ALL INDIA SEMINAR

ON

THE CHURCH IN INDIA TODAY

BANGALORE, MAY 15 - 25, 1969

ORIENTATION PAPERS

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FOREWORD

This book contains the final version of the six Orientation Papers of the All-India Seminar on "The Church in India Today" scheduled to be held in Bangalore from 15th to 25th May of 1969. They have already appeared before in a preliminary edition (A—F), now revised in the light of various observations made.

These pages contain a wealth of facts of great value to the Seminar. As for the views expressed, not all of them need be acceptable to all persons, even the organizers themselves. It is felt that, in their broad outline, these Papers represent an orientation in keeping with Vatican II, more definitely so in the principles laid down, less certainly perhaps in their application to the India of today. In any case, the views expressed in these pages are offered here to the participants of the Seminar not as fixed patterns of thought to be accepted in all details, but as suggestions intended to stimulate thought in directions of fruitful renewal. Both the facts and the views contained in these Papers constitute valuable material for the discussions and conclusions of the Seminar.

We owe these Papers to the continued labours of many. Although each Paper was first drafted by one person, many others, both clerical and lay, contributed to it with suggestions and constructive criticism. To all of them we should like to extend our grateful thanks, on behalf of all participants, for their joint endeavour in a spirit of co-responsibility.

The Organizing Committee
All India Seminar
on
The Church in India Today.

April 1st. 1969
C.B.C.I. Centre,
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ORIENTATION PAPER A

The Church and Her Mission

A Seminar on the renewal and re-orientation of the Church in India is confronted with the same basic problem which loomed over the beginning of Vatican II; where should it begin, and what are the priorities in the vast mass of material and problems ? The Council answered the problem by first limiting the unwieldy programme to the most vital issues, and secondly settling, after the first Session, on its central theme, the Church. From here it found the perspectives in which all other problems had to be treated.

In the forthcoming Seminar, the answer must be similar. To avoid wastage of time and scattering of efforts, the main topics to be treated in the workshops must be selected. But even before entering into their practical discussion, the basic orientation is needed : the understanding of the Church and of her mission. In the Council, the long time spent on the study of the Church was not lost ; the effort bore fruit in the framing of all the other documents. They all received their main inspiration from the new self-understanding of the Church and of her mission.

Also our Seminar has to start from the central question : What is the Church ? What is her mission ? This introductory paper can obviously not give an exhaustive exposition of the theology of the Church, nor of the complexity of her mission in the present world. A serious study of the Council documents, mainly *Lumen Gentium* (the Church), *Gaudium et Spes* (Church and Modern World), *Ad Gentes* (Missions) and *Nostra Aetate* (non-Christian Religions) must be the basis of the Seminar discussions. However, the following guidelines on the renewed self-understanding of the Church in the Council are offered to help finding the right perspectives in which the Church has to carry out her renewal, to be better prepared to fulfil the mission of Jesus Christ in our time.

1. The Call to Reflection

Our confidence in the Church rests on her divine origin, on her role in the universal mystery of salvation, and on the

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unfailing promise of Christ's abiding presence in her unto the final fulfilment of her mission. Jesus wanted this confidence to be deeply impressed on his disciples. It must be the keynote of the Seminar on the Church in India today.

Yet the trust in the unfailing support by God is very different from the false sense of security and self complacency which easily creeps into the Church : clergy and laity. We can fail in our mission ; individuals can fail, and the Church as a body can fall short of her responsibility if in long periods of her history she does not sufficiently understand and live up to the demands of God on her as expressed in historical situations. We do not examine the past; the Vatican Council itself shakes us up from the slumber of self-complacency through such key-words as 'renewal' and 'ecclesia semper reformanda'. In its attempt to analyse the religious crisis of our time—the immediate context deals with atheism, which is "accounted among the most serious problems of this age'—it frankly confesses :

"Believers themselves frequently bear some responsibility for this situation. For, taken as a whole, atheism is not a spontaneous development but stems from a variety of causes including a critical reaction against religious beliefs, and in some cases against the Christian religion in particular. Hence believers can have more than a little to do with the birth of atheism. To the extent that they neglect their own training in the faith, or teach erroneous doctrine, or are deficient in their religious, moral and social life, they must be said to conceal rather than reveal the authentic face of God and religion." (1)

Turning to the Church in India, it is not the task of this paper to study her manifold achievements, or her failures ; her deep impact on the life of India, as well as her absence from many spheres of culture and development. It will be for the Workshops to take up this examination with relation to the various functions and activities of the Church. Rather, it is our task to study the picture of the Church as it has been created in the faithful themselves, and as it presents itself before the public, and

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(1) Gaudium et Spes 19.

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to ask whether this picture needs to be complemented, and perhaps corrected in the light of the Council.

A simple reflection may serve as a starting point. Most educated people in India would pay homage to Jesus Christ as one of the great religious leaders of mankind and would acknowledge his relevance for India. Their attitude is sympathetic and implies an inner response to the Christian message as embodied in the person of Jesus. Jesus is not considered a stranger or an intruder in India, but a friend.

The same cannot be said about the Church. Gandhiji's well known resentment against the Church, in spite of his deep admiration and love for Jesus, is shared by many. The analysis of the reasons for this attitude would be a complex task : there are overstressed national feelings, there is communalism, there are vested interests ; besides, also in India, we encounter the modern secular outlook : scientific rationalism, along with philosophical agnosticism, which has little sympathy with religious beliefs and practices ; the aversion against religious institutionalism with canonical structures and dogmatic creeds, which is part of India's inheritance and is increased by the general—modern crisis of authority. There are, besides, particular obstacles on the part of the Church which make it difficult to understand her : the Western origin still embodied in a great part of her set-up ; the chapters of intolerance in her history ; the overweight of legal structures, of offices and authority.

But all this is not an adequate explanation for the difference of attitude in so many people towards Jesus and the Church. Let us then ask sincerely : if the Church really represented what she is meant to be, the community of Christ's disciples, concerned with making the Spirit of Jesus present in India and his saving love in our world of today ; if in all Christians, individuals as well as communities, the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount were alive, if the union with God the Father, the universal brotherhood and solidarity, forgiveness and love, of enemies, sincerity and service were evident both in Christian teaching and practice; if thus in reality the Church appeared as "the sacrament or sign of intimate union with God and of the unity of all mankind" (2) might not the attitude towards her often be different ? We

(2) Lumen Gentium 1.

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say 'might be,' because we really do not know, and it is not for us to search other people's hearts ; we make this reflection for our own sake : have we obscured the image of the Church, and placed obstacles in the way of others to understand her true meaning and mission ? Is the Church in India an object-lesson "of that renewed humanity, penetrated with brotherly love, sincerity, and a peaceful spirit, to which all aspire" ? (3) We cannot earnestly proclaim the message of salvation unless the truth and love of God are incarnate in the Church, so that in the Church, they could recognize Christ. This then is the question which we ask first : Is Jesus Christ really the centre of our Church ?

II. Jesus Christ, the Centre of the Church

The Church is the sign of Jesus' abiding presence among men. The value of a sign is measured by the degree to which it is able to present the reality for which it stands. The Church is meant to represent Jesus Christ, "whose brightness shines on her countenance." (4) It was the effort of the Council to make it transparent to the mystery it contains. Here, indeed, is the starting point of all renewal. Jesus Christ must live in his Church, and he must be found in her.

When Jesus established the Church, he took the risk of instituting a human society, and so exposing the continuation of his mission to the danger that threatens all institutions : that after beginning to exercise the function for which they are established, they gradually turn into themselves, and become more concerned with their structures than with their tasks ; often personal considerations and group interests outweigh the concern for efficiency ; administration increases, and correct legal and ritual procedure becomes more important than the spirit and the life for which they exist. Offices are multiplied, and a sense of self-importance prevails while important tasks remain undone. Such trends can be observed in all types of organisations ; they affect also religious groups and communities, which is one of the reasons why modern men are so resentful against organized

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(3) Ad Gentes 8.

(4) Lumen Gentium 1.

religion : there is something deeply offensiue in the perversion of spiritual values into material and selfish concerns.

The Church is not beyond this temptation. It was unavoidable that the little band of Jesus' disciples, when growing into the worldwide Church, had to develop her doctrinal formulae, the sacramental rituals, the laws for government and administration. It would be utterly unrealistic to think of a Church which could do without these. The Church is a body in which each function has its organ, but never must the organ become more important than the function, and never must the mission of the Church be fettered in a system of administration and organisation. The parish priest is first and foremost the pastor of his flock, and in the second place only an administrator and organiser ; the mission station is a radiating centre for the message of Jesus Christ ; its educational, social, medical and other activities are subsidiary. The Council speaks of the "countenance of the Church, on which the light of Christ shines". There is a danger that we turn his countenance into an institutional facade, and his life into depersonalized efficiency. We do need even better organisation and more efficiency, but they never must hide, or distort, the living features of Jesus Christ.

Pope Paul VI has spoken very seriously about the need of correcting our idea of the Church, of personalizing it. At the beginning of the second Council session he spoke about the urgent need of a clearer selfunderstanding of the Church: "She must obey the Holy Spirit who seems to demand of her an all-out effort that she be recognized by the people for what she really is." (5) In the same allocution he offers the outline of the right picture, answering the three questions about the starting point, the road to be taken, and the goal of the Council :

"There is only one answer which, in this solemn hour, we have to repeat to ourselves and to proclaim before the whole world: it is Christ. Christ is our beginning, Christ our leader and our life, Christ our end. Pray that this ecumenical Council fully understand that bond which links us to Christ, a bond one and manifold, strong and inspiring, deeply hidden and

(5) Allocution of Paul VI. Sept. 29, 1963, in *Vaticanum II; Constitutiones* etc. (Roma 1966) p. 903.

manifest, tight and sweet. The living and holy Church, i.e. we ourselves, are linked to Christ from whom we begin, through whom we live, towards whom we move. This our assembly should not shine in any other light of the world; our minds should not look for any other truth but the words of the Lord who is our only teacher ; at nothing else should we aim but in faithful obedience to follow his commands ; no other confidence should support us but the one which strengthens our weakness when we trust his words : Behold I shall be with you to the end of time".

The first and decisive step in the renewal of the Church, therefore, must consist in clearly recognizing Jesus Christ as the centre of the Church and referring all activities and structures to him. The 'Light of the Nations' (Lumen Gentium) of which the Constitution on the Church speaks, is not the Church herself, but Jesus Christ. The Church is merely the herald, and the sign of his continued presence. Jesus' words are more important than doctrine (though the latter, too, are necessary) ; his demands are above the canons of the Church law (though they too are needed) ; bishops and priests are the bearers of his message and mission, not mere officials or administrators ; and a faithful is more than one of the enrolled members of the community, he is a "sharer in the priestly, prophetic and kingly function of Christ." Jesus' Spirit must be with us before all organized action of the Church, and must pervade it. If the Council calls for the return to the sources, it means the renewal of all Christian life from its ultimate source, which is Jesus Christ.

III. The Common Priesthood

Who then is responsible for this renewed orientation ? In answering this question we are accustomed to turn to the authorities, and for all deficiencies we are likely to blame those in official positions. It is obvious that the Hierarchy has to play a decisive role in the renewal of the Church, and without the agreement and encouragement of those in authority, lay people could not move very far. Yet the real starting point of the renewal is not in any office, but in the whole Christian community and in each Christian personally. To every faithful the startling realisation must come that he himself is responsible.

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This is one of the key doctrines of the Council. It must be understood in its far reaching consequences both by the hierarchy and the laity : the subject of the life of the Church is the entire Christian community. Within this community, various offices have their specific functions, responsibilities and powers, but the real Church is the entire people of God. It is for this reason that, in the Constitution on the Church, the chapter on the People of God has been placed before that on the Hierarchy. The Hierarchy is only a part of the Church, established to serve the people of God, which comprises all the faithful. All Christians share in Christ's priestly, prophetic and royal office. They are—

"set apart to be a spiritual household and a holy priesthood, so that in all their actions as Christians they may offer spiritual oblations and proclaim the marvels of him who has called them out of darkness into his admirable light." (6)

The faithful must understand anew the meaning of their Christian vocation. It is centred round the sacraments, but demands at the same time a true renewal of the whole life. The Council says :

"It is through the sacraments *and* the exercise of the virtues that the sacred nature and the organic structure of the priestly community is brought into operation". (7)

Christian life begins with baptism, matures in confirmation, is nourished by the Eucharist and renewed through sacramental penance. But are there not many Christians who are satisfied with a more or less regular reception of the sacraments, without deepening the understanding of their Christian vocation and earnestly attempting to live their lives according to the Gospel ? They consider sacraments as a means of achieving perfection independently of their personal effort, through some sort of automatic causality. But there is no mechanical causality that can lead us to true holiness. All holiness consists in the love of God, in an union with him. Sacraments are the signs of this union with Jesus, true signs, containing his love and grace ;

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(6) Lumen Gentium 10.

(7) Lumen Gentium 11.

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they are instituted by Christ and therefore are the pledge of his saving power ; when we receive them, we are in Christ's presence, touched by his love. But the effect of this touch depends not only on Jesus, but on us as well, on the readiness to be transformed by him. Here lies our failure and the ineffectiveness of so many sacraments. The effect depends on our openness to the grace of God. The too mechanical conception of the sacraments and their causality has done immeasurable harm to the Christian life and has often reduced it to a monotonous routine.

If therefore we desire the renewal of the life and mission of the Church, let us speak not only of the sacraments, and measure the intensity of the Christian life by the frequency with which they are received. Let us work and pray for the new awakening of the Word of God in our time ; God calls us through the Gospel, and through the signs of our time, to be his Church in a new way, as it is needed in our age. Once we understand our vocation and live it in a true witness to Jesus Christ, the celebration of the Eucharist, and the reception of the sacraments will be truly meaningful and fruitful. All renewal grows from within, where God touches the hearts with His creative love. He alone can open the eyes to understand the Christian vocation in our time, and our mission in the India of today.

Besides our outlook on sacramental life has often been too individualistic. We have understood that our spiritual life is restored in sacramental penance, and renewed in the Eucharist, but we do not realise sufficiently that in each sacrament, and mainly in the Eucharist, we are united in one body, in Jesus Christ, and that in Holy Mass we celebrate the mystery not only of our union with Christ, but also of our union among ourselves, as members of the Church. Here, indeed, is the life-spring of that union and love which must bind the Christian community together. It is forcefully expressed in the more recent documents on the Eucharist, e.g. in 'Mysterium Fidei', where a classical text of S. Cyprian is quoted :

"The sacrifices of the Lord proclaim the unity of Christians, bound together by the bond of a firm and inviolable charity. For when the Lord, in speaking of bread which is produced by the compacting of many grains of wheat, refers to it as

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his Body, he is describing our people whose unity he has sustained ; and when he refers to wine pressed from many grapes and berries as his Blood, he is speaking of our flock, formed by the fusing of many united together." (8)

Thus Christ lives in the whole Christian community. The promises of God are given to the whole Church. To be able to live up to its vocation, it is equipped with the charisma of truth given to the whole people of God. Within this community, the Hierarchy has its specific function ; in its authority the mission of Jesus Christ is continued. But we have isolated the teaching function of the Hierarchy too much, and have considered the laity as a passively listening audience which has only to accept the word of their pastors. The Council has described the charisma of infallibility and of understanding the word of God in a very different way :

"The faithful *as a body* cannot err in their belief. They manifest this special prerogative of *theirs* by means of a supernatural *sense of faith* that belongs to *the people as a whole*, when from bishops down to the *last believer* they show universal agreement in matters of faith and morals." (9)

The whole Church, then, has received the spirit of truth to recognize and accept the word of God, to cling to it, and to penetrate it more deeply.

Apart from the charisma of truth, other gifts are bestowed on the people of God to equip them for their mission :

"(The Holy Spirit) distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts he makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks and offices advantageous for the renewal and upbuilding of the Church according to the words of the Apostle : "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit" (1 Cor 12,7). (10)

These gifts of the Spirit must be developed ; otherwise they

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(8) Paulist ed. p. 18. Cyprian, ep. ad Magnum 6, P.L. 3,1189.

(9) Lumen Gentium 12.

(10) ibid.

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cannot bear fruit. The higher doctrinal and spiritual formation can no longer be the privilege of the clergy and some select religious, but must be offered, in various degrees and forms, to all groups of Christians. It obviously must be different from the formation of future priests. It must not separate them from natural and professional surroundings, but should be offered in relation to their secular status and responsibility, to enable them to understand and judge their world as Christians. So they shall be prepared to make their own contribution to the life of the Church and to offer their service to the world in which they live.

IV. The Place of the Layman

In the renewal of the Church, it will be important to assess the role of the laity correctly, which can be done only in the context of a fuller understanding of the whole Church. All know that the Church has been too clerical. This means not only that the roles played by priests and laity have not been sufficiently balanced, but that the understanding of the Church itself has been centred too much on the Christian community.

It is the primary task of the clergy, of bishops and priests, to take care of the inner life of the Church, of doctrine, liturgy, Church-organisations etc. Their work and representation certainly extend beyond the church compound, yet in their outside contacts they are primarily taken as representatives of the Christian community. Thus there is the danger that the thinking and planning of the Church remain limited to the needs and the progress of the Church. This care for the life of the Church is important, yet it is only one aspect of the Christian life. It must be balanced by the responsibility for the world. The Church is part and parcel of the world. It is one of the decisive orientations of the Council that "this community (i.e. the Church) realises that it is truly and intimately linked with mankind and its history." (11)

If now the laity is called to take its legitimate part in the life of the Church, there is the danger that they unconsciously keep the clerical image of the Church in their mind : that their

(11) Gaudium et Spes 1.

contribution consists mainly in taking over certain functions which so far have been reserved to priests ; exercise certain functions in the liturgy, join parish councils and other ecclesiastical bodies, take part in doctrinal discussions etc. All this is right, supposing, of course, that it is done in the right spirit and measure. However, it is totally inadequate. The decisive role of the laity is to be played in the world. Through the layman Christ must be present in the spheres of secular activities. The problem of a too clerical Church will not be solved if also lay people become clerical in their outlook, and limit their interests to participation in ecclesiastical bodies—though, to be sure, they must be there. Still, their real concern is the world, their outlook must be secular; they have to live the Christian life and apply the Gospel to the situations of our time. Through the laity the relevance of Jesus Christ for our world must be shown.

This indeed is the crying need in our age of secularisation. In an age of worldwide anxieties about the pressing problems of mankind, in the midst of a developing nation, a Church with a predominantly clerical outlook is strangely out of tune.

