— need for attaining prosperity? “Water and power”. Water enables the fertile land to provide food for the people and raw materials for industry. Electric power provides the motor force for running the machines in industry. A country with great river systems should be able to use its water to irrigate agricultural lands and also produce power. You would naturally ask why our country is short of food, our people poor, in spite of the fact that we have vast areas of fertile land, numerous big rivers and huge man-power resources. Failure of crops due to lack of rains or devastating floods was a common occurrence before Independence. This was because there was little development of irrigation projects and no steps were taken to control the monsoon floods in rivers. The huge potential for production of electricity, by harnessing the great rivers, was also not utilized. Industry therefore had little chance of developing in the absence of cheap and adequate electric power.

Soon after attaining Independence we decided to utilize all these resources for the development of our country and for providing a better life for ourselves, through systematic development. Irrigation projects big, medium and small were introduced distributed all over the country, and economic prosperity has started glowing from these ventures, fully justifying the money and efforts expended on these projects.

Similarly great strides have been made in the production of electricity. By the end of the Fourth Five Year Plan it is expected that 10,000 villages will have receive electricity.

As regards the attitude of the Church to such major programmes it is sufficient that people are exhorted to cooperate wholeheartedly with the Government in the big undertakings i.e. at the “micro” level.

The "micro" level programmes in which the Church can actively take part, collaborating with the Government on one side and the people on the other side, are of subsidiary role, for example :

- (a) Minor lift irrigation projects providing sources of water by pumps, tanks, tube wells, and canals. Other agricultural development programmes such as supply of fertilizers, pesticides, improved implements
- (b) Systematic housing projects
- (c) Dairy farms and poultry projects
- (d) Cottage industries
- (e) Co-operative and marketing societies
- (f) Multipurpose societies
- (g) Individual entrepreneurs
- (h) Small savings schemes such as marriage fund, funeral fund, etc., at the parish level.

A. Financing

Donor Agencies in the country have a vital role to play by way of subsidiary function in solving the various problems of the country. Individual farmers, groups, organizations and even institutions who come forward with genuine tangible proposals for socio-economic development may be financed up to an appreciable extent, say 75%, by loans against mortgage of land and other immovable properties. Hypothecation of machinery as security may also be taken, if necessary. The loans may be made refundable over a period of, say, 5 years. The credit facilities of Banks, Agricultural and other Finance Corporations, Block subsidies of the Government, all such facilities should be made available to the ordinary village farmer by systematic action and approach to the Government and Blocks. Outright grants in socio-economic development activities may not have the desired effect; perhaps the result will be contrary, as it may cause a lazy set of people.

Once a project is submitted, scrutiny and evaluation of the same shall be made at the earliest and, if approved, necessary direction and subsidy shall be given under secure terms, without delay. The usual formalities and delay caused in the present normal course, change the situation and environments of the project and even the estimate by the time the project is approved.

Hence the sponsor will have to confront new problems. Anyhow final disposals shall be made at the earliest for practical purposes.

B. Lay apostolate in action

Perhaps the most crucial problem facing the Catholic Church all over the world is how to build up as soon as possible an enlightened Catholic laity prepared to do apostolic work. In mission lands like India, this problem is necessarily greater because the laity depends often on the initiative of the clergy. A strong lay Catholic movement, well equipped, spiritually and intellectually, deeply loyal to the Church, would be a blessing for the social establishment and development of the Church in India.

C. Lay apostolate stagnant

Practically all agree that in India the Lay Apostolate is not playing the vital role that it is meant to play in the Church. Not a few even venture to say that it is stagnant. There are of course some scattered activities carried out by lay apostolate organizations. But even these insist that much more can be done and that our laity are still far from realizing their responsibilities in development works in our fast developing country. The big number and potential of women should be made capital of in this line. Some feel that even those organizations or individuals who are active in the lay apostolate do not pay sufficient heed in this matter. Local and individual undertakings are no longer enough. The present situation of the world demands concrete action based on a clear vision of all economic, social, cultural, and spiritual aspects.

The majority think that our lay apostolate organizations can be more aptly classified as "pious associations" for the spiritual benefit of their individual members. Their view is limited to the spiritual aspect alone and they do not rise to the principles of the modern encyclicals and trends.

The reasons given for this state of affairs are many. We just enumerate a few :

1. The aims of the lay apostolate are not clearly defined.
2. The lay apostolate is not properly understood by the majority of Catholics.

3. Lack of awareness of responsibilities as People of God.
4. Too much domination by the priests in charge of the lay apostolate, preventing Christian maturity and producing a sort of apostolic "spoon-feeding" system.
5. Lack of competent priests to guide lay apostolate organizations in the line of development activities.
6. The Catholic community in India is living in a "ghetto".
7. The environment at home and at school does not give that wider sense of vision and that sense of commitment to one's baptismal promises needed in the Lay Apostolate.
8. Lack of adequate religious and spiritual formation at home, at school, and even in our lay apostolate organizations.
9. The principles enuntiated in the Encyclicals and other pronouncements of the Church have not engaged the serious attention of the lay person in the Church in India.
10. Little encouragement is given to the people in this line.

D. More co-ordination

Everyone feels that more co-ordination is an absolute necessity. Each organization is insular— works on its own and is engaged in its own programme. Thus major issues on the parish, diocesan, regional, national and international level are never tackled on a united front.

E. How it is to be achieved, or what to have instead

We enumerate the various ways suggested to achieve this centralization of, or co-ordination between, the various lay apostolate organizations:

1. Constitute diocesan bodies for each type of work to plan a programme co-ordinating the various organizations through an overall committee.
2. Have leaders at the centre who are men and women from the rank and file since they can best understand

and propose solutions for the problems they are themselves facing.

3. Leaders at the diocesan and regional levels should be full-timers and paid by the Bishop or Bishops; those at the national level should be paid by the C.B.C.I.
4. The Hierarchy should treat laymen as adults. Otherwise the lay leaders will be just figure-heads—they will lose the needed trust of the rank and file and the very idea will fail.
5. Prepare the way by holding seminars, summer schools and get-together meetings for leaders on the parish-diocesan-regional and national levels.
6. In every diocese a priest should be set aside *exclusively* to co-ordinate, without dominating, the various lay apostolate organizations and give them life. Such a priest should be specially trained for this work.

F. Political life

Various reports unanimously agree that the contribution made by our laity to the political life of the country is very poor and unsatisfactory in spite of the fact that opportunities are not lacking. It is true that the Catholic Union of India is doing its bit to safeguard the interests of the Christian community.

G. Social service programmes

Though many feel that our laymen are doing quite a lot in the line of social service, this work is dominated by the clergy and its programmes are not integrated with or even oriented towards the social service programmes of the Government. The reason may be that we have very few persons with dedication of life.

H. Youth

Perhaps never before were our young men and women beset with so many problems and allurements and yet it is felt that very little is being done to help them at this critical age. Most of our few Youth Clubs are just preventive measures. As yet we have nothing to compare with the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A.

It is suggested that our Youth Clubs should run regular training programmes for Social Action and discussions on topics of interest to young people.

Since many school-leavers are often without jobs for years, to the detriment of their moral and spiritual life, it is suggested that a central Employment Exchange with diocesan branches be set up.

We shall now conclude with the words of Pope Paul VI in his 'Populorum Progressio'. Programmes are necessary in order "to encourage, stimulate, co-ordinate, supplement and integrate the activity of individuals and of intermediary bodies. It pertains to the public authorities to choose, even to lay down the objectives to be pursued, the ends to be achieved, and the means for attaining these, and it is for them to stimulate all the forces engaged in this common activity. But let them take care to associate private initiative and intermediary bodies with this work. They will thus avoid the danger of complete collectivization or of arbitrary planning, which by denying liberty, would prevent the exercise of the fundamental rights of the human person."

SECTION II

STRENGTH AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CHURCH'S ACTIVITY IN THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC FIELD IN INDIA.

1. Introduction : Reasons for and scope of the topic

After a long and wide look at the Church in the developing areas of the world, Fr Houtart in a recent publication (*) does not hesitate to state that the most urgent task of the Church and the Catholic laymen is to join with all their forces in the search for a new economic and social order. In India today it cannot very well be otherwise when "the daily earning of half the population of the country is less than a rupee, and when there are over a hundred million people.....who cannot claim to have even 50 paise each for their daily needs." (**), and when earnest scholars see in the slow pattern of development a mounting cause of anxiety and a mounting need for urgency of action.

Never before have so many Papal encyclicals on the socio-economic tasks of Christians followed each other in such quick succession, and the range of the Church-initiatives, too, has widened considerably. Seeing all this one gets the refreshing impression that, after half a century of rather detached teaching on "social order" and of selling out concepts and values, now, out of the practical hints given by Pope Pius XII and the challenge of the last decennium particularly, a new awakening and practical concern has arisen regarding the Church's commitment in the field of organised development.

The field of "socio-economic activity" is admittedly so wide that it is at times difficult to define its frontiers. In the context of the present paper, however, its core can best be described as an 'area of co-operative aid and self-reliant effort aimed at

* F. Houtart : "The Church and the Latin American Revolution", 1965, p. 207

** C.T. Kurien ; "The Economic Challenge to-day", in "India To-day" p. 24.

realizing and ensuring a greater material prosperity, equitably shared by all, without disturbance of their cultural identity, and in keeping with an integrated human development'. We will refer therefore to those activities intended to satisfy the living needs and to realize the potentialities of new and increasing wealth, whether through the creation of new structures, the application of new productive techniques, the provision of protective services, or the elimination of blocking attitudes and vested interests. It is the sum total of our individual and collective efforts to participate in the "organised world-attack on poverty" (***) , and in the "social revolution" (Houtart) to provide satisfactory living standards for the submerged two thirds of mankind, as well as the continued search for the structures and conditions of a better "social order" wherein peace is the fruit of justice.

The presence of the Church in this field of "development" in its widest sense, can take on a variety of forms. Often, in the context of other topics as well, the seminar-terminology has aroused some initial apprehension if not confusion : would it not be better to speak of the action of "Christians" or of "Catholics" rather than of the "Church"— a term still too easily identified with the institutional, hierarchical initiative or with the collective, organised action of the Catholic community by itself and for itself? Yet, the more we descend to the field of temporal action, the more the individual, ecumenical or civic modes of involvement and service seem to increase in scope and effectiveness. It is clear that in our analysis all these ought to find a place, so long as they seem inspired and rooted in Catholic doctrine and are truly significant of the actual concern of the people of God as a whole for the well-being and peace of all. Both the W.C.C. and Vatican II have been plagued by this double meaning of the word "Church"—that of a group and of an institution— but, in fact, they are only two aspects of the same reality.

The scope of this section is to attempt an *evaluation* of the up-to-date achievements and degree of involvement of Catholics in India in the socio-economic field, in view of planning our future tasks. Planning, indeed, must begin from where we are,

** . cfr. The Conference on world cooperation for development (Beirut, 1968 ch II, 5. p. 23.)

and facts must feed our ideals. In this sense evaluation is in itself a necessary element of progress.

We do not intend to discuss here the validity of our ideals and of our presence in this field, nor of the planned national objectives and needs, but rather the actual performance and relevance, resources and results of our own participation in this common objective of national development. To do this well, we would indeed require two things, both of which we cannot claim: on the one hand, an all-round knowledge of what is going on and has been done by the Church in India in this field, and on the other hand, fixed criteria and a totally unbiased ability to discern within the diversity of action the central aspects of over-all weakness or strength.

Within the very small space offered, and faced with a very discouraging scarcity of up-to-date recorded information on nearly every aspect of action, and with a limited scope of enquiry and dialogue, this is well nigh impossible. One can only attempt, therefore, to present a study of trends rather than an analysis of statistical data; a study of emphasis and impressions rather than calculated percentages. As such our conclusions and reflexions will take the form of indicative questions rather than of decisive answers.

For that reason also we would prefer to present our observations in an existential manner (with light and shadow side by side and intermixed rather than presented separately, lest the black look too dark and the light too brilliant), and also in a dynamic context, wherein the roots of the present-day approaches and activities are not overlooked. Too often, indeed, this lack of historical perspective leads us to an unfair or unbalanced judgement.

Hence we have divided this section of the working paper into three main parts :

- the historical background to the socio-economic activities of the Church in India ;
- a tentative factual survey of socio-economic work currently done by the Church ;
- the formulation and application of some criteria of strength and weakness in this field.

Our conclusions and recommendations will be few : in the facts themselves lie the challenges and warnings, the vistas and the roads that might lead us to a more effective and intensive Church-participation in the "necessary utopia" of building a better world.

2. Historical Background to the Socio-Economic Activities of the Church

Living as we do in the midst of an age of rapid and intensive change and looking forward with anticipation to the ever-ascending peaks of the future, we are paradoxically forced to become increasingly aware of our mental and operational dependence on institutions, views and practices inherited from the past. The more radical, the more revolutionary the change we envisage, the more our success in carrying it through will depend on a proper evaluation of the source and setting of those forces which we want to direct and overcome. If this applies to evangelisation, education and spiritual renewal (where early acquired characteristics and convictions clearly tend to determine judgement and growth alike), it also applies to the field of material development. Our plans must take account of past trends, our failures have their roots, and our successes their history. The work of the Church in the temporal sphere is no exception to this law : hence this brief flashback to record the 'burden of the past.'

Link with evangelisation : A first observation which needs to be made is that the socio-economic work of the Church in India has been, almost from its earliest beginnings, and specially in the last century, linked with the work of evangelisation. In western countries much of the socio-economic initiatives of the Church in the last hundred years and more may have been *de facto* stimulated by the fear of social disorder and the danger of communist exploitation of poverty and distress. The motivation for social action in India seemed from the start to be more positive than defensive : apart from an occasional alarmist note in some of the CBCI reports on social action, the inspiration and social dynamism of the Church came predominantly from the desire to witness to the love of Christ and as a natural introduction and complement of the "good tidings". With the missionaries (who to a large extent represented the active

element of the Church for a long time), the love of souls went together with the love of men : the love of the abandoned out-caste and of the oppressed tribal led to their legal protection and to various means of cultural and economic uplift. The latter came as a sign of the Church's presence and a sign of the charity by which to recognise the validity of the Gospel : "the blind see, the deaf hear, and the poor receive the good news." More often than not village-schools preceded chapels, even to this day; so did dispensaries. This does not seem to have been true, however, at least not in the same extent, in the older established churches of S. India, in the railway-chaplaincies and cantonment-parishes, partly because of the medieval concept of limiting social action to relief, partly because people there lived sometimes in a more privileged colonial environment, and partly because the monastery-bred missionary considered his pastoral tasks sufficient.

That this is not only our own way of looking at it, is confirmed from a recent U.N. study on development-personnel : among the 360,000 various types of experts, active throughout the world in the field of development, pride of place is given to 100,000 estimated missionaries belonging to various congregational groups and churches.

Two somewhat presently less-desirable characteristics followed from this intimate historical connexion of social work with the evangelisational set-up :

—one, the near complete dependence of social work on the hierarchical initiative, approval and finances, and the predominantly clerical character and control of socio-economic work (parish-linked, convent-based), and

—two, the rather "protective" isolationism and privilegetreatment of our social services, aimed at warding off 'pernicious influences' of other religious or cultural groups. This gradually led to a pseudo-caste complex.

Community-colour: Another historical factor affecting our social work in India was its linkage to the Christian community. Living in a country where caste and family were the social horizon of all, and dealing with minorities in need of protection and recognition, social work among them clearly took on the colour

of the specific urban or rural communities among which the Church grew up. In the urban communities, where close grouping was easier, the stress fell on providing educational facilities of all grades, with cultural overtones adapted to the lower middle class. In the rural environment, where the individual families in scattered villages were the centre of attention, the stress fell on individualised rather than on institutionalised services, on agricultural and medical assistance rather than on education—for which the rural population initially felt little interest. Though in the present-day set-up we may notice a positive trend of socio-cultural compenetration in this respect, still the vestiges exist. As typical examples of this community-determined predominant character of social work, Mangalore, the urban type, and Ranchi, the rural type, could be mentioned. In the former, education of every type (even social !) seems to be very much still the all-in-all ; in the latter, even while the socio-economic environment changes substantially because of rapid industrialisation, rural services and institutions remain quasi-absolute priorities.

Western models : A third characteristic of our socio-economic activities, largely due also to the historical setting of its development rather than to Church-policy as such, is its dependence on western models. Whether in school discipline, uniform, or programme, in the medical or health approach, in our gardening or farming, the inclination to copy western patterns, and to found and find “a little Europe” or America, has been strong, even if not universal. This was to some extent clearly unavoidable, in so far as the missions played usually a complementary role in providing services which the then political or economic structure did not adequately supply. But even after Independence and the accompanying gradual Indianisation of Church-authority, the trend has been slow to change over to indigenous models. While the quantitative expansion is undeniable (spurred on by the unceasing demand—mainly from the more privileged or ascending social groups—for our “missionary brand” of institutions and services), yet the orientation and organisation and method have continued largely along traditional patterns. In a way this is not something to be specifically attributed to the Church in India: the same sluggishness of change occurred in Europe during the period of transition during the industrial revolution, and even to this day, when the

Church-structures and activities have not yet been fully adapted to the needs of an urbanising society.

Rise of funding agencies : Closely linked up with the above (and often the cause of it !) but with quite a different type of result, is another historical factor of more recent origin : namely the impact of the rising number of and growing resources from foreign funding and aid-agencies. Though the greater number of these funds (such as Misereor, Brot für die Welt, Oxfam, Entraide, Caritas, etc.) are destined for a specific type of social activities and not for missionary work as such, yet they were mostly approved through and entrusted to ecclesiastical agencies.

This led on the one hand, to an accelerated growth of a variety of socio-economic projects, but also often to the consolidation of ancient institutions which should have changed or even disappeared in keeping with the demands of a new society.

The effect has been that the Church as a whole is taking on a new image both to the faithful and the outsider. Superimposed on the traditional images of religiously earnest (though somewhat superior-minded), culturally progressive (though with a western slant), strongly institutionalised (and clergy-dominated), socially dedicated (though with an evangelising interest) community, there is now [gradually added the image of an active "voluntary agency" disposing of significant private resources (largely of foreign origin) for economical development, on a par with other, more secular, aid-societies.

New world-vision : Other, more contemporary forces have clearly also begun to influence the Church's mode of involvement in the socio-economic order. We could group them together (though they be of diverse origin— some "ecclesial", some secular) as the new world-vision and community-sense, derived from the awareness of common dangers and common opportunity. The smallest areas of conflict (Cuba, Israel, Vietnam, Berlin) cause ripples of fear of a worldwide conflict around the globe; the threat or report of famine anywhere, the "Asian" or Latin American "drama" of a too slow socio-economic take-off or a too rapid population-increase cause a spectre of "world famine (1975!)" to rise; the fantastic spread of information through nearly instant communications-media prepares the ground for the "revolution of rising expectations" even among the unskilled, untrained; side by side with all these is the new

reflection on the calling of the Church in the modern world, by theologians and social scientists as well as by the Christian community itself: the People of God are awakening to a more vivid and active concern for the well-being of all. "The age of nations is past, — the time has come, if we would survive— to build the earth". (Teilhard de Chardin)

Social pioneers : Across and above all these historical forces stands the often revolutionary impact on the Church's social commitment of some of its most charismatic social-minded personalities. The breakthrough of social change, as Max Weber puts it, is nearly always the initial result of such charismatic leadership but it turns only into an enduring stream when carried on the deeper currents of a prepared ideology or tradition, with the co-operation of a committed and loyal elite, and assisted by a capable team of "table-men." : they also fight, who only sit and write ! Should we not in this context, include particularly the impulse given by particular groups of people (the Church, too, has its "Punjabis" among its many adherents and congregations), by such teams as the Indian Social Institute, and, to be fair to all, by such pressure-bodies as the Commission on Social Action of the CBCI?

3. Factual Survey of Socio-Economic work by the Church in India today

The sources: However difficult and necessarily incomplete, it is essential above all to reason on facts, in an unweighted context. The sources for such a survey, as all are aware, are not only scanty but unequal in value and often out-of date. A brief reference-list of the major ones available is appended. The most notable one is the Christian Hospital Directory. When we shall have similar directories for our co-ops, development-projects, housing and employment services, evaluation will be a delight !

Meanwhile, one would like very much to advocate, with Cardinal Koenig, a greater "transparency" for the Church, i.e. a willingness and co-operative concern to give information about herself. The representatives of various New Delhi-centered Organizations were all very helpful.

Classification : Leaving aside the pastoral and socio-cultural activities (education, communications, art) of the Church, there remains a vast field of activities that could come under the

heading of socio-economic activities. We would like to group them here according to a goal-descriptive principle, i.e. according to the depth of performance along the development-scale itself. There are naturally other principles, too, work-descriptive or time-descriptive (short-term, long-term) or size-descriptive (micro—, macro—). But for our purpose the above suggested principle would seem the most appropriate.

Accordingly we will successively review the following types of socio-economic work :

- (a) *Protective* (i.e. more relief-oriented, removal of physical distress) concerned mainly with hunger, health, housing.
- (b) *productive* (i.e. more growth-oriented, concerned with the removal and eradication of the causes of poverty through agriculture, industry, cooperation).
- (c) *projective* (i.e. more planning-oriented, creative of opportunity and mentality).

Protective and Relief Service

These are, in a way, the oldest and often most challenging type of social work, the so-called "corporal works of mercy", the response of Christian "compassion" as well as the result of a social instinct of revolt against suffering, sordidness and want. Their purposes is to redress or soften the pain of accidental or congenital distress or inequality through 'protective' or supporting charity. It is concerned with the destitute, deficient, and delinquent. Its main battlefields are : hunger, health and housing. From an ISI-screening survey it would seem that 65% (two thirds) of the aid-speaking Church-sponsored projects during the last 8 years would come under the first category.

Hunger : of all human suffering it is the most common and pitiable . It is said that the most memorable picture of 1968 was the photograph of a Biafran child starving to death ("Life", Dec 23, 68). To those who have lived through the Biharfamine, the sight of hungry thousands will remain a most unforgettable experience.

The lack of food (and sometimes also of water, as in the Bihar famine) and of proper nutrition has become in recent times a more threatening and widespread reality and danger than war itself for mankind as a whole.(*). In India, famines, starvation,

* cfr PADDOCK: World Famine 1975?—An American Decision (N.Y. 1967)

undernourishment situations are more than old acquaintances to millions : among the nations of the world, India has in the last century (precisely about the time that famine was banished from Western Europe) become one of the most famine-prone and famine-stricken regions of the world (**). And famine is only a more intensive degree of what thousands of villagers expect with anxiety ; the hungry months (before the harvest) the lean years (when the rains fail), and the scarcity-cycles that make up the seasons of their memory.

The Church, though working mainly among the poorer sections of the population, did not for a long time have any special organisation or resources to make a significant contribution to alleviate this distress — other than in collaboration with Government organised relief or with the help of casual donations. In the Famine Reports, little mention is made of Catholic Relief, except in the case of the Bengal Famine of 1943, when thousands were fed in Catholic institutions. (The last Bihar-famine saw the birth of one specific “Catholic Relief Organisation” in Palamau, under the inspiration of the then Apostolic Internuncio.)

But all this has radically changed with the advent of NCWC/ CRS (1953) and other similar emergency or supplementary food-importing organisations, whether specifically Church-sponsored or jointly funded by various religious and other organisations (as OXFAM, CARE). No complete data were available from any agency over a number of years, but we have the following report from CRS: for 1967-68; 225,206,326 lbs (approx. 100,000 tons) imported for supplementary feeding programmes (***) benefitting nearly 1½ million people, and for FFW programmes, benefitting 1 million people.

For 1966-67 : (the drought year) more than twice the above amount was distributed, including 3¼ million rupees worth of foodgrains, distributed through the CCI, New Delhi This does not include special food-aid to Koyanagar and Tibet.

The CRS helped also to provide last year 1875 wells for drinking and irrigation-purposes: this number could well be doubled if we take into account well-digging projects aided by other agencies or through self-help schemes.

** BHATA: Famines in India”, 1965.

*** valued at 16.5 million dollars; compare to total national foodgrain-consumption of 55 million tons.

To the extent that more self reliance is achieved in food production, these external aid-imports may come to an end, but there will still be people without purchasing-power or stricken by adversity. The "hungry", like the poor, will always be with us : increased production does not automatically mean a more equitable distribution.

Health : Illness, it is said, is hunger's cousin, disease its sister. Easily the most undisputed and outstanding social service rendered by the Churches in India for centuries have been its hospitals and dispensaries (as well as its institutions for orphans, the handicapped, aged, etc.) Quantitatively and qualitatively they make, on the whole, the most favourable "image" of the "serving Church". Here, too, organisation and information are at their best.

In order to indicate the magnitude of this service, it should be mentioned that the Christian Medical establishments, with a combined total of 46,439 beds, provide 14½% of the total number of hospital beds available in the country (360,000), that they treated close to one and a half million in-patients in 1967 and nearly ten times as many out-patients during the same year; that (from information received from about half the actual number of units) a known total of over Rs. 54 million was spent by all Churches together — a figure that might be doubled to obtain an overall expenditure figure for the same.

Personnel employed in them (presumably predominantly Christian) :

—a total of 1861 doctors and 4199 nurses in actual service (as compared to a national total of 86000 doctors and 45000 nurses).

—a total of 5188 nurses-in-training (as compared to 30175 nurses of various degrees under training throughout the country)

—a total of 113 nursing schools (as compared to 491 nursing-training institutions for the nation as a whole in 1967).

The following tables give a comparative idea of the present distribution and comparative strength of *hospitals, dispensaries** and personnel.

* By hospitals are understood centres with a minimum of 6 beds; if less, they are classified as dispensaries or health centres. The source is the Christian Hospitals Directory, 1968.