In his 'The Humiliation of the Church' A.H. van den Heuvel quotes Dr. Visser't Hooft's painful question after his return from an All-African youth conference : "In ten years, how many of these young people will still be connected with the Christian Church ?", and he comments : "So great was the frustration of those students at the irrelevance of their Church and its inability to prepare them for the political and social questions that they face." (12)

The mission of the laity has been stressed long before the Council, but the shift from "Catholic Action", which was originally meant as the extension of the apostolate of the Hierarchy, to the Apostolate of the laity as such, is a gradual process which far from being completed, demands growing understanding and new orientation. Though the laity will always have to step in on many occasions where priests are unable to carry out their tasks, still they are not to be considered an auxiliary force of the

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(12) A.H. van den Heuvel, the Humiliation of the Church, Philadelphia 1966, p. 30.

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clergy. The lay-apostolate does not consist in mere cooperation with the Hierarchy, but, according to the Council, in genuine "participation in the salvific mission of the Church." (13) The word has been chosen deliberately to express the active part and the responsibility in planning and carrying out this apostolate. The laymen's apostolate lies "in their family, within their social milieu and in their professional environment." (14) Their immediate responsibility is found not where they are sent by any ecclesiastical authority, but where they are placed by the conditions of their lives. It is in their own world that they must give the Christian witness and exercise their mission. Only through lay people can the Church be present in all the spheres of human society.

The Council says :

"The apostolate of the social milieu, that is the effort to infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, customs, laws, and structures of the community in which a person lives, is so much the duty and responsibility of the laity that it can never be properly performed by others. In this area the laity exercise the apostolate of like toward like." (15)

"A vast field of apostolate has opened up on the national and international levels where most of all the laity are called upon to be stewards of Christian wisdom. In loyalty to their country and in faithful fulfilment of their civic obligations, Catholics should feel themselves obliged to promote the true common good. Thus, they should make the weight of their opinion felt, so that civil authorities may act with justice, and laws may conform to moral precepts and the common good."

Catholics should try to cooperate with all men and women of goodwill to promote whatever is true and just, whatever is holy and worth loving (cf. Phil. 4, 8). (16)

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(13) Lumen Gentium 33.

(14) Ad Gentes 21.

(15) Apostolicae Actuositatis 13.

(16) ibid. 14.

This engagement of the laity in the secular sphere is of very special importance in countries where Christians form a minority. The Mission Decree says :

"Even in the very founding of the Church, the greatest attention is to be paid to the raising of a mature Christian laity. For the lay faithful fully belong at one and the same time both to the people of God and to the civil society...... Their main duty, whether they are men or women, is the witness which they are bound to bear to Christ by their life and works in the home, in their social group, and in their own professional circle. For in them there must appear the new man created according to God in justice and true holiness. But they must give expression to this newness of life in the social and cultural framework of their own homeland, according to their own national tradition... Thus the faith of Christ and the life of the Church will not longer be something extraneous to the society in which they live, but will begin to permeate and transform it." (17)

To help the laity to fulfil its task in the Church and in the world, sincere collaboration within the Church is needed.

"Let sacred pastors recognise and promote the dignity as well as the responsibility of the layman in the Church. Let them willingly make use of his prudent advice. Let them confidently assign duties to him in the service of the Church, allowing him freedom and room for action. Further let them encourage the layman so that he may undertake tasks on his own initiative. Attentively in Christ, let them consider in fatherly love, the projects, suggestions, and desires proposed by the laity. Furthermore, let pastors respectfully acknowledge that just freedom which belongs to everyone in this earthly city." (18)

It is clear that lay people must receive adequate training, doctrinal, spiritual and practical, for this task; they must be imbued with a sense for the oneness of the People of God in its various functions and offices; and acknowledge hierarchial

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(17) Ad Gentes 21.
(18) Lumen Gentium 37.

authority. At the same time the clergy must be trained for proper collaboration with the laity, in a truly fraternal spirit. It is one of the decisive challenges of the post-concilliar era to find the balance between true authority and sincere communion in dialogue ; to acknowledge the work of the Spirit in all the members of God's people, and also outside the Church, and still to accept the authority which Jesus has given to the Apostles and their successors, to continue his mission. Only when this balance is found in practice, the pitfalls of criticism, disunion and antagonism can be avoided. All will have to go a long way in adjustment before the ideas of the Council will be embodied in the real life of the Church.

V. Solidarity and Service

The way in which the Church carried out her task has changed in the course of history, and is changing in our time, because the place of the Church in society must be defined anew. The attitude of the Council to this question must be understood against the background of the modern secular society. One by one the various branches of the cultural and social life of men have emancipated themselves from the tutelage of the Church. Should the Church try to recapture old positions, or reassess her own attitude towards the world ? The Council has taken the second alternative ; it has expressed its new orientation in the final and longest of its documents, in the 'Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World'. The Council frankly acknowledges "the legitimate autonomy of human culture, and especially of the sciences" (19) and explicitly accepts the role of solidarity and service towards the entire human family :

"The joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the men of this age especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ." (20)

The Church has no other purpose in her work but to carry out the mission of Jesus Christ in helping the human race to find

(19) Gaudium et Spes 59.

(20) ibid. 1.

its dignity and unity, and its final destiny :

> "This sacred Synod proclaims the highest destiny of man and champions the godlike seed which has been sown in him. It offers to mankind the honest assistance of the Church in fostering that brotherhood of all men which corresponds to this destiny of theirs. Inspired by no earthly ambition, the Church seeks but a solitary goal : to carry forward the work of Christ himself under the lead of the befriending Spirit. And Christ entered this world to give witness to the truth, to rescue and not to sit in judgement, to serve and not to be served." (21)

In this re-assessment of her place in the World, the Church has accepted the role of her Master. It is not by chance that the words of Jesus, (Mt 20, 28) who "came not to have service done to him but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many" belong to the most quoted texts in the Council documents. They demand a radical conversion of the Church. In the book quoted above, van den Heuvel sees the decisive point of renewal in the consequent application of Christ's self-effacement to the life and work of the Church :

> "The Church is there for the world, for the welfare of the world. I cannot accept any other starting point for thinking about the Church. The Church proves her identity by existing for others, and it is only there that she gets her authority. If she thinks of keeping her own life, she has lost it already. We are not more than our master, and we therefore take up the '*morphe tou doulou*', the form of service." (22)

This re-orientation of the Church as a whole must find its specific application in Indian conditions. It is true that, unlike in the West, in India the Church never enjoyed a position of power (only in the old Portuguese possessions was this the case). Still, also in India a marked transition is taking place. The Church has been established in India to a great extent under foreign patronage : during the period of colonialism she enjoyed certain privileges and high prestige. These have alienated her

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(21) ibid. 3.
(22) Van den Heuval, 1 c.p. 54f.

from large sections of the Indian population. Her position in the present set up is different. The security is shaken and she is without privileged protection. It seems to be a situation of vital importance that the Church in India accept this question not as a calamity, but as the opportunity offered her by divine providence to find her full identity. She must be a community of service. In his Council intervention on the first chapter of the scheme on the Church, Cardinal Gracias insisted that service be clearly and firmly proclaimed as characteristic of the Church :

"The Church does not exist to rule over the world but to serve it, not to receive privileges from it but to suffer for it."

Applying this general principle to the missionary task of the Church, he concluded : "It must be clearly manifest to those nations, to whom missionaries are sent that the Church, in her desire to expand, does not seek an increase in power by swelling her numbers, but more efficacious service to the world, and the witness to the truth and to her crucified and risen Lord : I have not come to have service done to me, but to serve." (23)

In the Indian situation, the commitment to serve must be the determining factor in the choice of work and in the way of carrying it out. Solidarity and service are the only credentials by which the Church can prove the authenticity of her mission, her origin from Jesus Christ.

VI. The Open Community

There is a special problem in adopting the attitude of solidarity and service under circumstances where the Church forms a minority, as in India. It is the result of historical circumstances that Christian communities in India have been too closely turned upon themselves, and, at times, begun to live in a self-contained world, separated from and too little interested in the life of the neighbouring communities, and even in the nation as a whole. This could hardly be avoided where a comparatively small group is concerned, which is on the defensive and has a duty in mutual

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(23) ed. Congar, Kueng, O'Hanlon, *Konzilsreden* (Einsiedeln, 1964) p. 215 quoted from German Edition.

help to provide for its needs, not merely in spiritual, but equally in social, economic, cultural and other affairs. Nothing would seem more important for the Church in India but to close ranks and to protect the interests of the Christian community, all the more as many Christians are economically and socially weak and must defend themselves against powerful rivals.

We obviously touch here a complex problem which cannot be fully treated in this general paper. Still, a short remark is needed because the basic orientation of the Christian community is at stake.

It certainly is necessary to look at the Christian community also from a social and economic point of view. The Indian nation is made up of a multitude of groups which have, to some extent, to provide for the social and economic needs of their members. Christians cannot be an exception to this rule. In fact, the strengthening of the mutual responsibility among all Christians is not merely a matter of practical necessity, but belongs to the early Christian tradition. The strong bonds of charity, the mutual support also in material things, was a striking witness to the unifying love which came to us through Jesus Christ (Acts 2,43-47; 4,32-35).

However, this unity must never be closed. It would be a perversion of the Christian community if it turned it on itself and would stick together as an intimidated minority. The Gospel is too plain on the impossibility of living behind closed doors, protected against the dangers of a hostile world. From the beginning the Spirit of Jesus Christ broke the locks and doors of self-protection, and scattered the disciples in the world without protection, but with a mission that gave them strength, and the assurances that he will be with them. So the Church in India must break through the barriers of communal seclusion and open her doors to the world in which we live; she must do so in a renewed consciousness of her universal mission. A closed community hides Jesus Christ, and distorts his picture; it does not represent his self-gift, nor his universal love. It cannot claim any longer to be truly Christian, but has fallen to the old temptation of the chosen people to build its own securities on human provisions and guarantees instead of relying on God's word and promise.

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It is to a great extent on account of this communal seclusion that India feels the striking contrast between Christ and the Church, and cannot find the Spirit of Jesus in the Christian community. A radical re-thinking is needed if the Church is meant to fulfil her mission. The model will be the group of disciples round Jesus who, on the one hand, were truly one (in spite of tensions) in their loyalty to Jesus, in their common call and mainly in their common mission. Yet Jesus never allowed them to close themselves up in their own narrow world and to be concerned only about their own problems. He made them responsible for others : made them distribute the loaves to the hungry masses, sent them into the villages, broadened their idea of neighbourhood to include anyone who was in need, and impressed on them that the last judgment on their life and work would not depend on their individual achievements or on their success as a group, but on their ability of recognizing and serving Jesus in everyone who happened to be their neighbour. The more he links the disciples to himself, the more he turns their eyes towards the world, in fact to all nations, to offer them the good tidings.

Vactican II has translated this essentially Christian attitude into modern language : Christians are meant to live not as isolated groups, or to work as separate agencies. True, the Church always needs also her own institutions to give witness to her life and spirit. Yet the Council wishes Christians not to remain confined to their own circles but insist 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. In terms which surprised many, 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."(24) This is the vision of a breakthrough for which the Church in India has to prepare herself.

This perspective concerns in a special way the Catholic

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(24) Ad Gentes 11 and 12.

organisations, the lay apostolate movements, Catholic Action groups etc. They should not think of themselves, as closed groups but as organs of action, and should form their members for contact with the non-Christian world and the secular society.

VII. The Mission of the Church

In what then does the mission of the Church really consist ? There can be no ambiguity in the answer : It consists in the continuation and fulfilment of the mission of Christ : "This mission (of the Church) continues and unfolds in the course of history the mission of Christ himself."(25) About the carrying out of this mission, the Council continues :

> "The Church fulfils her mission by that activity by which, in obedience to the command of Christ and under the impulse of the grace and love of the Holy Spirit she becomes fully and actively present among all men or nations so as to lead them, by living example, by preaching, by the sacraments and other channels of grace, to the faith, the liberty and the peace of Christ".

This mission of the Church is truly supernatural, based on God's word and saving grace, and leading men to an "intimate union with God", and thus to "the unity of the whole human race."(26) It is important to stress the truly spiritual mission of the Church today, when so many objections are raised by non-Christians, against Evangelisation, when even some Christians are tempted to 'secularize' the missionary activity of the Church by transforming it into a programme of social service. The Church can never betray her missionary responsibility. However, we must be aware that terms like 'conversion' are widely misunderstood. They are placed into a predominantly communal context, for many. 'Conversion' stands for changing from one community to another; hence missionary activity is suspected. True, through baptism, the Christian does enter into a new communion with all the faithful, becomes a member of the Church; yet he should remain, at the same time a member of his social group.

(25) Ad Gentes 5.
(26) Lumen Gentium 1.

The Church is not a community in the socio-cultural sense as non-Christians may understand, it "transcends all peculiarity of race and nation."(27)   Every effort must be made in the Seminar to bring into focus the real, spiritual meaning of the Church and her missionary activity.   We may also have to adjust our vocabulary and mental categories to the actual understanding of the world in which we live.   It will be for the workshop on Evangelisation to come to concrete conclusions in this line.

Yet the mission of the Church must be carried out not in an isolated spiritual realm, separate from the life and work of men, but in this world, and, to some extent, through the channels of human and social relations, cultural and economic activities etc. We must, therefore, distinguish *two ways in which the Mission of the Church is carried out* :   The Mission Decree speaks in n. 11 and 12 about the Christian witness, *i.e.* the active presence of the Church in the world, and in nn. 13ff on Evangelisation in the strict sense.   While insisting on Evangelisation, we must also be aware of the limitations of this approach.

To vast masses of the people, and to vital sectors of modern life, the Church has no direct access.   Unless people feel the relevance of the Christian message for their lives, they are not interested in it.   Hence the special insistence of the Mission Decree, in the motivation of the mission, not only on Christ's mandate, but on the significance of the Gospel for man and society. (28)   The relevance of the Gospel must appear in the context of human life.   In fact, at all times, the Gospel has been offered as an answer to human needs and aspirations.   It is, to be sure, more than an answer to the temporal quests of man; but unless it answers these quests, it remains meaningless for him,   If the Church today is closely connected with social, educational, medical activities, etc., this is not a departure from her original mission.   In the past century, much of the mission work was related to education and social emancipation, this was the great need and aspiration at the time.   Today the needs and aspirations have extended into wider spheres : whatever

(27) Ad Gentes 8.
(28) ibid.

goes under the word of development is of vital significance for the people both in urban and rural areas. Hence the vast involvement of the missions in these spheres. These activities, however, must be seen in the right relation to the central mission of the Church, to make God's saving love present in this world.

Thus the mission of the Church consists in service, beyond the boundaries of her own community, to the world. It is universal : to all nations, and we may safely continue : to all strata of society, to all fields of life and work.

It is obvious that this universal mission does not concern only bishops and priests. It was a great misunderstanding too often in the past that whenever we spoke of the mission of the Church, we thought 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."(29) 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 faithful. We have to recognise that there are vast fields which were badly neglected because they did not fall into the traditional patterns of Church-enterprises. Unfortunate 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 village life which still represents the greatest section of the Indian world. A new responsibility must grow which urges Christians to fulfil their mission in all spheres of the national life.

This must be done in a new way. Often we have counted the Christian contribution in terms of statistics, of manpower and financial investment, in institutions and through organised control. And indeed, the material contribution of the Church in several fields has been considerable; we need mention only education and medical assistance. Yet, it is too little, and given the vastness of the country, the growing number of tasks, the pace of present day developments, we must come to the conclusion that in future the proportion of the Christian contribution, expressed in statistics, is bound to decrease. But the Christian

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(29) ibid. 11.

impact should not be measured in mere figures. It must consist in the radiating presence of Christ in modern India through the Church, in concrete in the Christian outlook in modern problems represented by convinced Christians, in responsibility and devotedness, in the sense of solidarity, sacrifice, forgiveness, patience, tolerance, in short, in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount.

If this is the mission of the Church, vast possibilities are opened. In every sphere of life the spirit of Christ is needed. The most crucial problem in the development of the country is the personal factor : the educational system labours from lack of devoted personnel, social work has become for many a job, like any other, with little personal engagement, in the medical and nursing profession the personal devotedness is of decisive importance, etc. It is the mission of the Church "to spread the fragrance of Jesus Christ everywhere" (2 Cor 2, 14).

This outlook on the mission of the Church would influence our own Christian institutions intensely; their distinctive mark should be not only efficiency, but the spirit of Jesus. Once the accent of the Christian mission has shifted from the mere material contribution to the spirit, even further possibilities are opened : We shall think not only, perhaps not even primarily, of our own institutions, though we shall always need them, but try to free even priests and religious for a wider sphere of service in the complex network of organisations through which modern India is being built. Everywhere Christ should be present. In this free collaboration it will certainly not be possible to impose our own terms, or to dictate on moral issues, but the real influence could often be even greater, it would consist in the personal contact, in the silent witness, in inspiring confidence. The way of acting will be different. It will lack the facade of impressive institutions; it will flow through channels which are not under our control. We shall live in the world—as Christ told his disciples; it is the fate of true Apostles, the fate of the Church : "While we live, we are always given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifest in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, and life in you" (2 Cor 4, 11f). The Church is meant not to remain with herself, but to be given to the world : salt that gives savour to the meal, leaven that is at work in the dough.

VIII. The Christian Message

What then is the message of the Church in our time ? There can be no hesitation about the answer : it is always and everywhere Jesus Christ. It is the very essence of the Church "to bring to all men the light of Christ."(30)

Yet behind the simplicity of this answer lies the grave problem of the relevance of this message for our time, and the proper presentation of the message, lest it be misunderstood. The Mission Decree itself is concerned with the correct perspective in which the Christian message must be presented. It must be offered "in intimate connection with human nature itself and its aspirations."(31) Is it not often misunderstood as an imposition of strange doctrines and laws, not fitting into India's culture, and therefore instinctively rejected ? The Council continues :

"By the very fact of making Christ known, the Church shows to men the integral truth about their condition and their complete vocation. For Christ is the principle and exemplar of that renewed humanity, penetrated with brotherly love, sincerity and a peaceful spirit, to which all aspire."

If the mission of the Church is service, she will go out to find those who really need Jesus. She will not start with finished programmes which make little sense for others, but will listen to the questions people are asking and to the problems for which they need solutions.

She will first listen to the question about man and the meaning of his existence. The Council has acknowledged it :

"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. But what is man ?"(32)

If the Christian is able, in the light of faith, to give meaning to man's existence, life and destiny, he answers an intimate need of

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(30)   Lumen Gentium 1.

(31)   Ad Gentes 8.

(32)   Gaudium et Spes 12.

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our time.

But obviously this answer must be given in the concrete context of human life and society : the Church must speak with relevance to the social and economic conditions and to culture. Further, there must not be theory only but also an urge to action. The message of man's dignity extends to all.

"There is a growing awareness of the exalted dignity proper to 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 living a life truly human, such as food, clothing shelter."(33)

There are, besides, the special issues that are at stake in our time. The Church stands for that intimate personal freedom that is, and must always be, the basis of social peace and harmony. It is of vital importance also in India's pluralistic society :

"This Vatican Synod declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all persons are immune from coercion on the part of individuals, of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that in matters religious no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs."(34)

This then is the first level on which the Christian message must be offered : the meaning, dignity, and freedom of man.

Yet the Church's mission is still deeper : it is her task to give ultimate orientation, to inspire the new vision, from which concrete action must flow. True conversion is needed, the human heart must be renewed. When God creates a new world, he first pours his spirit into human hearts.

It is deplorable that the word 'conversion' has changed its meaning. Conversion in the original, biblical sense is an inner change, a turning of mind. It is man's spiritual and ethical

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(33) ibid. 26.

(34) Dignitatis Humanae Personae 2.

renewal in opening himself radically to God, his demands and his guidance. In this sense the mission of the Church will always be a call to conversion, which comes from Christ and ever since echoes through the world. It is the call for man's renewal and thus the promise of a renewed mankind, and of a world where man can live out his personal destiny.

We have not yet spoken about faith in Christ. Are we hiding our true message ? Also today "there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Act 4, 12). Have we then not to proclaim, first of all, Jesus' name ?

Before we answer this question, let us reflect for a moment on what the Bible means by 'name'. Name is not just a label for an otherwise unknown reality. Name, in the Scriptural sense is the person made manifest. Jesus' name stands for the fulness of his mystery, of his truth and saving love; it comprises whatever is contained in the kerygma of the Gospel. The text of Acts 4,12 then means nothing else but that Jesus alone is Saviour of our race, and that through the Church this saving mystery, the *'sacra mentum salutis'* must be manifested and offered to the world. The name is not an empty sound, a cipher for something unknowable, but truth revealed and given to us. Just as the word 'conversion' has been obscured by communal connotations, so the name of Jesus, and many other symbols of the Christian message have been deprived of their original depth and have become for many mere means of registration and classification and hence, ultimately, of communal segregation.

It is, therefore, of paramount importance that, whenever we preach Christ, we should beware of labels which may be misunderstood, We must convey the message, and must do it in such a manner that its relevance be grasped, and its challenge be realized.

Undoubtedly we have to proclaim the name of Jesus in its full meaning wherever this is possible. It is a matter of personal responsibility to judge the actual conditions under which this can be done. The Mission Decree explicitly speaks about situations where the direct preaching of the Gospel is not possible, and these situations are multiplying. Therefore we cannot

limit ourselves to the explicit preaching of Jesus' name. We have to offer the Christian message, the call to a new life, the values of a renewed humanity to all people. All this is nothing less but the spelling out of the name of Jesus in a language meaningful to our world.

The Mission Decree speaks extensively on these different ways of making Christ's saving love present to the world. It relates the works of charity, social uplift etc. to the works of Jesus who "went about all the cities and villages, healing every kind of disease and infirmity". However, Jesus did so not for mere humanitarian reasons, but worked his miracles "as signs of the advent of the Kingdom of God". (35) This reference to Jesus' deeds as signs of God's Kingdom is a late addition to the text, made with the explicit intention to express the unity of Christ's mission, centred round the kingdom : he preached God's Kingdom in his sermons, but, at the same time, convincingly showed its coming in his deeds. The same unity must be expressed also in the life of the Church : she cannot limit herself to preaching; her message must be expressed also in deeds, in the Christian witness and in service and solidarity. In her educational, social and other works she fulfils her pastoral mission. In it the Spirit of Jesus Christ is revealed to others as far as possible, and instilled in them. Christ's saving love is renewed in the work of the Church. It is, therefore not right to separate words from deeds, evangelisation from the witness in life and work. As Christ revealed himself "by deeds and words, having an inner unity"(36), so must the Church preach and work, and in both together, in her preaching and in her responsible care for the people, she continues Jesus' mission.

The Council acknowledges that the Christian witness in 'education' social work etc. is a real presentation of Christ :

Those who work in these spheres "are not seeking a more material progress and prosperity for men, but are promoting their dignity and brotherly union, teaching those religious and moral truths which Christ illumined with his light, in this way they are gradually opening up a wider approach to God. Thus

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(35) Ad Gentes 12.

(36) Dei Verbum 2.

too they help men to attain to salvation by love for God and neighbour. And the mystery of Christ begins to shine forth. In this mystery the new man appeared, created according to God. In it the love of God is revealed." (37)

IX. Christian Realism

It was the effort of the Council to translate the Christian mission and message into the realities of today. It is for the Church in India to concretize this translation and to spell out the Christian message in relation to the Indian scene.

To come to grips with reality, and to approach the problems in a practical way is indeed the need of the hour. It is the deep-rooted tendency of human nature to protect itself against the hard contact with reality. We tend to flee into a world of ideas, sometimes of dreams; we think of problems on a theoretical level but shield ourselves from the encounter that hurts us. Modern society has invented an elaborate system which allows us to know all that is going on in the world without getting involved in it. We know from statistics that there are slums but we try to keep them away from our sight; perhaps we even visit them but only on a scheduled tour which leads us safely back to our homes. We read the news about bloody battles, we listen to radio reports of atrocities, we see cruelty and misery on the T.V. screen, but we are able to do all this in our comfortable easy chair. When there is a calamity, we contribute perhaps to the collection, and feel we have bought ourselves free—we need not get involved. Is not also the Church fleeing from the world ?

This is not what Christ wanted. He sent his disciples into the world. A Church which is no longer in contact with the real world, and concerned with its problems is not really the Church of Jesus Christ. Going out, as Jesus wants it, means leaving behind our own world, our own ideas, even our own problems, and meeting the other world, facing their problems, fighting their battles. We shrink from doing so not only as individuals, but also as a body. It was the startling awakening of the Church under John XXIII that she realized her isolation. We do not mean to say that the Church had not cared for the world; the

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(37) Ad Gentes 12.

Popes did, and innumerable Christians did. Still it was done too much from the point of view of the interest of the Church. Even when we discussed problems of our time we did it in an esoteric language which other people were hardly able to understand. It certainly is possible to quote any number of instances of realistic enterprises of individuals and of communities, of real involvement in the problems of the world, still, when the Council met, we realized that a new era had to come, that in a new way problems of worldwide concern had to be tackled.

The Council was a decisive bid to break through this isolation. The world hoped to get the Church really involved in its affairs; the unprecedented interest of the press and all mass media is proof for the desire that existed on both sides. In fact, the press conferences during the Council with hundreds of sharp-witted journalists listening to reports and asking realistic questions often brought the Council closer to realities than closed sessions. But is there not the danger that now, after the Council, with the documents safely in hand, we sit back again; and are satisfied with documents—instead of translating them into reality ?

It is the purpose of this Seminar to apply the Council documents to the Indian reality. It is the explicit demand of the Council mainly in the Mission Decree :

"In order to be able to offer to all the mystery of salvation and the life brought by God, the Church must become part of all these groups (cultural, national, political etc.) for the same motive which led Christ to bind himself, in virtue of his incarnation to the definite social and cultural conditions of those human beings among whom he dwelt."(38)

Here is the clear demand : to enter realistically into the existing world. We must face the problems of the country, political, social, economic, communal, educational etc. We must realistically acknowledge the slowness of many Christians to accept the demands of the Christian vocation : we have not yet developed the passion for social justice which runs through the Council documents, through 'Populorum Progressio' etc.

(38) ibid. 10.

We have hardly developed the sense of Christian responsibility which is expected of the layman in the Council decrees. Are we still used, in spite of the renewal of the liturgy, to a devotional life which keeps us within an unreal atmosphere, secluded from the challenges that surround us ? Christmas is meant to reveal God to us who is involved in the hard reality of our world, who truly becomes man. Does our way of celebrating this feast convey this realism ?

Must not the same be asked to some extent of many of our religious practices, of the memorial of Christ's mission, the Eucharist, of the other sacraments, all of which are meant to draw us into the divine realism of God's saving love for our world, but often remain shrouded in the atmosphere of non-committal prayers, and at times empty ritualism, without leading up to the Christian commitment for the world in which we live. Also our apostolic planning is, at times, affected by the unrealism of our religious world.

It may be for this reason that often we feel little of Jesus' living presence in our Churches. We must understand our mission anew. Jesus gave the promise of his presence to his disciples when he sent them into the world. If they go and get involved in it, he will be with them.

X. The Christian Hope

The greatest gift offered to mankind through Jesus Christ is hope; not any of the elusive hopes of an ever changing world, but the absolute hope : God has loved the world, this world of ours, so it can never be lost. Perhaps it is the most important contribution of the Church to the world of our time that she lives this hope in unshakable confidence, and invites all to share in it. True, Christian faith has its roots in the past, in God's creation, and in Jesus' coming in the flesh; but its face is turned towards the future. A picture of the Church without the horizon of the absolute future would not make sense. The Council teaches :

"The promised restoration which we are awaiting has already begun in Christ, it is carried on in the mission of the Holy Spirit, and through him it continues in the Church. There we learn, through faith, the meaning, too, of our temporal life,

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as we perform with hope of good things to come, the task committed to us in this world by the Father, and work out our salvation."(39) ·

Hope is the core of the bible message. When man was exiled from paradise, God left him not without hope; man's battle against evil was not lost in the first sin, it only began, and will go on, and God himself wants it to continue : "I shall put enmity between you and the serpent !" Abraham has to exchange his inherited home and culture for the land of promise, for which he hopes; his life is no longer rooted in the past, in the land of his Fathers, but in the future, in God's promise. Throughout the ages the face of the people of God is turned towards the future. The Old Testament is inspired by the hope of the Messias in whom all promises of God are to be fulfilled. When John the Baptist prepares the ways of Jesus, he calls the people to penance with the promise that now the Kingdom of God is at hand. Jesus comes as the beginning of a new era, to inaugurate God's Kingdom, but again he directs our minds and our prayers towards the future and makes us unceasingly repeat the petition : "Thy Kingdom come !" His own life was turned towards the future : Its beginning is summed up in the words of the Psalm : "A body thou has prepared for me, behold, I come to do thy will, O God !" (Ps. 40,6-8; Hebr 10,5-7), and after having completed his earthly task he prays : "And now, Father, glorify me in thy own presence with the glory that I had with thee before the world was made" (Jo 17,5). Hope is Jesus' great gift to his disciples. In his last message he tells them once more : "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (Jo 16,33). When he appears to them as the Risen Lord, beyond death and above all earthly power he gives them the final assurance : "I am with you always, to the close of age" (Mt 28,18). So the pilgrim church never ceases to pray : "Come Lord Jesus" (Apc. 22,20), and to wait for the final fulfilment of all creation, and of God's promise : "Behold, I make all things new" (Apc 21,5). This is the Christian hope.

Yet we are not meant merely to wait for its fulfilment. Gertrud von Le Fort once formulated the enigmatic words : "God gives the promise, and we have to fulfil it." The hope of a new

(39) Lumen Gentium 48.

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world lies in our hands. Truly, God does fulfil his promise : He did so in sending his Son who became our brother and worked our salvation through his own death; and he continues to do so in sending his Spirit into our hearts and awakening them to new life and action. Thus God's creative power is incarnate in our race, which is renewed in Jesus Christ, and in human hearts which are inspired with the vision of a renewed mankind, to be united in justice and love.

If this Seminar is meant to bring about a true renewal of the Church in India, it certainly must kindle in the faithful the unfailing Christian hope. Jesus Christ is with us, he is the future, "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end" (Apc 21,6).

This Christian hope is also the decisive contribution of the Church in building up the India of tomorrow. The material share of the Church in various spheres of work is necessarily limited.

But for the solution of problems more than material help is needed. A rethinking of accepted standards, a new orientation, the true conversion are required. No one is able to make such a radical turn unless he is drawn by a living hope. The 'hope', *i.e.* the expectations people have for their lives, have, to a great extent, become material, many are crumbling; they fail to offer the inspiration for a true renewal. Defeatism, frustration, bitterness are at the bottom of much unrest. Christians must "be filled with joy and peace in believing so that by the power of the Holy Spirit they may abound in hope" (Rom 15, 13), and must be able to inspire those "who are strangers to the covenants of promise, and have no hope, without God, in the world" (Eph 2,12). From this hope, the joyful inspiration for work, sacrifice and self-gift must flow.

The final document of the Council, 'Gaudium et Spes', is the Magna Carta of Christian hope. If we believe in God the Creator of heaven and earth, and in God the Saviour of mankind, we also must believe in his work and in his promise. He remains creator and Saviour to the end, ever present in his Church. It is for us to study, to work, and to pray in hope. This is the conclusion of the document :

"Not everyone who cries 'Lord, Lord' will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but those who do the Father's will and take a strong grip on the work at hand. Now, the Father wills that in all men we recognize Christ our brother and love Him effectively in word and in deed. By thus giving witness to the truth, we will share with others in the mystery of the heavenly Father's love. As a consequence, men throughout the world will be aroused to a lively hope, the gift of the Holy Spirit—that they will finally be caught up in peace and utter happiness in that fatherland radiant with the splendour of the Lord."(40)

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(40) Gaudium et Spes 93.

Socio-Economic Forces
Shaping India Today

The purpose of this orientation paper is to set in clear perspective the variety of forces—physical, human and institutional —that are at work in giving shape and substance to the material and social environment of the Indian people. It is not directly concerned with the Church's involvement in development, or the activities of Catholic agencies in socio-economic welfare programmes, or the efforts made at the diocesan or parish level to relieve hunger and misery, to combat disease or to rehabilitate the handicapped. It is rather intended to present an overall picture of the economic and social milieu within which the Church must work, formulate policies and realise its decisions, and consciously adopt the limitations imposed by such social and economic necessity. This does not mean that the situation need always cramp or stifle organised Christian effort to eradicate poverty through development projects or enhance the welfare of the handicapped through specific institutions, but it does mean that the Church should be conscious of the social system and ideology behind the system, its broad tendencies, its weaknesses and strengths, and the direction in which it is moving. At the same time, it should be pointed out that the socio-economic system does not function in isolation. At many points, the political forces at work within the society tend to affect deeply the kinds of policy decisions and recommendations that may hinder or restrict the pace of economic growth and social change. Reference to these obstructive trends will be made in the development of this paper.

Since the canvas is so vast, it will not be possible nor is it worthwhile to attempt a detailed description of the total econo-

mic and social structure within the country. One can at best sketch some broad outlines of the most significant movements at work. And even then only their structural elements and their main lines of impact can be considered. Otherwise one would lose sight of the wood for the trees.

The following broad areas will therefore be considered in this paper, not so much in themselves as in the manner in which Indian society is being moulded by their presence and influence.

(i) Planning—Concept, Technique and Achievement.
(ii) Agricultural development and its implications for rural change.
(iii) The Co-operative Credit Movement.
(iv) Industrial Development, Management and Labour Problems.
(v) The Process of Urbanization.
(vi) Social and Economic implications of the Caste System.
(vii) Population, Family Planning and Marriage.
(viii) Social Policy in India.
(ix) Development Strategy.

These broad categories indicate the major divisions comprising the processes, the changing structures and the ideologies within which and with which the Church has to function, cooperate or contend as the case may be. Each section is concluded with a brief paragraph on *major issues for consideration.*

I. Planning—Concept, Technique and Achievement

Planning is a concept that India has borrowed from the West in particular from the Socialist West. The Russians were the first to experiment with a planned economy. Naturally, Russian planning models have had a deep influence on Indian planning. Moreover, since the country's leaders, particularly Mr. Nehru, had opted for a socialistic pattern of society, the influence of countries where socialism was presumed to have succeeded was significant in the choice of planning techniques. As a matter of fact, the second plan was strongly criticized on this score. But planning today is becoming much more common all over the world, so that even democratic countries use some measure of planning in maintaining their economies at specific levels. It

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is also realised that developing countries need the stimulation of planning techniques for rapid economic growth.

Indian Planning

The main objectives of Indian planning have been three in number : *economic growth, equity* and *full employment*. These three goals have been pursued simultaneously. For a fair appraisal of Indian planning, however, it is necessary to recognize that beyond a point the realisation of the three objectives develops conflict in the sense that the greater fulfilment of one may involve a lesser fulfilment of the others.

Indian planners, therefore, have followed a threefold strategy. The hard core of the plan has consisted of investment projects for the development of large-scale industries, irrigation and power, transport and communications. Ownership and management of these industries are the special preserve of the government. These projects were designed to increase the growth of incomes, and create an economic infra-structure which is increasingly self-sufficient in capital goods, as well as consumer goods and essential services. This division into the public and private sector is one of the consequences of planning.

The objective of equality has been sought to be achieved through progressive taxation, labour legislation, land reforms and social service expenditure. So far as employment is concerned, hard core investment projects have created considerable employment; but since the employment created by them is not sufficient to reduce the total unemployment, supplementary schemes have been undertaken to generate additional employment. The most important of these are small-scale industry and rural works programmes.

Economic growth is an essential condition for the realisation of the social revolution to which the nation is pledged, and planning is the technique adopted for stimulating and maintaining this growth. In stepping up production, Indian planning has considerable achievements to its credit. Industrial output from the year 1950-51 to 1965-66 has been growing at the rate of about 6 to 10 per cent per annum. While general agricultural output has been advancing at the rate of about 3 per cent per

annum during the same period, the production of foodgrains has increased by more than 2 per cent per year since 1951. These rates are higher than the rates ever achieved in India in the past. But at the same time they have not been high enough to meet growing demands, and serious shortages in the supplies of essential goods continue to persist. Only recently the country passed through two years of real scarcity conditions in Bihar and Orissa and parts of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. But after the good monsoon of 1967, the food situation has greatly eased. In that year alone, nearly 96 million tons of foodgrains were harvested, whereas in previous years 88 million tons was the highest ever reached. It would be safe today to say that Agricultural research, irrigation methods, seeds and fertilizers, as well as the 'package' programmes are beginning to show results.

The Objective of Equality

The distribution of wealth and income in India is highly inequitable. In order to increase developmental expenditure, the government has had to impose heavy taxation not only on the high income groups but also on the low income classes in the form of excise and sales taxes on commodities of mass consumption. Rates of income tax on corporations and households have been raised to very high levels, and cannot be raised much higher. The burden of taxation is therefore falling increasingly on relatively poor people. Inflation also hits the poor more than the rich and foreign aid brings in new resources to big business groups rather than the poor. Even the progress in agriculture is benefitting the large farmer almost exclusively.

The Objective of Employment

The record in regard to achieving full employment is not at all satisfactory. The situation must be remedied through an improvement of the machinery for the collection of employment data. But on the admission of the planners themselves, unemployment is growing in spite of planning. This means that one of the major objectives of planning is not being realised at all.