TABLE 1. CHRISTIAN HOSPITALS IN INDIA

States	AP.	As.	Bih.	Dlh.	Goa	Guj.	Har.	HP.	JK	Pun.	Ker.	MP.	Mad.	Mah.	Mys	Or.	Raj.	UP.	WB.
Catholic (308)	38	1	14	1	4	3	..	..	1	..	110	15	48	18	24	3	10	14	5
Protest. (312)	41	15	19	2	..	6	3	3	2	7	34	32	49	35	17	9	3	23	10
Total (620)	79	16	33	3	4	9	3	3	3	7	144	47	97	53	41	12	13	37	15

TABLE 2. CHRISTIAN DISPENSARIES IN INDIA

Catholic (469)	33	19	53	2	..	13	..	..	..	4	50	27	93	46	31	12	8	24	24
Protest. (570)	11	15	7	2	20	4	1	..	..	1	2	10	16	18	9	1	1	6	7
Total (1039)	44	34	60	4	20	17	1	..	..	5	52	37	109	64	40	13	9	30	31

TABLE 3. CHRISTIAN LEPROSARIA OR HOSPITALS WITH SPECIAL PROVISION FOR LEPERS

Catholic (116)	15	2	19	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	10	7	31	4	5	2	1	13	5
Protest. (62)	9	4	4	..	..	1	1	1	..	2	2	5	8	8	5	2	1	4	4
Total (178)	24	6	23	..	..	2	2	1	..	2	12	12	39	12	10	4	2	17	9

TABLE 4. CHRISTIAN TB SANATORIA OR HOSPITALS WITH SPECIAL PROVISION FOR THEM

Catholic (28)	4	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10	..	4	1	2	1	2	1	..
Protest. (11)	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..	3	..	..	..	1	..	..
Total (39)	7	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	1	10	2	4	4	4	2	1	3	1	..

TABLE 5. CHRISTIAN NURSING SCHOOLS IN INDIA

Catholic (29)	4	..	3	1	..	..	..	..	9	..	4	3	3	..	1	1	1	..	
Protest. (84)	17	8	5	1	..	2	2	..	2	4	2	5	12	7	4	2	1	6	4
Total (113)	21	8	8	2	..	2	2	..	2	4	11	5	16	10	7	2	2	7	4

TABLE 6. DOCTORS IN CHRISTIAN HOSPITALS IN INDIA

Catholic (670)	50	4	30	85	8	7	..	..	..	..	225	17	76	44	104	1	5	20	4
Protest. (1191)	95	30	32	8	..	18	11	3	4	120	66	52	451	127	60	18	8	64	24
Total (1861)	145	34	62	93	8	25	11	3	4	120	291	69	527	171	164	19	13	84	28

TABLE 7. NURSES IN CHRISTIAN HOSPITALS IN INDIA

Catholic (1594)	24	17	111	42	10	7	..	..	..	..	627	42	217	78	130	7	25	39	7
Protest. (2605)	405	136	95	29	..	72	23	5	9	182	133	79	624	310	152	72	27	202	50
Total (4199)	647	153	206	71	10	9	23	5	9	182	760	121	841	388	282	79	52	241	57

TABLE 8. NURSES UNDER TRAINING IN CHRISTIAN HOSPITALS IN INDIA

Catholic (1718)	334	..	213	90	..	..	..	..	..	..	478	..	176	91	272	..	45	23	6
Protest. (3460)	543	284	179	76	..	99	98	..	15	459	60	242	335	343	217	67	42	319	82
Total (5188)	877	284	392	166	..	99	98	..	15	459	538	242	511	434	489	67	87	342	88

Each of these shows how, to a remarkable degree, the Christian medical service, far beyond the population ratio of the Christian community, has become a vital element in the development of health in the nation. It was indispensable that such a pyramid of institutions and services should be capped with a Medical College to intensify the guidance and service expected from us.

Still, it must be observed that in spite of these impressive numbers the actual leadership-elements are somewhat lacking in our Christian medical and nursing people: partly, possibly, because of the absence of a Medical College for so long, partly because of our absence in certain nationally important sectors of research and medical planning.

Among the Christian *institutions for the handicapped* (physically, morally or socially) our *orphanages* are perhaps the best known and most numerous. In the most recent Catholic Directory, a total number of 565 orphanages is listed (as compared with 555 in 1964 which itself indicated an increase of 33% over the number in 1950). From replies sent in by 444 (87%) of these, it is clear that more than half (55%) are for girls, about 25% for boys, and the remainder mixed. 75% of them are run by religious congregations and 25% by diocesan personnel. In these 444, a combined total of 56,497 inmates (21,889 boys and 34,598 girls) is cared for. The largest number of them are in the south (particularly in Madras State) where the largest orphanages of Adaijalpuram (Tuticorin) with 945 inmates, and Tranquebar (Thanjavur) with 444 inmates, are found.*

In the last twenty years a modern type of establishment has grown up, the so-called *Boys Town* which often combines the foster-home idea with the reformatory and re-educational system. Though there may not yet be more than a dozen (and these of various types) of them, they are nevertheless an important landmark and innovation in the field of Christian social work. The best known among them are the Pius X Boys Town (De La Salle, Madurai) the St. Mark's Boys Town (Gabriel Brothers,

* The above data were supplied by Dr Puthenkaam, Indian Social Institute, who was the organiser of the Consultation on Orphanages at Bangalore.

Hyderabad), the Palai Diocesan Boys' (and Girls') Town, and others at Bhalarpatnam, Mannapara, Calcutta. Though of a somewhat different conception, the Snehasadan Homes in Bombay should also be mentioned here.

Last but not the least, there is the work among the aged and dying, for the *physically handicapped*, and the rescue homes. Some of these institutions (such as the Madras Deaf and Dumb School, the homes of Mother Teresa, the St. Catherine's Home in Bombay) are among the most-appreciated Christian service institutions in India. Particularly for the physically handicapped, the number of institutions is relatively small, and the demand (and here one can unhesitatingly speak of "need" as well, home-treatment being difficult) very great. Should a small, but apparently unique initiative in India — the Ranchi Blind Men's Co-operative— be mentioned here, as indicating a way out of pure institutionalisation? It, incidentally, also opened the way for the solution of a much larger problem, beggary.

Some complementary observations: We have already noted how very different in size these institutions are (hospitals with 625 beds like Fr Muller's in Mangalore), or with just the minimum 6; homes for the aged like St. Joseph's, Calcutta with 250 inmates are hard to compare with St. Joseph's Gopalpur for 6. Again, from the point of view of amenities, services and standards, it is hard to draw an average image. Often the most recent are — as in industry and education— the most favoured: the older institutions carry a heavier burden of administration, outdated buildings, equipment, personnel, difficult to replace as quickly as the times would demand. Lastly, one cannot overlook, apart from these institutionalised services, the efforts made by individuals or organisations to assist specially difficult groups, such as alcoholics f.i. in major cities (Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi) as also in rural areas (the Chota Nagpur Tap Sangh League).

Housing: both as 'shelter' and 'quarter', whether for the homeless, the slumdweller or travellers, is another field of "protective activity" which Christian Churches throughout the world have chosen as a field of service. It suffices to remember the chain of YMCA or YWCA hostels set up by Protestant churches throughout the East and West, of the Salvation Army reception centres,

the Friendship Homes of the Quakers, the Emmaus-cities of Abbe Pierre, the "peace villages" of Fr. Pire. Yet, leaving aside the boarding-school-hostels and other educational institutional residences, no comparable organisation or institutions are found among the services provided by the Catholic Church. The little there is, is mostly of recent origin. In a way, as Abbe Pierre remarked once, "housing is not so much of a big problem in India as in the West : the roads are cooler at night than the stuffy tenements, employment is the bigger need." Still, increasingly, irresistibly as it were, around the new urban centres the tin and leaf-huts spring up, while in the older cities the chawls become decrepit with new tenements often inaccessible or unattainable. With increased travelling, specially by women and youth, the lodging problem itself becomes a problem, apart from the great charity that is always hidden in hospitality.

Hostels : The Catholic Directory of 1964 lists 467 hostels for young people (nearly all in schools). Some recent Catholic Centres have started providing accommodation also for working class or non-institutionally employed people (Nirmala Niketan, Sodality House). Arrangements exist in many parishes for a lean-to or "dera", where poorer travellers can spend a night, however uncomfortably (usually they are left to themselves in the matter of food, light, hygiene, etc.). Where clergy and religious can count on a ready welcome, it cannot be said that lay people (specially families) are equally charitably received or provided for.

As to *housing schemes*, while an encouraging beginning has been made in many dioceses on a small scale, the Church, in other developing countries, seems to have made more headway and effort in this field. In India an average of but 4 to 5 housing-projects (rural and urban), are taken up every year (judging from an analysis of requests-for-aid screened by ISI), with an average aid-value of 1½ lakh of rupees, during the last 8 years. To this should be added some significant self-help housing-schemes, such as the Changanachery Diocese's 5-year plan in which 120 parishes undertook to build a minimum of 5 houses each year for needy families, and such as the recent all-Kerala Bishops' Pentecost-resolution jointly to build 1 house in every parish of Kerala. A few co-operative Housing Societies have also been registered in the last 10 years (at Bangalore, Poona, Quilon, and elsewhere) specially for middle-class Catholics.

Laypeople, too, have, in some instances, taken the initiative in this field (when in Delhi, it is worthwhile visiting the Dutch Ambassador's housing scheme for servants and staff).

When it is remembered that the bulk of the 66 million rural houses in India are mudhuts, with an average of 2½ persons per room, surely there is a great lacuna here and a crying need.

Lastly, what concerns *slum clearance*—a difficult and complex task under any circumstance—the self-help slum clearance project in Trivandrum could be mentioned by way of example (in 1960-61 it built 39 low-cost houses). Student-organisations have organised several house-building camps for poorer families (Shembanagnur, Ranchi, Bombay, Madras, etc.) often in an ecumenical spirit. But these are only very small beginnings. A mine of suggestions and guidelines were formulated at the Low Cost Housing Seminar, organised some ten years ago by the ISI (Poona-Bombay) : would an effort at raising better houses for our people (irrespective of caste and creed) not go a long way to counteract and diminish the “scandal of our ever-better ecclesiastical residences”? Would not the gesture of Mgr. Lercaro, sharing his house with dozens of homeless, be in India a welcome “sign” of Him, who became homeless so that all man might have a home ?

Productive (or Growth-Oriented) Activities

The activities considered under this heading are those concerned with strengthening the socio-economic substructure from which development can take off and be maintained. On the more economic side this means agricultural and industrial development-assistance; from the social angle it means mainly the building up of a strong co-operative spirit and organisation.

Given the scarcity of information, we can again do no more than bring together a few relevant experiments and figures, without claim of completeness and only with the hope of characterising an over-all situation and achievement-pattern.

Agricultural Development-work

If any aspect of our development is being watched with mounting hope and confidence it is the “green revolution”, the anticipated “agricultural breakthrough” which in the last year

particularly seems to have gained sufficient momentum to ast. After the 7-year quasi-stagnation of food production in India and the world*, last year's record crops and the discovery and use of improved seeds, together with the determination of governmental and voluntary agencies "that famine shall be no more", are more than just good omens. The awareness of Catholic agencies in India and abroad that here is a battle we must help win without delay and without default, is reflected in the revised, priorities of aid stipulated by many of them.

Land reclamation and settlement : Quantitatively and as a long-term community-development project, this type of activity by which in compact, often barren, wasted areas, an attempt is made at settling and raising the socio-economic status of hundreds of landless people, is specially significant of the Church's pioneering and community-forming inclination. It is also a prognosis of what the future of India could be, given the right "animators" and means. With various degrees of intensity, these settlement-projects account for roughly 10% of the aid-seeking projects submitted during the last 8 to 10 years. Some of them have grown to be regional "hot centres" of attraction: Mariampahari (Bihar), Wynaad (Kerala), Belve (Mysore), Lalpur (Meerut), Vadala (Chanda), Talasari (Maharashtra), to mention only a few. They often extend over hundreds of acres (usually on Church-registered property, however) and are mostly managed by priests. In most instances, too, they mainly benefit Catholic families.

There is one big black shadow in all this— an absence rather than a defect : in the big national Bhudan-movement (which in the words of J.P. Narayan "would have been near-complete if Christians had put their weight behind it"), in the field of land-consolidation (where a single individual, F. Brayne set such a remarkable example of what could be done with Christian dedication and patience), our participation has been very meagre. This could have been a great field of guidance to the Catholic laity to take up their share.

Development of water-resources : (for agricultural irrigation). In a land where the farmers keep a more anxious eye on the sky than on the thieves— rain being (traditionally the big IF of their

*cfr Dr R B Sen, Director General FAO 1965-66, quoted in PADDOCK, o. c. p.45)

prosperity), the man who supplies water is master of the land. Under pressure of drought and thanks to farsighted foreign aid-agencies, the development of subterraneous or surface water has become one of the most thrilling and decisive aspects of our battle against poverty.

It is estimated that more than 100 large and medium-size irrigation-projects are now operated by Catholic Church-related agencies in different parts of the country, some aiming at covering nearly entire talukhs or blocks (Manmad, Bhabhua, Palanua, Kurnool, Jashpur). Though many minor irrigation dams and reservoirs have been constructed, the majority of the projects are concerned with the digging of wells, installation of pumping sets, construction of minor irrigation canals and bandhs.

It is characteristic again that, apart from a few cases, much of it is done under clerical management and independently from the over-all Government planning, under a foreign aid-supervision, and usually family-oriented. An increasing number of the projects are gradually being organised as registered co-operative societies in view of some form of co-operative farming.

To get an idea of the quantitative effort of the Church-sponsored agencies in the field of ground water development resources, the following analysis of ad hoc funds requested and obtained may be enlightening :

—more than 1 million rupees annually for an average of 13 major projects yearly founded by voluntary agencies (screened by ISI 1961-68).

—more than 3-4 million rupees annually through funding contracts signed by CRS/USCC with USAID, for the last 3 years.

—through AFPRO an impressive list of water development equipment has been placed at the service of various private and government projects (in 7 states) for well-digging. The list itself is revealing:

- 28 rigs of various types, averaging a value of over Rs. 100,000. each)
- 32 compressors and accessories averaging over Rs. 50,000. each)
- 34 supplementary vehicles, jeeps, etc.,— worth about Rs. 250,000.)
- 10 motorcycles for workers and staff and 47 other equipment units, such as pumps, trailers, grinders, etc.)

Apart from the administrative and technical services which the operation of this equipment implies, this would represent an equipment value of over Rs. 5 million, operationally productive for the minimum of 5 years' (*)

It can be safely said that both to the individual farmer and to the project planner, the provision of a reliable ground water supply has become a de facto primary objective. It is said that one political party in the last mini-elections owed its success to the slogan: "HAR HATH KO KAAM, HAR KHETI KO PANI." It was largely due to the pressure exercise by Christian agencies that ground water development was made the primary objective both of the state and voluntary action in Bihar (**). At least three major regional water development societies have been financed in the last years, which set the pattern for similar societies on a smaller scale: The Bihar Water Development Resources Society (BWDS), Rajasthan Water Development Resources Society (RWDS), and the Maharashtra Regional Water Resources Development Programme (MWBS).

Seed and fertilizer procurement : Not all "the smiles of the rain god", nor all the canals and waterholes a man can dig, will by themselves suffice for an agricultural breakthrough. The revolution starts in the laboratories and in the factories : where the new seeds, the pesticides, the fertilisers are prepared.

The fertiliser import programme of AFPRO (1966-68) of over 5000 tons of concentrated fertiliser (donated by CWS/WCC and "Misereor), of the total value of Rupees 1,600,000. to be distributed through 38 project holders, quite likely marks the first significant contribution of the Church in this field of agricultural development. The largest part of these imports were handled through the Ranchi Catholic Cooperative Bank, and they made a remarkable impact on agriculture in the hilly plateau of Chota Nagpur. The sales proceeds of these fertilisers, returned to AFPRO and CASA will constitute a revolving service fund to finance immediate purchases locally.

While we know of several Church-sponsored major pioneering experiments with imported cattlebreeds (Kirusumala, Bangalore, Simdega, Madras, Goa), there is a little evidence of any similar

(*) AFPRO - evaluation report 1968

(**) cfr. BAVA-resolution 1968

notable initiative in the field of seed-experimentation (other than in the horticultural field). In the matter of scientific agricultural research, as a matter of fact, the Church, as far as we know, has not yet sponsored any significant institution (as has been the case in other countries, however).

Agricultural training and extension work: Little has been done also by the Church, inspite of its impressive educational apparatus to sponsor agricultural education, either on the mass-publicity level or through ad hoc schools.

Leading, but very much alone in this field is the Ranchi Archdiocese which has a high-class (2 years) agricultural training centre for 80 students as well as two teacher training centres with a strong agricultural bias), a well-organised Extension Service department covering three districts, a week-end type of agricultural training for young farmers, and which will quite likely soon have a mobile agricultural training unit to complement it all. Projects of this type, judging from the above quoted ISI screening report, are still exceedingly rare: only about one a year. Pioneering work has also been done in the field of agriculture-orientated general education by such institution as Daya Matha Institute at Sangamner (Poona), and by some model farms such as the demonstration farm at Talasari (Maharashtra).

It is enough but to recall the influence exercised by the formerly Protestant Naini Agricultural College, (Allahabad) on agricultural development (specially in the field of farm machinery and crop experimentation) to visualize how much indeed can be done to supplement state effort in this field. The work done at the Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), where the wonder seeds like PV-18/S-308-Kalayan 227 etc., were developed, is an example in the same direction. We might possibly have earned even more the gratitude of the country's millions by investing in an Antigonish type of Agricultural University than in giving another Medical College.

As regards mass publicity, two instances merit mentioning: The AFPRO publication (see : Evaluation Report page 16, where 25 titles are given) and the Ranchi Cooperative Credit Society's popular Hindi booklets for farmers. The AFPRO training camps and courses (12 were held between Feb. 67-Sept. 68) covered a large variety of subjects (poultry, relief, horticulture, nutrition, etc.)

Dairy Farming and Horticulture: To many, poultry and dairy farming, gardening and vegetable growing, are an alternative to starvation, as much as they are an important determinant of national health. They may be called the "agricultural small scale industries." We are well acquainted with the old plantations and admirable gardens attached to our institutions, causing the admiration of many. But the important question from the point of view of national development and Christian leadership-impact is whether this pioneering effort has de facto inspired the community to do likewise. Have we shown the way here for a more than imitative production?

Storage and prevention of waste : This may look at first a relatively minor aspect, in the context of general increased production effort. Yet when it is realized that the Gross National Waste of foodgrain in India for 1966-67 (the year that the rains failed) was estimated at 43.5%, and even higher after India's Fourth Election (*), then this assumes a character of urgency. While these estimates (based on the quantity of unconsumed food grains and making a 10% allowance for seeds) may seem incredibly high (others place it at a minimum of 25%), it should be enough to convince us how much our productive effort needs to be protected by improved storage. With the quantity of annual wasted grain we could increase our foodgrain rations from 78.5 kg per capita to nearly double that amount, or feed a greater part of Africa, and could dispense with any imported grain today, apart from preventing a number of communicable diseases as well. For it is specially moisture with its accompanying storage pests, fungi and bacteria, which causes this wastage; also birds and rodents" which contaminate-ten times as much as they consume," transmit numerous diseases, and in the words of an observant housewife "eat the best part of the grain only."

It would seem that one of the relatively simple, immediate and yet significant contributions which we could make to our national development is to organize a programme of dry and hygienic model storage. This was proposed as a matter of fact as one voluntary agencies. It is a contribution which would be very welcomed by the Government after the Bihar Famine Relief....Storage, in a way, is to the harvested crops, what fences are to standing crops.

(*) cfr Ramsay Tainsh, Industrial Consultant, Stockholm in an IMPRINT Sept. 1968,

Models for this purpose already exist: a foodgrain storage building programme has been initiated by the Ranchi Catholic Cooperative Credit Society in the last few years, which also has encouraged agricultural fencing. But much more needs to be done. A massive and concentrated programme and propaganda is required and it would seem that for this purpose help from financing agencies or through co-operatives should be easily forthcoming. It is said that the agricultural revolution in England, which preceded the industrial one by a hundred years, started with the "enclosure movement", which kept the goats and sheep at bay, but also introduced consolidation of land.

A word should be added for the sake of completeness, regarding SEA-Farming and fisheries : a great proportion of Catholics are living along the coast and are traditionally fishermen. While they were left much to themselves to continue ancient methods, some earnest and promising initiatives have been undertaken in the last ten years, particularly in Kerala (fishermen's cooperatives, improved nets, trawlers, etc.)

Industrial Development

As in Pope John's encyclical on "Christianity and Social Progress" (*Mater et Magistra*) it would seem necessary to change the tone and *ambitus* of the Church's concern from attitudes to activities. Traditionally, the Church as an institution and as a group, has always had something to do with farming, with art, science and education, from the time of the *latifundia* and the monastic schools up to this day. But the Church's direct involvement in industry and trade seems to have been long restricted to 'the making of rosaries— and the occasional brewing of beer' and to the despatch of gift parcels and the issue of postage stamps. Yet, paradoxically, as a social analyst remarked, the Church seems most suited (because of her discipline, dedication to labour and perfection) both as an institution and as a group, to the industrial mode of working and living. We will briefly review here the part she is playing in three ways :

- in the field of industrial production-promotion (small-scale industry)
- in the field of industrial orientation and policy (wage-training)
- in the field of industrial relations and peace.

Direct industrial activity: In at least one kind of industry the Church in India has pioneered i.e. in the *printing industry*. India's first modern printing press was installed in St. Paul's College, in Goa in the 16th century. Faithful to that tradition the Church could boast in 1964 to have a total of 78 presses, (giving employment and training to about 50 people in each press), many of them of a very high standard. Because of heavy competition and financial strain, a trend seems to grow to entrust these to religious men and women, but how much of community-uplift could be lost by this process could be judged from the remarkable social uplift a practically purely lay-operated press like the Ranchi Catholic Press, has achieved in 30 years.

Under the impact of enthusiastic Catholic laymen (such as Mr. F. Ryan, a one-time *Small Scale Industries* Project Officer, Bombay, whose advice was sought throughout India), a good many efforts were made to launch enterprising Catholics in this line of industrial development. Some 10 years ago there was quite a stir in Church-circles about this : how far has this resulted in concrete establishments and success, is difficult to estimate. But judging from the requests for foreign aid-assistance alone, a total of 131 projects were presented between 1961-68, valued at over 6 million rupees. It must be noted that this is in no way an indication of the total number of initiatives in this direction : very likely a far greater number have been started with local government-help or from private resources, but it does indicate a positive awakening of industrial interest among us.

Still, the state of the industrial workshops or colonies, (such, as the well known and long-established St. Vincent's Institutes, Calicut), is not uniformly encouraging; and, apart from the more enterprising older Christian communities along the coast, other communities are awakening to the industrial age only slowly.

In the field of industrial orientation and policy : some very worth while contributions have been made by the Church in India.

In 1968 the dioceses of India together ran a total of 172 technical schools as compared to 157 in 1964 (76 for boys and 81 technical training centres for women). Not all of these are industrially orientated in the strict sense of the word (some are commercial schools) and they do not include the technical and vocational

schools run independently by Catholic laymen. The biggest concentration of these is, as can be expected, in Kerala. More than a hundred projects (amounting to 22 million rupees) were presented between 1961-1968 for aid and 80 projects (averaging about 1 lakh of rupees each) for Craft training.

In this connection the role of *employment guidance and information* cannot be overstressed. And there we come upon another regrettable gap in the field of the Church's development-assistance : there are apparently not more than a dozen or so Church-sponsored well-functioning employment agencies. Apart from outstanding individuals (as the late Mr. Francis in North India — Patna), who have dedicated the best of their energies in this field, her guidance apparatus has rarely extended beyond the school level. And yet, among the very vital ways of assisting Catholic laymen and laywomen to play their most effective role in society, few, if any, avenues could be so rewarding and urgent in India today.

It may not be out of place to mention here some seemingly minor, but potentially effective contributions in the field of *industrial and trade policy*, such as the much-noticed recent study of Father Fonseca (ISI) on "need-based wage," the special preparatory seminar on development and trade (UNCTAD 1967), the work done by Christian laymen in several central research institutes, etc. They are an indication of what opportunity, continued dedicated effort or study may have far more decisive social impact and service.

Industrial relations and peace are of very special concern to the Church both as a servant and unifying force in society. On no other topic do the Popes expound so much at length, ever since the first labour-encyclical, in their concern for justice and progress.

The Church in India during the last 20 years has not lagged behind. She is running two postgraduate Labour Relations Courses in the heavy industrial belt of South Bihar (XLRI at Jamshedpur and XISS at Ranchi), one industrial management training institute in Bombay (St. Xavier's), several M.A. and M.S.W. courses (with special accent on labour relations and labour welfare) at Madras, Ernakulam, Trivandrum.

Not only on the level of training, but also in the practical field of trade unionism, Catholic laymen play an important role;

similarly an increasing number of them have become labour welfare officers, personnel officers, etc.

The Co-operative Movement

It has been said that the Cooperative Movement is the best image of Catholic Social philosophy in action. It is also for the nation the only real shortcut to progress, while preserving human freedom and dignity. Hence, one could reasonably expect to find the Catholic Church everywhere in the vanguard of the cooperative movement as a pioneer and animator.

To a limited extent this has been so in India. Although no comprehensive survey of all the cooperatives established under Catholic leadership is available, yet sufficient evidence exists in every type of cooperative organisation to support this impression.

Among the *rural credit cooperatives*, the Ranchi Catholic Cooperative Credit Society (with its 35,000 members and over a 1000 units) is perhaps the oldest, largest and best known. It was started in 1909 and conceived on the Raiffeissen-pattern which Father Hoffmann, S. J., adapted to local circumstances. Annual loans extend to over 16 lakhs, 70 % of which are for agricultural extension purposes. It has had an incredible impact on the whole region in many ways.

Nearly equal in age and similar in scope is the GUJARAT CATHOLIC COOPERATIVE SOCIETY (Anand, Reg. 1914). Other credit unions have been started particularly in Northern India, in such places as Bettiah (Patna), Kurseong, Dumka, Raigarh-Ambikapur, Sambalpur, Assam and the Andaman islands.

Closely allied are the *producers' cooperatives* and multipurpose cooperative societies. By way of type-representation the following may be mentioned: Fisherman's Cooperative in Trivandrum, Trichur, Tinnelvely, the Weavers' Cooperative in Anand and Karamsad (Ahmedabad), the Potters' Cooperative in Ernakulam, The Palmyra Tappers' Cooperative Society in Parakunnu, the Cooperatives for milk suppliers in Guntur, and for rickshawpullers in Ranchi or for potato growers in Dumberpath.