Two sets of measures seem to be required to bring about a radical improvement in the employment situation. First, in

choosing techniques for the execution of various projects (especially wherever there is a choice as in irrigation, construction, land reclamation and transport projects), labour-intensive techniques should be taken into greater consideration. The same criterion applies in choosing project works programmes which have so far remained more or less on paper as an appendix to the plan. Rural works projects—particularly minor irrigation, land-reclamation, and construction projects—must be designed for each district in consultation with the *Panchayats*. And they must be executed without delay. Only such a programme can break the back of the unemployment problem and put some meaning into the vague talk of ensuring a minimum income to the poor. The identification of poor households and the creation of employment for them in rural works programmes on a priority basis can be undertaken only by local bodies and *Panchayats*.

Indian Poverty

Data from the National Sample Survey results up to and including the year 1964 show that practically a third of the Indian people lie below the poverty line, *i.e.* an expenditure of Rs. 24 per month in urban areas and about Rs. 15 in rural areas. About a little over a fifth are below the line of destitution, which implies a per capita expenditure of less than Rs. 13 in rural areas and less than Rs. 18 in urban areas.

Another sad fact is that economic growth and the plans have not been successful in relieving poverty and destitution. Growth has benefitted the middle income groups mainly. Indeed it is becoming apparent that the benefits of India's increasing national income is been channelled in the direction of the top half of the income range. Economic growth does not lead to any massive redistribution of income in India. This seems to be true of all countries, both rich and poor.

A successful escape from poverty would require two essential things. First, a little capital such as a small piece of agricultural land or tools, and secondly, education for skilled or even semi-skilled employment. Unskilled operations are basically unremunerative. On an average they do not yield a subsistence wage and this applies to a third of the Indian people. Thus

Indian economic growth has been callous to the underprivileged. Hence a major attack on poverty can only come from a policy designed for that purpose. It cannot be a by-product of economic growth in general.

What is therefore required is a massive programme of education for the underprivileged, a nutrition programme to support and improve their health, and a major political and social effort to remove obstacles, so as to provide job opportunities for all.

The National Sample Survey reveals that the proportion of people with an expenditure of less than a rupee a day has remained almost unchanged at over 80 per cent in 1952, 1960-61 and 1963-64.

The Study Group on the welfare of the weaker sections of the Village community headed by Jaiprakash Narayan reported in 1961 that about 45 to 50 per cent of rural households have an income of less than Rs. 500 per annum, and 80 per cent have an income of less than Rs. 1,000 per annum.

About 29 per cent of the rural households do not operate any land while another 15 per cent operate holdings of less than an acre in size. In terms of ownership about 13 per cent did not own land and another 31 per cent owned land less than one acre each. These vast multitudes of landless or near-landless people constitute the bulk of the utterly indigent and destitute people of India. Added to these must be the 15 to 20 million unemployed, who have no incomes, but are dependent on parents and relations. All these categories add up to more than 90 million people.

The Problem of Inflation

In recent years, planning has been accompanied by rapid inflation. The extraordinary rise in prices is mainly due to the stagnation in agricultural production on the supply side and a great increase in government expenditure on the demand side, and the use of deficit financing. Since inflation has inequitable distributional effects, it creates economic and political instability. The real remedy lies in increasing production, particularly agricultural production. But until production catches up with demand it is urgently required that other measures should be taken.

All non-essential governmental expenditure should be drastically sliced. Food should be imported on the scale required to give price relief to the low income groups, and when shortages become very acute, rationing of essential commodities may have to be introduced.

Administrative Machinery

The cynicism and defeatism created by the failure of the administrative machinery to bear the burden of developmental work is another inhibiting factor to economic growth. The inherent defects like the recruitment system, red-tapism and the lack of mutual trust at different levels of responsibility are only too well known. The organisational pattern at the ministry level could be modified for quicker and more fruitful decisions.

The problem needs to be tackled in a more fundamental manner however by creating new procedures and a cadre of administrators, who have been suitably adjusted to the obligations and initiatives called for in a developing economy. In this connection, there is certainly a case for placing all public enterprises under autonomous corporations subject to audit by independent chartered accountants as is done in the case of Joint-stock companies. It is also necessary that the recruitment should be entrusted to specialist boards who could choose men of proper calibre and qualifications for the different projects.

Another factor that has come in for severe criticism is the extent of corruption and malpractices in the administrative system. It is a pity that some of the statutes and the inherited social structures of the country should possess built-in conditions for developing these evils. It is true that the problem is a complex one and much of it may be inevitable in a time of transition and development. All the same, there is a great need for a strict enforcement machinery to check corruption. In this context, the recommendations of the Santhanam Committee require to be fully implemented. Besides there should be scrupulous adherence to the code of ministers and the findings of parliamentary control bodies like the Public Accounts Committee.

Fourth Plan

India has already drawn up and carried out three five year

plans. The first two were rather successful in the sense that the targets were achieved and that the infra-structure for a modern industrial society began to be laid. Unfortunately, the Third Plan proved to be abortive because of the severe drought during the last two years of the Plan and the wars with China and Pakistan which diverted large quantities of resources for the defence of the country. But recently, the Fourth Plan seems to be taking shape.

The main objective of the Fourth Plan is intended to be 'growth with stability', for lack of stability has resulted chiefly from wide fluctuations in agricultural production and a rapid rise of prices....Stabilization of prices would help in checking a general rise in prices."(1)

Another major aspect of the same policy is "to move towards self-reliance as speedily as possible. A process of development sustained by foreign aid cannot be healthy. (2) This determination to build up a self-reliant economy is in accord with the "Algiers Charter" where it was clearly envisaged that the primary responsibility for their development rests with the developing countries. At the same time, when everywhere in the modern world, political nationalism is being deprecated as one of the major hurdles to the development of political internationalism economic nationalism must be subordinated to the needs of a world that is evolving into a single universal market and whose complex economic relationships are getting more closely intertwined.

Though it is quite possible that the planners have kept this international perspective in view, the emphasis on self-reliance shows that the Indian Government is disappointed with the outcome of UNCTAD II.

This only means that India expects to receive much less foreign assistance than she needs to develop her economy. It also means that the process of development will take a longer time than was thought possible. Exports especially of the steel

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(1) Approach to the Fourth Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, Govt. of India p. 3.

(2) Ibid. p. 4.

manufactures, pharmaceuticals, plastics, synthetics and fibres are sought to be developed and import substitution to be encouraged. This is more easily said than done. But the point is that this will be the policy of the future.

Another important step in the direction of self-reliance, is the desire to reduce foreign aid to half its present level. It is also intended to eliminate P.L. 480 counterpart funds that have been accumulating with the Government of India as rupee payment for the huge grain imports from the United States during the Third Plan and part of the Second. There seems to be growing confidence that in view of the change in attitudes of the farmers in the Punjab, Maharashtra and other regions towards the use of fertilizers, seeds and water, it will now be possible to satisfy the needs of the growing population for foodgrains.

The big farmers have greatly benefitted from the improved climate for agriculture. Because of the powerful voting block that the peasantry form in the democratic set-up of the country, there is no State Government that is ready to tax these people for fear of repraisals at the hustings in the next elections. So the document on the Fourth Plan piously hopes that the rich farmers will plough back their surplus earnings for more efficient production and higher productivity.

As for industry, the maximum utilization of capacity is a decision that is long overdue and the planners have decided not to go in for any new large-scale projects for some time at least till the present capacity especially in the public sector has been absorbed by expanding and effective demand. On the other hand, even the public sector is expected to yield profits. This is a change in official thinking which has never viewed profits kindly, but looked upon all types of profit-making as a form of exploitation.

To cope with the rapid increase in prices, price control through fair price shops is envisaged. Finally, it is admitted that the pace of development is a function of all the three important sectors in the economic community, viz. the State, private business and the cooperatives. Generally speaking, these are healthy trends in official thinking. But it is not only clear thinking

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that is sufficient, determined action to implement these resolutions is just as important and necessary. Just as at the international level, so too at the national level, the political will to build up a better world at the cost of sacrifices to certain sections of the community is not sufficiently evident. This is the crux of the problem.

MAJOR ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The massive problem of Indian poverty needs to be tackled with a determination of spirit and in depth by methods different from the planning techniques with which we are familiar. Vatican Council II expects the "People of God" to play their role of service to humanity and witness to Christ right in the midst of these destitute, squalid and dispossessed masses of humanity. For the Church to be really the Church of the poor, such a preference is mandatory. How far is the Church concerned with extreme poverty ?

In its efforts to relieve hunger and distress, a large number of projects for the provision of wells, fertilizers, land, technical training, cooperative societies of various types have been undertaken. The emphasis in these projects is to make the beneficiaries self-supporting and self-reliant. In the process, quite a number of weaknesses have been discovered in the solution, the financing and evaluation of projects.

The purposes of aid being given, the Church faces a dilemma. Members of the clergy who are actively engaged on project work, are caught between a concern for their pastoral obligations of evangelisation and their functions as agents of development. A further difficulty arises when it is realised that the task of helping others calls for a certain technical competence in addition to possessing a spirit of dedication. Can the Church in India help the country by working for larger inputs of foreign assistance ? Is the Church aware of the international implications of development ? (3)

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(3) Cf. Trade and Development, by A. Fonseca (Ed.) Report of a Seminar Organised by the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, December, 1967.

II. Agricultural Development and its Implications for Rural Change*

The Indian economy is still largely dependent on agriculture. About 80 per cent of the people live on the land and about 50 per cent of national income is derived from agriculture. It is vital, therefore, that these problems be analysed and discussed. The success of an agricultural development programme, apart from the wider context of overall agricultural planning, depends on three broad factors—motivation, the availability of the inputs of production and operational efficiency. They may be viewed in the following groups :

(1) *Motivation*
    (*a*) Land Reforms
    (*b*) Prices
    (*c*) Plan Formulation and People's Participation.

(2) *Inputs for Production and other Development Programmes*
    (*a*) Physical inputs
        (*i*) Water   Major and medium irrigation
                          Minor irrigation.
        (*ii*) Fertilizers
        (*iii*) Improved seeds
        (*iv*) Plant Protection
        (*v*) Agricultural Machinery
        (*vi*) Soil Conservation, Land Reclamation and Development.

    (*b*) Other Development Programmes
        (*i*) Credit
        (*ii*) Co-operative Marketing
        (*iii*) Co-operative Processing
        (*iv*) Co-operative Storage
        (*v*) Warehousing
        (*vi*) Agricultural Statistics
        (*vii*) Animal Husbandry.

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*This part of the paper has been prepared largely out of a brochure on "Problems of Plan Implementation for Agricultural Development in India" by K.A.P. Stevenson, Joint Secretary, Planning Commission, Government of India.

(3) *Operational Efficiency*
  (*a*) Research
  (*b*) Education
        (*i*) College, diploma and school level.
        (*ii*) In-service training.
        (*iii*) Training of farmers
                    short-term courses;
                    adult literacy;
                    farm broadcasting.
  (*c*) Extension
  (*d*) Institutional support.

Since it is not possible to treat all these aspects in the discussion that follows, it is intended to focus upon certain important issues that are necessary for agricultural development and discuss them at some length.

Land Reforms

The human factor plays a dominant role in agricultural production and any plan which does not give prominence to human motivation cannot be fully implemented. This is particularly true in a vast country like India, where agricultural production lies, almost entirely, in the private unorganised sector and rests on the decisions of about 70 million families of farmers spread over half a million villages. Unless these farmers are motivated to maximise production, no amount of increased supplies of inputs nor advanced techniques can bring about a major break-through in agriculture. Land reforms or resettlement programmes are basic forms of motivation. In countries where owners are given the right to hire out their lands for a rental, reform of landholding initially took the shape of protecting the rights of tenants.

But tenancy reform is not enough; it is necessary to confer ownership status on the tiller of the soil if maximization of output is the goal. Peasant proprietors who own land are much more motivated to use fertilizers because they got more profits from them whilst those who are half-tenants used much less, depending on what they were paying to the landlord as his share. (4) Fragmentation of holdings is another disincentive to production and

(4) Yojana Vol. 10. Republic Day Special Number, 1956. Pp. 20-24.

schemes for consolidation of holdings also tend to increase investment in land and increase production. The Indian experience in the sphere of land reforms has been fairly good. *Zamindaries*, *Inams* and other intermediary estates have been abolished bringing 20 million tenants into direct relationship with the State and making available to State Governments several million acres of cultivable waste lands which have been distributed to landless agricultural workers. Provisions for security of tenure and regulation of rent have been provided in almost all States. However, the Land Reforms Implementation Committee points out that the laws have not been everywhere implemented.(5) Tenants still suffer from an insecurity of tenure and therefore find difficulty in obtaining agricultural credit from cooperative and government agencies to carry out improvements.

Prices

The second factor which stimulates the farmers' motivation and plays an important role in the successful implementation of agricultural plans is prices. Agricultural prices in the past were left almost entirely in the hands of the village merchants. Farmers were often compelled to sell at prices which were uneconomic particularly as the village merchan was also the money-lender and took back the produce at low prices in repayment of loans. Marketing practices included deductions for charity and other purposes which were not of direct interest to the farmer. In fact, agriculture was the only occupation in which the price of the inputs was known whereas the price of the output was uncertain and arbitrary. This worked as a positive disincentive to increasing agricultural production.

Attempts had been made in the past to regulate prices but those were more in the nature of fixing distress prices. No attempt was made to establish remunerative prices which would act as an incentive to greater production. This matter has been under the consideration of the Government of India in recent years and in January 1965, it set up an Agricultural Prices Commission to evolve a balanced and integrated price structure in the

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(5)   A Review by the Land Reforms Implementation Committee of the National Development Council : Planning Commission, Government of India, New Delhi, August 1966.

prospect of the overall needs of the economy and with the due regard to the interests of the producer and the consumer. (6)

Plan Formulation

It would appear incongrous to list the formulation of agricultural plans as a problem of plan implementation but there is indeed such a close link between implementation and planning in the agricultural sector that faulty or incomplete planning is quickly reflected in the results in the field. The Draft Outline of the Fourth Five Year Plan has clearly stated that 'agricultural development has suffered on account of incomplete planning, particularly at the local levels.'(7)

The concept of 'planning from below' had in the early years brought forth 'charters of demands' from villages, blocks and districts which were neither physically nor financially feasible. The plans at the lower echelons were largely made by Government officials and there was no commitment by the farmers themselves or their representative institutions. The two-way traffic which such planning requires was largely absent.

As early as May 1965, a broad plan-frame indicating production goals, programmes, targets and financial outlay was indicated to each state. The intention was that the State Governments would then prepare a plan-frame for each district and the latter would indicate a plan-frame to each block which would in turn prepare a plan of action for each village in consultation with farmers and their representative institutions.

Another significant change was in the classification of block and specific areas into different categories for the purpose of agricultural development. In early planning, agricultural programmes had been introduced more or less uniformly throughout a State and it was not until the advent of the Intensive Agricultural District Programme in 1960 that a more selective approach was adopted.

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(6) Resolution of the Government of India, Ministry of Food and Agriculture. No. 6-2/65-C(E) dated January 8, 1965.

(7) Formulation of the Fourth Five Year Plan in Agriculture and Allied Sectors—General Framework—Preparation of State, District and Block Plans (Letter No. 14-3/(6)/65-Agri. dated 6th May, 1965).

Irrigation

Indian planning has always recognized water as being the main input for increasing agricultural production. From the first Five Year Plan substantial funds have been provided both for major and minor irrigation programmes. After 19 years of planning however, Indian agriculture is still a gamble in the monsoon. Generally a failure of the monsoon implies either a delayed monsoon or failure of the rains intermittently. It is during this time that the agriculturalists need water most urgently and minor irrigation by means of tanks, tube wells, lift irrigation etc. are found most useful. Perhaps minor irrigation has not been given the importance it deserves.

On the other hand, modern methods demand the intensive use of water and it is no good having large 'command' areas for projects if water is not available in sufficient intensity to permit the adoption of the modern techniques. At the end of the Third Plan, against a potential of 18 million acres, 14 million acres were being irrigated. This is due to the non-implementation of field channels, levelling and other steps needed to prepare the land for cultivation. It is also partly due to the absence of a proper extension programme to show the farmers the benefits of double cropping and other benefits which accrue when irrigation is assured.

Fertilizers

It is redundant to dilate on the role of fertilizers in agricultural production. Farmers in India today, both large and small, are convinced of their efficiency. The level of per acre consumption of fertilizer nutrients in India by the end of the Third Plan was only one-seventh of the world average, 1/90 of Japan, 1/70 of Taiwan, 1/40 of Korea and 1/150 of the Netherlands. There is therefore ample scope for its increased use.(8) In 1951, the consumption of fertilizers was just 55,000 tonnes of Nitrogen and 8,800 tonnes of P O In 1961, it increased to 2,10,000 tonnes of Nitrogen and 54,800 of P O Since then, the demand has

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(8) Text of Broadcast on All India Radio by Ashoka Mehta, Minister for Petroleum and Chemicals, July 1967.

outstripped supply. The growth of the fertilizer industry in t he Third Plan was slow and this has placed a heavy responsibility on the industrial sector to build up massive new capacities in the Fourth Plan. By 1971, it will have to provide 2,400,000 tonnes of Nitrogen and 10,00,000 tonnes of P O . For the present, reliance is placed on imports to meet the shortfall in production—imports increased from $ 98 million in 1964-65 to $ 270 million in 1966-67, but we cannot meet our growing demands through imports and steps must be taken to expedite and enhance indigenous production.

Improved Seeds

The main plank of the agricultural production programme in the Fourth Plan is the introduction of new high-yielding varieties of seed over 32.5 million acres. Fortunately, as a result of trials on hybrid and exotic varieties, it has been possible to develop, in recent years, strains which are responsive to heavy dosages of fertilizers and yield substantially more than the varieties in common use. This is specifically true of wheat, paddy, hybrid maize, sorghum and bajra. By 1970-71, 12.5 million acres are proposed to be covered under high-yielding varieties of paddy. Eight million acres of selected lands are to be brought under Mexican wheat and four million acres each under hybrid maize, jowar and bajra. Thus in all, 32.5 million acres will be covered under this programme in 1970-71.

A second feature of the seed programme is the introduction of short-term varieties in the major cereal crops. These varieties are as good yielders as existing long-term varieties under a suitable package of practices. This enables the farmer to take a major second crop in irrigated areas where previously only one crop was being grown. It will now be possible to achieve substantial results and the programme is expected to cover 30 million acres by 1970-71.

Operational Efficiency

It is with sadness that one records the long period of divorce between agricultural research and its application in the field. It is only recently that agricultural education and training of the farmers are receiving attention. Agricultural schools and

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colleges are being opened and the Education Commission (1964-66) has recommended that at least one agricultural university be established in each State.

Extension work in India has so far been channelized through community development. Unfortunately, because of personnel failures, administrative incompetence and the vastness of the scheme, it became evident that a change was needed. Some form of selecting specific areas and greater intensification of effort was required. The logical approach was the "package" programme in selected areas and this is being tried out in India for the last five years.

Institutional Support

The most important need of agriculture in India today appears to be proper institutional support. The links with the *panchayats*, the community development blocks and the co-operatives have not brought forth the backing which the farmer needs if he is to maximize production. The *panchayats* are political bodies and are subject to party groupings and policies which may not always coincide with practical agricultural requirements. The community development block, although it can play a super-visory role in agricultural extension and the flow of supplies, has become more an agency of Government than of the people. It is bound by all the rules of an administrative system unsuited to a dynamic concept of development. Even the 'package' programme suffers from several inherent defects. (9)

It is very desirable therefore to set up small corporations cater-ing to a specific intensive unit. The sort of arrangement en-visaged is an organisation of the farmers themselves, either co-operative in structure or otherwise which would cater to their needs and act as a catalytic agent in spreading new ideas and techniques. This body would have research, extension and training facilities of its own, manned by its own staff and also have its own arrangements for the supply of physical inputs and credit. The fact that this staff will be responsible to the farmers.

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(9) Intensive Agricultural District Programme—Second Report (1960-65). Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Coopera-tion (Department of Agriculture).

of the area will break through the administrative hierarchy with its mass approach of what can best be described as red-tape. It will also provide continuity as there would be no question of frequent transfers.

Another important function of this organization will be the supply of inputs. It should have a credit section, a physical input section and a marketing and processing section. In this way, it will provide the needs of the farmer promptly and efficiently at every point where they arise.

An alternative programme to the small corporations might be suggested. Inputs like fertilizers, pesticides, implements, etc. could be channelled through the private sector. The major producers of agro-industries could form themselves into a consortium for specific regions and in collaboration with the commercial banks now going into rural areas could quickly commercialize agriculture. Such consortiums can employ specialists in soil techniques, farm management, agricultural engineers, poultry experts and other similar experts at their own expense to advise the farmers. Urban producers are increasingly realizing the importance of rural markets, and can easily be induced to help these markets grow and flourish, if they find them profitable enough.

MAJOR ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

It is obvious that, since 80 per cent of the population is concentrated on the land, for these persons agriculture is more than a profession or a source of income. It is also a way of life. Pope John XXIII, in his encyclical *Mater et Magistra* called agriculture a depressed sector. He speaks of the disproportion in productive efficiency between the agricultural and the industrial sectors. Farmers suffer from a lower standard of living than the city people. They also possess an inferiority complex because they feel that agriculture is despised. The Pope therefore wanted the agriculturists to be provided with essential public services, such as good roads, etc. Has the Church insistently sought for an improvement in the status of the agriculturist? How far is the Church concerned with the development of the right attitudes towards the farming profession? How is it helping to update agriculture? Are the rural parishes real centres for agricultural

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uplift or is the Church only concerned with the spiritual needs of the rural population ? What part could the Church play through an extension service in motivating farmers ? Perhaps this could be its main function. Finally, in the last paragraph of this section, reference has been made to the need for proper institutional support. How can the Church help in this matter ?

III. Co-operative Credit Movement

In the past three plan periods as also in the Fourth Plan, stress has been laid on strengthening the cooperative credit movement. The working of the movement has constantly been reviewed by All-India Committees appointed from time to time as well as by a Standing Committee appointed by the Reserve Bank of India and the Government of India.

As a result of the measures adopted on the recommendations of these committees, the cooperatives have made fairly substantial progress in the sphere of agricultural credit. The number of village primaries increased from 1.05 lakhs in 1950-51 (before the First Plan) to 2.12 lakhs in 1960-61 (end of Second Plan). During the Third Plan, the accent was on the creation of viable units in the villages through a process of amalgamation of weaker units and liquidation of defunct and moribund societies. This resulted in a slight diminution in number of village societies to 1.97 lakhs at the end of 1965-66. The membership of these societies, which recorded a six-fold increase in the 15 years of the three plan periods stood at 27 million in 1965-66 against 4.4 millions in 1950-51 showing an increase from 7 to 33 per cent in terms of coverage of the total rural population. Advance of short-term and medium term loans increased from Rs. 22.9 crores in 1950-51 to Rs. 345.5 crores in 1965-66.

This quantum of cooperative lending should, however, be viewed against the total borrowings of cultivators. In 1951-52, the cooperatives provided above 3 per cent of the total borrowings of the cultivators.(10) Against this, in 1960-61, the contribution of cooperatives was 25 per cent of the total borrowings. It is expected that by the end of the Fourth Five Year Plan, the cooperatives will meet about 40-45 per cent of the estimated

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(10) All-India Rural Credit Survey : Reserve Bank of India, 1957.

short-term requirements of agricultural finance.

While the overall performance of the cooperative credit movement in quantitative terms seems impressive, the same cannot be said about its qualitative aspect nor about the position obtaining in different parts of the country. Progress has been very uneven in different States.

The movement lacks self-reliance, and progress has mainly been due to sustained official support and incentives. The Reserve Bank of India has been making progressively larger funds available to cooperative banks at a concessional rate of interest. The dependence on Reserve Bank finance will be judged from the fact that out of total advances of Rs. 317 crores of short-term and medium term credit, the Reserve Bank had provided about Rs. 262 crores.

The main deficiency has been in building up owned funds and deposits at the three levels of the cooperative credit structure more markedly in a few of the States. Steps are being taken to encourage the central cooperative banks to have a large branch expansion programme to mop up surplus investible funds in the rural and urban areas.

At the primary village level also, an action programme has been launched to revitalise the credit institutions and to gear them up to meet the growing needs of production credit for agriculture. The salient features of this programme are :

(i) Credit should be production-oriented and be determined on the basis of needs and repaying capacity.

(ii) To the extent possible, credit required for fertilizers, seeds and pesticides should be disbursed in kind to facilitate both disbursement and recovery.

(iii) The village primaries should increase their share capital and collect compulsory thrift deposits.

(iv) A quick study should be undertaken to identify potentially viable societies and efforts should be made to make them viable within a specified period. Societies

not likely to be viable should be reorganised through amalgamation and defunct societies should be liquidated.

(v) Overdues have to be arrested; recovery-mindedness has to be developed and procedures laid down for dealing with defaulters have to be set in motion without fear or favour.

(vi) Marketing should be intensified and organically linked with the credit programme.

None of the above measures have succeeded fully.

Regarding long-term credit, the land mortgage banking structure as a whole has creditable record. Against outstandings of long-term loans amounting to Rs. 6.59 crores in 1950-51, the outstandings in 1965-66 were of the order of Rs. 164.50 crores.

Cooperative Marketing

There are over 3200 primary marketing societies organised in the important whole-sale assembling centres in the country. Of these, about 2,700 societies are organised on a territorial basis and handle all types of agricultural produce. The remaining 500 societies deal in specific commodities, such as fruit and vegetables, cotton, coconut, arecanut, tobacco, etc. Besides undertaking marketing operations, these societies distribute agricultural requisites and consumer articles. The total value of agricultural produce marketed by the cooperatives was of the order of Rs. 360 crores in 1965-66 which is more than double their performance five years ago. With regard to supply of agricultural requisites and distribution of consumer articles, the progress has been fairly rapid.

Some State Governments have encouraged marketing co-operatives by entrusting them with procurement work relating to foodgrains and the supply of fertilizers. The price policies adopted in some States have, however, adversely affected the business of societies.

Shortage of capital is one of the limiting factors in expansion

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of business. Till recently, the Government participation in share capital of marketing societies was on a matching basis with share capital collected from individuals and affiliated societies. In September 1964, the pattern of Government participation was revised providing for enhanced share capital contribution by the State Government with a maximum of one lakh rupees in the case of selected societies. This will go a long way in helping the societies to expand their business of outright purchases, supplies of agricultural requisites and distribution of consumer articles. The marketing societies have, by and large, been functioning as commission agents. Recently, the societies have increasingly been involved in inter-state trade—business transacted mainly on cooperative to cooperative account or on Government account. The limiting factors that stood in the way of expansion of inter-state trade are introduction of Food Zones restricting inter-state movement, inadequate availability of railway wagons, lack of marketing intelligence and reluctance of societies to make outright purchases.

A crucial handicap in the field of cooperative marketing has been the lack of guidance to primary marketing societies from higher tiers. They do not have managerial personnel of the right calibre and experience.

Warehousing

Warehousing helps the farmers to store their grain in good condition and sell it when the prices are favourable. It means a saving of 10 to 15 per cent of the grain which is destroyed by pests and rodents. Warehousing is an essential plank in modern agriculture but is grossly neglected. The capacity of warehousing is acutely inadequate.

Cooperative warehousing was started in 1957-58. A Central Warehousing Corporation and 14 State Warehousing Corporations have been set up. In 1965-66, 42 per cent of capacity in the Central Warehouses was utilized by Government, 34 per cent by merchants and 24 per cent by producers and the cooperatives. Experience shows that producers and their cooperatives for whom the warehousing scheme was primarily designed have been able to make very little use of this facility.

Cooperation is one of the fields where such virtues as honesty, unselfishness and love of neighbour have to be studiously practised in order to make the movement successful. From experience, the Church's activities in this matter have occasionally been successful. Cooperatives have been started on the Church's initiative and are considered among the best in the country, *e.g.* the Chotanagpur Catholic Cooperative Society. Should cooperatives under Catholic auspices however remain completely closed to others, except Catholics ? Is this policy feasible in the new secular environment ? Housing cooperatives are another important field where to some extent the Church can play a very beneficial role. Church properties in urban areas, if possible, could be used for this purpose although sometimes experience in this matter has been very frustrating for the parish authorities. There is no doubt that the cooperative ideology fits in very well with the Christian outlook on life. For this reason, the Church should play a much more dynamic role in this field. Can parishes at least in some selected rural areas build a few warehouses ?

IV. Industrial Development, Labour and Management Problems

It may be said that the country started its industrial revolution only with independence. Previous to that event, a fair amount of industrialisation had taken place under the colonial regime, but much of it was geared to suit the economic needs of Britain. India was thus mainly developed as a source of raw materials for British manufactures. Its great cities were built along the coastline, and were all connected by a network of railways with the interior for rapid transit and export. But the infrastructure for supporting modern industry was really begun to be laid only with Second Five Year Plan.

It is the strategy of planning which has given us the break-up of industry into the public and the private sectors. In the mind of the planners and according to the norm of the 'socialistic pattern of society', it is the public sector that must play the leading role in laying the base for industrial advancement, economic growth and a rising living standard for the Indian masses.

Much of the recent industrial development in the country has

been determined by the investment ratios in the plans. For this reason, the iron and steel industry holds a commanding position in the economy. Out of the five steel mills now functioning, three are in the public sector and two in the private sector. The bulk of the investment during the second and third plans was in the investment goods area, i.e. iron and steel, heavy engineering, chemical and aluminium industries. Steel was looked upon as the key industry in industrial programme because it was expected to be the supplier of the basic raw material to satisfy government's needs and the needs of the engineering industry.

Government Goals and Policies in Industrialization

There are various criteria for judging specific policies to promote the manufacturing industry. The industrialization programme requires the conservation of scarce capital resources and scarce foreign exchange. It also aims at providing a socially satisfactory regional distribution of industry. The 'socialistic pattern of society' implies essentially a movement towards 'greater equality in income and wealth' and a 'progressive reduction of the concentration of incomes, wealth and economic power'. The achievement of this goal is felt to require the encouragement of the growth of trade unions, a policy to provide labour a 'living wage' and the prevention of abuses of labour. This is directed to a third goal, namely, the creation of employment opportunities.

It should be noted however that the great increase in the investment in the public sector largely reflects the concentration of investment in a few industries—primarily in the three government owned steel plants, in several chemical factories which are by-products of larger government multi-purpose projects, and in certain railways and communication product factories, which are also government owned. Finally a part of this investment goes to the strategic defence industry. Almost all investment in the consumer goods sector, and a large part in the capital goods sector, exclusive of steel, remains under private control.

Controls

The industrial sector is to a large extent a controlled one. The network of specific controls applies to all phases of an

individual firm's operations. These include licence to build a new plant, or expand capacity, go to the public for capital, and import either the capital goods for further growth or the raw materials for processing. There are also numerous controls over the conditions of employment for the workers. These are supplemented by various direct controls over prices of outputs, or costs of inputs, and various distributive controls, and excise taxes to limit the profits of manufacturers to fair dimensions and to discourage blackmarketing.

These are supported by a tariff and import control policy which provides protection for all new industries. The consumer is protected by periodic investigations of the Tariff Commission to ensure fair prices and review the industries'p rogress towards greater efficiency, lower costs and increasing 'indianisation' of production.

These controls and protections re further affected by government tax and credit policies. These are meant to assist the investor in recovering his capital investment in a short period. Similarly, although corporation taxes are high, allowances are made for the first few years of a firm's life. Government's tax policy definitely affects the corporation's savings and investment policy, because of its control over dividends and reserves.

Of course, all these controls make industrial investment a complicated matter, but they are imposed on the principle of ensuring the greatest common welfare, and not permitting certain sections of the population to enjoy the advantages of their favourable position in the economy.

The Fourth Plan

"The Approach to the Fourth Plan" makes clear the policy of the government regarding its objectives where industry is concerned. One of these is the maximum utilization of all existing capacity. A second is to ensure that new investments are undertaken in accordance with plan priorities. Most important is the resolution to "encourage the emergence of widespread entrepreneurship and a great dispersal in the ownership and control of industries." All these aims are to be achieved with a minimum of controls.

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The dispersal of industry is going to be tackled at three levels. The traditional village industries will be sheltered and given an opportunity to grow. Small scale industry—the second level—will be dispersed as widely as possible, especially when established to produce consumer goods, or processing local agricultural material, or providing small scale instruments and implements in general demand. The third level is concerned with small scale industries that are ancillary or subsidiary to individual units in large scale industry. It is hoped in this way to provide much wider avenues of employment.

More autonomy will be given to the management of the public sector to run the day-to-day affairs of the establishment. Efforts will be concentrated on utilizing the public sector industries to their full capacity and for export purposes.

Human Aspects

The technological revolution has also its human aspects, *viz.* human resources of both management and labour which are required to keep the machines producing, and maintain their efficiency and also a large variety of labour skills for increased production. This calls for both labour and management education. It also calls for the establishment of a rational system of human relations within the factory if production is to be maintained continuously without a break.

Organized labour has already drawn a large amount of publicity and interest to its own problems. The trade union movement in India was begun with the registration of the first union of cotton textiles workers in 1918. But after the independence of the country, it has grown rapidly, so that today approximately two to three million workers belong to trade unions out of a total industrial working force of about 12 to 15 millions. Unfortunately, the trade union movement is fractured because of ties of trade unions with political parties. Each party has its own trade union wing : the Congress has the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), the Communists have their All India Trade Union Confederation (AITUC) and the Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS) is linked with the Socialists. Apart from these federations of trade unions, there also exist in India certain independent unions.

This division of the trade union movement and its links with politics is one of the many reasons for the general weakness of the trade unions in India. Economic and psychological difficulties are often superceded by political bargaining. Since many of the leaders are actively engaged in politics, this is not surprising. But so far the trade union movement has not thrown up leaders from its own ranks. Most of its leaders have been so-called 'outsiders', generally politicians.

Other causes of trade union weakness are the low standard of literacy, political unionism especially in new industrial centres, diversity of origin, the poverty of the workers who cannot afford to pay larger subscriptions, ties with the village, lack of skills, and slow adjustment to an industrial way of life.

Because of these weaknesses, the government has stepped in to protect the workers from being exploited by their employers. Much of industrial working conditions have sought to be controlled by a number of legislative provisions concerning minimum wages, hours of work, safety and health conditions of the plant, compensation in case of accident, social security, provident fund, and other similar matters. Industrial disputes fall under the Industrial Disputes Act, that enjoins compulsory arbitration. Voluntary arbitration is also permitted and encouraged, but hardly practised.

One striking aspect of Indian labour relations is the absence of collective bargaining. A few cases of collective agreements have been brought to light, but the so-called memoranda of settlement are to some extent a prelude to collective bargaining. It is said that trade unions find it easier to obtain their demands by appealing to the courts rather than fighting it out with the employer. As a matter of fact, the tripartite where the employers' representatives, the labour unions and the government sit together to solve common problems is a peculiar Indian institution for achieving industrial peace. The various codes of discipline, of industrial policy, etc. have been made possible through the meetings of the Indian Labour Conference, a tripartite body. The latest example of the tripartite has been the Wage Board. Some thirteen wage boards have been set up composed of representatives of the employers, the trade unions and a few independent members. They have not been too successful because

their decisions have not been unanimous or not been implemented since they are not binding by law.

The earnings of industrial workers have suffered greatly in recent years because of the steep rise in the prices of workers' consumption goods. There has been a clamour for a higher and higher dearness allowance to neutralise the rise in the cost of living. In comparison, agricultural labour has not suffered so severely, although as a rule industrial workers are better organis ed and better paid. An important addition to workers' earnings is the annual bonus which has become one of the major causes for industrial disputes in recent years. Despite the setting up of the Bonus Commission, no agreement has been reached on the amount of bonus that should be paid. Managements demand that bonus should be linked with the productive effort of the worker rather than be considered a payment to make up for a living wage due to the workers.

The workers' education scheme to train workers in trade unionism has been carried on ever since 1958. In certain cases, workers are much better acquainted today with the situation of the industry in which they work, their rights and obligations, but the problem is that the right kind of leadership has still not been created despite these efforts.

On the management side, there is a growing awareness of the need for managerial training in essential business organisation techniques. High level training institutes have been started in Calcutta and Ahmedabad and several universities now run courses in business management. Perhaps not sufficient is being done in the way of training in management for managers actually in the field, who cannot afford the time to take a full two-years, business course.

On the other hand, the employers are actively united to protect their own interests. And the F.I.C.C.I. in New Delhi puts forward the business man's point of view quite forcibly to the government and the public. With their employees, managements in India can still be rather primitive in their approach. Paternalism is quite common and employers will confer a host of benefits on employees provided they have a free hand in the management of the concern. But they will severely discriminate against

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those employees who attempt to form a union or will not tolerate such paternalism. Because of rival unionism in the factory, there is always the temptation to play one union against another. This weakens the workers' side but does not lead to more industrial peace.

The recent spate of *gheraos* in West Bengal and on a few occasions in other industrial centres reveals the extremities to which some labour leaders will rouse their followers very often under pressure from political parties. Such incidents cannot but be condemned. A strike by its very nature should preclude violence. That is why it is so important to build good leaders both in the trade union as well as in the management group.

MAJOR ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Has the Church in India welcomed the technological revolution? Or has it regarded material improvement with suspicion as a source that undermines spiritual values ? Has the Church profited by the technological revolution to improve its own techniques for the spread of its message among the Indian people? In what way has the Church exercised its influence over the labour movement in the country ? How has it affected Indian businessmen ? Has the Church in India lost a large number of Christian workers who are engaged in industry ?