The spread of *consumer's cooperative societies* has been much slower, though it is the keystone of an integrated cooperative system and has a great community welding value, particularly

in urban areas. The known instances are apparently still too much in the infant stage to require mentioning here. The same applies also to the relatively few school cooperative societies (and the fewer still clerical cooperative purchasing societies).

The following common characteristics may help to see the social significance and limitations of these Christian cooperatives in a better perspective :

—They are mostly restricted to Catholic or Christians only.

—The strongest cooperatives are the regionally federated ones, though with a parish-basis (Ranchi, Gujarat, Maharashtra).

—few of them are *de facto* multipurpose, which might indicate that the overall cooperative ideal has not yet gone sufficiently deep.

—most of them are under clerical control with as yet little enduring lay-leadership and responsibility.

Projective Socio-economic activities of the Church in India.

Development is not a matter of added targets but of integrated planning. This means discerning the key obstacle or lever, the formulation and subordination of objective, and the marshalling of all our resources.

Family Planning, population-experts remind us, is at the centre of planned development. With the population of India increasing at the rate of 2.2% (i.e. an annual increase of over 11 million people now), and an annual growth rate in per capita income of less than 2%; with an irreversible “revolution of rising expectation following in the wake of more broadbased education and improved communications,” there can indeed be no doubt that there lies a major agonizing challenge, if not to our survival, at least to our development and growth during the next ten or twenty years.

Hence the government has embarked on an artificial, near-legalised family limitation programme, by all available means (short of abortion and outright compulsion) of persuasion and pressure. It intends to spend 950 million rupees on this programme during the 4th Plan period. In order to lay a firm foundation for self-sustained growth and full employment as soon as possible (say by 1975), more than 100,000 sterilisation-operations have been performed to date; more than 16,000 Family Planning Units are in operation; nearly every type of contracept-

ive is now produced in India (pill, condoms, IUCD, etc.) A chain of research centres in all major cities of India is following and guiding the process, assisted by foreign agencies of private and political characters.

What is the Church doing in this respect, in keeping with her principles and vocation? Admittedly, apart from its religious-moral education of the faithful, very little in the form of direct action:

—there is little or no mass scale propagation of the approved rhythm-method.

—there is little or no sex-and-family education in our schools (we are still mostly at the domestic science level).

—there is little understanding yet and study of the demographic problem in itself (apart from the popularising studies of Father Nevett, S.J., a decade ago), though the recent seminar-discussions have helped in this respect.

—there is little or no positive planned-parenthood education programme from our hospitals and dispensaries.

Some of the initiatives that mark an awakening of our Christian responsibility in this field, even if small in size, show the way to a wider and concerted action programme:

—the Life Guidance Course of the “Catholic Correspondence Course” has been spread to over 4000 people and the same has been adapted in Hindi (Patna).

—the book “Happiness in Marriage” of Father A. D’Souza is now used in over 20 colleges as a text for marriage guidance even for non-Christians.

—“Family life centres” have been established in a few cities (Bombay, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Jamshedpur, New Delhi).

—the Christian family movement, though still very weak, could be a channel of action and guidance to many.

But some old and often repeated resolutions, still buried in reports, bear a promise of greater impact. One of them is the demand for a wider family organisation, open to all believers in God. Only this kind of mass-organisation could exercise sufficient pressure, reach more intimately, both the families themselves and the governments, in order to uphold the natural parental rights as well as those of the community.

Some of the conclusions of the Beirut Conference may well be quoted here : "Religious organisations, with a deep concern for family life, have an obligation to work for adoption and implementation of programmes acceptable to them for responsible parenthood." — "A basic Christian contribution is the promotion of responsible parenthood and family life. Churches and Christian agencies must emphasize the duty and right of parents to decide on the number of their children, taking into account, among other things, the claims of the social situation."

Project-Planning: As this is a subject of a special section, it may suffice here, as a basis for reflexion, to note the existing patterns of development and project-formulation, as well as their evaluation.

In spite of a strong ecclesiastical control, it cannot be said that most of our social projects are imposed from on top. On the contrary, there is a remarkable spontaneity in the birth of this kind of projects : the individual congregation, the parish priest, the local, "interested man" are usually the initial conceivers of the service envisaged. This in itself is a precious element, provided it is matched by an increasing willingness and understanding on the part of the decision-makers. This is not to exclude the often dynamic vision of some of the top Church-leaders themselves: but their discretion and indirect stimulation and support of grassroot-initiative must remain the primary base of fruitful growth.

On the other hand however, most projects are in danger of remaining parochial, or of flowering into "wider schemes." without adequate preparatory investigation, survey, or consultation. The same applies, at the operational stage, to evaluation and follow-up study: this is less dangerous in the case of institutions that have their internal checking and results, than in the case of out ward-basis activities. In very few Dioceses, if in any, is there as yet a Diocesan Social Action-planning Board wherein experts and representatives from the clergy and the laity, consider and decide together the priorities of action in this field (except in Madras).

Organisational Set-up

Among the progressive features noticeable in the Church's organisational approach to socio-economic work, is the fact that — in every Diocese a Director of Catholic Charities has been

appointed (though in very few a full-timer, nor is he more than a CRS-supplies consignee ?)

—in some places a beginning of a new trend is perceptible, the registering of societies (lay-operated) as projectholders. Under the pressure of AFPRO and other funding agencies, this trend is sure to grow into an accepted practice, imbuing greater lay-maturity and responsibility.

—next to the traditional “institutions”, a new type of “task-force” is developing : the “organisations”. Some of them have stood the test of time (St Vincent’s De Paul Societies and other Catholic Action Organisations), but are in need of modernisation, so as to be more flexible, more qualified, less restrictive in membership e.g. for Catholics only !, more self-reliant.

—the funding agencies and evaluating-agencies are also an element of the socio-economic activity of the Church in India, likely to stay for long. A tentative list of the most important of them is attached in Appendix B.

4. Criteria of Strength and Weakness

“*Dos moi pou sto, kai ten gen kineso*”—the sigh of Archimedes in search of a fixed point from which to move the earth, comes to our mind when confronted with the initial problem of every evaluation : the search for *criteria*. ‘Strength’ and ‘weakness’ are indeed mutually relative concepts : they need an outside point of reference to measure them.

We see four of these criteria, roughly coinciding with the suggested foci for the workshop discussions at the forthcoming All-India Seminar:

- the profession of our faith (it is the axis of our participation and motivation)
- the demands of our country (i.e. the relevance to our national needs)
- the needs of our times (our approach as service must be up-to-date)
- the scope of our resources (our organisation and functional limits).

Every evaluation is a mixture of a close look and a distant view: it is not easy, while being actively involved in this field, to rise above our actions to our aims, or to check our present achieve-

ments by the demands of the future. It is easier done together than alone: hence, it is preferable to analyse the criteria than to present the answers. A question well put is half the answer: our discussions should present the other half.

a. Our Christian Ideal source of our motivation.

What is it that makes our "christian" social service any different from that given by others? Bihar Famine Relief Sisters found these answers: that it should be supernatural in motivation, catholic in dimension, disinterested and humble in its performance, representative of the whole Church.

Faith-inspired "good works": It is customary in certain circles to take pride and justify our social services and involvement in economic work by a variety of praiseworthy characteristics: our dependability, dedication, personal care, incorruptibility, etc. But we should not confuse modalities with motivation or be satisfied with either. Motivation is intention and message alike :

(a) It is not enough to start a work with a good intention: this intention itself has to be deepened, revealed, enriched. "When an institution has lost the sense of its original purpose, it is time for it to disappear." What has inspired the Church from the beginning (she practised charity before the word 'development' was coined—in her diaconate, monte de pieta, Paraguay reductions) was the parable of the Good Samaritan and the Sermon on the Mount, the example of her Founder and His word "quod minimo, Mihi", and the known standards of the Last Judgement (Math. 25). The Church as a whole, and the individual Christian personally, must in their socio-economic participation proclaim this supernatural inspiration : "charity is not vainglorious", our service is Christ-centered all-through.

Is there enough spiritual material at hand to inspire the prayer and the struggles of those of us involved in socio-economic development?

(b) But it is not only from the individual angle that our work here might suffer from lack of spiritual significance. Often our service-involvement in the material world is taken as a sacramental presence, by itself an operative sign of Christ's action redemptive of the whole man. It is not directly and strictly so : service is of the order of witnessing, of the "word". It has to

be message-laden as much as prayer-filled, and pregnant with sacrifice to be meaningful and effective. It is not enough that our service be faith-inspired, it must be faith-inspiring—not only of our belief in man and his future, but in God and His Son, Jesus Christ. Our social tasks cannot be merely a ‘dumb and silent’ witness.

Would not the functional “division of labor” between social workers and pastors or preachers, at least on a macro-level, be a workable solution (*)

“Ultimately all Christian development-participation is an attempt at creating living conditions that are favourable to the free acceptance of the faith and intended as such” (J. Kerkhofs, Pastoral theology, p.3).

Catholic dimensions

Granted the internal spiritual value and authenticity of our work in the socio-economic field through its linkage with living faith, the first external quality of our involvement must be that it clearly bears the characteristics of human and Christian universality. In terms of “veracity” this makes us face a double test :—

- do we aim beyond the individual at human society as a whole ?
- do we reach beyond the Christian community also to the other communities ?

Regarding the latter, it need not be stressed here— it being so plain in too many instances—how much we need to be more of an “open Church” and to break down the walls of privilege that surround us still. This is not a matter of accessibility only, but a matter of search (the good shepherd goes *out* in search of his sheep!). Locality may have much to do with it (but surely then we can also choose places where this would not be so), but not everything . How is it that in our Catholic hospitals about 80% of the patients are Christians (with protestants only 20%), and that 90% of the CRS beneficiaries are Catholics (of FFW-

(*) cfr. Gispert-Sauch: “Crisis in the Mission” , Clergy Monthly, Dec. 1868.

projects 80%), and that perhaps the same applies to our co-operatives, workshops, housing schemes ?

Christian universality is ordered 'beyond the brethren' mainly to the poor. "Among the hopes and joys, the griefs and anxieties of the men of this age" it is specially of "those who are poor or in any way afflicted"* that the Church, in her attempt at self renewal and true to her vocation, wants to share. Do we reach the poor *de facto* ? Is the Church known as the champion of the poor (not only of her own)? It is not enough to have sick people in our hospitals: are they marked by special care for the most helpless among them ? How far do our best services, even among our parishioners, extend to the poorest, the most handicapped in our institutions, the unemployed and the hungry? Do we have enough hospitals (do we give priority in our planning to them ?) for the incurable as well as for the curable? Lies not there the mystery of the universal appeal of Mother Teresa : in her choice of the poorest and most hopeless patients of all : the abandoned and the dying ? And there, too, was the secret of the charismatic appeal of Fr Lievens, "the champion of the liberties and rights of the tribals" about whom it was said that if he had died in India, his tomb would be the biggest place of pilgrimage of all. In this light, f.i., employment-assistance becomes an eminently Christian task: for the modern poor are often the third-rate people, who cannot find a job or keep one, the left-overs of all employment-exchanges.

Disinterested service: There is another difficult test for anyone (also the social worker) who believes in priority of the Kingdom of Heaven — and wants others to accept it too; he must be prepared "to loose all" and "to give all", "to be the least" [and "to be the last" (in matters of prestige and recognition).

In theological language this is the problem of "power and prestige" in the Church, the duty to overcome the temptation of working out change without seeking power, of perfecting our service without increasing our wealth. The temptation is not imaginary: whether under the form of deriving from this involvement a stronger political or personal recognition, or a sense of a higher caste-belonging, or just material benefits, as any large-scale and successful action in this field brings opportunities for any of these...And the reverse part of the temptation : to

(*) Vat II "Church in the Modern World" no.1.

avoid or shrink back from social involvement, because of criticism, rivalry, opposition or misunderstandings.

It has been said: "development-aid is a gift from the poor of the rich countries to the rich of the poor countries". It may sound rather cynical: but the test for us is this: to what extent have the church-institutions themselves become richer while begging for the poor, made the poor more dependent while serving them? Is it not easily taken for granted that all this aid should make it possible for us and our institutions to acquire more comfort, equip ourselves with better tools than those we get it for?

How many of us have "dispossessed" themselves fully, as some Latin American Bishops did?

Total participation: The Church is a community of faith, worship and charity. She can only show the first by expressing herself in the third. But the charity expressed should be that of the community, as a whole (not only of the hierarchy or clergy or religious), and not merely by proxy.

Do the people of God as a whole participate in these socio-economic activities? If not, these activities lose largely their sign-value. Clerical and religious participation and control has been noticed in many fields: it should not really astonish us. We find in them after all usually more availability, continuity, support and trust. And the vocation of many among them derived from just that single-minded desire: to be all to all, not only in the spiritual sense, but in the social sense, and thus inevitably to lead where others fear to tread. But there are moments and situations, where this kind of social monopoly should not be: is it not strange that we should have so few Catholic hospitals administered by laymen (a feature which the Holy Family Hospital, Delhi has so courageously introduced), that in the Bihar Relief Organisation only a trickle of laymen and lay-women could be found to share in the work (while hundreds of non-Christian laymen came forward), that in spite of nearly over 1000 high schools and 150 colleges (and some of them a hundred years old) we should as yet have only a trickle of "lay social missionaries" (as Sadhu Ityavira of Palai, as the *Viaiores Christi* from Bombay)? Should not, from among the ranks of our youth, more from the Catholics than from other communities, come forth totally dedicated and inspired men (not only during their college-camps) "set apart" like Vinoba Bhave, J. P. Narayan, to become "rebels for justice"?

There is another humble lesson in Mother Teresa's effort : at making "cooperators", inviting many people (actively, and each in an individual way) to share in her work. It is the draw in the community at large, so that the dying and the lepers recognize in it as it were, a gesture of society as a whole.

b. Relevance to Indian Conditions

The All-India Seminar is aimed at making the Church discover her true place and role in India. For this, as Nehru discovered his India (and from the pride and anger of this discovery our independence was born), we must discover India to-day (and that means besides her ancient glory, also her covered-up or forgotten weaknesses). Church-renewal is not a matter of new forms but of new symbols, of being better understood (and learning something in the process). In her message, as in her service, she must be relevant to the nation's needs and expectations. While being herself, the Church must be our own.

Indigenisation: the most telling part of the message is the speaker. Adaptation is communication: hence the importance of indigenisation of personnel (without narrow exclusivism).

One of the disconcerting impressions derived from an analysis of some 200 socio-economic projects selected at random, under Church-supervision (*) in India, is that, apart from Kerala and Madras, 2/3 of the project-managers are non-Indian; when concerned with the newer type of large-scale agricultural development projects an even higher percentage of 80% is still non-Indian. Covering both Catholic and Protestant projects, allowance must be made for congregational differences. But, in so far as it is true, it reflects not only a vulnerable situation for the development-work itself, but an aspect of "image" and communication open for improvement.

National priorities : With the indigenisation of persons, and even more important than that, should come the indigenisation of purpose, lest our socio-economic work be marginal, parochial, or superficial. It is sometimes striking how, even with the best intentions, major issues are overlooked (for instance, in Mater et Magistra there is nothing about land reform and land redistribut-

*cfr J. BERNA: "Implications of Missionary Policy for the work of the Church" 1968 (Paper Presented at Methodist Council-Meeting, 1968)

ion). We have observed something similar in India where the Church stands aside from the voluntary land reform advocated by Vinoba. There are other nationally vital issues : the Plan, employment, corruption, the family. Are we moving with the stream, or blowing bubbles in the air ?

The role of voluntary agencies: the Church is not a rival to the State: from the socio-economic angle her services fall naturally under the category of "voluntary agency", one among many. In a recent speech J. P. Narayan described the three modes in which the voluntary agencies can make their best contribution to the national effort: we could briefly summarize them as follows:

- (a) as a pressure-group of ideas and social consciousness not only among villagers and citizens, but in the developed world, too;
- (b) as a model of inspiration, as "animators", i.e. people who "bring the heart of the blueprints (plans)" to the people, and heart to the people;
- (c) as a complementary task-force where Government fails to reach the people, because of lack of resources, personnel, time or organisation.

The Church has certain available advantages over the State on the performance-level: she has a longer life than any government (government being determined, and not always helped, by politics); she is in direct contact with the individuals in a more intimate and personal way than any official; she has worldwide contacts and resources (of sympathy, personnel). As a "pressure-group" she is therefore well placed: the various Social Science courses among college-students, the encyclicals and statements, the initiatives and experiments, should be more widely publicised and spread. As an animating factor—the leaven in the dough—the Church should be ready to 'sacrifice' some of her priests, and stimulate more of her laymen, for national even governmental tasks (beyond our own institutions), for a short or longer period, irrespective of parochial or diocesan needs, when wanted.

C. Up-dating our services in keeping with the times

The keyword of Vatican II is 'aggiornamento, i.e. not so much upgrading as up-dating of our effort. In it the Church must reveal not only her spiritual resilience but the daring and

enthusiasm of youth. Living in a modern world, she must modernise her structure and methods. "The charity of the Church, to be a real sign to the modern world, must be directed to true problems and use other appropriate means"(*)

This modernity should reveal itself primarily under the following aspects: greater stress on administrative efficiency, more professional qualification, greater result-consciousness, and greater flexibility.

Administrative efficiency and accountability: On one weakness shadowing the work of the Church most people, with some prolonged experience in the field, will agree: our projects and services lack in business-like accountability and organisation. Believing in charismatic gifts, often makes us erratic. As one expert puts it: "We are too well-intentioned and too little office-conscious. And yet we require really more checks than ordinary business-people: for where profit keeps them alert, charity is an anonymous thing; failures cannot be so easily detected and attributed or penalised".

Concretely: too many project managers are *fac totums* (accountant, supervisor, correspondent, manager, etc.). As long as micro-projects are concerned, not much harm may derive from it, but there should be a barrier beyond which a manager will require a full time accountant-cum-secretary, in order to remain a responsible recipient of (specially official) aid.

Professional qualification has been mentioned already in the earliest Church-seminars on social work: the insistence has borne fruit to some extent, but the latest survey of the use and training of clerical personnel shows some appalling lacunae. Fr. Zeitler alludes to "an extremely low percentage of personnel set aside for any specialised work along modern lines of the apostolate..... (in the first place): social service".

Greatly deficient in this field are, particularly, the seminaries (in very few are any regular programmes foreseen for providing information or training in concrete social problems); scholasticates are often not much better, and colleges have abandoned, in many places, the effort to inculcate, apart from the right social attitudes, the general urgency for youth to help effectively in the socio-economic development.

The opening of new postgraduate Courses in MSW offers opportunity for laymen as well as for priests.

*cft. Hontart: "Latin American Church and the Social Change" p. 209

Greater flexibility is another imperative of renewal at a time when forms change so rapidly and lost opportunities speed away so fast. "Development," Pope Paul reminds us, "is growth plus change". The value of flexibility is that it allows for more creativeness. Many Church-undertakings are more worried about continuity than about adaptability. And yet it is our openness to the future, "to prepare now already the mental and operational readiness to accept the year 2000" (Kahn), which determines our temporal survival, in so far it stimulates inventiveness, and fosters detachment.

Did the Church bring about any significant new idea or model of social development? We could mention the Grihini—education system for women (started in 1962 in Gholeng); the grain golas and other tribal-uplift models, the recent Catholic Mobile Relief Organisation conceived during the Bihar Famine: but these cannot be more than random-examples. An attempt is to be made to discover these pioneering concepts which have a potential in them for socio-economic progress on a national scale.

(d) Resource—Adaptation:

Planning is not primarily fixing targets: it is basically the maximum exploitation of our resources. In the euphoria overtaking the Church at moments of intense renewal, the danger of over-ambitious or centrifugal planning is real. Her history bears the marks of this at certain moments in other fields: of over-grasping her political power in an age of political opportunity; of over-reaching and spreading too thinly her personnel in the age of missionary awakening; possibly of overtaxing herself also in the matter of educational institutions when the opportunities seemed great.

In the socio-economic urgency of our days, this danger is there, too: hence the primary need of resource-analysis and resource-development.

Are we too ambitious, or too limited in our participation? Are we doing too little, or should we do more in this direction? Remembering that we are a Church, a minority socially, functionally committed to many pastoral and other duties, often "not more than a voice in the wilderness", financially extremely dependent, politically vulnerable often, should we cut down or increase? To this question there is no simple answer, but a principle:

doing much or little is not a matter of size, but of *focus*, of choice, of concentration.

The answer lies also in a better *division of labour* (such as clergy, laity) which allows us not so much to do more with less people, but to do things better with the same number of people.

Are we too dependent on resources from abroad ? Could our socio-economic work be planned and maintained without foreign aid (money, personnel) ? Should it ?

- Protestant institutions of health need 1 million dollars per year for running expenses; Catholic hospitals need £ 100,000 medicine per year (free).
- From foreign aid-funds it is estimated by the Govt. of India that yearly between 50-60 crores of rupees is received from abroad by Christian agencies (Catholics about 25 crores, from Misereor alone in 1967: near to 6 crores).
- From National Lenten Campaigns (CCI) a total amount of Rs. 261,000 (1966), of Rs. 304,000 (1967) of Rs. 228,000 (1968)—about 1% of total aid received.
- From co-operative credit societies, at least double that amount (5 lakhs) should be yearly available as interest-gain for development (2% of total aid)

These are a few financial data as guidelines; from the point of view of personnel, one should know there are now 8680 priests (diocesan and religious: 9% foreign), 2136 brothers (16% foreign), 30,305 sisters (6½% foreign); 7,607,286 Catholics. Of all the clergy and religious together only 8% are in social work (mostly in hospitals, orphanages); about 350 men, about 1000 Sisters; laymen..... ? Another important fact: there are 3513 parishes, 10,025 mission stations.

Suggested conclusions: from the above facts some observations follow:

- that “institutionalised” use of personnel may have to be limited or reduced
- that more mobile service teams (pastoral or social) should be established
- that a development fund (from local resources) should be constituted (the Joint Council for CUI and CUOI suggested a minimum of 5 crores (initial capital) by the setting up of “revenue projects”, internal taxation, and other means)

- that we should more and more compete for allotment of national resources available for various projects, side by side with other groups—*a pari*;
- a sort of Central Social Welfare Board for Christian Churches might be set up, channelling all finances, assisting in planning, survey, loans, etc.

Are we not too "topheavy" in our structures, too weak at the basis? The impression is gaining ground that in the last few years a trend is growing of founding more and more central agencies (CCI, ISI, AFPRO, ICGSS) of screening and supervision, all well equipped with staff, in between the original donors and the projectholders. While no one doubts the need and utility of screening and reference, the demands imposed on the executive in the field becomes increasingly heavier, if not impossible (in so far as locally no secretarial staff is easily available or funded). On the other hand, because of an absence of supervisors and "screeners" with prolonged personal executive experience, many misunderstandings are created and maintained on both sides (to give an example: top supervisors cannot easily conceive that a nurse in India can do valid medical service without a doctor, or practice midwifery alone, which normally no nurse in Europe or America can, without a doctor, that at the outset development-schemes inevitably start from the "mission" itself, etc.)

The remedy is to be sought at three levels maybe: at the top-level, by making provision for really field-experienced people to act as liaison; at the intermediary level, to organise midway larger and better-administered registered societies; at the lowest level to provide (and fund) a minimum of clerical assistance (for bookkeeping, reports, entries, etc.).

5. Possible Lines of Renewal

1. On an all-India basis: absolute need of a *central information-office* on socio-economic work of various categories, to act also as an advisory and evaluating body on over-all performance.
2. At the regional level: more *interdiocesan, diocesan, inter-church planning* on the principle of "select area approach" or priorities with joint finance-planning and development plan.
3. At the local level of institutions and personnel: *more flexibility and mobility* of services; organisational acceptance of short-term assignments and commitments.

4. At the individual's level: *more spiritual assistance* to the social workers (lay and priests) to feed their professional spirituality (cfr the books of M. Quoist, Pierre, etc. for workers).

Conclusions

The words of Pope Paul may best sum up the reasonings and the fundamental attitudes that should guide us in overcoming our weaknesses and increasing our strength in socio-economic work in India:

"We must make haste: too many are suffering, and the distance is growing that separates the progress of some and the stagnation—not to say the regression—of others.....

"Yet the work should advance smoothly, if there is not to be the risk of losing indispensable equilibrium.

"Development demands bold transformations, innovations that go deep. Urgent reforms should be undertaken without delay.

"It is for each to take his share in them with generosity, particularly those whose education, position and opportunity afford them wide scope for action..... (Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*).

APPENDIX 1.

List of reference-works of Church-activity in social work

1. *Catholic Directory* 1968 (published Febr 1969) and previous editions of 1964, 1960, 1956. St Paul's Press, Bombay.
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SECTION III

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION IN THE FIELD OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

The Seminar "CHURCH IN INDIA TODAY" is *'fact finding'* as well as *'action oriented'*. Every effort should, therefore, be made to arrive at a definite well-considered policy for action in the future role of the Church in the pastoral and temporal spheres. In order to evolve such a policy we shall have to evaluate the past and present activities of the Church in this field.

Keeping this point in view an attempt is made here to provide some general background information on the subject and to suggest a few general guidelines which may be discussed in detail at this All-India Seminar in order to arrive at conclusions for the basis of establishing priorities in a future policy of socio-economic development.

1. Reasons for Choice of the Topic

The one important reason for the choice of this topic is the vastness of the field of socio-economic activities, the limited resources and trained personnel at the command of Government and the need for voluntary agencies such as the Church and others for lending a hand in this vital sector of human growth. Again, the limited financial resources and lack of trained personnel within the Church structures makes it vitally important to establish some order of priorities when discussing the teachings of the Church on the development of peoples and the contribution of the Church in the development of India.

Need for planning

Planning and budgeting for development is now a necessary and widely accepted method. All International Agencies like the FAO., UNESCO, UNICEF, ECOSOC, UNDP, most National Governments and in India all State Governments draw up plans and establish priorities because of the limited funds and trained personnel. For example, in the field of agriculture

FAO's Freedom from Hunger Campaign has set itself some of the following priorities:

1. Secure widest possible use and application of the new *high yielding* varieties of seed and planting material.
2. War against waste in all forms of food.
3. Close the protein gap.
4. Better development of human resources i.e. social mechanism.
5. Help developing countries to increase production of exportable exchange-earning crops to help in overcoming their balance of payments.