In the large cities of India, especially Bombay and Calcutta, and in the steel belt in Bihar, large numbers of Catholics are factory workers. Many of them are involved in union work. What has been the general attitude of the clergy and the laity towards trade unions ? Are all trade unions regarded as Communist inspired, as disturbers of peace and as a means to defend the slothfulness on the part of the worker ? Are Catholics taking to industry ? Do they have business talent ? How can such business talent be promoted ? Finally, what has the Church done for securing peace and harmony in industry ?

V. The Process of Urbanization

Metropolitan centres have always been the seat of rapid change and social power. With the seething growth of cities throughout the developing world, they are especially volatile and explosive. Urban centres are the generators of change.

They are "a permanent focal point for innovation and creation." The psychology of the city-dweller is different from that of his rural compatriot. Urbanization, industrialisation, cosmopolitan values push the new arrival from the country into a kaleidoscope of shifting scenes and values. Although 79 per cent of the developing world's population sti l live in rural areas, cities play the dominant role in activating social change. Yet Churches have tended to invest much of their resources in rural areas.

In India, the cities have grown enormously within the last fifteen years. And yet, as compared with the percentage of population that lives in urban areas, in other countries, India's 17 per cent would still be considered rather low. In the USA it is as high as 60 per cent. But the process of growth demands a large transfer of the rural population into industrial and therefore urban pursuits. In the developed countries in general, the majority of the population are engaged in industry or the services as compared with the minority occupied on the farms. So as India industrializes, there is bound to be a shift of the population from the rural into the urban areas.

Migration

It is rather a disputed point as to whether migration from the village into the towns which is proceeding at a fast pace in India is due to the 'push' from the village or the 'pull' from the towns. There is the economic theory of Prof. Arthur Lewis that in the developing countries, the rural areas enjoy what are known as 'unlimited supplies of labour'. In other words, although all the peasants seem to be occupied in some way, yet many of them do not really add to the total production as a result of their labour. Their labour is redundant and the same amount could be produced by a much smaller labour force. It is for this reason that many of them can easily be spared for work in industry and they go to find more profitable employment in the towns.

But there can be no doubt that life in the towns also attracts the rural worker for a variety of reasons. The higher wages, the new sights and sounds, the independence from traditional customs the market for a variety of consumer goods, transport facilities, new and exciting forms of recreation and entertainment—all these exercise a fascinating appeal on the rural worker. On the

other hand, as the farmers take to mechanical cultivation, they will need less human labour, which will become costlier as compared with the output of the machine. This will release a large number of rural workers from employment on the farm and push them into the cities in search of employment.

The migration of such large numbers of rural workers into the cities have created and will create numberless social problems as a result of this rapid urbanization. In India, town planning is of very recent origin. So most of our large cities were unplanned and quite inadequate to meet the onrush of the new waves of immigrants and the requirements of the new technological contrivances that are subject to dynamic change like cars, buses, airplanes, etc. The classic example of an impossible urban situation is Calcutta which has been allowed to grow in the most haphazard manner. The bustees of Calcutta and Bombay and of other large cities in India are like cancerous growth that are almost impossible to cure. To some extent, Delhi is of the few towns in India that has escaped being swamped by immigrants because it is essentially a centre of government and because New Delhi has been well planned.

Slums

There is no need to describe the social consequences of city slums. They are too well known : small crowded houses, poor ventilation, narrow lanes with open drains, garbage dumps, diseases of all kinds, much social corruption, crime, poverty and unemployment, apathy of the slum dwellers to their deplorable physical conditions, factionalism among them because they come from different parts of the country with varying backgrounds, and no urge to improve their local conditions, which they believe to be a government responsibility. At the same time, they resent being shifted from the slum, because they wish to be near their place of work.

Some efforts have been made in different parts of the country to clear the cities of their slums or at least to make the slums more habitable. An example was set by the Delhi Municipal Corporation some years ago with the formation of local neighbourhood councils. These encouraged the slum-dwellers to cultivate qualities like cleanliness, thrift, a sense of belonging to a

community, a sense of citizenship, and to work for the economic betterment of the local community. While these councils appear to have been partly successful, recent measures of slum clearance undertaken by the Delhi Metropolitan Council seem to indicate that the corporation has been forced to take strong remedies to clean up the city.

Apart from the slums, there are many other groups in the urban centres that are deeply affected both economically and socially by living in cities. There are the problems of young working girls who come to the city in search of employment and often become the victims of exploitation at the hands of unscrupulous employers, or landlords. There are the young men from the villages—most of them belonging to the category of unskilled labour—who can find no employment in the towns and may take to a life of petty crime. There are also the groups that are townbred and belong to the city by birth and avocation. Many of them are Westernized and live in a secularised society. Religious loyalties and practices are often relegated to the background of their lives. No process of integration or adjustment has taken place.

Influence

Cities are where the action is. They are the centres of power and decision-making, which need to be influenced. It is in them that intimate and hard dialogue with all the elements—hostile, indifferent, confused—of modern society should be initiated by those who wish to influence national policy. Escapism into rural and small communities will not put the Churches into the mainstream of the throbbing new world which struggles to be born at the new movement of history. If christians and the Churches cannot learn to survive and be relevant in the great urban complexes of the developing world, they will not long be relevant even to the rural milieu.(11)

The cities produce national leaders, revolutions, political parties. In India, a political party often offers an alternative to the traditional extended family with its strict and rigid patterns of

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(11) cf Line and Plummet, The Churches and Development by Richard Dickinson, World Council of Churches, Geneva, 1968.

living. The party appears to be much more liberal, challenging, open, and therefore exercises its attraction on those who feel cramped by outmoded traditions. Students in particular are often caught up by party ideologies and activities. Thus party loyalties often come into conflict with loyalty to the family.

The cities also breed revolutions. When successful, a revolution can leave behind it a cementing force that unifies its adherents through the memories of a successful revolt.

The cities expose people to the social currents flowing in from other countries, especially the advanced ones. This may cause an absolute or relative deprivation among different groups in the city. The city also exposes its inhabitants to the competitive campaigns of opposing political parties. It brings them in contact with people whose patterns and levels of consumption are far superior. All this causes dissatisfaction both among the rich as well as poor in the developing countries.

Differences

In India, not every city takes on the common characteristics of the cities described above. Many of the immigrants into the city take the village pattern of living with them. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between the village and the town. "An Indian village is not merely a way of life", says D. N. Mazumdar, "it is also a concept—it is a constellation of values and so long as our value system does not change, or changes slowly and not abruptly, the village will retain its identity, and so it has done till today .... There are two distinct constellations of values and there are sharp dividing lines between the two levels of living and experience."

Finally in India, it is noticed that often the normal gradation— village, town, city—is not always observed. The villager tends to migrate straight from the village to the big cities, instead of to the towns. This produces an imbalance which is not healthy, for the villages get depleted and the cities overcrowded. Some attempts are being made to spread the larger cities into suburbia but even these are becoming crowded.

MAJOR ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

It is quite obvious that there are a large number of Catholics

who migrate from the villages to the towns and cities. Many of them do so because they hope for better prospects in the town, since they belong either to scheduled castes or scheduled tribes. This problem of the migrant worker can be an acute one for the urban parishes. On the other hand, large numbers of educated Catholics migrate from South India to the North in search of employment. How does the Church cater to the needs of such migrants who are exposed to all the baneful influences of over-populated cities ? How do the urban parishes and dioceses cope with the unemployment problem of their parishoners ? Do Catholics in cities cooperate with their neighbours in trying to overcome the consequences of rapid urban growth, such as slums, prostitution, unemployment, starvation, abandoned children, abandoned people, etc. ? How does the Church in the urban centres which are the makers of policy in the country influence such policy decisions ? What does it need for this purpose ? A better equipped laity; better motivated, less concerned with spiritual devotions and much more implicated in social upliftment ? How can the Church help such a cadre of workers ? Could not some of our present parish organisations be integrated into the larger urban associations for social welfare, moral hygiene, slum clearance, etc.?

VI. Social and Economic Implications of the Caste System

India has been known for the unchanging aspect of her social system over the centuries. The caste system has formed the framework of traditional society and even today controls the lives and behaviour of the vast majority of the people. As Kusum Nair in her book *Blossoms in the Dust* has written, even today the Indian cultivator believes that "an increase in yields is not due to improved techniques but to our fate and *Karma*. (12) All the same, the ancient social system is cracking under the impact of the technological revolutions, the vast development of communications, universal education, and the new ideology of equality among men and respect for human personality.

However, sociologists can detect a certain pattern of change. It is found that some of the lower castes in order to raise their

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(12) Blossoms in the Dust, Kusum Nair. Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., London, 1961.

status in the ancient hierarchy of castes adopt customs and beliefs which are considered to be more refined and more Sanskritic in character. This tendency is not only present among low caste groups who turn to Sanskritization in view of achieving a higher status in the caste hierarchy, but even the more educated who seek for a purer interpretation and practice of their beliefs, and turn to Vedanta. At the same time, the rigid distinction between caste and outcaste is strictly maintained. No outcast can ever acquire 'caste' status despite Sanskritization.

On the other hand, it is noticed that while the *Chamars* for instance try to upgrade themselves by becoming stricter "about their habits of diet, dress and occupation, the higher castes are becoming less strict." The Thakurs who are the dominant caste in Rajasthan have taken to college education, read and speak English, and are exposed to Western ideas and values. They are slowly becoming Westernized. Yet part of their lives is governed by traditional mores; the two halves co-exist precariously.

In fact there are two tendencies developing side by side. One of them is in the direction of greater secularization. This trend towards secularization is not necessarily destructive of traditional Hindu culture and religion. It is a technique of modernizing and popularizing traditional beliefs. It has led to the secularization of eating habits. This shows the kind of inner conflict between traditionalism and modernism that Hinduism is undergoing.

Contact with the West has produced a number of reformist and revivalist movements, e.g. the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj and The Ramakrishna Mission. These movements have sought to purify Hinduism of the characteristics that deface it like the caste system, child marriage, image worship, etc. The Ramakrishna Mission in particular has become one of the principal agents fostering the growth of social and religious consciousness in modern Hinduism, especially among the educated. Among the greatest Hindu reformers of modern times was Gandhiji, who tried to do away with untouchability, while retaining the caste structure and traditional Hindu customs. The Harijan leader, Dr. Ambedkar was violently opposed to the Gandhian approach in this matter. He wanted a clean sweep of the caste system.

Division of Labour

Occupation specialization is intimately connected with the hierarchical principles of the caste system because it is oriented towards the needs of the whole. An analysis of the *jajmani* system clearly brings out that we cannot understand division of labour in caste society simply in economic terms. The harvest is distributed on the basis of each one's position and function in village society. The *jajmani* system has to be thought of in terms of a kind of cooperative system where the primary objective is to ensure the subsistence of each individual on the basis of his contribution to the subsistence of the whole. This reference to the whole is again essentially religious for it implies a reference to the total system of ultimate values.

Residual Aspects

Rules concerning marriage, physical contact, and commensality are, together with the division of labour, aspects of social life where the caste system as a system of values or beliefs expresses itself most clearly. The notion of 'dominant caste' is particularly useful and important by the fact that it emphasizes, on the village level, the non-ideological aspect of the caste system. It includes ownership and distribution of land, and right to employ labourers and specialist castes, to constitute a following of clients and even to raise an army.

Many caste prejudices exist among Muslims and Christians whose form of social organisation is similar to that of Hindus inspite of an egalitarian ideology and the absence of notions of purity and impurity. This is not surprising in view of the fact that feelings of such a nature are slow to die and that Muslims and Christians are a small minority living in the midst of a Hindu majority.

Change

It can be said that there has been change *in* but not *of* Hindu society. The changes that are taking place may not apparently alter what has been considered as the 'kernel' of the caste system. Yet it is quite possible that they are slowly corroding the system from within. With regard to the caste system as such,

there seems to be a trend towards "substantialization of caste" which is described as a transition from a structural world where emphasis is placed on interdependence between groups to a "universe of impenetrable blocks, self-sufficient, essentially identical, and in competition with one another."

At the economic level, the 'other-worldliness' of the Hindu is blamed for the scarcity of enterpreneurial talent in India. Caste is also responsible for the discrimination that is shown in selecting personnel in industry. Where merit should be the main motive for the choice, it is often overruled by caste considerations. The belief in auspicious days, or in the ruling of the stars may impede business transactions just when they are most necessary.

On the other hand, industry has its compensations. The shop floor is no respector of persons. People of all castes and from all parts of India are compelled to mix within the factory, and many caste prejudices are thus undermined. Similarly, the modern business manager who is educated in modern business practices will be much more rational and objective in his business decisions. Because of the conflict between traditional customs and modern values, many educated Hindus find it difficult to invent a 'via media' to satisfy both tendencies. This may not always be possible and the result is a split personality.

In his *Ex-Untouchables*, (13) Harold Issac points out that the great gulf between the caste and the outcaste is still maintained in its rigid form. While there is mobility within castes, there is still rigid separation and immobility between caste and outcaste. Many of the untouchables have left the Hindu fold and become Buddhists. Even then they are still recognized as outcastes and often discriminated against with regard to employment. Caste still controls politics, especially at the local level. The local governments like the *Zilla Parishads* and the Village *Panchayats* are generally cornered by the dominant caste representatives in the district or the village.

Caste is similarly blamed for the lack of initiative and spirit of competition which has galvanized the Western world in its productive effort. But if with Dumont we accept that caste is the

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(13) India's Ex-Untouchables, Harold Isaacs. Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1965. p. 188.

result of religious belief in 'pure and impure', then unless this belief disappears, caste will persist, despite all the efforts of the Constitution to banish untouchability.

Communalism

A serious source of disunity in the country has been communalism based on religious diversity. It is most acute among the Hindus and the Muslims, and has been the main reason for the division of the sub-continent into Pakistan and India. It was thought that such a separation would lead to communal harmony. Instead in 1965, India and Pakistan were at war over Kashmir. In India itself, communal outbursts have been taking place continuously since Independence, especially in North India. And the Muslims are naturally by far the worse sufferers because they are in the minority. For Muslims, who have opted to stay in India, the formation of Pakistan has not improved their lot. Not rarely they suffer from deep feelings of insecurity, and are often accused of a divided loyalty.

Christians on the other hand, do not generally suffer from the same kind of acute insecurity or the feeling of not being wanted. Many of them hold fairly high ranking posts in the defence forces and in Government. There are twenty four Christians in Parliament, some of them holding the rank of ministers. But there is a strong anti-Christian feeling especially because of the misunderstanding regarding missionary work.

There is compelling evidence in the country to show that the forces of communalism instead of abating are taking on new strength. The Bhartiya Jan Sangh stands for Hindu cultural dominance, and is violently anti-Pakistan. It is strongly opposed to conversion by missionaries. It would wish to revive the ancient glories of Hindu culture and has set its face against westernisation. Obviously, such a policy has to be very ambivalent, since India is moving fast in the direction of a rational, technological society.

The language issue is another divisive force within the country. India is now divided into states in which the majority of the population speak one language, which is to some extent distinct from the others. This is especially so between the Dravidian languages and those that draw their origin directly and

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mainly from Sanskrit. Language has become an issue from which separatist tendencies emerge to divide the country and split its political unity. Indeed loyalty to the country as a whole seems to be weakening. Every attack from outside India however has served to reunite the people in a mighty outburst of patriotic fervour.

These various social forces in India do tend to give rather a dismal picture of the 'secular state' envisaged by the Constitution. What appears to be lacking is strong leadership at the Centre to check these divisive forces, ease the communal tension, and give the country an uninhibited constructive economic and social programme.

MAJOR ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The major anxiety for many dioceses in India is the question of retaining the economic privileges enjoyed by the scheduled castes and the tribal people for Christian converts from these groups. Another major problem would be the question of communalism and the stand to be taken by the Church on such issues. How can the Church effectively implement a clear-cut programme of fostering integration in her struggle against the spread of communalism? Should the Church remain indifferent to communal clashes where Christians are not involved ? How can the Church overcome caste prejudice among its own adherents and among the people of this country? What part can the Church play in promoting integration in the country ?

VII. Population, Marriage and Family Planning

Population

The population of India is increasing rapidly in spite of the various measures adopted by government to prevent over-population. India's population problem arises primarily out of high fertility accompanied by a relatively high but declining mortality. In 1951, India's population was just over 350 million. According to the 1961 census, it rose to 439 million, and the estimate for 1966 shows that the population stands at about 500 million. More realistically, this means that a baby is born every 1½ seconds; more than 55,000 a day, or 21 million a year. But because of relatively high death rates, the annual addition to the

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population is about 13 million, more than the population of Australia.

The main cause of population growth at this rapid rate is not excessive births, but the decline of the death rate from 27 per thousand in 1951 to 16 in 1966. Life expectancy at birth has risen from 32 years in 1950 to 50 years in 1966. Communicable diseases like malaria, small pox and cholera have been brought under control. The infant mortality rate has fallen from 250 per thousand in 1950 to 109 per thousand in 1966. Unfortunately, this increase in population which in itself is something commendable thwarts the various programmes of government to increase the consumption of food by its people.

The fertility rate in Indian urban areas is slightly lower than that of rural areas, because of the adverse sex ratio in the cities. Peasants migrating to the cities in search of employment leave their wives behind in the village. The urban population is generally more conscious about the dangers of excessive population growth and they are therefore more receptive to cooperate with government schemes for the control of population.

It is generally expected that with a rising standard of living nature will automatically check fertility to bring about a balance. But the transition to this stage may possibly be a long one, and the country cannot wait till then. Some economists argue that the country is always short of hands during the harvest season. With growing mechanisation in agriculture, this shortage may be eliminated. It is quite true that we know little about the laws of population growth, but here and now the rate of increase in the population needs to be checked.

Family Planning

The Government of India has been concerned about population growth ever since the inception of the First Five Year Plan. The 'Rhythm Method' was sought to be popularised during the first plan period, but this had little effect. The second plan saw a more vigorous action-cum-research programme. In the third plan, it was stated that "the objective of stabilizing the growth of population over a reasonable period must be at the very centre of planned development." Quantitatively, the aim of the

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programme is to reduce the birth rate from 40 per thousand to 25 per thousand as expeditiously as possible, say by 1976. To do this, a vastly intensified programme for the fourth plan envisages (1) mass education and motivation, (2) training of personnel at all levels, medical, paramedical and extension education, (3) provision of services and supplies (4) research in all fields bearing on the programme.

A clear stipulation of the programme is that there is no compulsion or force on people to practise family planning, or to choose specific techniques. But social pressure by doctors and nurses is often brought to bear on women in hospitals or clinics not to have more children through having themselves sterilized. In general, one of the most obnoxious aspects of the programme is the lack of the proper motivation. The aim seems to be the simple one of reducing numbers by any and every method. There is also an acute lack of trained personnel at the higher levels. Even the insertion of a loop requires a doctor. Some doctors have complained bitterly about the dangerous and unhealthy results of loops badly and quickly inserted. However there is great pressure especially from some of the Western 'Christian' countries to carry through the programme as rapidly as possible, without concern for its possibly unhealthy social and moral effects.