While the above priorities are important enough, a large number of equally important areas like irrigation, fertilizers etc., are left to be taken up by other agencies. In the five-year Plans of India, financial allocations indicate the priority in different fields considering the importance of the role each sector has to play in the development of the country. In the face of so many problems, planning and establishment of priorities is absolutely essential from the local to the regional and to the national and international levels. Fixing of priorities will of course largely depend on the availability of: (1) capital resources; (2) human resources; (3) local infra-structures; (4) technical know-how; (5) suitable climatic conditions; (6) raw materials; (7) means of communication and transport; (8) stable political and cultural environments; (9) co-operation and readiness of the beneficiaries to face up to the challenge of change; (10) proper marketing; and (11) purchasing capacity of consumers, etc.

In line with the objects of the Seminar we have to ask ourselves a few relevant questions and provide the answers to them. What are the different activities the Church has been engaged in? How are they selected? How are they financed? How are they implemented? What are the existing criteria and what is the policy (if any) for establishing priorities? Is there an existing planned approach?

The answers to these questions will show forth the importance of the choice of the topic. The Church has realized the importance of the material side in the development of the *whole man*. Her activities in the sphere of socio-economic development offer a great opportunity of presenting to mankind the Church of Service and projecting the true image of Christ in the service

of the poor. Laying down priorities for action in socio-economic activities will also enable fixing priorities for action in other fields.

2. Scope of the Topic

The scope of the topic includes defining of the different fields of action and their relative importance. The following lines of approach may be helpful.

Present activities of the Church: It is worthwhile here to examine the activities of the Church and their relation to the socio-economic field. A close look at the activities will reveal that socio-economic activities in areas like agriculture, irrigation, animal husbandry, training in socio-economic projects etc., are of comparatively recent origin. In the past, the attention of the Church was focussed more on education and public health and pure relief. These are in fact still the major fields of activity. It would, perhaps, be revealing to conduct an evaluation to see whether consolidation and adaptation of these sectors to present day needs is not urgently required in order to reflect an image relevant to our times. Unfortunately, most activities of socio-economic development have been largely institutionalised to the detriment of the people at large. It is high time that some soul-searching be done to find out if this sort of approach is really effective and useful in the larger interests of the poor people whom the Church professes to serve. Should she not formulate projects for the people at their level, with their co-operation and involvement rather than undertake to formulate and implement projects (with lack of trained personnel) through institutionalized charity? The "educative value" which is sought to be fostered through each project is being lost because real and enthusiastic involvement of the beneficiaries is not obtained. Funds solicited for development are used as doles which only lead to perpetuation of dependence of the people on outside funds and does not lead to self-sufficiency and higher levels of living through self-help, employment, earnings and savings.

3. Background Data

It is an accepted fact that most development will have to begin with education. That is why illiterate people are prone to be slow in adapting themselves to *real development* as compared to the educated and elite groups. Hence, in this context the activit-

ies of the Church in promoting education over the centuries was a step in the right direction. In today's complex society, however, the mere provision of education or scattered hospitals and dispensaries will not answer the urgent necessity of raising the living standards of the people through community development projects.

Challenge: Vatican II has called upon the People of God to play a major role in the overall development of man. This does not necessarily mean merely a shift in emphasis from a past concentration of resources and personnel on education, public health and emergency relief confined to institutions. This is a call to the Church—clergy, religious and laity—to attempt a wider embrace of its concern for man, to include in her activities a strategy for the overall development of the people. It is a stirring challenge which needs to be met realistically. The most important factor to keep in mind is the fact that no effort has been made to plan and formulate a coordinated and unified programme of development in different spheres of activity.

Agriculture: Agriculture has for long been recognized as the most vital sector which governs the growth and development of India. The country being predominantly agricultural any change from the traditional patterns to a modern industrialized or urbanised pattern requires a primary stabilisation in the agricultural sector.

In spite of the accepted importance of the development of agriculture and the agriculturist, a look at the past work of the Church in the field of socio-economic development will reveal that even in rural areas the approach was rather urban. The main emphasis was on the education of the rural children and on providing the rural people with occasional supplies of food, clothing and medical aid. If at all any agricultural development was undertaken, it was mostly confined to mission lands and the people at the family level had very little involvement. Much of the aid given for rural development to a Church institution has gone merely to boost the existence and expansion of that institution, leaving the proposed beneficiary—on whose behalf the funds were solicited and received—at the tail-end of the benefits.

Continuous droughts and famine conditions have rudely awakened this country and the world at large to the importance

of not just talking of the importance of agriculture, but to the utmost urgency of doing some hard practical work to increase food output by providing the required inputs. Agriculture is a major priority area for action. Not only has the spectre of starvation from lack of primary produce been responsible for this priority to agriculture but also the fact that failure in agriculture leads to large-scale depression in industry and hampers the whole process of development in the country.

It is a known fact that large areas of land owned by the Church are not fully or usefully utilised. Almost 60—75% of the land is either half utilised or not developed to its full capacity. It would be advisable to conduct a survey to find out "what is required and where", to enable a rapid development of these lands for intensive cultivation. For developing such lands emphasis should be on finding local resources, and the institutions which have such lands attached to them should be made self-supporting from their produce.

A larger number of "model farms" are being run by dioceses, parishes, mission stations and Catholic institutions like schools, colleges, hospitals etc., all over India. Most of them solicited aid from abroad on the plea of "awakening" the farmers in the surrounding areas to the new techniques of agriculture. In fact, however, they have not served the local community properly for most of them are planned and implemented with high capital investments. In fact, they show forth the privileged position of the Church as compared to the poor neighbours. Demonstration farms or model farms should be simple models for the local people to follow and practical steps he taken to improve the lot of the surrounding farming families. We should examine whether all the extra overhead expenses are necessary and whether they would benefit the local people. Those farms which do not have competent and trained personnel to manage and extend the demonstrative aspects of the farms should not receive any priority. It is also useless to demonstrate sophisticated techniques of agricultural production to poor people who do not have the capacity to acquire the improved inputs.

Industrialisation: Even though, due to famine conditions in the past few years, donor agencies abroad and project administrators in India have been concentrating on rural development, we must realize that the problem in urban areas (their solution is much

more complicated than those in the villages) need equal attention. Perhaps, because rural development is comparatively easier and the requirements of the village folk comparatively few due to the simple nature of their life, the Church also has concentrated its efforts largely in rural areas. This has led to the neglect of the development of poor sections of society in urban areas. The massive resources, the technical knowledge and the dedicated cadre of trained personnel required have hindered urban development and the solution of problems caused by expanding industrialisation. This, again, is a challenging task. The whole situation needs to be reviewed and surveyed.

The Church should make a greater contribution to promote effective trade unionism, develop entrepreneurial skills, industrial leadership and professional competence. The work already being done by Catholic institutions to train skilled-workmen for employment in factories is quite praiseworthy though far from sufficient.

Capital formation: In India we need to build up capital resources much more today than ever before. The Church's work in "development" has been mainly dependent on the help of foreign donations. Hardly any effort has been made to raise and mobilize local resources. Even the foreign donations have not been properly invested to use them as catalytic agents for generating our own funds. Most of our socio-economic projects do not lay a heavy enough emphasis on self-help. The large population of India is a tremendous natural resource, as this manual power can be a mighty tool for reconstruction if properly organized and channellized along the right lines. Projects at present are not designed to educate people to invest in savings by fostering the habit of thrift and the utilization of these savings for productive purposes. If the Church could give a positive lead in this direction it would be a valuable example and an incentive for others to follow.

Cooperatives

The Church in India has made a pioneering effort in this field. Today, we have co-operative societies scattered all over the length and breadth of India. But it is now being questioned whether all these societies are functioning in accordance with the true spirit, philosophy and principles of the movement. Quite often the answer is in the negative. This may be largely due to the ignor-

ance and illiteracy of the rural people and their inability to undertake joint ventures. The Co-operative movement in India, even outside the Church's activity, is also wanting in this respect. Many of the existing co-operative societies sponsored by the Church are not true voluntary co-operative movements of the people. Their purposes were:

1. To provide a legal frame-work for a group or society.
2. To merely obtain some facility either from Government or from private bodies which would be difficult to obtain without such a legal frame-work.
3. To take shelter under the movement and to avoid coming under the purview of legislations like land-ceiling, tenancy act, etc.

Whereas in some cases co-operatives are organized as above, in other cases their organization is altogether opposed for fear of interference by Government or Co-operative Departments. This happens rather often and is not a correct approach. Such isolation will not enable us to identify the Christian community with the rest of the nation. Co-operatives could in fact be tools for a true dialogue with non-Christians and would help in mutual understanding and appreciation.

4. Problems

Human development vs. material development: The proper training of people, the development of leadership, the creation of active local groups of dependable and dedicated (trained) workers at local (and other) levels are investments in human development. The result of such investments will be seen in communities going forward through their own efforts to develop their material resources, to improve their environments and to raise their living standards.

Development has to be not only material, but both spiritual and material. The present teaching of the Church has given material development its due important place in the full development of the *whole man*. Without the provision of basic needs of a material life, all talk of spiritual growth to a man with an empty stomach becomes meaningless. Hence the Church has to attempt human development incorporated in material development.

Socio-economic projects offer a media for an all round human and material development if they are properly designed.

To train farmers in the techniques of using improved inputs becomes meaningless if those inputs are not provided to them in proper quantity at the proper time. The failure of Government programmes and of our own demonstration projects to improve the conditions of surrounding farmers are due to a lack of inputs for the farmers. In engineering and industry a dearth of employment opportunities leave human development stagnant due to non-utilization of training and skills. In the above context human development and material development are inseparable and the total development of a human person can be achieved only when both the sectors are explored simultaneously and totally.

5. Possible lines of solution

Priorities for action

1. *Efficient structures*: One of the important areas for top-most priority for action is the need for an urgent change in the whole business of socio-economic project work. There is no coordinated or planned approach in the dioceses. Any individual priest, nun, brother and even bishop gets an idea into his head and before long he or she starts sending out appeals to national and international agencies all over the world. Even the Holy Father, individual Cardinals, Bishops, Priests and known lay philanthropists are not spared. The result has been a mushrooming of thousands of so-called development projects all over the country—sometimes with large funds in the hands of individuals who have no training or background in the type of work they have undertaken.

Many of these project appeals go out with the approval of their bishops or diocesan directors who mechanically sign their recommendation of letters without going into the merits, the need or technical feasibility of those projects. Funds are then channelled to the applicant over whom no one has any specific control as far as the utilization of those funds is concerned. There is no one in the diocese qualified to see to the proper supervision and implementation of the projects. The result is fairly widespread waste of funds and failure of projects.

Most of the diocesan directors have no training or background in socio-economic activities. Many have neither these qualifications nor even the interest to do such work and also lack qualities of leadership.

There is thus an urgent need for a thorough change in this regard. First priority must therefore, be given to the establishment of diocesan structures in each diocese. In order to help the proper functioning of the diocesan structures, parish structures should also be established. These structures may be a sort of Development Councils consisting of the Ordinary, the Diocesan Director and elected representatives of the clergy, the religious and the laity. Lay representation should preferably be higher than the rest. Some qualified technical persons (agricultural experts, engineers, etc.) available in the diocese may be co-opted on these Councils for competent advice. The aim and motivation should be an answer to the clarion call of Vatican II to the *People of God* to come closer to each other, understand and appreciate each other and work together in the true spirit of Christ to present the Church of Service in Action. There is no question of a conflict between laity, clergy and religious.

These Councils should be formed with as much speed as possible and charged with some of the following activities:

- (i) Conduct an immediate survey in the diocese to find out what has been done and what needs to be done.
- (ii) After the survey they should write down in order of priority the projects which need to be undertaken.
- (iii) Keeping in view the limited finances, one or a few projects should be undertaken to be completed over a set period of time. These may be five-year or ten-year plans of development and within these there may be annual plans.
- (iv) After setting the targets, efforts should be made to formulate a coherent budget.
- (v) Avenues for raising resources for the budget should be explored and means and ways established and taken recourse to.
- (vi) In consultation with the Ordinary a properly trained, qualified and experienced person—priest or laymen—should be selected and appointed as the Diocesan Director. This person should not be moved and shunted from post to post for any and every kind of work. He should be a whole full-time devoted man—or even woman—whose sole concern will be socio-economic development of the people of the diocese. If such a person needs to be

- trained then the arrangements should be made to give him or her the required training.
- (vii) The Development Council should preferably be a registered body in order to avail of Governmental facilities, and be a legal entity.
 - (viii) This Council will not just be an advisory body. It should be a fully authoritative decision-making Council.
 - (ix) It will have full control over all the socio-economic activities in the diocese.
 - (x) No individual in the diocese will seek aid for any projects from any source excepting from and through this Council.
 - (xi) This Council will plan, select projects, examine projects, approve projects, solicit funds for them, channel those funds with full control over them, see to the competent, economical, speedy and best possible implementation and supervision of all projects.
 - (xii) All funds will be controlled and disbursed by the Council which will be responsible for building up a development fund and for keeping all records, accounting and audit.
 - (xiii) It will be the Council's responsibility to provide for the regular supply of trained and qualified personnel for projects' work.
 - (xiv) If trained personnel are not available, then a project need not be undertaken and priority should be given for the training of suitable persons.
 - (xv) The Council should give priority to the emergence of local leadership and active, dedicated groups of social workers who will never rest until they see the community grow from progress to progress.

2. *Self-reliance*: The emphasis from now on must be on self-reliance and our own funds. One of the major reasons for priority here is the fact that aid to India from abroad has started shrinking. We have been warned by major donor agencies to be prepared for drastic cuts in development as well as emergency aid from abroad. India has so far received the "lion's share" of the aid given to developing countries by Catholic agencies abroad. There is—and rightly so—a shift in emphasis towards

meeting the needs of other developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

(i) Firstly the well-to-do people in our country must be awakened to the miserable conditions of poor and downtrodden people. A sustained effort through all possible media be made for a continuous campaign to raise funds in each diocese as well as on a national level. It is a known fact that those who can are not giving enough for the development of the nation and of the under-privileged.

(ii) The poor people for whom projects are formulated must be made to work in the projects and also to put in whatever little finance possible, in order to make them feel that they are doing something for themselves. This means they should give their contribution in cash, kind and labour.

(iii) Every project which can be made productive should be made to yield income for sustaining itself, for generating savings for the future and for contributing to its own expansion or for the taking up of other projects for other groups of needy people.

(iv) Because of the urgent need for self-reliance, priority should be given to a few well selected productive projects—maybe commercial ventures—which will yield money for funding other urgent projects for development.

(v) The Campaign Against Hunger and Disease sponsored by the Catholic Bishops of India and conducted by the Catholic Charities India is an attempt to mobilise local resources to provide for relief and development. Priority should be given to the strengthening of this Campaign and enroll more public support towards its objectives.

3. *Emergencies*: Emergencies caused by disasters like droughts (famines), floods, earthquakes, cyclones and fires, etc., should be treated as national responsibilities, be they in any diocese. Immediate urgent steps should be taken by the dioceses not so affected to come to the aid of the areas where humanity suffers on account of such calamities. Within the dioceses where the calamity strikes, effort should be made to solicit aid from Government as well as from the well-to-do people in the area—instead of depending only on aid from outside or only from diocesan funds. Such emergencies where human suffering is caused in the above manner must always have priority over other

developmental activities. Emergency situations should be used for creating permanent constructive works for the benefit of the people. Pure relief may be avoided as far as possible to make use of the labour of all those who can work, together with the available funds and supplies to achieve real reconstruction. Our relief work in such emergencies should be done in cooperation and collaboration with Government as well as other Christian and non-Christian and secular relief agencies working in the field.

4. *Need for co-operation at national level:* (a) The disjointed, scattered and haphazard manner of development activity going on around the country in the various dioceses is sought to be set right by the establishment of Diocesan Developmental Councils as suggested in priority number one.

(b) It is known that at the national level there are four Catholic agencies working in this field viz. Catholic Charities India, Catholic Relief Services, Indo-German Social Service Society and the Indian Social Institute. CCI is established by the CBCI under an unanimous mandate of the entire hierarchy as their national relief and development wing. CRS is representing the American Bishops Conference in India. They distribute American food supplies donated by the people of USA and are also funding projects with recourse to USAID funds, CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS (Papal Funds) and funds solicited from several other organizations abroad. IGSSS represents MISERE-OR—that is the German Bishops Campaign Against Hunger. ISI is an organisation of the Jesuit Fathers which evaluates projects on contract basis for IGSSS, CRS and several other foreign agencies (Belgium, etc.).

(c) The field of socio-economic development is so vast that there is no need to ask for the demolition of any agency. In fact it is essential for as many voluntary agencies as possible to lend a hand in this vital sector of human growth. There is, however, an urgent need for these agencies coming closer towards each other and if possible having some sort of an agreed common programme which, while ensuring the entity of each agency, would put some coherence and some sense into the currently distorted picture of the developmental and relief work of the *Catholic Church* in this country. The non-Catholic and non-Christian in this

nation does not understand and cannot comprehend the meaningfulness of so many different agencies working separately, isolated from each other and each claiming to represent the Church. In Governmental circles also one is sometimes placed in a ridiculous situation.

(d) (i) This lack of cooperation, collaboration and coordination among existing national Catholic agencies should be remedied.

(ii) Similarly, lack of the same with non-Catholic, non-Christian and Governmental agencies should also be remedied.

5. *Look before you leap*: (Slow and steady development). This is a wise old saying and needs to be given priority when enthusiasm bubbles over and money, which is not one's own, can be got easily. Before plunging headlong into any project, make it a must to consult the people concerned, the experts, Government departments, local donors and as many as possible. Look into the vastness and complexity of the task, the various modes of tackling it effectively with due consideration to forces working parallel to the Church as well as those working against the Church. A recent example is that of one lakh rupees (cash) relief programme enthusiastically started with several lakhs of rupees worth of CRS food supplies in a certain district in Orissa. The local press and the Collector have made the completion of the programme impossible. The priest concerned has abandoned the work with several projects like wells, tanks and channels, etc. left incompleted.

Project formulators should take into fullest consideration the material and intellectual levels of the proposed beneficiaries and the corresponding degree of development they can assimilate without their being physically and mentally jolted out of their environment. Hence, every project should attempt to provide for a stage by stage development to ensure proper use of meagre resources and a true and steady development of the people and their surroundings. For instance when it comes to a choice between other projects and a project for a certain section of the people say in a village where there is no facility at all for safe drinking water, and the same is being brought from distant places, with much labour and hardship—and that too from unhygienic sources like dirty ponds and river beds where animals and men bathe, wash and drink the same water—then this project has priority over all others. If a project is conceived and plan-

ned to provide a drinking water facility then prudence should guide us. It should be modest and should be able to provide the immediate need of the people. In contrast to this if an ambitious and expensive programme is conceived with tubewells, overhead tank, pipelines and taps in every home then this project should receive a lesser priority over a project for a simple, covered drinking water well with rope-pulleys for drawing out the water.

6. *Basic needs*: Priority must be given to the provision of the basic needs of the poor and downtrodden people. These needs are food, shelter, raiment, drinking water and medical aid. Other needs such as felt needs like sanitation, hygiene, education, training, transport and communications etc. may come next depending on the results of the proposed surveys in all dioceses. Availability of drinking water is a widely unfulfilled basic need, in lakhs of villages in India, and is crying for attention. The Gandhi Centenary National Committee and its sub-committee for BASIC AMENITIES FOR HUMAN LIVING has selected this task as the most urgent to be completed during the Centenary Celebrations of the Father of the Nation. They have given a clarion call to all sections of our society to come forward to help in this massive undertaking. Here is a chance. Let us gird our loins and come forward to mobilize the people and galvanize them into action all over India (raising our own funds) to make an effective contribution to provide water for drinking for those of our brethern who have not even water !

7. *Supplement national and State plans*: Even though our developmental activity is primarily a voluntary effort we should see all our projects within the frame-work of National and State plans. We should try to integrate our work with official and other non-official efforts and obtain their cooperation and aid in the form of grants, loans and technical advice and information. The isolated approach should be shed and the ghetto mentality should be given up, if we want to be accepted as truly a part of this nation and be in the mainstream of the life of our people.

8. *Priorities in agriculture*: We have to establish priorities for various developmental projects within the agricultural sector also.

(i) *Productive projects*: Funds are very limited. Needs to be met are large-scale. Priority should be given to investing the limited funds in productive projects, and to begin with, only in

areas where self-help is forthcoming and where mutual aid can be fostered among the beneficiaries. Such productive projects could, over a period of time, be sources of funds and trained personnel for other projects in areas of felt needs like rural housing, sanitation, etc., which in themselves are not productive but are vitally needed. Ambitious rehabilitation programmes for a few could wait for sometime when a large number of small peasants can be helped with more immediately required inputs for production. This will also be in line with the national policy of helping the largest number of poor people possible.

(ii) *People's projects*: Agricultural development schemes which aim at making Catholic institutions self-supporting are *not* top priority with CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS and several other donor agencies abroad, unless they are convinced that the schemes will greatly help to improve the life of the surrounding community (Christian, Muslim, Hindus) and be the starting point of an awakened community development programme in the area. In such cases they would much prefer to see the project initiator help poor people to develop their own lands *before* improving Church lands. In this they are not following idealistic principles, but the practical experience of missionaries who find that a rich Church institution (and ordinary people always judge by outward appearances) surrounded by poor farmers nearly starving on their own lands may not present the real image of Christ. Oftentimes this is an obstacle to the spreading of the faith. It will be generally admitted that the Church buildings in Rome are far from useful when we have to convince the Italian workmen of the values of the Christian faith. In developing countries therefore, special care has to be taken not to have as the main aim a self-sufficient, prosperous Church among starving people. The fear is that such schemes have the counter-witness effect—the Church's well cultivated acres, by sophisticated and mechanical means, her well-fed cows and pigs and poultry—on the surrounding poor people, both Christian and non-Christian. In spite of the fact of the usefulness of our institutions *is it not high time we adopted a change of methods, with a more direct approach to the people and their basic human problems?*

(iii) *Trained personnel for projects*: One of the important criteria for deciding priority for any project is to ensure the existence of capable, trained personnel for effective and economic imple-

mentation of the project. The emergence of local infra-structure together with trained personnel should be the deciding factor.

Technological progress in the field of agriculture demands the scientific training and education of the farmers. Just as it would be foolish to man a complex industry with untrained hands, so is it foolhardy to expect the best results from scientific farming indulged in by illiterate and untrained agriculturists along traditional patterns. The Church need not put up its own training institutions but should try to make the fullest use of existing facilities in agricultural colleges, research stations and institutes to effectively transplant the new findings through a network of trained hands. Because of this urgent need the Church should give priority to the training of its personnel for agricultural vocations.

9. *Priorities in urban development.* (i) *Training of social workers:* As in rural reconstruction so in urban improvement schemes, social work among slum dwellers is no more just a dedicated man's work. Various complex factors caused by industrialization, overcrowding, growth of slums, party politics and conflicting behavioral patterns give a bigger dimension to this problem. Today it is a job for vocationally trained social workers. Priority should, therefore, be given to specialized training in urban development work for the promotion of healthy trade unionism, counselling of exploited workers in slum improvement.

(ii) *Trade unions:* Trade unions are indispensable in today's complex society. This sector shows rather unhealthy and extremist tendencies due to the exploitation of issues by different political parties. Many a trade union exists for name's sake, without any programme, policy or platform. In contrast there are trade unions which are politically motivated and are violent in their demands. These are used as tools to protest and strike even against just actions of the managements. The Church would do well to give priority to the organizing of people into unions and welfare groups, irrespective of religious or political allegiance. She could help to evolve model trade unions which will stand for obtaining the rights of each union member in a peaceful and just manner. The need is for a movement of dedicated lay social workers to help mobilize groups and their resources to fight for their right to live a decent life.

(iii) *Technical training:* The existing general educational institutions would do well to include vocational training in their

curricula to help rehabilitate more and more people in industry. This is an important aspect in today's growing industrialization and production of large numbers of young people with a general education but no technical skills. This is one of the causes of widespread unemployment, lack of respect for manual labour and so much of unrest and discontent. Vocational training in all schools should receive top-most priority.

The Church in India has done tremendous work in educating the public of India. This contribution of hers has definitely contributed towards the growth and development of India. The English medium schools, though expensive, are *fully used* especially by the well-to-do classes of all castes and creeds. For the future, however, we have to see whether instead of multiplying these types of educational institutions we should not convert at least some of these into vocational schools and also open only vocational schools in the future.

The limited number of existing technical training institutions run by the Church are serving only a very small percentage of our youth. The present effort in technical training is quite insufficient. The Church should seriously adapt the above suggestion. The birth of an organisation called "SKIP" (Skills for Progress) with the objective of consolidating the entire Christian effort in this sector is a realistic step in the right direction and should receive support and priority. It is a coming together into a national registered society of all existing Christian Technical schools and institutes. Perhaps, this ecumenical venture could be used to build up a movement for urban development.

10. *Urban development vis-a-vis rural development*

Housing: Comparing rural and urban problems we see that urbanisation and industrialisation have created acute problems of housing, sanitation and hygiene, transport and communications, etc. The rural areas are experiencing similar problems today though they look less acute due to the emphasis on food production and a lesser concentration of population. In this whole problem of development, the main limiting factor seems to be *capital*. That is where priority has again to be considered. The educational and public health complexes in urban areas swallow a good amount of development funds and they seem to be the only visible signs of our socio-economic activities.

In contrast to this, for the same capital investment in a rural area, there are more widespread visible signs of development in the form of wells, bullocks, pump-sets, channels, machinery, dairies, poultry, piggeries, etc. We may ask ourselves whether our work in urban development is serving the cause of the poorest and neediest in the cities as it is actually doing in the rural areas? Due to the lack of interest on the part of donors abroad in housing projects and their emphasis on food production and rural development activity this vital area is not receiving sufficient attention. One way out of this morass could be cooperative housing projects in urban areas. These should be taken up methodically in slow and steady phased programmes over several years. Funds could be raised by having area-wise commercial projects, by mobilizing local resources through thrift unions and small savings schemes, special campaigns for donations, Government subsidies and loans, etc.