In the Report of the Beirut Conference on World Cooperation for Development, support for family planning was considered an essential component in development.(14) The following are some of the recommendations suggested by the participants.

(a) Christians should recognize not only the gravity of population pressures for development, but also the right of citizens to be enlightened by public authorities and the right and duty of these authorities to inform all citizens in regard to population problems and policies. Such a policy, when seen to be necessary, should be viewed as an integral part of—rather than as an alternative to—a general development programme. Christians

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(14) World Development: The Challenge to the Churches, Report of the Conference on World Cooperation for Development to the World Council of Churches and Pontifical Commission Justice and Peace, 21-27, April, 1968, Beirut.

need to champion the fundamental rights and claims of the family in this connection.

(b) There is also the question of the impact of population pressures and their consequence on the family and the quality of its life. The factors governing family formulation and size are many and variable, and differ from country to country. They include the prevalent ethos and mores, the level of education, the conditions of health in relation to infant mortality, the status afforded to women and the opportunities available to them for employment outside the home. The development of education for women can make an indispensable contribution to new patterns of family life.

(c) In situations of social change which threaten the family and the truly human development of its members, the first task is to safeguard familial values and the dignity of the human person. 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. This also applies to the question of methods of regulating fertility which accord with their conscience and religious convictions. Religious organisations, with a deep concern for family life, have an obligation to work for the adoption and implementation of programmes of responsible parenthood acceptable to them.

(d) It is not to be expected that family planning will reduce materially the present rate of increase in population in the near future. Even if birth rates are decreased, the falling death rate will keep population increases at levels where they are for the time being. Some limitation on population increase now does not imply that in the longer run further expansion in the populations of the sparsely-populated regions may not be desirable. Nevertheless, rapid increase of population of the low-income societies is likely to lead to social, economic and political problems that may be staggering and perhaps unmanageable. It is therefore a matter of great urgency to take action which recognizes the dynamics of the population problem but, of course, with due regard for the necessity that such action be integrated with development programmes.

The Regulation of Birth

The recent encyclical of Pope Paul VI on "The Regulation of Birth" has come out in favour of responsible parenthood, but condemns artificial birth control as a violation of the natural law. To prove his point, the Pope appeals to the traditional teaching of the Church on this matter and elaborates a profound theology of marriage. His basic argument for rejecting artificial contraception as immoral is the "inseparable connection willed by God and unable to be broken by man on his own initiative, between the two meanings of the conjugal act : the unitive meaning and the procreative meaning." If the couple has serious reasons for spacing births, the encyclical teaches that it is licit for them to practice periodic continence or the 'rhythm' method of birth control.

While in several countries of the world the encyclical has aroused bitter controversy, in India the reaction of Catholics has been largely affirmative. The Bishops have loyally supported its teaching and many priests as well. Some educated lay couples however have found the teaching difficult to accept, but dissent has not come into the open. Neither has the encyclical met with any serious or public criticism. It is therefore safe to say that the majority of Catholics in India will abide by its prescriptions.

The Government of India has chosen to ignore the encyclical because it feels that the common interests of the country require a rapid scaling down of the birth rate and that population pressures in a developing country justify every measure to achieve this goal rapidly and effectively. There is a serious attempt to legalise abortion.

Marriage and the Family

Since marriage customs largely determine population growth, this brief section on marriage and the family is introduced at this stage. According to the 1961 Census Report, the mean marriage age of women is still 15.6 years. Conditions in India have changed to some extent since the passing of the Child Marriage Restraint Act. The situation has improved since the early thirties, when about 45 per cent of girls were married before they were 15. However, much still remains to be done. In

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Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and West Bengal, the mean marriage age for girls in *rural* areas is still below 15. In Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh it is as low as 13.9 and 13.5 respectively. In three states, namely Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, the mean marriage age for boys in rural areas is also still below the minimum legal age. Hence the need for an effective implementation of this already existing legislation with regard to the minimum age of marriage.(15)

During the Asian Population Conference, Mr. S. P. Jain, Deputy Registrar General of India, presented the data for 4 States. His findings show that those marrying between ages 18-22 or later gave birth to fewer children than those who were 18 or under at the time of marriage.

Marriage Age and Average Number of Children

States		Below 18	18-22	23 and over
Jammu and Kashmir	R	5.1	4.2	3.2
	U	5.2	4.2	3.7
Punjab	R	5.7	5.2	4.4
	U	6.0	5.5	4.7
Kerala	R	6.2	5.5	4.0
	U	6.2	5.5	4.0
Uttar Pradesh	R	4.2	4.0	3.7
	U	4.5	4.0	3.7

(Maternity Completed)   R—Rural   U—Urban

Hence raising the minimum age of marriage in India, both through social education, public opinion and effective legislation, is a step in the direction of responsible marriage and responsible parenthood. Legal enactment alone will not suffice, for the main obstacles in a tradition-bound society like India are social and religious pressures in a predominantly Hindum ilieu. The discouragement of early teenage marriages in India merits much

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(15) cf Social Action, March 1965, "Towards Responsible Parenthood" by Anthony A. D'Souza p. 769sq.

more consideration from the Government, social planners and civic leaders than it has hitherto received.

The Family

Apart from the age of marriage, the family pattern in India still largely follows the joint family system. The social implications of such a system are at variance with the requirements of a modern society. In her study of the Hindu family in an urban setting, Aileen Rose feels that "the type of family structures has a decided relation to the rate of change." Those from a nuclear family do not follow the traditional customs and traditions. Those from joint families still follow the traditional customs wholly or in part. The process of change however does not follow any rational pattern. Moreover, though some people might declare themselves in favour of inter-caste marriages, they themselves will marry within the caste.

Family ties are extremely complex. So it is difficult to break away from their influence entirely. All the same the force of circumstances does play a part in loosening these ties. Thus Hindu women in towns marry at a later age. They have separate homes. They have more initiative. For this reason, they escape the traditional indoctrination from the mothers-in-law, which is possible in a joint family. Christian families, which are mainly nuclear, are not faced with similar problems.

The independence of the younger generation both boys and girls is growing. And with it a demand for more responsibility and decision-making. This also causes conflict within the traditional family where the father's word was final.

Since education is the main channel for more money and greater prestige, continuous pressure is put on children to obtain good grades at school. This may cause much anxiety and frustration in the child.

However, one must expect a number of disorganizing effects with rapid social change. There are certain sections of Hindu society opposed to such changes, but the tendency to modernism is forging ahead especially in the larger towns and causing conflict situations, split personalities, tension between parents and children, and in many cases a loss of traditional and even human

values. This vacuum can be most disastrous for the healthy growth of a more liberal society.

Need for Marriage Guidance

In a developing society like India's it is quite obvious that the transition from the joint family to the nuclear type family, from arranged marriage to marriage by personal choice, from a lower marriage-age to a higher marriage-age and marriages between castes and communities are likely to bring about a large number of tensions. As a result there will be a growth in family disorganisation brought about by marital conflicts, increasing desertion and a higher rate of divorce. Moreover, separation between husband and wife owing to occupational requirements, the greater opportunities for the employment of women, higher education, especially of women, urban ways of living and the new values derived from the democratic pattern of living and through the movies and popular magazines are important causes in bringing about and hastening a social change.

It is obvious, therefore, that the family in India needs special service to help it overcome the trials of this transition period. For instance, marriage guidance for family life, a course of education for family living in schools and colleges, evening lectures for adults are urgently needed. Another urgent need is education for responsible parenthood to remedy the misleading propaganda organised by family planning organizations. At the school level, sex instruction and sex education need to be imparted.

Finally, special social service to the family should be available both in urban and rural areas. This could be arranged through the maternity-child welfare clinics that government wishes to spread in India.

MAJOR ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Education for marriage and responsible parenthood should be a major field for Church activity. The conclusions from the Beirut Conference emphasize that population control is a very urgent matter and the Catholic Church cannot ignore its significance any longer. Family planning by artificial methods of contraception and particularly sterilization and abortion however

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have been rejected by the encyclical on "The Regulation of Birth." Problems of living for many couples still remain un-solved.

Should the Church therefore undertake more research on problems of population and training for family life ? Should it encourage and develop the Christian Family Movement ? How can it create a public opinion that will favour a higher minimum age for marriage ? What special services can the Church offer married couples of all communities to help them in solving their problems ?

VIII. Social Policy in India

In a Report on "Social Policy and Social Research in India", (16) Dr. Henning Friis expresses his impression that several of the policy-makers or other opinion leaders are not convinced of the importance of development of social services and of policies which have as their specific aim to increase quality and improve the situation of the economically and socially weaker sections in society. Many important initiatives have been taken, but several of them have not been pursued forcefully enough with a view to cover the whole country or all the sections of the population for which they have been intended.

A prevalent view seems to be that only when general econo-mic growth is obtained can more attention be given to specific social programmes in order to secure a minimum level of living and to other social services. This view seems to be held by political parties from left to right. Though demands for more action in the field of education and housing appeared in many election programmes, social policy as a whole did not appear to play any great role in the election in contra-distinction to what was the case, *e.g.* in the developmental period in Europe in the nineteenth century.

The share of the national income which has been allocated in the Five Year Plans for social services (including education,

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(16) Social Policy and Social Research in India and the Contribution of the Council for Social Development. A Report by Henning Friis, India International Centre, New Delhi.

health and housing) has, therefore, been modest and the rate of new investment for this purpose has not increased during the Plan periods. (See Appendix III) Of the actual outlays for the Second and Third Plans, the share for social services has only been 14.4 per cent.

Public education and health services have received the largest allocations. The main reason for this is that education and health are expected to be positive factors in economic growth. Further "being the longer established services, they have relatively larger and more competent administrative machinery to absorb a higher proportion of additional investment". (P.D. Kulkarni)

The allocations for public education and health services in the proposed Fourth Plan are respectively 7.6 per cent and 5.4 per cent of the total Plan outlay. Family planning is given a share of 0.6 per cent, Housing and Urban Development 1.8 per cent. Social Welfare Measures for Backward Classes 1.1 per cent while Social Welfare is accorded only 0.3 per cent of the Plan outlay, covering services for families, children, youth, women, social defence and rehabilitation of handicapped persons.

It is uncertain to what extent the social services including education, health and housing, reach the economically and socially weaker sections of the population. In the Third Plan document, it is said explicitly that "one of the principal lessons of the past decade is that for a variety of reasons, in the ordinary course, the weaker sections of the population are not able to secure a fair share of the benefits of provisions made under different heads."

In the Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes 1966-67, it is stated that "even among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes there are poorer and still poorer sections, neglected and even more neglected sections. The same kind of programme for upliftment cannot therefore, apply uniformly to all these sections. It is necessary to pay special attention to the problem and devise separate programmes for different classes among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes."

Academic economists have expressed doubts regarding the prevailing view that a poor nation is unable to afford social services and improve the position of the weaker sections.

A big problem facing social development in India seems to be to change the prevalent attitude of policy-makers and opinion of leaders towards social policy. In such an endeavour, Dr. Friis proposes that the following viewpoints be stressed :

(*i*) Increasing investment in the social services including education, health, family planning, housing, rural and urban development, welfare of children, youth and women are not only serving immediate human needs, but are among the pre-requisites for general economic development and social change in the country and, therefore, an integral part of total development planning. The case for this point of view must be based on more precise studies of the general impact which the various social services can have in proportion to their cost to the society.

(*ii*) Improvement of the conditions of the weaker sections in the population does not automatically follow economic development.

(*iii*) It is possible even in the framework of very restricted economic resources in the country to develop minimum social services and improve the conditions of the weaker sections.

If social objectives are to be brought to the forefront in development planning, it seems necessary that action be taken by such organisations and individuals who are motivated to bring to the public attention the social needs, the arguments for a social policy and the means to improve the conditions of the weaker sections and the development of social services.

Among the more specific problems we meet with in India as a result of the growth of towns is the increase in the number of juvenile and adult delinquents. The causes of such behaviour are mainly due to broken-homes, poverty, unemployment, ignorance, personality defects and other such reasons. It is a com-

mon complaint among social workers that an increase in workers' wages or earnings only leads to higher expenditure on drink and increasing misery for the wife and the family. But this may be a generalisation for which there is no sufficient evidence. However, since prohibition has proved a failure, there are quite a number of alcoholics among industrial and agricultural people.

Another notable social evil in our cities is prostitution. The large cities in particular tend to foster the demand for such women because of the imbalance in the sex-ratio. For instance in Bombay, nearly 40 per cent of working class males leave their wives and families in the villages and are compelled to stay in Bombay either single or in hostels for men. Rehabilitation of fallen women and unmarried mothers takes on an importance in urban centres which would not be required in a rural environment.

Another serious social problem in both rural and urban centres is the absence of housing or the shortage of housing. In the towns this leads to overcrowding and insanitation. Finally, we still have a large number of beggars among whom should be included children, physically or mentally defective, religious mendicants and bogus mendicants. Besides we have the blind, deaf, crippled children, insane, lepers and aged. For all these, social services are required.

MAJOR ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The need for social welfare in a developing country is more than obvious and the Church has here a wide field for service of the weakest members of the community. This type of service will require great self-sacrifice. But this is precisely the best method of giving christian witness. The Church must go all out to collaborate in the programme of social welfare outlined above.

Beside service, there is great need for research in social problems and the Church cannot afford to neglect this area, because her own plans and policies for rehabilitation and social work will depend upon the findings of the research worker and the priorities that he recommends. Up to now, little attention has been paid to the Catholic contribution to research in the social

problems despite the large number of Catholic voluntary agencies involved in social assistance.

A new outlook and approach to social service is urgently required on the part of christians. There are very few professionally trained Catholic social workers. The general tendency is to seek for avenues of social work where there are wide employment opportunities. While this is necessary, it should not be the exclusive motivation in choosing a vocation to social work. The Church could give the right inspiration in this matter.

IX. Development Strategy

In a recent encyclical on "The Development of Peoples", Pope Paul VI was deeply concerned about the hunger, poverty and illiteracy that still haunts the lives of a major portion of mankind. He found that, left to itself, the prevailing economic system tended to widen the differences in the levels of living between the few rich nations and the large majority of poor nations. An aggravating fact was that the few rich nations were mainly Christian by religion, culture and inspiration. The growing chasm between the rich and the poor led to serious, social and political conflicts on a world dimension, endangering international peace.

His analysis of the situation which applies equally to India highlights the fact that the highly industrialized nations export for the most part manufactured goods, while countries with less developed economies have only food, fibres and raw materials to sell. As a result of technological progress the value of manufactured articles is rapidly increasing, so that the poorer nations have to sell more abroad to buy the same amount of imports.

The situation is worsened by the high tariffs imposed on the exports of manufactured articles from the poor countries. This prevents their industrial development. Further most of the services, like insurance and shipping required for international trade are in the hands of the former colonial powers. These powers also heavily subsidize their agricultural producers and strive to replace imported raw materials from the developing countries with synthetic products. On the other hand, in their effort to improve their economic situation, the developing countries have taken to producing larger quantities of agricultural

products to increase their foreign earnings. These measures have incurred for the developing countries great loss of income because of a fall in the prices of their exports, due to competition among themselves.

Besides having to face difficulties common to all developing countries, India suffered grievously from the two years of drought which required the import of 10.4 million tonnes of foodgrains in 1966 and 8.7 million tonnes in 1967 to prevent the people from starvation. Because of the good monsoons and rich harvests of 1967 and 1968, only 5.7 million tonnes were imported in 1968 mainly to build up a buffer stock for future emergencies. The increase in agricultural production affected the quantity of raw material available for industry. There was considerable decline in industrial manufactures, but the year 1967-68 showed a visible increase of 3.7 per cent in exports as a whole.

More important for this country than import-export trade is foreign aid. India has been depending heavily on foreign assistance, both financial and technical for supporting the plans, and undertaking the larger projects for building the infra-structure. During the third plan, $ 6000 million was received as external financial assistance. Most of this help came in the form of loans, grants, and U.S. commodity assistance. Despite this large amount, comparisons of aid received by selected developing countries reveal that India is one of the countries which has received the least amount of foreign aid per capital.

While such aid is welcome, there are a couple of snags in aid-giving that seriously reduce its beneficial effects. First, the conditions and terms of aid greatly increase the burden of debt on the developing countries. Nearly 40 per cent of the aid given to this country today is expended in paying back the loans and interest on loans taken over the past years. Outright grants form a small proportion of the aid. During the third plan, grants were about 4 per cent of the entire annual average assistance.

A second difficulty is that much of the aid is tied in the sense that the beneficiary has to spend the aid on a specific project and to buy the wherewithal to set up the project from the donor's country. This may be harmful to the beneficiary especially when

similar commodities are available in the world markets at cheaper prices.

It is very desirable therefore that the aid should not be tied to projects and that it should be received by the beneficiary through a multilateral source. The terms of aid should be softened and a larger proportion should be given in the form of grants. It has been noticed that recently there has been a falling off in aid, despite the two months' session of UNCTAD II in New Delhi last year, where the developing countries requested one per cent of Gross National Product of developed countries as the target for assistance during the first half of the second development decade, 1970 to 1980, and a more liberal trade policy.

Many suggestions have been made for the banishment of hunger and disease and for rapid development of the poor countries. Pope Paul suggested in Bombay the formation of a fund to relieve hunger. This fund should be replenished out of the savings on armaments. Developed countries should seriously consider their obligations towards their poorer neighbours. And the developing countries should strive to grow self-reliant, unite their forces through the formation of common markets for mutual trade, and make proper use of the assistance given to them. Special efforts for the expansion of their trade would require that their products receive protection in the markets of the developed countries, and development aid should be channelled to them preferably through an internationally organization.

Defining Development

Today the attention of everyone is caught up by this new word 'development'. Everyone speaks about it. What does it signify? Pope Paul has called development the new name for peace. All the same development means different things to different people. One may speak however of a general development ethos. What does it include? What is its major emphasis?

It appears that the concept of development is based on an implicit faith in the capacity of reason to lead man to progressive control over his environment. It implies faith in the physical sciences to help man master nature, faith in the social sciences

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to help man to understand human relationships and rationally to build a more just and humane society. But the urge for development springs not so much from cool reason as from the deepest desires of modern man for a better life and an impatience to attain it. Hence it is well said that development expectations are not only scientific and rational; they are also visceral.

In the second place, development focusses not so much on individuals as on groups or categories of persons. While basically concerned with the conditions of human life, it prefers to focus attention on the larger social processes and movements. Purposeful social change can only be the result of concerted and strategic action which presupposes a sound grasp of social dynamics in specific situations and places. Planning for development therefore requires facts, a capacity to articulate goals and to fashion the organizational skills and instruments to reach these objectives.