11. *Capital formation—priorities*

Thrift: An urgent effort should be made to educate people to avoid extravagant expenditure on social customs such as marriages, births, funerals, feast days and also in daily living. They should be taught ways and means of simplifying these functions and to make sacrifices to build up savings. New ways and means should be discovered and encouraged. Experiments should be conducted at all levels. A dialogue with non-Christians should be initiated to promote thrift among all our peoples. The main burden in this task must rest with the enlightened laity so as to make such a movement really worthwhile and successful. Non-sectarian, legally registered cooperative credit societies should be formed in all areas under lay leadership.

12. *Priorities in cooperatives*

(i) *Examine role:* The Church should seriously examine her role in promoting the principles of cooperation among people and in the development of cooperatives as a major means of progress and prosperity in India.

(ii) *Learn from others:* Studies of world famous cooperatives like the one in Nova Scotia (Canada) and the more successful ones at home like the Chotanagpur Co-operative Society, the Christian Co-operative Union, Calcutta and the Seva Co-operative Credit Union, Bangalore should be made and their experience

used to expand the movement. Inspired and devoted leadership is doubtless the most important factor, along with loyalty and integrity which lead to the success of such societies. Economic stability and all-round development of peoples can be achieved if the Church were to work by organizing communities into fruitful co-operative societies. It is necessary to inject into the people the philosophy and principles involved in the co-operative movement. Every individual should be taught to accept the fact that the interest of the community as a whole should take priority over personal or self interest.

(iii) *Learn from past failure*: A study should be conducted of some of the more important co-operative societies which have failed or which are finding themselves in the doldrums today. This study placed alongside the studies of the successful cooperatives should show where failure lay. Past failures should not discourage us from undertaking new cooperatives. It is certain that once the principles of the movement are properly understood and efficiently applied it is bound to succeed. It is wrong to believe that illiterate and ignorant poor people cannot be organised into successful cooperatives. Many a failure occurred because of a lack of understanding, a lack of correct judgement of the loan capacity, purchasing capacity, selection of wrong type or untrained people to direct their activities. It was also due to dearth of local leadership and sound counselling of members to maintain their continued and sustained loyalties.

(iv) *Proper leadership and education of members*: We must bear in mind the fact that cooperatives will bring all sorts of people together who differ widely in their background, education, social status, religious and economic and political views. Certainly not all these members will be enthusiastic supporters of their organisations. Apathy is a common disease in backward communities. This turns members into passive participants and "everybody's business" tends to become "nobody's business". The biggest factor in this relationship is the human equation which will involve members, directors, managers and employees. So the acceptance that any will enjoy among its members will depend on the quality of people it will select to direct, manage and carry on its day to day operations. Success will depend on persuasion to accept the ideals and principles of cooperation, the cooperative programme, policies and procedures. Once set up

this can partly be achieved by building the reputation of cooperatives so that members will come to trust it as their own. This will imply building up its financial ability—for nothing succeeds like success. “A sound Balance Sheet is the Best Public Relations Instrument”.

Every effort should be made to:

- (i) infuse the cooperative spirit amongst the people;
- (ii) instil in them confidence in the usefulness of practical services;
- (iii) create feelings of fraternity between those who serve and administer and those who are served, so that their identities are merged in the service of the movement; and
- (iv) employ cooperative techniques by example rather than precept.

The education of the people in general and of the members and office-bearers in particular in managing the affairs of the cooperatives is paramount. In addition to training in book-keeping, accounts and business practices, the executives and office-bearers should be provided with training facilities in marketing and other types of cooperatives, particularly those of a vocational nature which are likely to be developed in the area.

SECTION IV

ORGANIZATIONS AND STRUCTURES FOR DEVELOPMENT WORK

I. INTRODUCTION

The discussion that follows is meant for those who accept a Christian ethos which demands that the Church in India, both as an Institution and as the People of God, should commit itself to development work. Development work, as opposed to emergency and relief activities, aims at removing the root causes of poverty and thus at overcoming misery. It teaches the hungry "how to fish" instead of just "giving him fish to eat". Smooth and efficient organizations and structures at different levels to decide Church policy in the field of development work, to establish priorities, to mobilise resources and personnel and to carry out projects and programmes are clearly necessary if the Church is to fulfil its role properly in this important area of activity.

—What should be the nature of and scope of these organizations ?

—Are the existing organizations and structures competent and adequate ?

—How should the existing structures be improved ? What new structures will become necessary ?

II. THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF NEEDED ORGANISATIONS AND STRUCTURES

The nature and scope of needed organizations and structures for development work should be determined, it would seem, by the following factors:

1. Demands of development as such;

2. Demands of the roles to be played in development work by the different categories of the People of God; and
3. Demands of Indian existential situation.

1. Demands of development

(a) Development demands the use of physical sciences to help man master nature, the use of social sciences to help man understand human relationships, to arrange them to promote human welfare and to help man act normally and rationally to build a more just social order. Development ultimately stands for total emancipation of man from crippling diseases, deprivation, hunger and ignorance and total reconciliation of man by bridging human estrangement based on economic, social and cultural disparities.

(b) Development work demands a planned and rational approach since it focuses on groups or categories of persons, on structures of society, rather than directly on individuals. It presupposes integrated and coordinated actions rather than isolated efforts. It has to be based on a deeper appreciation for the cultural, political, and other non-economic factors in development. It demands clear thinking about the nature or character of resources available and an allocation of these where they can do the most good. It requires proper investigation, continuing evaluation, a progressive clarification of goals and mobilization of *consensus* on those goals and more important, efficiency of instruments and institutions to attain them: experts, research programmes, planning institutions, implementing agencies, etc., will be the needed as effective instruments in this task.

(d) Development demands the community-development approach, which emphasizes the initiative and active participation of the people themselves in the programmes; mobilization of people's resources as much as possible; blue-prints and technical know-how; the use of outside help to stimulate local self-efforts for reliance through self-help and mutual help; the tackling of felt needs of the community; the faith in science and technology, democratic process, social justice for all and the integration of the life of the people with the life of the Nation.

2. Demands of the roles to be played by the different categories of the People of God

(a) It is the mission of the Church to be an instrument in the

hands of the risen Christ to redeem the secular from within and lead it to its eschatological fulfilment. But, in this mission, "the laymen should take up as their own proper task the renewal of the temporal order." If the role of the Hierarchy is to teach and to interpret authentically the norms of morality to be followed in the matter, it belongs to the laymen without waiting passively for orders and directives, to take the initiative freely and to infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, customs, laws and structures in which they live.

(b) The Church is the whole People of God and must be understood in terms of the mission of Christ in the world. This means, that in terms of the nature of the Church, the clergy-lay distinction is not fundamental but rather functional. The laity will have to play a major role in the organizational structure of the Church—in its decision-making process, in carrying on its super-natural mission and more so, in the matter of managing its temporal goods and activities. Their right and responsibility to play their legitimate role in the priestly, prophetic and royal functions of the Church needs emphasis not only in theory but also in practice. Very specifically the responsibility of the laity in the management of the temporal means adopted by the Church towards its salvific mission, is to be on par with that of the Bishops, the clergy and the religious.

(c) The Bishops, the clergy and the religious as members of the People of God and as citizens of the earthly city, have a major role to play in the field of development. To say that their ministry is purely spiritual is a dangerous dogma.

"We must be careful, not to create a false dualism between the spiritual and the temporal in the Church's work of human redemption. . . . Man does not lead his spiritual life in separate compartments of his being. The man is not a closed world to the other, but the two react on each other in a constant process of mutual interference. . . . After all, the Church does not cure souls in vacuum. She cures them in the bodies they dwell in and amid the concrete circumstances of their material existence. . . . Cure of soul, in fact, means cure of lives, and by extension, cure of trades, professions, occupations, of all the ways and means whereby men earn their daily bread and serve the community and so, ultimately, of the whole social system."

3. Demands of the Indian existential situation

(a) The Church in India is placed completely in a different situation after Independence. Under the British regime, the Christian community and its institutions, though a small minority, enjoyed a somewhat privileged status and much of the influence we had was derived from the patronage extended by the British rulers who were Christians—albeit on the merits of each case. Even after Independence, the policies that have shaped Indian life, have been planned and implemented by a group of National Leaders who had, most of them, received their training in western countries. The system of our politics, education, law administration, etc., have been inspired more or less by western standards of Christian heritage. Thus Christianity, along with other religions in our country, was given its due place in Indian life under a constitution upholding secularism, i.e. malice towards no single religion and protection for all. But these leaders are no more in a commanding position. Especially, after the last General Election, our country is experiencing a distressing lack of leadership which can protect secularism securely. A new line of leadership is emerging—rising deep from the soil itself and much closer to the masses, more concerned with their immediate and local problems and aspirations—religious, economic, political and cultural. Extremist movements of prejudicial and false “patriotism,” “nationalism,” “regionalism,” and “communalism” are raising their ugly heads in the wake of the rapid evolution of our democracy and Christianity has become a target of attack for most of these movements. It is within this broader context that the problem of the structures and organizations of the Church for its development work has to be studied.

(b) In this context, if the Church and its people have to survive and grow, help themselves and help the Nation as well, it has to stand on its own feet rooted in the entire reality that is India to-day. The Church has to maintain and expand its present efforts at five levels—“indianization,” “involvement of the laity in affairs of the Church,” “strengthening of the economic, social and political base of the Christian community,” “an intensive participation of the Church in our nation-building” and “organization of a broad based ecumenical front”.

(c) It is necessary, that an instinctive equation of anything that is foreign (persons, concepts, attitudes, etc.), with the best and the most competent, and equation of anything Indian with less

than average, the under-developed, the incompetent, etc., should be given up. An absolute equation of anything foreign with expertise is unreal. It will be equally unreal to call for Indianization for its own sake at the cost of results and 'delivering the goods'. It is high time to explore seriously the possibilities to having Indians to the fullest possible extent in key positions of the Church's life at all levels. This is a must indeed in the context of present realities. On the other hand, the non-Indians in the Church have accounted for pioneers, innovators and trail-blazers in many fields—a fact that has to be well appreciated and reckoned with. The onus, therefore, will fall on the shoulders of the Indian leadership to cultivate and develop qualities of expertise in a substantial way, soon, and to take over.

(d) The insignificant involvement of the laity in the management of the Church's temporal means has given rise to a subdued cry of "clerical capitalism" within the Church and has projected without, rightly or wrongly, the lopsided image of the Church as only a clerical Institution interested only in proselytisation. In India of to-day, when the Christians are a small minority, the weakness of this wrong image is aggravated. This situation requires an urgent remedy.

(e) In a democracy and in a welfare state, in the present context, the political state has become the determining and moulding force for economic and social growth. Planning by the Government for the overall development of the country has come to stay. An economically and socially strong community, has a greater say and share in the political and social affairs of the country. This is not to belittle the need for the moral and spiritual strength of the community. This will have to be the core of our overall strength. However, Christians in the cadre of economically and socially weak tribals, harijans, landless labourers, coolies and poorly paid teachers and clerks, cannot effectively shape the destiny of this nation exclusively from their moral or spiritual strength. A strong business community, a forward looking and scientific minded farming community, a community of outstanding economists, engineers, lawyers, scientists, doctors and administrators, a well-knit political community—all these imbued with sound spiritual and moral qualities can bear effective witness to Christ, guide the destiny of any nation in the right directions and bring about the establishment of a just social order. If the Church in India today is to wield any

worthwhile influence and to have an impact on the destiny of our nation, the building up of an economically, socially and politically strong Christian community is one of the greatest challenges that will have to be met with determination.

(f) What has been said above on the need for building up a socially and economically strong Christian community is not intended to suggest that we should develop a kind of "ghetto-mentality" which keeps us exclusively pre-occupied with our own selves, our own institutions, our own particular interests. That will be unchristian and disastrous. One who does not help himself in the right perspective, will not know to help others much. We owe as much to our needy fellowmen, as to ourselves. Christians should get into the 'mainstream' of the development efforts of our Government, our brethren of other faiths, other agencies. It is generally argued that not many Christians in India were in the vanguard of Independence Movement of the country. Well, if the Church in India does not now identify itself with the anxieties and griefs of our nation and with its efforts to bring about economic independence for our millions we will still remain isolated and appear exotic. We will not be a witness to a living Indian Christianity.

(g) We Christians in India are a minority. But divide ourselves by the number of denominations we belong to, and each group becomes an awfully small minority. It is true, that Christians all over the world are at present thinking, praying and worshipping together that "the visible unity of Christians may be accomplished such as Christ wills and by the means that He wills:" and that we may achieve the real getting together in the Spirit. While we hope for it, only God knows when, and if at all, we are going to achieve this fundamental unity. But, should we remain separated in our social welfare programmes, educational activities, political undertakings and other innumerable works we carry on for the welfare of our country? We are anxious about the lack of expertise in most of the work we do. Supposing we come together to run schools, colleges, hospitals, professional training institutions, agricultural and community development programmes, will not duplication of efforts, resources and personnel that are invested in these endeavours, be avoided to a great extent and a rational deployment of our resources be achieved?

III. EXISTING ORGANISATIONS AND STRUCTURES

The existing organizations and structures of the Church in India for development work can be studied and analysed from different angles.

1. First angle

(i) We have institutional projects owned and run by parishes, dioceses, C.B.C.I., the religious orders and lay organizations, e.g. schools and colleges (academic and professional), dispensaries and hospitals, hostels, agricultural and commercial farms, etc. Except for a few, the projects are planned and ultimately controlled by the authorities laid down by canon law or the law governing the religious orders. Most of them are sectarian in management though the benefits of the project go to people irrespective of caste, creed or language.

(ii) We have non-institutional projects—like agricultural development, cottage industries, cooperatives, etc. There is very little systematic and organized planning of Church activities in this field. A large number of the existing projects are the creation of some dedicated individuals.

2. Second angle

Analysis and evaluation of the present organizational set-up within the Church in the field of socio-economic matters, both at the local (diocesan) and higher (regional, national) levels.

Two aspects of the question can be considered:

- The question of policy-making, i.e. the process of reaching decisions as to what work is to be taken up, what the priorities and emphasis will be, etc.
- The organizational set-up for implementing projects and programmes decided upon.

(i) (a) At the present time the process for “establishing policy” and carrying it out is highly decentralised. This is necessarily so, given the organizational structure of the Church with Bishops as the ultimate authority responsible for the development of the Church in their respective dioceses, and with religious congregations enjoying a large amount of autonomy, etc. There are, therefore, a large number of decision-making centres throughout India as regards what is to be done in the socio-economic field. At the same time, however, we are witnessing the gradual emer-

gence of a national structure in the form of the CBCI and its various commissions, as well as some national organizations working in the social and development field: the Catholic Charities India, the Indian Social Institute, the Catholic Relief Services, the Indo-German Social Service Society, etc. Various religious congregations active in the social field also cut across local diocesan lines and some have activities of national scope.

(b) There is a growing feeling in many quarters that more co-ordination of efforts is needed, if the Church is to make a maximum contribution to a solution of the grave social and economic problems of the country, and a growing desire to find ways and means of working more closely together, so that, duplication of effort can be avoided and efforts of individual groups strengthened by proper forms of collaboration and association. This trend has a growing "ecumenical dimension" in that it includes a desire to join forces with Protestant groups working for the social and economic development of India. Ecumenical bodies like AFPRO, SKIP, Christian Hospital Association, etc. are products of this trend.

(c) At the same time, the need for a large measure of decentralization in the decision-making process is recognised, since India's social and economic problems differ very widely from region to region. Each group (Diocese, Religious Congregation, Lay Association, Institute, etc.) also wants to preserve its proper autonomy and liberty of initiative and not surrender this to some 'super-planning' or 'policy-making' authority.

(ii) On the level of implementation of projects (as distinguished from policy-making and taking decisions as to what should be done) there is a special organizational problem with respect to socio-economic development work—i.e. such projects as agricultural improvement work, construction of drilled and open wells, setting up of small industries, etc. At the present time most of these projects are being based on organizational structures which were created for quite another purpose than development work, namely mission stations and parishes. In many Dioceses "Social Service Societies" have been organized as the legal holder of projects. But these Societies are generally only nominal and legal entities, not really operational bodies, and are in actual fact the Diocese or parish under a new name. For some types of projects, especially smaller ones, which stress human formation, a Church entity, such as a Diocese, or Parish can be

the proper implementing body. But the situation changes when projects grow larger and involve handling of large sums of money, use of expensive capital equipment, entering into contracts for services to be rendered, etc. (as in the case of large programmes for blasting or drilling wells). Different types of work require different types of organizational structures adapted to the special requirements of the work to be done. To attempt to base an economic development programme on an essentially religious institution such as parish or mission can lead to serious problems both for that institution and for the development programme itself. Appointment of individual priests or laymen to be solely responsible for the development of projects in the dioceses as Directors of Charities or Social Action takes into account only the existing structure of the Church and discards the demands of development.

(iii) This situation results in several notable weaknesses which can be discerned in our work at the present time.

(a) First of all, projects are often the creation of one individual who is often extremely dedicated, able and enterprising but does not have the backing of a solid organizational base to ensure the proper functioning and continuation of the project. The result is that many projects are a "one-man show" which go on as long as the founder remains in the place but are in danger of collapse as soon as he is removed.

(b) Secondly, projects remain individual, isolated activities functioning without any relationship to other projects and activities in the area, either of the Church or of the Government or other organizations.

(c) Thirdly, due to the multiplicity of implementing organizations mentioned above, there is often a good deal of over-lapping and clustering of projects in particular areas. This is the case, for example, where different religious orders, governed by their own rules, set up projects of the same kind in the same area.

(d) Fourthly, projects often exist in a place where they do exist because the individual or the congregation setting it up happened to be there. This leaves huge gaps in our work in the sense that there are areas of real need which are not being met because at present there is no mission or congregation functioning there.

(e) Fifthly, since projects and programmes so often depend on a single individual or on a single mission or congregation which may be rather small, projects often remain small and weak and local in their effectiveness. If there could be more pooling of resources, much more effective work could be done.

(f) Sixthly, generally speaking, in most of the projects the layman has no significant role to play either because he is not given an opportunity, or he is distrusted with regard to the finance, or he is disqualified in sharing authority of the Church, or he is said to be apathetic, incompetent, lacking organisational ability, etc.

(g) Seventhly, some Bishops allow their priests to initiate and organise development projects only to the extent of availability of absolute grants from outside. Priests are forbidden to accept loans even for productive projects.

(h) Eighthly, and I think, one of the most serious weaknesses in our present work, is the fact that programmes are not planned on a regional basis, and as balanced integrated programmes, but as isolated single projects. This means that in one particular place, we may have a socio-economic project aimed at increasing food production or raising people's incomes by giving them employment. In another place we have a hospital and medical programme. In a third place, we have schools and orphanages and in some other place we have a training programme for village girls—all of them good projects as far as they go and achieving benefits for the people served by the project. But a really scientific and serious approach to development work involves setting up plans and integrated programmes for an area so that all aspects of the area's needs are tackled. We cannot overlook the fact that if all we do in a particular area is medical work, thereby lowering the death rate, and do not at the same time improve food production and employment in the area, we may be worsening the situation in the long run. At the same time, if we concentrate only on economic improvement and do not support this with the proper type of training schemes and health services, etc., we may accomplish very little of real and lasting benefit in the long run. I believe that we have to think much more seriously about "package programmes" i.e. integrated programmes in which we complement our economic development work with medical services and other community services for particular areas in a balanced and well planned way.

IV. THE STRENGTHENING OF EXISTING STRUCTURES AND SETTING UP OF NEW STRUCTURES

1. (i) Planning must be realistic and not merely abstract and theoretical. "Top-down paper planning" by a "Planning Commission" of some sort which does not have real experience of the problems involved in carrying out programmes is, usually, useless. To be effective and practical, plans must be worked out with the close participation of those who are engaged in the work and who will have to implement the programmes.

(ii) While we need greater planning and more systematic organization of our activities in the socio-economic fields, we must be careful not to kill the initiative and the enterprise of creative individuals and particular groups. It is not enough to have every individual, no matter how able, deciding what should be done but we have to recognize that successful programmes ultimately depend upon creative individuals. One of the problems facing us is how to integrate individual initiative into a more systematic method of planning and coordination.

(iii) We will never solve the planning and coordination problem, unless we create proper structures for exchange of information, for studying the needs of areas, for reviewing what is already being done and so forth, in the area in which we are interested. Planning must draw on the experiences of others and analyse the reasons for success or failure of activities and projects started in the past as a guide to what should be done in the future. This implies some continuing mechanism for recording the experiences of the various agencies working in a particular area, for analysing them, exchanging information about them, etc. In these days, when so many different groups are at work in every area, this problem must be solved on an ecumenical basis in the broadest sense of the term.

2. The following recommendations may be seriously considered:

(i) *At the parish level:* There should be a parish council consisting of competent clergy religious and laity (preferably elected by the respective constituencies), one of the functions of which will be to plan and lay down general policies preferably through democratic processes. Until this is done, at least a consultative committee of competent people could be set up.

(ii) *Individual projects*: As far as possible these should be registered as a separate legal set-up with a governing body consisting of a good number of able lay people to implement them. In this process, setting up of suitable welfare associations such as, Farmers' Associations, or Cooperatives, should be seriously considered.

(iii) *At the diocesan level*: It is keenly felt that there must be a greater lay participation in realising the socio-economic objectives at the diocesan level in the decision-making and in the employment of resources, monetary or otherwise. In short, there is a need for a Governing Body/Council at the diocesan level, membership to which must be through election of competent men/women of the various agencies/religious groups. There should also be scope for nominating a few experts to this Council. The Council should have the following structure: 60% laity, 20% clergy and 20% nomination. This ratio would more or less satisfy everyone and ensure a greater laity participation. Accordingly the formation of Diocesan Councils on the above lines is recommended. It is also recommended that this Council as far as possible and practicable, should be a registered body, should lay out plans for development, draw up schemes according to priorities, subject of course to the finance available, keeping in view diocesan requirements. It will also be good if the diocesan registered body employs one or more trained and experienced lay persons as Diocesan Social Welfare Officers.

(iv) *At the national level*: It is recommended that a National Development Board be set up. This Board will be represented by CBCI, CRI, lay organizations, national development agencies such as CCI, ISI, CRS, IGSSS, CHA, suitable regional agencies, etc. This Board through democratic process, will adopt future plans for national projects, National Lenten Campaigns, etc., and will be fully responsible for planning, raising of resources and utilisation of resources for the national projects and national lenten campaigns. This National Development Board can also devise ways and means of assisting dioceses, poor and backward in men and resources, to plan and implement development projects.

(v) Of the existing structures helping the Church in its socio-economic development, the role played by some of the agencies could be briefly gone into- CCI, CRS, ISI, IGSSS, CHA, etc.

These agencies with lay experts on their staff, function to investigate feasible projects that need to be financed, arrange for finance both from local and overseas sources and guide the people to help themselves and become self-reliant. In addition, funds are also donated by some of these national agencies for national calamities in times of need. The ISI, in addition to its extension work in the field of project planning and formation, is also engaged in training, research and action-oriented surveys.

There is a danger for even responsible people to suggest that all help that is forthcoming from outside, should be channelised through one central agency in India and that all the project screening and evaluation should be also done through a centralised agency at the national level. Investigation and evaluation of projects is first the right and responsibility of those who give the money. At times, the fact that any one or more agencies have received the mandate of the Bishops is used to play down the role of other "non-mandated" agencies inspite of the fact that these latter agencies are in the field perhaps with a larger army of technical know-how and for a much longer time, even before the "mandated agencies" came into existence. The activities of the "non-mandated" agencies are as equally the activities of the Church as those of the "mandated" agencies. The different policies followed by the different donor agencies and the past record of service of the existing national agencies and their autonomy should be honoured and preserved. What is required is "coordination" for exchange of information and experience to improve the service rendered and not "centralization" for control and power. The country is too vast, the number of people is too large, the magnitude of problems too stupendous and the number of benefactors too scattered all over the world so that centralization either will be ill-conceived or will only smack of power-mongering at the cost of quality of work. Free choice and diverse resources will only help the much needed development process.

(vi) The newly set up Justice and Peace Commission of the CBCI could be considered as a high powered body to study the problems of development in its international and national aspects and to guide the Church, related persons and agencies, with food for thought on self-help, total development, etc. The long standing Social Action Commission—with *full* membership of clergy, religious and laity—could be the co-ordinator of the

existing national and regional agencies actually engaged in practical work of development for exchange of information and experience, and the inspirer of regional action-oriented social-action seminars.

(vii) Of late, professional organisations such as hospitals, agricultural projects, technical schools, etc., both Catholic and non-Catholic, have come together at the national level—such as Christian Hospital Association, AFPRO, SKIP. These are marvellous examples of ecumenical encounter. These efforts should be strengthened and encouraged with resources and personnel to promote the interests of their member units.

(viii) At all these levels greater emphasis should be placed on:

- (a) effective participation of competent laymen in decision-making and implementation;
- (b) employment of full-time laymen to relieve the clergy of such duties which can be conveniently performed by the former, consistent of course with funds available; and
- (c) genuine building-up of the ecumenical and secular character of the structures and organizations both in the set-up and in the operations.

Most important of all, the freedom of people is not to be stifled. What is required is coordination and strengthening of the efforts of creative individuals and groups.

SECTION V

FORMATION, MOTIVATION AND TRAINING

Introduction

The tasks of formation, motivation and training, related to socio-economic development arises from a national situation which presents a tremendous challenge to change. The great leaders of modern India, Gandhiji, Pandit Nehru and others, have been haunted by this need for change and for progress. In fact, their lives were dedicated to a vision which saw the whole nation on the move towards a better future. In their vision of New India, they saw every citizen an agent of change and a responsible participant in the struggle of the people for liberation from poverty, illiteracy, ill-health, unemployment, injustice and disunity. Their faith was in the Indian people as an immense human potential for New India. They realised fully well that the decisive factor in development would be enlightened citizens, highly motivated for achievement and equipped with new social, professional and technical skills to change at all levels of national life, the economic, social and cultural reality. And, today, the concept of human resource development is even more alive among the leaders of India, than it was at the beginning of the Five Year Plans. More so than the Church, even the State is preoccupied with raising the level of formation, motivation and training. The enormous sums allocated year by year to education and training, are telling facts of this existing preoccupation.

It should be obvious that even for Christians, the Church is not the only agent wanting to offer opportunities to acquire formation, motivation and training or socio-economic development. And yet the Church cannot stand aloof from these tasks. First, because in a developing country, the Church wants to serve the nation in raising the human qualities of all citizens, and it is confident in being able to make a specific contribution of its own. Secondly, the Church believes that a more complete and dedicated commitment to socio-economic development is essentially linked with the fulness of the Christian life of its members.

Keeping aloof from these tasks would greatly weaken the mission of the Church of bringing the Gospel-orientation to bear on the actual daily life of its members. Thirdly, the Church wants to express its Christ-like love for the poor, in action-programmes which must be implemented with the help of deeply dedicated and highly competent persons.

I. Reasons for choosing the topic

Apart from the basic reasons given in this short introduction, there are many more specific ones which impel us to study the practical implications of the tasks of social formation, motivation and training.

1. It is obvious that after the Vatican Council, local Churches have to respond in their particular way to the challenge of a changing society. This is all the more crucial in a developing country like India, where the legitimate aspirations of the vast majority of the people for a better life must generate a mighty social dynamism of the Christian community. Today we witness a *very abnormal state of affairs*. Though we have a very impressive record of Church-sponsored socio-economic development work, all this has very little to do with the actual life of Christian communities. On a deeper analysis, all these new orientations and initiatives seem to be centred around pioneering priests and sisters and have left unaffected the traditional, often individualistic, religiosity prevailing in our parishes. Whilst some Christians as individuals, are being known as able leaders in public (we only have to think of Trade Union leaders in the country) the spiritual nurture received on the level of the parish and the school has not produced a universal sense of urgency and commitment among our laity. It is surprising that in a situation as dramatic as ours, no pastoral directive from the highest level has been forthcoming, which would lay down clear guidelines for bringing to life the great potential of social dynamism, inherent in the Gospel, among all Christian groups.

2. Christian education and formation is imparted mainly within the framework of institutions, parishes, schools, seminaries, religious houses of formation, etc. By their very nature, institutions tend to be conservative and slow in adapting themselves to new challenges of history. Instead of being centres of renewal, and helping youth to orient themselves towards the future, they run the risk of lagging behind, caught in values,

attitudes and customs that are of the past, and which prove to be dysfunctional in a fast changing society. The National Seminar on the Church in India should find some concrete ways of administering some wholesome shock treatment to these institutions.

3. Dedication can never be a substitute for technical competence. It is obvious that one of the great lacunae in the rapidly expanding Church-sponsored development work is trained personnel. During the past few years, hundreds of development projects have been organised by bishops, priests, sisters and laymen all over the country. Unfortunately, no systematic evaluation of these projects has been done so far, which would enable us to see clearly the serious lack of expertise. Still, we know well enough that much of well-intentioned zeal has ended in frustration, how much money has been wasted, how many of the projects have become financial burdens to the project holders. Auditing of project-account has become a new type of headache for those entrusted with the task. Even economically successful projects have often failed to promote local leadership and to instil in the people, benefitting from the projects, new attitudes of co-operation and responsible participation. Many projects have been prestige projects and are creating an unfavourable image of the Church and the hierarchy which so far was ultimately responsible for Church-sponsored development projects.

4. The need for special training becomes more urgent as we get away from institutional projects and begin to give priority to projects which benefit more immediately the people. In the course of the past five years, agricultural self-help projects, which primarily aim at increased food-production, have multiplied a hundredfold. The leadership in organising such projects can no longer be left to amateurs since they all demand high competence in Extension Work, community development techniques and require, even from the beneficiaries, new skills in fields like modern farming, crop and vegetable growing, poultry management, etc. An army of highly skilled specialists will be needed for the expanding programmes of agricultural improvement like development for water resources, upgrading cattle, etc. In the Community Development Work of the Government, even the lowest cadre of gram-sevaks have to undergo a two-year training course, but many of the Church 'extension workers' have nothing else rely upon than a course in Divine Science.

5. We have now to evaluate the training for development so far given by various agencies and institutions :

—*AFPRO* : From the General Report of the AFPRO activities, we learn that this national organisation has offered during the last two years, twelve training courses of three days to three months duration. Having at their disposal highly qualified specialists in rural development, the organisers of these training programmes were in a position to meet the felt needs of many persons engaged in Church-sponsored agricultural projects. They have willingly co-operated with existing training institutions like the ISI Training Centre, the Betthis School for Home Science, the Sisters' Formation Centre in Old Goa and others.

—*The ISI Training Centre, Bangalore*: Beginning in a small way, this institution has developed into a well-established Training Centre, offering residential courses of three months to batches of 25 trainees. Its programme is designed for people responsible for the organization and supervision of all types of development projects. Its programme is of a very practical nature and based on the field experience of a number of field-officers of the ISI Extension Service.

—*Seva Sadan, Bhopal* : This new Institute for social studies and community development, provides an excellent programme, but seem to be experiencing somewhat of a crisis.

—*Stella Maris College, Madras*: offers a one-year course for Sisters in Extension Work and Community Work. It is still in the developing stage, but has considerably improved its programme since its inception three years ago.

—*Nirmala Niketan, Bombay and Roshni Nilaya, Mangalore* are two other Institutions with more complete and scientific training programmes in social work for women.

—There are a number of other Institutions which offer degree courses in Social work, which prepare competent leaders for the field of industry and institutional care.

Today the integration, co-ordination and expansion of these various training activities is the need of the hour. Whilst the existing institutions which offer training for full-timers in development work require rather upgrading than multiplication, a nation-wide scheme is very much needed for offering short-term courses in specific skills. This requires mobile teams ra-

ther than fixed institutions. Their training courses must be 'work-orientated' and should be given in the local languages to all categories of people.

II. Scope

Though we shall have to give due consideration to training Christians for participating in developing Church-sponsored projects, this cannot be our first concern.

1. The vast majority must become more faithful to their Christian social responsibility within the structures of their professional work. These are of the secular society. The laity involved in Church-sponsored undertakings will, of necessity, be but a small minority. Hence the crucial issue of finding *new ways of lay-training*, which will benefit all the members of the Church, emerges as the first question to be discussed at the National Consultation for Workshop No. 7.

In India, priests and sisters play an eminent role in influencing the life-orientation of Christians. But in their own formation, both priests and sisters are prepared so poorly in understanding the world of socio-economic activities in which Christians have to express a renewed Christian spirit of meaningful service. It is proper, that this National Consultation should formulate certain demands for better seminary training and better Sister formation.

2. In its very large number of educational institutions, the Church has the most powerful means of imparting a new sense of social responsibility to youth. But a stimulating environment for youth can only be provided by schools, colleges and training centres which are in close touch with human life that goes on outside the gates. Unless young people are concretely challenged by the actual responsibilities they will have to accept in a developing society, in a fast changing city, etc., the powerful social forces inherent in them will remain dormant and useless for society. The social training of Christian schools is greatly weakened by the fundamental attitudes of educators, who themselves often lack creative and imaginative social consciousness.

3. Our generation believes very much in 'learning by doing'. For Christian social action of working youth, the late Cardinal Cardjin has opened a new door. In India, the AICUF, YCW, and YCS, have with some measure of success followed this

method of formation through life. It was impressive to listen to reports of students who worked during the famine relief in Bihar, as they confessed that this experience has marked them for life. Similar were the accounts of sisters who had joined the ranks of social workers in Bihar. Seminarians too, have discovered in holiday-work camps, most valuable means in social training. And it is most remarkable to notice the effect of actual involvement in socio-development projects in rural areas among laymen and women who voluntarily have left their cities to work in rural India. It should be one of the tasks of the National Seminar to indicate widened and concrete avenues of intensified formation, through action.

4. What has been said so far must sound very vague. Our experience and information is too limited to be specific on the above issues. In our forthcoming discussions we will have to get more into the thick of things. But to come now to the socio-economic activities which are organised within Church structures, and where the problems of organising the human resources falls directly on the Church, in recent years we have become familiar with expressions like 'Church-sponsored development projects', 'strategy for development'. Behind these words lies the rapidly expanding development work, undertaken in urban and rural India, by Church agencies. As this work expanded, the need of trained personnel with technical and administrative skills, became the need of the hour. Along with this training, and adequate Christian initiation into this new form of service was required.

1. How can the actual field-experience of diverse persons playing a leading role in development projects, be fed back to various training programmes all over India? For, any attempt at mere theoretical training is bound to be a failure.
2. How to motivate Church-leaders to invest more money in training persons, especially lay-people, and less in large constructions?
3. How to multiply short term training programmes in the vernacular in every region and city? The laity and also the sisters have a great desire to do something but they do not know how. AFPRO and ISI have organised with unexpected success a few such programmes.

4. How to create opportunities for trained lay-people to play a more important role in Church-sponsored development work? At the moment bishops, priests and sisters are the leaders in these socio-economic activities.

III. Background

1. A very large section of Christians in India are economically very poor. With their Hindu-brethren they are struggling for subsistence. Contrary to Pope John's affirmation, that in human groups, upon their entering the Church, socio-economic progress will also become manifest, the actual human progress of these Christian groups remain far below expectations. Their conversion did not bring about any significant motivation to socio-economic progress. Where this did happen, as e.g. in Chotanagpur, it was due to the practical genius of some pioneer priests who realised that achievement motivation for depressed groups of people can only come to life within an *operating structure of self-help*, in this case an expanded network of a centralized co-operative society.

2. Even for the middle class Christians, more numerous in cities and along the west-coast of Goa, Mangalore and Kerala, economic life is a hard struggle. The high fees for Catholic education, the often fabulous cost of marriages, and the obligations to the family members and near relatives are a heavy burden on them. Among them motivation for self-improvement is more noticeable, but the idea of Christian social action as service has not much significance.

3. The above facts deeply influence the attitudes of some of our best lay-leaders. They feel that the ideal of the Vatican II, which aims at projecting the image of the Church as a Church serving society, is too idealistic for us in India. According to their view, the primary need of Christians is motivation and training for self-help of the Christian community. They believe that presently, the Christian community, being small and weak, is being edged out of the field of opportunities by the majority Hindu group.

4. A new spirit is taking hold of many of our laymen and women. An increasing number of city-educated Christians are today desiring to go out and lead a life of Christian service to the poor. The number of those in the field is still small because there

has not been so far, a systematic approach to the problem of their training and their placement. A number of lay persons who have followed the three-month training course in Bangalore, in project organisations, are permanently involved in development work somewhere in India. It is not so much opportunity of training which is lacking, but a policy of employing these lay-people in Church-sponsored projects with a minimum of financial security. Hardly one-third of our trainees are lay people and even these have mostly been deputed by national organisations like CRT, CASA, CARE and ISI Extension Service.

5. The main drive and initiative in taking up development projects has come, up till now, from the clergy and religious. The laity would find reasons for this in the fact that priests and religious have no family responsibilities and are better placed to have access to foreign aid.

The greatest work so far has been achieved by pioneer missionaries who were identified with their people and have been trained by hard experience. But the real untapped potential are the sisters. Thanks to the former internuntio, Msgr. Knox, sisters have begun to orient themselves towards development work. Their achievements are mainly in institutional work: in hospitals, dispensaries, technical schools, schools of social work. But they have hardly entered the more challenging field of authentic community work in urban and rural areas. Motivation is not wanting among them, but a type of *systematic practical training* which qualifies them to enter this field of service. Despite some efforts at re-orientation, the formation of sisters, remains far too theoretical and academic. Few have been trained in Nirmala Niketan, Rohsni Nilaya, Stella Maris and other centres. Neither does training seem to be the only problem, for often, even sisters trained for development work are placed again in traditional institutions cut off from the scene of the social struggle of adult women.

6. Finally, there is much need in clarifying the relationship of development work with evangelisation. Today we have two irreconcilable trends among Church leaders and priests. One stresses so much the Christian meaning of 'diakonia' expressed in planned rural up-lift projects, etc., that it seems to shelve the other central task of mission: the communication of the Good News of Salvation in Jesus Christ. The other overstresses the spiritual aspect of the mission of the Church and fails to under-

stand the practical implication of the Gospel message for the daily reality of actual life. In a recent issue of the *Clergy Monthly*, it was suggested that two separate and distinct structures should function for these two dimensions of mission. If this suggestion is accepted, it would influence deeply, not only the organisational set-up, but also the formation of persons engaged in organising major projects of a self-help nature. Yet, even this proposal has its risks.

IV. Problems

1. Serious doubts are cast on the effort of the Church to undertake development projects. Motives of prestige and institutional interests often influence the persons in power (hierarchy and superiors) in implementing certain projects. It is futile to hint at forming the social consciousness of the faithful as long as those in authority, reserving probably too much decision-making in these matters to themselves, fail to have a more delicate sense of justice.

2. Experience shows that the mere teaching of social ethics and social doctrine in seminaries, juniorates, schools, colleges and Training centres do not achieve the goals envisaged in this paper. Can all these places of formation be transformed into *Extension Centres*, with permanent community work-projects in operation? Could one person in each of these institutions be trained as *Extension Work leader*. Is this not a pre-condition for implementing a new approach of 'formation through action'?

3. There is a type of religiosity which prevents commitment to service and another type of religiosity which promotes it. In our parishes, the devotions, sermons and religious teaching often tend to promote the first type of religiosity. This is reflected in the existing parish organisations which often do not attract the most able and competent elements in the parishes. But without their participation, the social dynamism of parish-community cannot develop.

4. The Government is having many programmes to improve the skills of various categories of people: skilled labourers, technicians, medical workers, farmers etc. Which are the fields where Church-organised projects would fill a need? How could such programmes, presumably short-term training courses, be organised for youth, men and women, particularly sisters.

5. The Indian Social Institute Training Centre offers special courses for people destined to organise differed development projects, as also institutions, like Nirmala Niketan, Roshni Nilaya and Stella Maris. Are these institutions adequate for providing competent leadership in organised Development Work? Are these institutions properly utilised?

6. It is true that the laity is excluded from more extensive participation in Church-sponsored projects, not for lack of motivation, but because of its present structure? How can one explain the fact that a field which is specific to the apostolate of the laity, socio-economic activities, has become the preserve of bishops, priests and the religious? And which concrete steps will bring about a change in this set-up?

7. How can concrete policies of utilising funds from within the country and from abroad be devised to provide for training and placement of laymen and women in Church-sponsored projects?

8. Could not the local financial resources within India be substantially raised if city parishes would adopt concrete projects in rural India? A general appeal for contributing towards the Lenten Campaign appears too vague to stimulate generosity. The priests and Christians in villages would feel much encouraged if a new bond of Christian charity would give them this moral and financial backing. It could also open opportunities for people from a city-parish to offer their services in the adopted village for a short or long-term as need demands.

APPENDIX

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NATIONAL
CONSULTATION ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

February 14-16, 1969

TOPIC I

Issues concerning the Church's Teaching in Socio-Economic Development and its Applicability to India

1. Development is an urgent problem, and every Catholic should be made aware of his responsibility to promote material welfare and help build a more humane society.
2. Catholics should be encouraged to acquire a better understanding of the deeper insights of the social encyclicals and especially the document "The Church in the Modern World" regarding development. They must endeavour to *disseminate the Church's social doctrine* in regard to socio-economic development.

This dissemination can be effected through existing educational institutions and vocational, parish and other organisations by including among their formal activities instruction on social doctrine, according to a syllabus to be worked out by a panel of experts, to suit Indian conditions. More effective channels of public relations should be built up, especially through the use of mass communications media for disseminating these ideas.

3. The teaching of the Church should be realized and lived through *greater involvement* at all levels in socio-economic development work, especially among the poor.

In this respect, the Church in India should also develop a wider sense of community which would include not only Christians but everyone irrespective of religion. In our activities, we should cooperate more closely with the government and voluntary agencies.

TOPIC II

STRENGTH AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CHURCH'S ACTIVITY IN THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC FIELD IN INDIA

1. In the planning and implementation of socio-economic activities, the participation of the laity should be intensified.
2. In the screening and evaluation of projects, the agencies concerned, wherever possible, may associate with themselves other persons with practical experience.
3. Catholics should give a lead in cooperative endeavour in socio-economic activities. To ensure its success, such efforts should be preceded by education in the principles and practices of cooperation.
4. The need was stressed for setting up an Information Centre and for developing public relations.

TOPIC III

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION IN THE FIELD OF SOCIO- ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

1. Socio-economic development activities must not be isolated efforts, but an integrated approach to the total needs of the community must be adopted.
2. Every diocese or region should undertake a socio-economic survey (fact-finding of existing projects and needs) and set its own priorities for action. Survey data could be sent to a national centre whose purpose will be to collect and process such information.
3. The Church should stand for such progress-legislation on land reforms as will enable the tiller to become the full owner of the land, and such as will safeguard the rights of tenants.
4. In all projects, there must be emphasis on developing an awareness of the necessity of self-reliance at all levels, among project holders.
5. Since food to feed India's growing population is a primary national goal, agricultural or food programmes should envisage training for increased agricultural

production. Wastage of food due either to bad storage or improper use should be guarded against. Water development for drinking and irrigation must be considered on the same level of priority as food.

6. The Gandhi Centenary National Committee and its sub-committee for basic amenities for human living have selected the task of satisfying basic needs to be the most urgent one for completion during the Centenary Celebrations of the Father of the Nation. The Consultation heartily endorses this goal and encourages all Catholics to participate in its achievement.
7. Integral human development, however, must be our chief focus. The Church's greatest contribution should be towards motivating people to fraternal and dedicated service.
8. The energy and idealism of youth must be mobilised for socio-economic development. Positive steps should be taken to involve them in socio-economic activities.
9. In the execution of projects, there should not be compromise on efficiency and the scientific approach, and at all times there must be emphasis on accountability and progressive management.

TOPIC IV

ORGANIZATIONS AND STRUCTURES FOR DEVELOPMENT WORK

1. There should be on the parish level a socio-economic council consisting of clergy, religious and laity whose main function will be to plan, co-ordinate and see to the implementation of socio-economic projects within the parish area.
2. Individual projects should be executed through a duly registered body.
3. Suitable welfare associations such as Farmers' Associations or Co-operatives should be encouraged.
4. There must be greater lay participation in realising the socio-economic objectives at the diocesan level, in decision-making and in the employment of resources, monetary or otherwise.

5. The CBCI Commission on Social Action should be so reorganized as to include :

Representatives of the Bishops of India,

Representatives of the Diocesan Councils, or Regional Councils, and

Representatives of the agencies engaged in socio-economic development on a national level,

for the purpose of co-ordinating the socio-economic activities of the Church in India.

TOPIC V

FORMATION, MOTIVATION AND TRAINING

1. In all our educational institutions and houses of formation, there should be at least one trained person with practical experience so as to make the institution an extension centre, i.e. that the institution be actively involved in some concrete project of community development.
2. Sisters, brothers and priests should be equipped in greater numbers with the necessary skills for community development work. It is highly desirable that sisters in particular be more mobile so as to move to areas of greater need, and that they collaborate with other sisters that various congregations. It is also urgently felt that superiors of the various congregations should be asked to participate in training courses to acquire the same skills.
3. Mobile teams should be set up to conduct short courses to train educators and lay leaders. Existing training institutions should take the responsibility for such courses.
4. Short courses in poultry, nutrition and animal husbandry should be conducted throughout the country.
5. A Central Information and Personnel Bureau for the purpose of providing competent and suitable people to assist in different projects should be established.
6. A systematic effort should be made at the Diocesan and Social Action Commission level to set apart certain funds for the training and placement of lay people in community development work.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

TOPIC I: THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH WITH REGARD TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Consider

- the clarification of this rôle in the context of her universal salvific mission.
- clarification of the criteria for involvement in such activity.
- the rôle of individuals—priests and laymen. (Should we speak in terms of “action of Christians” vs. “action of the Church” ?)
- the *respective* rôle of priests and laymen in this field, CONCRETELY.
- the problem of public relations and communication: Why do we undertake this type of work ? Why is such a *particular* work by this *particular* institution being undertaken in this area ?
- indigenisation and the setting up of *national* priorities.

TOPIC II: PRIORITIES FOR ACTION—DEVELOPMENT, NOT DEPENDENCE

1. What steps can be taken for a *planned, co-ordinated* and *unified* programme of development ? In what spheres of activity, according to priorities ?
2. Spell out the need for co-operation at the national level:
 - among Catholic organisations
 - among inter-religious organisations
 - with Government agencies
3. Suggest steps for the all-important “education for development”—with special emphasis on youth.

TOPIC III: ORGANISATIONS AND STRUCTURES FOR DEVELOPMENTAL WORK

Analyse

- organisational set-up for implementing projects—their present deficiencies, and possible remedies.
- problem of ‘policy-making’ in Church organisations.
- fuller involvement of the laity.
- ‘ecumenical’ co-operation in developmental work—its extent and efficacy.
- need for new structures, at what levels ?

TOPIC IV: FORMATION, MOTIVATION AND TRAINING

1. Discuss *new ways of lay-training* which will benefit *all* the members of the Church (and not merely the minority involved in Church-sponsored undertakings) with regard to their Christian social responsibility. Consider “fund-raising” as a means of real involvement—should there not be more to it than merely “asking for alms” ?

2. Formulate certain definite demands for better seminary and sister formation in understanding, and in being involved in the world of socio-economic activities.

3. Indicate [widened and concrete avenues of intensified formation through action, of youth.

4. In what concrete ways:

- (a) Can we make use of the field-experience of individuals and the programmes of existing training institutes, to train the required personnel ?
- (b) Can trained laypeople be given opportunities for playing a more important role (including policy formulation) in Church-sponsored developmental work ?
- (c) Can funds be utilised to provide for the training and placement of laymen and laywomen in Church-sponsored projects ?

WORKSHOP-VIII

Civic and Political Life

INTRODUCTION

Christians are also citizens of the secular city. "They are mistaken who knowing that we have no abiding city but seek one which is to come, think that they may therefore shirk their earthly responsibilities. For they are forgetting that by the faith itself they are more than ever obliged to measure up to these duties, each according to his proper vocation" (Vatican II, *The Church in the Modern World*, n. 43)

The Church is no political community; nor is she bound to any political system. She claims no dominion over the state, no temporal power over the people. Her task is to bear witness to God's love for man, to uncover, cherish and ennoble all that is true, good and beautiful in the human community. For she is at once a sign and a safeguard of the transcendence of the human person. By this she can contribute to the wider application of justice and charity within and between nations and foster the freedom and dignity of man (cf. *ibid.*, n. 76).

It is in this spirit that she appeals to all Christians to realise their special and personal vocation in the political community: "This vocation requires that they give a conspicuous example of devotion to the sense of duty and of service to the advancement of the common good. Thus they can show in practice how authority is to be harmonized with freedom, personal initiative with consideration for the bonds uniting the whole social body, and necessary unity with beneficial diversity." (*ibid.*, n. 75).

The Christian attitude and the role Catholics should play today have been made quite clear by the Vatican Council. Christians are meant to live not as isolated groups, nor to work as separate agencies, nor to remain confined to their own circles. The Coun-

cil insists on their presence in the society in which they live, with an intimate knowledge of, and sharing in, the cultural and social life of their surroundings. It demands that they collaborate with others, all those who are engaged in the struggle against hunger, ignorance and disease; with undertakings promoted by institutions whether private or public, by governments, by international organisations, by the different Christian communities or by non-Christian religions.

Thus it is clear that the mission consists in service, beyond the boundaries of her own community. The mission is universal to all nations, to all strata of society, to all fields of life and work. It is a great misunderstanding that whenever we speak of the mission of the Church, we think of the Hierarchy. But when the Council, in the Mission Decree, describes the universal presence of the Church in all the walks of life and culture it says: "The Church must be present in these groups of men through her sons who dwell among them or are sent to them". Given the infinite variety of the cultural, social, economic life today it is clear that the mission of the Church must, to a great extent, be carried out by the laity. We have to recognize that there are vast fields which were badly neglected because they did not fall into the traditional patterns of Church-enterprises. Notorious is the absence of the Church, of a real Christian impact, in the labour force, in mass media, in political life, in scientific research, also in vast sections of the village life which still represents the greatest section of the Indian nation. A new responsibility must grow which urges Christians to fulfil their mission in all spheres of the national life.

Hence it follows that the Church is called upon to guide and initiate the process of economic and political revolution which is necessary in India today. Christians therefore must enter into the mainstream of life of this country and work for the progress and prosperity of the nation.

BACKGROUND

Nature of Indian Policy

India is a Secular Democratic Republic. The secular nature of the State enables every citizen to play an equal role (theoretically at least) in civic and political life. A citizen may be a member

of a very small minority community; yet he is free to aspire and strive for the highest office of the land.

The distinguishing features of the secular State as understood in India are: (i) the State will not identify itself with or be controlled by any religion; (ii) that while the State guarantees to everyone the right to profess whatever religion one chooses to follow, it will not accord any preferential treatment to any of them; (iii) that no discrimination will be shown by the State against any person on account of this religion or faith; and (iv) that the right of every citizen, subject to any general condition, to enter any office under the state will be equal to that of his fellow-citizens.

The democratic nature of the State implies the equality of citizens before the law; right to full participation in the political and civic life as well as in the organising of Governments at the Centre and in States on the basis of the will of the people expressed through free voting at periodic general elections. The Constitution provides for a single and uniform citizenship of India. It confers the right to vote on every person who is not less than twenty-one years of age.

The Union

India is a Union of 17 federative States and 10 centrally administered Union Territories with the President as the Head of the Union and the Governors as the Heads of States. The totality of the political power of the nation is divided between the Union and the States in such a manner that it establishes a federal system of government. The distinguishing feature of this system is that the Union is entrusted with all those matters which are of national importance and the States are entrusted with those of local or regional importance. Laws made by the Union ensure uniformity throughout the country while laws made by the States provide for diversity of treatment depending on local conditions and requirements which vary from State to State. For example, subjects like defence, external affairs, inter-state communication, currency, coinage etc. fall within the Union's jurisdiction; while law and order, Police, Local Government, etc. are subjects which belong to the States.

As a safeguard against the centrifugal tendencies prevalent in the country, the division of powers ensures a greater share to the Union than the States. Any dispute between the Union

and the States regarding the division of powers, is to be settled by the Supreme Court of India. The federal system enables simultaneous functioning of different party Governments at the Centre and the States.

The President who is the head of the nation is elected by the elected members of both Houses of Parliament and Legislative Assemblies of the States for a term of five years. All executive authority of the Union, including the Supreme Command of the Defence Forces, formally rests in the President and all executive actions of the Central Government are taken in his name.

In the exercise of his functions the President is aided and advised by a Council of Ministers, that is the Cabinet, headed by the Prime Minister. The Cabinet finally determines and lays down the policy of the Government. The Cabinet is collectively responsible to the Parliament of India. Thus the executive authority is accountable for all its decisions and actions to the people through their elected representatives in the Parliament.

The Parliament of India consists of two Houses. The Upper House, called the Rajya Sabha, consists of not more than 238 elected representatives of the States and Union Territories and 12 members nominated by the President for their special knowledge and practical experience in the fields of literature, Science, Art, and Social Services. The Lower House, called the Lok Sabha, consists of not more than 500 members elected from territorial constituencies in the States and not more than 25 members representing the Union Territories. All laws are enacted by Parliament, whose consent is required for the levying of taxes and sanctioning of expenditure by the Government.

States

The States, like the Union, have a Parliamentary system of Government. The Head of the State, the Governor, is appointed by the President and is aided and advised by a Council of Ministers (Cabinet) headed by the Chief Minister. The Council, just like the Central Cabinet, works on the principle of collective responsibility and is accountable to the legislature of the State. Most State Legislatures have, like the Parliament of India, two Houses, the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. Some States however, have, only one House, the Legislative Assembly.

Judiciary

In spite of the federal system of Government, India has a single system of judiciary, hierarchically organised. At the apex of this hierarchy stands the Supreme Court of India. The Supreme Court consists of a Chief Justice and not more than thirteen judges, all appointed by the President. The Court has not only constitutional but also civil and criminal jurisdiction. In the constitutional field it is the final interpreter of the Constitution and hence its guardian.

There is a High Court in each State which stands at the head of the State's judicial administration. Each High Court has a Chief Justice and a number of judges, all appointed by the President. The Constitution ensures an independent judicial system under which the Supreme Court and the High Courts function in an atmosphere of independence and impartiality.

Local Self-government

India has a well-organised system of local self-government. Village panchayats form the foundation of this system. Members of the Panchayats are elected directly by the people of each village divided into separate wards. In most of the States the Panchayats are linked organically to a larger administrative organisation within each district known as *panchayati raj*. With increasing powers in the field of developmental administration, panchayati raj is bound to play a role of greater importance in the economic and political spheres of the rural segment of the Indian people.

The administration of each town is entrusted to a municipality and that of a city to a municipal corporation. Since panchayats and municipalities are the primary local units of rural and urban administration, the scope of the ordinary citizens participation in the activities organised by these bodies is very great indeed.

The State in India stands for the realisation of the following objectives :-

1. Justice, Economic, Political and Social
2. Liberty of speech, expression, belief, faith and worship
3. Equality of status and of opportunity and to promote among all its citizens

4. Fraternity, assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the Nation.

Fundamental Rights

The Constitution guarantees to the Indian Citizen a comprehensive list of Fundamental Rights. These rights are grouped into seven categories : (1) Right to equality, (2) Right to Freedom, (3) Right against Exploitation, (4) Right to Freedom of Religion, (5) Cultural and Educational Rights, (6) Right to Property, and (7) Right to Constitutional Remedies. Each of these rights is of a comprehensive nature. For example, the right to freedom of religion includes, among others, the right to freely profess, practise and propagate one's religion. All the Fundamental Rights are justiciable — capable of being enforced through a court of law — and any aggrieved citizen can directly move even the Supreme Court to get his grievance redressed.

Welfare State

In the economic sphere, the State aims to establish a welfare state, more popularly known as a socialist pattern of society. The distinguishing features of this society are: the state will play a dominant role in the economic life of the community with a view to providing every citizen adequate means of livelihood; it will ensure that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and the means of production to the common detriment; and that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good.

As the state is playing an increasing role in the economic sphere of the country through the successive five year plans, the influence of the state and its agencies on the life of the citizen is bound to be more and more in the years to come.

Nineteen years have passed since the inauguration of the Constitution. During this period democracy in India has worked, on the whole, reasonably well. We have had four general elections and several mid-term elections in the States. All these have been conducted in an orderly and fair manner and citizens have participated in them in large numbers. These elections show the sound foundations of Indian democracy which is essentially built on the people's will. Our democratic institutions

also have, on the whole, functioned normally. No doubt, there have been stresses and strains but in spite of them they have been functioning with a fair measure of dependability. When we take into consideration the manner in which democratic institutions have been tumbling down in the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa, and how dictatorship of varying forms and hues has been reigning over them, we realise the relative strength and stability of democracy in India. This should not, however, blind us to the difficulties and dangers that confront our democracy and the undemocratic and anti-democratic forces and tendencies that threaten it.

The complexity of India's Political, Economic and Social Scene

India is a land of immense diversity. From a religious point of view about 85 per cent of our people are Hindus. Next come Muslims who are over 50 million in number. Christians are the next largest group with over 12 million. Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsees, etc. form the rest of the people.

Among the Hindus, who are traditionally divided into different castes, are a large number of Scheduled Castes or former Untouchables.

The Scheduled Tribes or adivasis form still a separate category by themselves.

From a racial point of view there are at least three major groups, the Indo-Aryans largely in the north and north-west, the Dravidians in the south and the Mongolo-Aryans in the north-east parts of the country.

There are over a dozen well-developed major languages spoken in different parts of the country. Fifteen such languages have been recognised and listed in the Constitution of India. Of these, Hindi is recognised as the official language of India and is understood by over 40 per cent of the total population of India.

A large number of organised political parties function in the country. They can be divided broadly into two categories, namely, the all-India Parties and Regional Parties. The all-India Parties are : The Congress Party, Swatantra, Communist Party of India, Communist Party (Marxist), Jana Sangh, P.S.P. and S.S.P. Among the regional parties, the D.M.K. in Tamil-

nadu, the Muslim League in Kerala and the Akalis in the Punjab are of special significance. The Muslim League and Akalis are purely communal parties organised on a religious basis.

Since the people as a whole are backward socially, economically and educationally, it is easy to exploit them for political purposes.

The Christian Community in India : Its Strength and Weaknesses

Christians as a community are the third largest in India. But in absolute terms their number is insignificant, a few drops in the vast human sea of India, some 12 out of a total of about 520 million.

Among these, over 7 million are Catholics and the rest Protestants. Both the Catholics and the Protestants are sub-divided into different groups, rites and denominations, each trying to preserve its own separate and distinct identity.

The small number of Indian Christians are spread over the entire country. Except perhaps in Kerala, Goa, Nagaland and a few tribal pockets, they are too small in number to influence the local population through their numerical strength. In Kerala, where there is the largest concentration, they form about 25 per cent of the total population; Catholics alone may constitute around 15 per cent of the total population of the State. In Goa and Nagaland, although the Christian population is not as great, the percentages are higher.

The Christians in India are generally poor and socially backward in many parts of the country, especially in the northern regions. Being mostly recent converts from backward classes, they are looked down upon by the upper classes and especially the higher caste Hindus.

Except in Kerala Goa and a few tribal pockets in the north, Christians are more in urban centres than in villages.

As India was under colonial rule for a long time and the British rulers of India professed Christianity as their religion and the Anglican Church received special recognition and the patronage of the Indian Government, Indians generally looked upon the West with suspicion, if not open hostility, and at the Christian Church as an instrument of western colonialism. Christian culture

is identified with western culture by most Indian who look upon the latter as one which is bent upon destroying the ancient culture of India.

The greatest strength of the Church in India today is its influence on the people as a whole through its educational institutions and also, to an extent, through, its hospitals, nursing, charitable and such other institutions. While most of its members are literate, a good percentage of them are highly educated. These educated men and women, if properly organised, can play a role of decisive leadership in a country as largely illiterate and backward as India. The educational and other institutions run by the Church afford the opportunity to come into intimate contact with all sections of our people and to demonstrate how the Church is committed to a social ideal that has great relevance to the objectives that are held aloft by the Indian nation.

What the Church can do and should do in the civic and political life of the country will become clear only if the participants of the Seminar have a clear idea and a comprehensive understanding of the various points outlined briefly above.

An action-oriented discussion should clearly comprehend the implications of these aspects of the situation. For, in the ultimate analysis, decisions can be made only if the problem is analysed in the light of facts.

SPECIFIC TOPICS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE SEMINAR

Political Consciousness

Although India has a democratic political system based on adult franchise, it is only of recent origin. Our first general elections on the basis of adult suffrage took place in 1951-52. So far, we have had four general elections. Yet it is a fact that a very large percentage of the Indian electorate is politically uneducated. Over seventy per cent of them are illiterate and are not quite competent to judge the merits of the policies and programmes of parties or their candidates. Often they cast their votes not out of political convictions but on considerations of caste, community, language, region or money. Thus, on the whole, the political scene in India is far from satisfactory. If a politi-

cally conscious and educated electorate is the base of a democracy, such a base has yet to develop in India.

Against this general situation we may consider the extent of political consciousness and civic sense of Christians and Catholics in particular. There have been no authoritative studies which throw adequate light on the voting pattern and behaviour of our people. Yet there are indications largely based on the discussions and conclusions of Regional Seminars. The picture that emerges from these, except in a few areas, is rather disappointing. For, between 30 and 40 per cent of our people have not been exercising their franchise at these elections. Another interesting revelation is that the percentage of people who voted at the civic and panchayat elections were less than that which took part at the general elections. Yet another significant point is that a good percentage of those who voted did so on individual, parochial or such other considerations. The general conclusion that emerges is that although our people are better placed educationally and socially, they are not politically as conscious as they ought to be in a democracy.

One reason that is advanced in this context has been that Christians, including those who are highly educated among them, have had no tradition of political consciousness. During the days of British rule, in the long struggle for Independence by Indian nationalist forces, they, with rare exceptions, generally kept aloof from politics. Naturally, when Independence came, the Christians were not much in the political picture. Political consciousness was to be created in the generality of the community's members and they were to be educated in discharging properly their political and civic responsibilities.

Lack of political consciousness is intimately linked up with the lack of political leaders from amongst the members of the community. Because of the community's keeping aloof from the freedom struggle—Kerala seems to be one of the very few exceptions to this—it was unable to provide its own leaders to the political movement of the country as a whole during pre-Independence days. As a consequence, when Independence came, there was hardly a leader of all-India stature to be reckoned with. To a large extent, this was true at state and regional levels as well.

There are no detailed statistics available regarding the number of Catholic candidates contesting the different elections,

civic, panchayat, state and parliamentary. If we consider the last two decades and the different elections during the period, what has been the tendency? Has the number of such candidates been progressively increasing or decreasing? Has the number of successful candidates been increasing or decreasing? What is the extent of representation the community has at present in the Parliament, State Legislatures, Municipal Corporations and Councils, Panchayats and Panchayat Samiti and District Councils or Zilla Parishads?

The reports of the Regional Seminars indicate that the community's representation in these bodies, in proportion to its population, is inadequate. That means that from a political and civic point of view, the community's influence on the Government and administration of the country is less than its due share.

Why is it that a relatively better educated and organised community like the Catholics has not been able to produce better political leadership? Due to lack of character and willingness for selfless service? Due to lust for power and opportunism, internecine rivalries, squabbles and quarrels?

It is sometimes pointed out that Catholics do not play the role which they could in many organisations of a public nature because whatever spare time that they can find is taken away by a multitude of activities, organised by the Church, which have a very narrow scope. The Church, it is alleged, is inward-looking and not out-ward looking. So long as this attitude persists, few Catholics will find the highest positions in the public life of the country. This allegation deserves careful examination.

Again it is pointed out that a clerically dominated society cannot be expected to produce first-rate lay leadership. For, one is a leader not only because he has leadership qualities but also because there are people to recognise his leadership. The rigid, paternalistic and authoritarian pattern that still prevails in our homes and parishes, schools and colleges and other institutions and, finally, in the whole Church and community, is not conducive to promote strong and imaginative leadership.

There seems to be considerable strength in the argument that the community has not made sufficient use of the communications media to make our impact felt on the public eye of the country. Our resources are at present being wasted on nume-

rous publications which are inept and incapable of creating any impact on public opinion.

In regions like Kerala, divisions and disunity based on rites and castes bedevil the Church and its members. As a consequence, leadership fights take most ugly forms in which members of the Church instead of helping and supporting each other bring defeat to themselves and ruin to their political careers.

The following specific questions may be considered in the light of the foregoing discussion:

1. Are our people adequately conscious of their political and civic responsibilities ?
2. Do they actively participate in civic and political life?
3. Do they vote at the various elections—civic, Assembly, Parliament, Panchayat etc.?
4. Do many Catholics stand as candidates in Civic, Panchayat or general elections ?
5. What are the difficulties they face in this connection ?
6. Is lack of finance a handicap ?
7. What is the proportion of educated persons among those who contest elections ?
8. Are our women coming forward to stand as candidates?
9. What is the quality of our present leadership ?
10. Are they maintaining the highest standards of character and integrity ?
11. Do we have any concrete plans and make conscious efforts to make members of the Church political and civic leaders at the highest levels ?
12. Is the Church guilty of creating multifarious organisations of narrow, parochial outlook and utility which limit the scope of Catholics to enter a wider arena of social and political activity? Will it not be better that Catholics take greater interest in broad-based, non-communal and non-religious organisations?

Possible lines of solution

Educating the community on the meaning of democracy and the responsibility of citizenship in a democracy, particularly Christian responsibility towards a democratic political society,

is to be undertaken on a systematic basis. The press, the pulpit, schools and colleges are effective media for this purpose. It should be made clear to everyone that Catholics should, as a matter of duty, vote at every election, should be free to vote for anyone and join any political party that is not against our faith. Further there should be opportunities for lay leaders of all political persuasions to meet periodically to discuss, frankly, socio-economic and political problems facing the country and the response that is expected of the Christian community. Such meetings should be organised on parish, diocesan or regional levels depending on the requirement of the situation. It is also desirable in this connection for the Church to take the initiative, on a regional basis, to organise scientific studies on socio-economic and political problems by enlisting the cooperation of scholars of repute.

The Church should make a more conscious effort to build up effective and imaginative lay leadership in the community. For this, as a first step, the old authoritarian ways should give way to a spirit of sincere dialogue in our homes, parishes, educational institutions and in the whole community. Creative and dynamic leadership can grow and flourish only in an atmosphere of real freedom. Hence freedom of thought, free discussion, initiative and constructive criticism should be encouraged at all levels and especially among the youth. Side by side, vigorous efforts should also be made to foster the ideals of dedication to service, habit of hard work and the capacity for cooperative and collaborative endeavours.

With a view to achieving the double objective of creating better civic and political consciousness among our people and developing better leadership, a three-tier organisation may be set up: a Parish Society a Diocesan Association and an All India Catholic Union. It should be made absolutely clear that none of these is a political party or group but an organisation in which every Catholic can become a member irrespective of his political or party preferences or allegiance. The basic objective of these organisations should be education and the creation of the right civic and political consciousness among the members of the community, guidance and counselling. It is also worthwhile to explore the possibility and feasibility of appointing full-time organisers on a diocesan or regional basis.

This three-tier organisation should be actively supported through two auxiliary, autonomous organisations, one amongst our students and the other amongst the workers. The Catholic Students Union and the Christian Workers Organisation are the appropriate bodies to serve this purpose. Both these organisations should provide the leadership of the future in all spheres of the community's activities.

Leaders, however, are not born. They are to be developed through a systematic process of training and development. A conscious effort should be made at the parish level and in our educational institutions to spot potential leaders. They should then be given training and special opportunities. For this purpose every one of our Colleges and even Schools should organise once a year Summer Institutes or Camps under proper direction. Such camps should, as a part of their programme, organise mock Assemblies, Parliaments etc. and give lectures and demonstrations covering civic and political problems and issues. The possibility of opening a permanent training institute for each region also should be explored. Such training institutes should also prepare deserving young men to compete in competitive examinations for higher services.

The Catholic Union of India should sponsor, from time to time, studies in depth, jointly with non-Catholics and non-Christians, of political forces at work in India with a view to creating proper awareness among Christians of these forces.

The Church must exhort its members and actively encourage them to join and participate in the work of existing civic organisations. Individual Christians should also endeavour to form associations in their own localities, jointly with non-Christians to further the ideals of Christian charity and fellowship.

The Diocesan Catholic Associations should organise a "Voters' Registration Week" every time the voters' lists are revised in order to see that every eligible catholic voter has his name registered on the list.

While encouraging the laity to participate fully in the civic and political life of the country, the clergy and the religious must take all precautions necessary not to get the Church institutionally involved in any manner in any political activity.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS SECULARISM, DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

The Constitution of India stands for the establishment of a secular democracy. We have seen earlier the significance of secularism. We have also dealt at some length with the concept of democracy. In fact, the distinguishing features of both secularism and democracy are clearly laid down in the Constitution itself.

There is, however, a widespread erroneous impression that a secular State is anti-religious. This is not true so far as India is concerned. Of course, there is no State religion in India nor has the State given any privileged position to any religion. In the eyes of the State all religions are equal. Further, it guarantees the fullest religious freedom for all. It will not discriminate against any citizen on account of his religion, caste, race or descent.

Such an idea of secularism goes well with the concept of democracy. For, in a democracy the greatest emphasis is on freedom or liberty; liberty of thought, expression, association and action. Democracy also ensures the participation of the citizens in the government and administration. Thus a secular democracy is an ideal unrivalled in the context of the modern State.

Yet, a secular democracy may degenerate into a political system of extreme inequalities of wealth and the consequent concentration of power in the hands of a few. Socialism can check such a tendency. For, the basic emphasis of socialism is equality. Equality of opportunity will act as a brake on the tendency for the concentration of wealth. This is why socialism has special significance in a poor country like India. Further, socialism is committed to planned economic growth which ensures necessary controls on both production and distribution.

If secularism, democracy and socialism, as applied to India and the Indian political system, are understood in this sense, there should be no serious difficulty for the Church not only to understand but also to appreciate the basic principles on which the State in India stands. It is true that these principles are not always seen practised by the different agencies of the Government. But that is no justification to deny the existence of these

principles and their great value. Rather we ought to emphasise them again and again and strive for their realisation.

But what is often seen in the actions of the Church, the Bishops, Priests and many well-to-do laymen is a sort of apathy if not open hostility towards these principles. Why is it? It seems that our history, the Church's attitude towards India's struggle for freedom and independence has somewhat to account for it, since most of the priests, especially the missionaries were foreigners, they were apprehensive of the attitude of an Indian Government of Indian nationals towards them. Hence most of them had not only nothing positive to do with the freedom movement but were even opposed to it. From their own point of view it is understandable. But the image the Church has produced as a consequence was not a pleasing image to Indian nationalism.

During the post-independence era too the same apprehensions lingered on. There was no wholehearted approval of the principles on which the State in India stood. Many priests pooh-poohed and even denounced from pulpits, the concept of secularism as anti-religion and anti-God, Indian Democracy was looked upon with cold indifference and resignation rather than of approval, and socialism was denounced as statism and communism under a mask.

It would be instructive to study in this connection the reaction of the Church, and particularly conservative Catholics and the clergy, to such policies as land ceiling, nationalisation of key industries, cooperative farming, labour legislation, high rates of taxation of large incomes and similar other measures. More often than not it was hostile. Perhaps they have been psychologically conditioned to this sort of reaction by a moral preaching of long standing which emphasised the virtue of private property as an absolute, inviolable right which left the social character of earthly resources somewhat in the background.

All these have unfortunately made the community not fully integrated with the mainstream of Indian political and civic life. We have been more aliens than Indians in India which is perhaps an unfortunate accident rather than of deliberate design. But the impact of these basic attitudes from a political point of view has been far-reaching. To-day the community is looked upon by many with suspicion, its members as agents of western

imperialism, alien to Indian culture and unsympathetic if not openly hostile to the principles for which independent nationalist India stands.

Here is a great challenge for the Church in India today. How to establish its *bonafides* as an integral part of India's socio-cultural complex, how to convince all that Catholics are true Indians and patriots and how to make others appreciate that what the Church does is for the good of the country and its people and not with any ulterior motives. It may be worth the while to remember in this context that with all the relief work and charitable activities we undertake, we do not secure even half the appreciation, support and sympathy of the masses which one of the Communist Parties has been able to enlist. The reason is not far to seek. Our social service activities, however beneficial they may be, can only alleviate the misery and suffering of the people; they may also ameliorate sections of the people. They cannot, however, put an end to the gross inequalities that exist in Indian society and bring speedy economic security to all.

Hence the logic seems to be irresistible that unless and until the Church takes a definitive stand for massive socio-economic reforms and planned development, she cannot hope to win the sympathy of the masses of India and fulfil her mission of being the sign and safeguard of the transcendence of the human person. It may be feared that this may alienate from the Church the powerful moneyed and landed sections of her own faithful. This is a possibility; but the Church can and should avert this eventuality by properly educating its members about the social dimension of earthly resources and the right which each human being has to live a life worthy of his humanity.

The following specific issues may be considered in this connection:

1. What was our attitude on the whole towards India's freedom movement? Was it positive, neutral or negative and apprehensive?
2. Was this policy motivated more by considerations of expediency, a blind devotion to the status quo or the Establishment, or by misguided pro-western sentiments?
3. Is our present attitude towards the democratic ideal one of cold indifference or wholehearted acceptance?

4. Does the Church accept the concept of the secular state, not so much as a minority need, but as a valid Christian point of view?
5. What is our attitude towards the socialist ferment in Indian Society to-day?
6. In what specific ways can we show that we are as much Indians as anybody else and we are a community fully integrated with the Indian nation?
7. How can Christians play a leading role in the field of national integration and communal harmony?

Possible Lines of Solution

A deep rethinking of the Church's policies and stances in the socio-political life of India in the light of the Gospel is called for. We need some machinery or institution which is devoted to research on socio-political matters. Such a body should bring out, from time to time, studies and reports assessing the situation and explaining the Church's attitude and approach to specific problems. Such reports should be given the widest publicity all over the country. This will have a two-fold effect. On the one hand, it will educate the members of the Church as to the implications of the issues. On the other, it will make clear to others and the country as a whole what the Church's stand on such matters is. This is perhaps the most effective way to dispel the lingering doubts and suspicions which others have about the Church, its attitude and activities.

The label which brands Christianity as a western religion, and its external manifestations a product of accidental culture, have to be removed. This is perhaps a most difficult task in the context of an emerging pattern of cultural modernisation which has decisive western influence through modern science and technology. Yet this is an area which deserves careful study. One example may illustrate the point. It is often noticed that Christians as a whole have a somewhat negative attitude towards Indian languages. A lack of knowledge of Hindi among Christians living in Hindi speaking areas of the country is a serious drawback. How can Christians then mingle and merge freely with their fellow citizens and get themselves fully integrated?

Another method which has great practical value is the establishment of social relationship with members of other religions

and communities. Such social intercourse will bring down the artificial barriers that separate different communities and remove many prejudices. Catholics should also be encouraged to join and participate actively in cosmopolitan social and cultural groups and activities.

Christian Schools and Colleges should lay special emphasis on patriotism through suitable devices both inside and outside the class room. They should celebrate all national festivals, particularly important national days like the Republic Day, the Independence Day, etc.

The Church should encourage the visits of non-Christian leaders to all its institutions and arrange meetings, conferences and discussions in which they are made to participate in a prominent manner. In all such arrangements, however, there should be no apparent religious motive.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS POLITICAL PARTIES

The role of political parties in a democracy can hardly be over-emphasised. Parties provide distinctive programmes; organise citizens for political action; contest elections on a national or regional basis; capture political power through democratic methods and rule the country so long as the people's mandate lasts. For the successful functioning of a democracy, the party system seems to be indispensable.

Although political parties may occasionally degenerate and act as handmaids of dictatorial political bosses and caucuses, where parties function in an atmosphere of freedom, they are the surest guarantee of a democratic political order. Hence almost every politically-conscious citizen seeks membership in a political party of his choice in order to participate in political activities. Those who keep aloof from political parties can seldom play a role of importance in the political affairs of the country.

In India there are a large number of political parties. They can be broadly categorised as All-India and regional parties. Among the former are the Congress Party, the Swatantra, the Communist Party, the Jana sangh, the P.S.P. and S.S.P. Among the latter are parties such as the D.M.K., the Akali Party, the Muslim League and the Jharkand Party. It is unnecessary to go into an analysis of the platform of each of these parties, as

these are well known. What we are interested in here is the attitude of the Church towards political parties.

During the pre-Independence days the Church did not do much to encourage its members to join political parties. Even if it may be claimed that the Church was not actively supporting a colonial regime in India, it was at least indirectly supporting and upholding it. Some of our Bishops and priests had been even openly and actively working for the continuance of the British Government in India. This is one of the reasons for the rather insignificant number of Christians, particularly Catholics, among the leaders of the Nationalist Movement although the Christians had been relatively better educated. All this is understandable in the context of the situation which then obtained.

The question that is more relevant today is whether or not the Church has changed its attitude towards political parties in the post Independence era. There is no authoritative statement that is available on this point except that at the times of election individual Bishops and priests have been taking stands according to their own individual likes and dislikes and exhorting the people to vote accordingly. This does not meet the situation properly or adequately. The Church as a whole should declare in unmistakable terms its attitude towards political parties.

This does not mean that the Church should identify or align itself with any political party. On the contrary, the Church must make it absolutely clear that it is not with any particular party. Further, institutions of the Church should scrupulously keep aloof from partisan politics especially at election times. At the same time, it should declare its firm conviction that democratic political parties are essential for the effective functioning of a parliamentary system of government.

Are all the political parties in India democratic? Is it possible for the Church to give its verdict in a matter like this? For example, the Communist parties are often attacked by their opponents as anti-democratic and dictatorial. Yet they are allowed to function in the country as any other party. They have also been permitted to form governments in the States and run the administration. In this context, will it be proper for the Church to condemn the Communist party and totally oppose it unless it is a policy of the Party to destroy the Church?

While the Communist movement has been anti-religious and has totalitarian tendencies, it is equally important to remember that it has been promoting genuinely human and Christian values. It may be argued that our opposition to Communism has been coloured by our predilection for the security of property which a feudalist or capitalist society would provide us. It may further be argued that it is symptomatic of our unconscious identification with "the haves". The same trend of argument might indicate that our opposition to Communism should be more positive, acknowledging the values it embodies while laying bare its denial of individual freedom and the dignity of man, its over emphasis on statism; and by providing a practical alternative by a programme for a more equitable distribution of wealth, for equality of opportunity, for the liberty and the initiative of man and the abolition of every type of discrimination based on colour, caste, community or economic status.

In the same manner, should it not be possible for the Church to formulate a positive policy towards parties like the Jan Sangh, the-Muslim League, Akalies etc. ? The Seminar should give a clear lead on this very difficult problem as the Church's attitude to political parties does not appear to be clear. The following specific questions may be considered :

1. What should be the attitude of the Church towards political parties?
2. Should it encourage its members to join political parties? Or advise them to keep aloof and be neutral so that members of the Church can use their political rights with discretion ?
3. Is it possible to prescribe the criteria which would guide Catholics interested in joining political parties as active workers ? If so, what could they be ?
4. Why could not Catholics associate themselves with the good acts, noble causes, laudable movements and such other activities of any party or group irrespective of its communal, religious or ideological affiliations? For example, could there be an objection to Catholics joining the Communists when they fight Hindu religious fanaticism or the R.S.S. or the Hindu Mahasabha, or joining the latter when they attack the anti-religious and atheistic actions of the Communists ?

5. What should be the attitude of the Church regarding Catholics joining a Government dominated by Communists or communalists ?
6. What definite policy should we adopt towards Communism as it works in India today? Abandon an attitude of unqualified condemnation and start a dialogue ?
7. Is there any need and scope for the formation of a Christian political party in India or in any region or State in India ? Examine its implications in the light of the salient characteristics of the Indian political scene.

Possible lines of solution

If members of the Church are interested and aspire to occupy the highest political offices in the country, they may be able to do so only through political parties. Merit alone without political pull will not take citizens to the highest policy-making positions at the Centre or in the States. Hence it is only natural that ambitious citizens join political parties and actively participate in their activities so that when opportunities arise they can take advantage of them.

It is, however, right and proper on the part of the Church to point out those aspects of the party to which it has objection without making any wholesale condemnation of the party. Such an attitude will help not to create animosity or hostility towards the Church from any political party in India. On the other hand, it would help develop not only better understanding but even appreciation of the Church's stand by all parties. After all, no party would expect the Church to support everything that it does, just as no party would like to find itself in a situation where the Church is totally opposed to it and finds nothing but evil in it.

The Church's attitude towards political parties, therefore, should be positive. It should never be conditioned by ideological slogans of parties but by objective evaluation of their actions both in government and in the opposition. The Church should always try to assert its moral fibre by complimenting every good act, whomever it comes from and criticising or even condemning every bad act irrespective of its party origin. It will not be in the interest of our secular state and of the Chris-

tian community that the Church identifies herself with any political party.

The Church must also have full faith in the ability of its own members to hold on to their Faith wherever they are and whatever they are. The fear of a Christian losing his Faith because of his working with a Communist where both of them have a common ground for collaboration is a fear which exposes the weakness rather than the strength of the Church. If the foundations of the Church are firm and if it is a living, vibrant Church which is capable of applying its mind to the complex problems of the present day world and find solutions, it has nothing to fear from Communism or any other "ism" and it will not lose any of its members. On the other hand, such members might be able to create better appreciation of the Church's stand on different problems even among those who have been nursing a hostile attitude towards the Church.

World Communism is now in a process of evolution and Indian Communism is not immune from that process or its influence. While we may denounce the anti-religious and totalitarian attitudes of Communism we may equally appreciate the fact that it fights social injustice and exploitation and stands and works for the social and economic emancipation of the masses. Hence it seems logical that the Church moves away from an attitude of wholesale condemnation to one of dialogue.

The Church may even go a step further and associate with the good acts and laudable movements of any party or group including Communists, keeping always, of course, a vigilant eye as to how such collaboration works and what results it produces. Such dialogue and collaboration together with a bold progressive stand for reforms to bring about socio-economic uplift of the masses are bound to create a new image of the Church and promote better understanding and appreciation of the Church's role in India.

The idea of organising a Christian party in India as a whole or in any region or State does not go well with the secular character of the Indian polity. It is harmful to the community's interests and is opposed to its philosophy in political matters. Catholics, therefore should not take any lead in organising such a party or lend their support directly or indirectly to any such move.

Common Endeavour in Civic and Political Life

Isolation is neither desirable nor feasible in a pluralistic society like ours. There was a time when the Church seemed aloof on Olympian heights and claimed the monopoly of all virtues, spiritual and temporal. The Vatican II has brought the Church from that splendid isolation of the Olympian heights to the midst of the mundane problems of the multi-religious modern world. And the Council pronounced that for the good of the Church as well as the country and the world, Catholics are in duty bound to collaborate with other Churches and other religions.

Until Independence, Catholics and non-Catholic Christians were generally in rival camps almost in any area of activity. Much of this was due to competing endeavours in the field of evangelisation. After Independence, however, the Christian community realised the implications of the new political order and, gradually, the different denominations came to appreciate the value of cooperative and collaborative endeavour in the face of common challenges. Vatican II played a decisive role in strengthening this movement and establishing the firm foundations of a common endeavour. Evolving common policies regarding socio-political issues facing the country and the Christian response to these problems has become essential if the community has to make its own distinct contribution to the Civic and Political life of the country. Mutual understanding at the time of elections would also help to avoid rivalry between different Christian denominations and the consequent frittering away of the energies of all.

The Church should also explore the ways in which it can collaborate with members of other religions. This is particularly important in the context of fissiparous forces based on communal, regional and linguistic loyalties threatening the very survival of our secular democratic state. If the Church's bonafides are made clear by its identification with the woes and weals of a developing India, which projects the right image of the Church as an open community, respecting others and seeking to serve the nation rather than trying to increase its own power and position, it should be possible to come to a real understanding with the majority Hindu community and initiate a series of cooperative and collaborative endeavours.

Similarly, it should be possible to bring about real under-

standing with the Muslims and other minority communities for the purpose of common endeavour. In a large country like India with many religious minorities it is to the benefit of the minorities to understand each other's problems so that ways of mutual-help and assistance can be worked out from time to time depending on the situation.

The following specific questions may be considered :

1. What should be the Church's attitude towards other Christian groups in political and civic life ?
2. Are there hindrances against our intimate cooperation and collaboration ? What are they ? How can they be removed ?
3. What should be the Church's attitude towards other minority religious groups and communities ? What are the areas in which we should establish common endeavours with them ?
4. What should be the Church's attitude towards Hinduism and the Hindu community ? What are the different ways and areas in which we can cooperate and collaborate with them ?
5. Is it advisable for the Christians and the Muslims to join hands in the political and civic spheres with a view to capturing political power in any part of the country based on their combined numerical strength ?

Possible Lines of Solution :

Cooperation and collaboration with other Christian groups have made great progress in recent years. Every encouragement should be given to strengthen this movement. To facilitate this there should be regular meetings between accredited representatives of the different communities from time to time. One of the problems which such meetings should endeavour to discuss and find satisfactory solutions to is political contests between members of the different denominations. Wherever such contests have taken place, they have exacerbated the feelings and strained the relationship. It is advisable, therefore, that sufficiently ahead of the time for selecting candidates, a representative local committee may be constituted to go into the different aspects of the situation and take such measures as are called for to avoid unhealthy contests.

The Christian community in India should explore the possibility of establishing a national non-political organisation of Christians which will look after the civic and political interests of Christians. Such an organisation may run the risk of being branded as a Christian political party under a non-political mask. It may also create a minority complex among Christians. Hence the matter has to be carefully considered giving due importance to all these aspects.

A united Christian community can play a vital role in the maintenance of communal harmony in the country. It is a sad fact that communal passions have often played a role in the conduct of regional and even national politics. A Christian community which has abiding faith in secularism can render meritorious work in staying communal passions especially between the Hindus and the Muslims.

The idea of the Christians and the Muslims joining together for political purposes in areas where they form a sizeable number is not a worthy one. For, such a move not only will have all-India repercussions of an adverse nature but also is against the concept of secularism. It should be the endeavour of Christians to eschew all forms of communal-religious politics.

THE ROLE OF THE CLERGY

Politics is the concern of every citizen, man or woman, priest or layman, rich or poor. Every citizen has his civic and political rights and responsibilities. It is for him to decide how best he should exercise these rights. Yet, the nature of one's office, the type of one's work and such other considerations impose certain limitations on the extent of one's participation in politics. A civil servant or a member of the armed forces for example, is forbidden to enter active politics and contest a political office.

Similarly a priest also, because of the peculiar nature of his vocation, has to keep himself away from active politics. Active politics is the field of the politically free layman, not of the priests.

This does not mean that the clergy should have nothing to do with politics. Far from it. They should, in fact, study as best as possible, political developments and their implications, the

programmes and policies of different parties and governments so that they are in a position to discuss them intelligently and objectively.

In the light of our detailed consideration of what ought to be the attitude of the Church to political parties, there is no need here to go into greater detail on this topic. Suffice it to say that if the clergy does not play a role of neutrality at the time of elections, they are bound to lose their position as spiritual and religious leaders of their people. Let us consider the following specific issues :

1. What should be the role of Bishops and priests in the political and civic life of the country ?
2. What should be the attitude of the clergy towards individual candidates at the time of election ?
3. Is it proper to make use of the pastoral letter, the pulpit and the Sunday sermon in connection with elections? If so, in what manner and to what extent ?
4. Is it advisable that Bishops, priests or nuns seek political offices, contest elections, become members of the legislatures, Municipal Councils, village panchayats, etc.

Possible lines of Solution

The proper role of the clergy in civic and political life of the country is to study the issues and problems and give advice to the faithful about the merits and demerits of each. They should leave the decision making function to the individuals themselves. Their role in this context is that of an educationist and not that of a partisan leader. Since there is always the danger of their being identified with the Church even if they make it clear that their views are personal, it is the Church that will be attacked and accused of being partisan every time a priest or bishop gets politically involved. It is perfectly legitimate, however, for the bishops and the priests to exhort the people to register themselves as voters and exercise without fail their right to vote at the time of every election.

In a situation where two or more Catholic candidates are contesting from the same constituency, if conditions are favourable, the bishop or the parish priest may use his good offices in a prudent and tactful manner to bring about an understanding

between the candidates. Especially, in situations where the unhealthy contest between two candidates is going to help neither but a third one, the priest is justified in playing the role of a mediator. But such occasions are rare and utmost care and caution are essential in dealing with them so that the priest does not get branded as a partisan.

Normally, no priest or bishop or nun should accept a political office. Under no circumstances should they enter a contest for a political office, or seek such office for the sake of power and glory. However, if a political office is offered voluntarily or if a priest, bishop or nun is elected unanimously or by acclamation to a political or civic office, the person concerned may consider accepting it as a trust. Such cases may even serve the cause of the Church better. But the moment the circumstances under which the position was accepted, change, the priest should readily vacate the office to show that he has no vested interest in it.

The same guide lines ought to regulate the conduct of priests or nuns working in the educational, cultural or social fields whenever elections are held to the various elective positions in such organisations.

ADVISING THE CLERGY ON POLITICAL AND CIVIC MATTERS

The world of today is a most complex one. And many of the issues and problems a person in a responsible position has to handle are complex. Knowledge is increasing at a fantastic rate and specialisation is the order of the day. However intelligent, able and scholarly a person may be, there are real limitations on his capacity to keep abreast of the fast-moving events and developments that are taking place in the different spheres of human activity. And yet, if he has to function effectively, he has to be knowledgeable and should be familiar with the implications of these developments in the context of his own responsibilities. The higher the position one holds and the larger the sphere of one's activities, the greater is the need for such knowledge and understanding.

Our Bishops today, in the context of the complexities of the times, have much greater responsibility and more difficult tasks to perform than ever before in the history of the Church. Even if every one of them is a most brilliant person from an intellec-

tual and scholastic point of view, even then, there are obvious limits to their knowledge and understanding of matters political, civic, economic and social. How can this disadvantage be remedied so as to make them function more effectively whenever they are called upon to speak or act in a manner that will have repercussions on the social, political economic and civic spheres?

There is a feeling among the laity, particularly among those in public life, that our Bishops are not in the full and proper know of the different aspects of political and civic life of the country. This is why, it is alleged, they are unable to give proper guidance wherever possible and whenever advisable. In the light of this situation let us consider the following specific questions :

1. Are our Bishops and priests properly advised on matters civic and political? If not, how can this be done effectively?
2. Is it possible to think of setting up a definite machinery which embraces the different levels of the Church organisation for this purpose?
3. In organisations like the C.B.C.I., regional associations of Bishops and such others and their different sections, what is the present system to enable the Bishops to get expert advice on political, economic and civic matters? Is it satisfactory? If not, how can it be improved? What concrete measures can be recommended in this context?

Possible Lines of Solution

To make expertise available to the Church at various levels, first of all, the Church should have precise knowledge of the number, areas of specialisation etc. of such experts available among its own members. In order to make this knowledge available, every parish and every diocese should prepare a list of such persons with all relevant details. It should be possible, on the basis of such lists, even to prepare an all-India directory composed of the more prominent names among them. Such a document will be immensely helpful to spot the right persons as and when occasions arise.

It would be desirable to constitute in every diocese, either as a part of the Diocesan council or independently, a body of select experts who would be available for advice as and when required. The list should be periodically revised so as to admit fresh blood. The group should meet at least twice a year and, in addition, whenever there is special need.

Similarly the Regional Associations of Bishops as well as the C.B.C.I. and their committees should have the benefit of such advice. Experts may also be requested to make special studies and prepare reports which may be placed before these bodies so that whenever they take decisions affecting the interests of the community, they would be based on adequate preparation and consideration.

In enlisting the cooperation of experts the Church need not limit its choice to Catholics, although they would naturally form the largest component of the expert body. Non-Catholic Christians as well as non-Christians may be invited or persuaded to to accept positions on such bodies and help the Church to make the right decisions.

The Catholic Union of India has constituted a joint council of the Catholic Union and the Christian Union and the Christian Union of India to facilitate joint deliberations between the two organisations on matters of common interest. This is a step in the right direction. While strengthening the ties of these two organisations, similar organisations should be established at regional levels and even sub-regional levels. The C.B.C.I., regional organisations of Bishops and Diocesan organisations may seek advice from such bodies, particularly on civic and political matters.

HANDING OF PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH RELIGION, MINORITY RIGHTS ETC.

The Constitution of India has, as pointed out earlier, guaranteed a number of Fundamental Rights. From the point of view of the Christian community, these Rights can be divided into two special categories : (1) those that are applicable to every citizen and (2) those that have special significance from the point of view of a religious minority.

Among the former are rights such as equality before the law and equal protection of laws; right to freedom of speech and ex-

pression, assembly and association; right to freely move throughout India or settle in any part of its territory; right to acquire, hold and dispose of property; right to enter any occupation, trade or profession, right to life and personal liberty; freedom from unlawful arrest and detention; and right to constitutional remedies.

Among the latter are two categories of rights: the right to freedom of religion, and cultural and educational rights. These rights are couched in the following language:

Right to Freedom of Religion

“(1) Subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this Part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion.

(2) Nothing in this article shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law:

- (a) regulating or restricting any economic, financial, political or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practice;
- (b) providing for social welfare and reform or the throwing open of Hindu religious institutions of a public character to all classes and sections of Hindus.

Explanation: I—The wearing and carrying of kirpans shall be deemed to be included in the profession of the Sikh religion.

Explanation: II—In sub-clause (b) of clause (2), the reference to Hindus shall be construed as including a reference to persons professing the Sikh, Jaina or Buddhist religion, and the reference to Hindu religious institutions shall be construed accordingly.

Subject to public order, morality and health, every religious denomination or any section thereof shall have the right:—

- (a) to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes;
- (b) to manage its own affairs in matters of religion;
- (c) to own and acquire movable and immovable property; and
- (d) to administer such property in accordance with law.

No person shall be compelled to pay any taxes, the proceeds of which are specifically appropriated in payment of expenses for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion or religious denomination.

No religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of State funds.

Nothing in clause (I) shall apply to an educational institution which is administered by the State but has been established under any endowment or trust which requires that religious instruction shall be imparted in such institution.

No person attending any educational institution recognised by the State or receiving aid out of State Funds shall be required to take part in any religious instructions that may be imparted in such institutions or to attend any religious worship that may be conducted in such institutions or in any premises attached thereto unless such person or, if such person is a minor, his guardian has given his consent thereto.

Cultural and Educational Rights

Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.

No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.

All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

The State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language."

Despite these constitutional guarantees the Christian feels - and this is often reflected in the statements made on behalf of them by the spokesmen of the Church or other representative organisations - that justice is not done to them in the fullest measure. As a small minority of law-abiding citizens who have

been making disproportionately large contributions of great value to the nation in the educational, medical, social and humanitarian fields, they feel that they should get better encouragement from the government and the administration. But instead of encouragement, often they are denied their legitimate rights and hindrances are created in their legitimate activities.

Numerous instances can be cited when legislative enactments have been made by several States which are detrimental to the interests of the Christian community. Similarly there have been administrative decisions and actions which have equally had an adverse effect on them.

There is also a feeling, right or wrong, that the Christian community has inadequate representation in the legislatures and in the administration. How should the community go about to remove these disabilities and handicaps is a matter of great importance from a political point of view. In the light of these, the following questions may be considered :

1. Enumerate and assess the extent and seriousness of the various legislative and administrative measures which have been of a discriminatory character from the point of view of the Christian community.
2. Do we represent to the Governments at the Centre and in the States our problems and difficulties which they can solve or remedy in the appropriate manner and form and at the proper time? Do we have any specific machinery for the purpose?
3. Have we got any widely circulated newspapers and journals to publicize our standpoint on different matters? If not what is the remedy?
4. Should we seek reservation of seats in civic and political bodies?
5. Should we seek reservation of posts in government services in proportion to our population?
6. What should be our stand on behalf of recent converts to Christianity regarding extension of the same facilities and privileges which are now given to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes?

Possible lines of Solution

As a forward looking, progressive community, the Christians should not seek reservations either in the political and civic fields, or in public services. The community is bound to get its due share or more in the political and civic fields when it produces leaders of ability who enter the mainstream of Indian politics. The community's handicap at present has been largely a product of history. It is only a matter of time to remedy this handicap. Christians should, from now onwards, participate actively and increasingly in political and civic organisations at all levels.

Regarding reservation in public services, in the long run, it will be harmful to the interests of the community. In spite of all the nepotism, favouritism and such other evils, merit still counts to an appreciable extent. It is bound to assert itself increasingly in the years to come. Hence a relatively better educated community should look forward to the future with hope.

With regard to the extension of facilities and privileges to the converts from scheduled castes and tribes, representation at the appropriate levels of the administration and the government seems to be the best course of action.

To safeguard the community's interests and legitimate rights it has to become more vigilant, and organised efforts are to be made. From this point of view the following proposals may be considered :

A 'Vigilance Committee' consisting of a select group of leading men of each Diocese or region may be established to take appropriate action as and when occasions arise.

It is advisable to have such a body on an all-India level also.

- (i) Mobilise public opinion through all lawful forms of protest and making good use of all forms of mass communication media.
- (ii) Establish press-offices in all important cities and a press office cum public relations office in Delhi.
- (iii) Enlist the cooperation and support of members of the Parliament and the State legislatures through appropriate means.
- (iv) We should also make the fullest use of the existing facilities provided by the judiciary, particularly the High

Courts and the Supreme Court. A committee of lawyers may be constituted to render timely and appropriate assistance on all occasions and such a committee may work in close cooperation with the Vigilance Committees mentioned earlier.

- (v) Peaceful and dignified agitation should be undertaken if all other means fail to achieve the community's legitimate rights and interests.

ORGANISATION FOR RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATION

In the ultimate analysis it is ideas that rule the world. Hence the importance of ideas, sound ideas, as the foundation of all our endeavours. As a progressive, educated and forward-looking community we should be able to find new ideas and permeate the political and civic life of the country with such ideas.

Hitherto we have been concerned largely with defending our rights and interests when they were in danger. This was right and proper but not enough. While continuing to do so we must, at the same time, develop a new attitude of commitment to all the problems of the country, from agriculture to atomic energy. No problems should be considered irrelevant or unimportant to us. We must make every endeavour to help solve them.

In particular, we should subject to serious study every legislative measure that come up before the Parliament and the State Legislatures and give our comments, criticisms and suggestions. This is bound to have a salutary effect on the course of legislation. Similarly we should offer as far as possible, our own evaluation of every important administrative action of the governments at the Centre and in the States.

But we cannot do this effectively without an organised effort. The expert groups about which mention was made earlier should be the focal points through which our efforts are to be directed. They should study the problems systematically and give their findings and conclusions which should receive widest publicity within the country and, wherever necessary, even abroad.

From this point of view it is absolutely necessary to establish at least one English language daily newspaper and a few weeklies and other periodic journals. Such journals should also be pro-

duced in regional languages. Such an organised effort should produce good results in the long run and we should be able to succeed in creating an impact on the civic and political life of the country.

In the light of this let us consider the following-questions:

1. Are there any bodies or organisations of Catholics devoted to research, engaged exclusively or otherwise in studies and preparing scholarly reports dealing with various problems, especially from a political, social, economic and civic point of view?
2. If there are any, how satisfactory has been their work? How can they be strengthened?
3. If there is none, is it feasible to create one or more of such bodies? How will they be constituted and run?
4. Is it practicable to establish an English language daily newspaper which would serve the community's interest as a whole? Is it practicable to have Indian language versions of such a newspaper? What are the implications of these propositions?

Possible Lines of Solution

Since the C.B.C.I. is functioning as an all-India body, under its auspices a research institute may be established in Delhi. Similarly, the feasibility of establishing four regional institutes at Bombay, Kerala, Madras and Calcutta may also be explored. While the institute at Delhi will concentrate on problems of an all-India nature the regional institutes may concentrate on problems of regional and local nature.

The institutes should make every effort to find really competent men, both priests and laymen, to work with them. Care should, however, be taken to avoid the possibility of the Institutes becoming clergy-dominated. As far as possible, they should be headed by laymen or women of reputation and standing in the intellectual world. The working of the Institutes should be properly coordinated.

Some of these institutes may be started as autonomous units attached to the major Seminaries already functioning in the important centres of the Christian community. This might help reduce cost on the one hand and drawing of competent personnel readily, on the other.

In a similar manner, the feasibility of establishing an English Newspaper should be seriously explored. Regional language newspapers, to begin with in all major languages, also are very important from many points of view. Hence every endeavour should be made to give a start to some of them in the near future. It should also be the aim to run these primarily as commercial ventures rather than as Church newspapers.

Initiative may also be taken to encourage Christian writers and researchers to undertake studies in specific areas and undertaking to publish their works. If the Church has to be a dynamic force in the affairs of the nation, it has to establish its ability and capacity for research and study in depth and develop new ideas which would pave the way for new action.

SUGGESTED READINGS

A. Vatican II Documents

Abbreviations Constitution on the Church (LG); Constitution on Revelation (DV); Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (SC); Constitution on the Modern World (GS); Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication (IM); Decree on Ecumenism (UR); Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches (OE); Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church (CD); Decree on Priestly Formation (OT); Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life (PC); Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (AA); Decree on the Ministry and life of Priests (PO); Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (AG); Declaration on Christian Education (GE); Declaration on the Relationship of the Church with non-Christian Religions (NA); Declaration on Religious Freedom (DH).

Means of promoting active Christian participation :- GS 42/2; 43/1-6; 77; 88; 90.

Training and motivation of laity:—LG 36/3; AA 14; 16/5.

Direct participation at different levels: local boards, municipalities, assemblies, parliament :—GS 75.

Cooperation with Christians and others : GS 90/3.

LG 131 the laity and their temporal or secular affairs, cf 48 meaning of temporal existence. AG 15 Christians as good citi-

zens love of country and of all men; the laity to instill spirit of Christ in temporal affairs; cf. AA114; AG 21 Christian laymen belong to People of God and civil society.—12 the Church abstains from politics, cf. GS 73-76 changes in political life today: sense of human dignity etc. 74 nature and goal of political community; 75 co-operation of all in political life, Christian vocation within the political community and the Church; cf. 43 Christians are citizens of earthly and heavenly city.

GS 73-political life today, 74 nature and goal of the political community;

75 cooperation in political life; 76 the political community and the Church.

B. Others

The Constitution of India Published by the Government of India.

*Constitutional Government in India
And India's Constitution.*

by Dr. M. V. Pylee,
Published by Asia Publishing
House.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

TOPIC I: POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN INDIA

1. What are the reasons why the Christian community in India, which is relatively better educated and organised, has not been:

- (i) adequately conscious of its political and civic responsibilities
- (ii) able to produce adequate and better political and civic leadership ?

2. Is the creation by the Church of multifarious organisations, of a narrow, parochial outlook, the cause of limited Catholic involvement in civic and political activity ? What lines should re-thinking on this score take ?

3. Will it not be better that Catholics take greater interest in broad-based, non-communal and non-religious organisations ? How would this work out in practice ?

4. Do we have any concrete plans to make members of the Church (Bishops, priests, and laypeople):

- (i) conscious of their civic and political responsibility;
- (ii) political and civic leaders at the highest level. (Cfr. Q. 1 above)

N.B. With regard to the clergy in particular analyse:

(a) The role of the Bishops and priests in the civic and political life of the country, and their attitude at the time of the elections.

(b) The machinery for proper and expert advice to individual Bishops, to Regional Associations of Bishops and to the C.B.C.I.

TOPIC II: THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH TOWARDS SECULARISM, DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

1. How, keeping in mind the past, can the Church establish her *bonafides* as being an integral part of India's socio-cultural complex ?



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