Thirdly, development can never be achieved through isolated efforts. Coordinated action is crucially important. For instance, an increase in agricultural production would require certain inputs of technical skill, fertilisers, cooperative planning or harvesting, marketing and changes in attitudes of the farmer towards new seeds and methods of cultivation. The same is true of other development areas. Therefore, coordinated action and integration are essential for development.

Fourthly, most development schemes concentrate on the productive and potentially productive sectors of the population— the young, the able-bodied and the alert. Since developers are concerned with wide-scale and long-term results, they are scared lest expending energy on the marginal elements in society should only end up in waste of precious time and efforts. Development therefore tends to become rather impersonal, and keeps a close watch on statistical results rather than human advancement. It is true that material and physical gains are much easier to measure. Hence the tendency to emphasise the economic and material aspects of development to the exclusion of human values.

For the Christian however, development must have spiritual connotations, for the purpose of development is the full expan-

sion of the integral human person. What are the consequences of such a conceptual framework of development?

Development in this sense would require that physical and material necessities of life should be more fully and adequately satisfied. Increasing educational and cultural opportunities for opening the mind and spirit to the larger dimensions of existence through the sciences and the arts, and in philosophical reflection, should be made possible and available. On the economic level, a definite trend towards equity of distribution should be established. On the political plane, increased participation in and responsibility for public policy must be achieved.

Increasing dominance of reason over magic, science over superstition, merit over inheritance or ascription should be the marks of a developed society. Implicit in this view is the expectation that society can be organised to achieve rationally articulated objectives, and at the same time scope for the mysterious and the unexplained should not be excluded from the purview of reason.

Another important element in the development concept consistent with the Christian ethos would be the endeavour to secure increasing justice, progressively clarified by love, and constantly reinterpreted for changing circumstances. This justice must lead to enlarged freedom, which is particularly crucial today when pressures of social obligations are so complex, burdensome and all-encompassing.

The imbalance in emphasis on the economic and material factors in development must be avoided; instead the political, psychological and intellectual elements must be pressed into the picture. Moreover it is better to seek consensus on positive goals than build purely on negative sentiments, (e.g. hatred towards an enemy).

The final mark of a developing society is its capacity to incorporate change, even fundamental and radical change without chaos. For both the past and the future must be held together in a dynamic way. This would require fluid and adaptable institutions, and the right and ability of men to change their institutions in a peaceful manner. The future is always breaking into the

past, therefore viable social structures are needed which can generate and sustain social change.

MAJOR ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

What kind of influence on development can the Church exert? It appears that the role of the Church in forming individual character for both personal fulfilment and for responsible citizenship can be minimized only at the greatest risk. Even an advanced developed society is exposed to the relentless pressure of private greed and ambitions of individuals and groups. Therefore a network of responsible individuals, themselves sinful but rooted in a morality nourished by a sense of living in the presence of God, must be established to sustain society against injustice and depravity.

How can the Church open the eyes of the blind and the indifferent to the suffering, pain and injustice which surround them ? What is the danger for the Church when it is made comfortable by social prestige and success ?

How can the Church provide its members and society at large with a sustaining philosophy? This is extremely important because modern man is searching for direction and guidance regarding the meaning of life and his own destiny in the midst of the freedom that he now enjoys. In the developing countries there are masses of mobile and uprooted people, there exists an anomie of values and a search for identity. Traditional value systems have been shattered by technology, urbanization and rapid communication. People therefore tend to be timid, fearful and defensive, and sometimes grasp for power and security. How can the Church help in this matter?

Can the Church pioneer social justice through new types of programmes and evaluate existing social conditions and institutions regarding the manner in which they incorporate the virtue of charity in social affairs. Should the Church concentrate more on people than on buildings ? How can the Church internalize the motivations for development ? Since development is a dynamic process, our institutions and organizations should be flexible enough to integrate social change. How can the Church build up a "responsible society"?

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What should be the role of the clergy, religious and laity in development projects? What should be the goals the Church seeks to achieve through these activities? Evangelization? Witness? Service? Or a combination of these goals? How are the needs of technical know-how and finance to be satisfied? What types of projects should be chosen? Those channelling relief or those that make the beneficiaries self-reliant? At what level should the planning of these projects be undertaken? parish? diocese? national? What kinds of social structures need to be erected at each level in the interest of both efficiency and the development of a community spirit?

CONCLUSION

Within the limits of this brief paper, a rather bold attempt has been made to present an overall picture of the socio-economic forces shaping India. A highly selective approach has been adopted in regard to the choice of the subjects that have been treated. Obviously out of such a complex environmental matrix it was hardly possible to do otherwise than to point out the distinctive variables which seem to influence social change in this country. In choosing these and no others, the writer of this paper has followed the mature advice and the inspiration of his colleagues who have been working for many years in this field. It is his fervent hope that this orientation paper will serve as a useful source of information and guidance towards the formulation of such plans and programmes that will finally emerge from the discussions of the National Seminar on "The Church in India Today".

ORIENTATION PAPER C

Political Forces
Shaping India Today

A. POLITICAL FORCES AT WORK IN INDIA TODAY

B. CATHOLICS IN THE NEW INDIA

I. CATHOLICS AND POLITICAL LIFE

VOTER
CANDIDATE

II. CATHOLICS IN PUBLIC LIFE

GOVERNMENT SERVICE
ORGANS OF PUBLIC OPINION

III. CATHOLICS AND THE NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY

SOCIAL WELFARE WORK
LABOUR
PATRIOTISM

A. POLITICAL FORCE AT WORK IN INDIA TODAY

Introduction

A wave of discontent seems to be sweeping over many lands today. There seems to be a growing belief that ideals that were only distant dreams in the past, have come within the range of practical politics in the present, that a lot more can be done much sooner to provide a better life for all. This has given rise to increasing impatience with the pace of progress and a readiness to rebel against and repudiate ideas, institutions and procedures that fail to justify their worth in the living present. Science and technology have demonstrated what can be achieved, and how soon. Modern means of mass-communication have accelerated the dynamics of discontent and popular action. Yet, politicians and political systems seem to have been caught unawares. Political institutions and programmes, the machinery of Government and the processes for taking and implementing decisions seem to have become slow, inadequate and even obsolete. They do not seem to be able to satisfy the yearning for greater freedom and fuller life that science seems to have made possible. Old forms and ways cannot survive only on the ground that once they were considered as the most desirable and practicable approximation to the ideal scheme of things. They must prove that today they are the most desirable approximation that we can visualize or work. If they do not, the relentless pressure of new forces will compel a search for new forms and ideals and new means. If this search for new forms takes place in the midst of the pressures and passions of popular action, society often succumbs to a stampede or runs the risk of conflict and violence.

The spectacular events that France witnessed in May and June 1968, the unrest in Germany, the stirrings of a movement for liberalization and freedom of expression in the U.S.S.R., the sorties of popular action that Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and other countries in Eastern Europe have witnessed in the recent past, the wave of violence in the United States and the intensifying fight against racial inequality and poverty, the turmoil in China and the tensions and conflicts in the developing countries,

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all seem to be the signs of a new awakening and a new search for freedom and fuller life.

I. INDEPENDENCE AND AFTER

Independence

India became independent in 1947, after many years of struggle. The last decades of this struggle, especially after the National Movement accepted the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, had witnessed a novel form of popular action. The organized use of non-violent non-co-operation by large masses of men in the rural and urban areas of the country had created a revolutionary situation. It was indeed a revolutionary challenge to the authority of the State. It was not a movement for constitutional reform that was confined to the elite or the evolue. Nor was it a campaign of terror that was secretly plotted and carried out by groups of conspirators in different parts of the country. It did not even take the conventional form of an insurrection that brews in the underground and bursts forth in violent popular action at the barricades and in fights for the physical control of the nerve centres of authority. Under Gandhi, it became an "open conspiracy" by the people. A conspiracy for violent action requires secrecy. Non-violence did not need secrecy. What it needed was fearlessness. It was a weapon that everybody could use. Its effectiveness depended on the extent of public participation that it evoked. Gandhi, therefore, wanted people to be conscious of the power of non-violent non-co-operation. He preached the revolutionary doctrine that the State, the Government and all social and political institutions depended on the recognition and co-operation that they receive from the people and that all that had to be done to fight injustice or abuse of power was to withdraw co-operation and fearlessly face the consequences of non-co-operation. Gandhi wanted people to 'non-co-operate' with authority and co-operate among themselves. They could not do this unless they discovered the oneness of the nation, overcame the complexes and prejudices of caste and community and eradicated the evils of their social life like untouchability and communal disharmony. The nationalist movement under Gandhi, therefore, became a unique movement that combined political action by the masses with political education of the masses. For years Gandhi and his

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colleagues strove to educate the people that they were the ultimate repository of power, that non-co-operation or satyagraha was the greatest weapon in the hands of the people, that Independence was the birth right of every nation, that political independence was only the gateway to economic independence and social equality, and that independence should and would lead to the elimination of exploitation and inequality, to rapid economic progress, equality of opportunity, and democracy and socialism. To show that these were not empty promises for a distant future many of them started to lead a life of saintly simplicity to identify themselves with the conditions and aspirations of the common man. All this had led the people of India to hope and believe that Independence would be the beginning of a swift socio-economic revolution.

Years of Trial

The twenty years that have elapsed since Independence have been years of trial for the people as well as for the leaders of the nation. The country has had to face colossal problems which could have rocked the very foundations of any new born State. The partition of the country and the communal carnage that ensued; the passions that were roused and the waves of violence that swept across the country; the manner in which millions of men, women and children were uprooted from their homes and cast into the wilderness of uncertainty, and the pangs of tragedy and suffering that accompanied these mass immigrations through hostile surroundings gave rise to feelings and forces that threatened the secular basis of our State and led to the martyrdom of Mahatma Gandhi. The lapse of paramountcy and the theory that the Princely States were free to resume sovereignty, posed a serious threat to the integrity and unity of the country, and it was only the ingenuity and the uncommon qualities of statesmanship of Sardar Patel that enabled him to pilot the integration of the Princely States with the rest of the country. The traditions of the national struggle and the tremendous popular support that the leadership enjoyed were powerful forces that enabled the country to grapple with the many problems that arose in the wake of Independence.

Achievements

India survived the aftermath of the Partition. Hundreds of

thousands of refugees and displaced persons were rehabilitated and given a new start in life. The Princely States were integrated with the rest of India. The elected representatives of the people of India met in a Constituent Assembly and fashioned out a democratic Constitution for the country. The Constitution accepted adult suffrage and guaranteed equality before the law. It guaranteed fundamental rights of liberty, freedom of opinion, freedom of association, freedom of worship and the freedom to own property and to enjoy the fruits of one's labour. Its Directive Principles have directed the State and the Government to work for the elimination of inequality and for the creation of an egalitarian social and economic order in which there would be no exploitation of man by man.

The Constitution came into force in 1950. Since then the people of India have gone to the polls in four General Elections: millions of voters have exercised their franchise peacefully, elected their representatives to the Legislatures and Parliament, and accepted the verdicts of the polls. While many other countries that became free along with India, or soon after India, failed to fashion or work democratic institutions of their own, India made headway with democracy. She had political parties that had established their own traditions, a political leadership that had roots among the people, electors who had a fairly long experience of political struggles. She had a competent Civil Service. She had a judiciary that commanded respect for its integrity and independence.

Soon after the country became independent the Government itself announced that political freedom would have no meaning unless it led to rapid improvement in the standard of living of the common man and to economic and social equality. It declared that it would lead the country to socialism, without forsaking the paths and values of democracy. It set up a Planning Commission to plan the mobilization, allocation and utilization of national resources. Three Five Year Plans were formulated and implemented. The objectives of these Plans were to increase the national income, to improve the standard of living of the common, man to increase opportunities for employment, to ensure a fairer distribution of the national wealth, to increase agricultural production, to build the infra-structure of modern industry to expand, diversify and modernise industrial activity and to

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provide opportunities for education and medical attention. The Government itself took up the responsibility for building up the public sector of the economy and for directing, controlling and co-ordinating the industrial effort in the private sector.

Yet, the Plans did not have a smooth sailing. Unforeseen difficulties arose and whittled down the progress towards the targeted increases in national income, and national productivity. There were shortfalls in resources, paucity of foreign exchange, difficulties in securing united aid, difficulties in utilising aid, repeated failures of the monsoon that brought down agricultural production, an unprecedented drought, persistent famine conditions in many parts of the country, a recession that almost threw industry and trade out of gear, and above all the economic consequences of the military action that India had to undertake in 1962 to protect herself from China, and again in 1965 from Pakistan.

In spite of these difficulties, the country managed to register considerable progress in many fields. In 15 years of planning the national income has gone up by 63%; per capita income has gone up by over 20%; millions of acres have been brought under irrigation. The area under irrigation has more than doubled. Agricultural production has gone up by nearly 90%. Industrial production has more than doubled in certain industries. The installed capacity for the generation of electricity has gone up by nearly 500%. The number of school-going children has doubled. The number of doctors and hospital beds per thousand has gone up by 60—100%. The average expectancy of life has gone up from 30 to 41 years. Thousands of kilometers of metalled roads have been laid to connect villages to towns and to connect towns along national highways. New Industries have been set up. The three Plans have seen the setting up of refineries, steel plants, heavy engineering plants, fertilizer and petro-chemical complexes, and complexes for the manufacture of aircrafts, aeronautical equipment and electronic equipment. A chain of national laboratories has been set up to promote research and development in every field. Indigenous competence has increased in every field of industry.

Still Distant Targets

Yet, it can hardly be said that there is a mood of elation in the

country, or even a mood of satisfaction with what has been achieved. Unemployment and underemployment seem to be as chronic as ever. The increase in opportunities for employment has been totally inadequate to provide gainful employment for all. Every Five Year Plan has begun and ended with a backlog of unemployment. The young entrant to the labour market continues to be haunted by the fear of unemployment. Even the skilled and the highly educated seem to be uncertain of finding employment. This fear of uncertainty has contributed considerably to the mood of restiveness, irreverence and rebelliousness that one finds in the younger generation, especially those in the institutions of higher learning in the country. Incomes have increased, but their real value has decreased with the continuing erosion of the value of the rupee. Prices are going up and the measures that the Government has taken seem to have failed to arrest the rise in prices or the rising inflation. Many essential commodities are still scarce and dear. Minimum wages have not been fixed and enforced in many fields of employment. Salaries are inadequate. Dearness allowances have often to be fought for and even when they are paid, they are not always linked with the cost of living. Employees, in the fixed income groups, seem to feel that they are being forced to bear an inequitous share of the burden of inflation. This is leading to low productivity, discontent, sullenness and continuous agitation. The urban middle class, including the employees of the Government and the middle income groups in industry, seem to be in the grip of this wave of discontent and agitation. Their discontent is whetted by the growing feeling that disparities have not decreased, that the rich in industry and trade are growing richer and flaunting their affluence in spite of heavy taxation, controls and of declarations that the Government will not tolerate the growth of monopoly or the concentration of economic power in the hands of a few private individuals. The Government does not seem to have succeeded in rooting out corruption or plugging the loopholes through which black money accumulates and flows. After twenty years of independence and democracy, the Administration still seems to be slow and soulless. It appears that, even today, the common citizen can hardly escape a sense of humiliation when he has to approach even the lowest officers of a Government that, in theory, represents him and acts on his behalf. All this seems to have given rise to a mood of discontent and frustration, of doubt and disillusionment. There seems to be a

growing sense of scepticism about our goals and values and institutions, and about the professions and practices of those who are to run the institutions and pilot the processes of a democratic system. It appears that this scepticism and intense impatience are at the root of many of the strikes and "Satyagrahas" and much of the violent and disorderly agitation that one witnesses in the country today.

II. MOOD OF SCEPTICISM

Nothing is sacrosanct for the sceptic. When a nation drifts into a mood of scepticism, even values and ideals that every nation normally regards as basic lose their immunity from doubt and disbelief. Ideals like Independence, National Unity and Democracy become vulnerable as debatable issues of policy or of day to day action. It is not uncommon in such a state of affairs to hear people questioning the need or value of Independence and recalling the days of dependence with nostalgia or to see poor and illiterate voters using their newly acquired franchise to support the symbols of the system that had denied them equality and freedom. In India today it is even possible to see groups of people who publicly defy the head of a State that is hostile to the country and identify themselves with the views that the hostile State wants to impose through aggression.

Unity

There are powerful forces in the country that do not seem to hesitate to question the very basis of the unity of nation. There are some who would say that before the British conquest of India, the unity of India was more notional and emotional, than political and administrative. There are some who ridicule secularism and propagate the belief that national unity cannot be built on the basis of secularism. They believe that nationalism cannot be divorced from the cultural mores of the majority and that national unity, therefore, must be built on the consensus which the mores of the majority induce in the Community. The danger that this way of thinking poses to national unity need hardly be described. It is a theory that divides citizens on the basis of beliefs that do not relate to the fields of economic and political activity in which the modern State operates. It is a theory that defines political

loyalties in terms of factors that are not political, blurs the distinction between nationalism and cultural uniformity, and paves the way for the political chauvinism of a cultural or a religious group. It can expose minorities to the blackmail of a fanatic group of the majority that wants to confront them with the choice between cultural conformism or assimilation and the consequences of being characterized as politically unreliable or disloyal.

Linguistic States

There is yet another area in which the concept of national unity is being impugned. India is not a small country with a population that is homogeneous in language, cultural traditions, religion and customs. It is a big country with people who speak many languages and profess many faiths. It is a country with many regions that have a distinct language and political history of their own. The idea that unity needs the acceptance or enforcement of the predominance of the traditions and language of any particular area, even if that area is inhabited by a majority of the population of the country, is therefore fraught with the danger of provoking chauvinistic reactions.

The Division of the country into linguistic states has no doubt helped to underline the distinctness of linguistic groups and to accentuate their pride in their own language, literature and historical traditions. The constitution of homogeneous linguistic states has made it easier for the new units of administration to use the regional language as the language of administration within the State. The new status and opportunity that regional languages have received seem to have made linguistic groups jealous of their new rights, and anxious to assert the equality and parity of all Indian languages. This has led to a seeming conflict between the desire and opportunity to use an Indian language as the official link language of the country and the desire to protect the equal rights of regional languages.

Official Language

It is one thing to hold that the adoption of an Indian language as the official link language of India is more natural and consistent with national self-respect; it is an entirely different thing to

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suggest that those who ask for gradualness or for a prolonged period of bi-lingualism are unreconciled to independence or unmindful of the needs of national integration. Similarly, it is one thing to ask for effective steps to ensure that the introduction of Hindi does not constitute an inequitous handicap for the non-Hindi speaking people of the country; it is an entirely different thing to suggest that the unity of India cannot be preserved if we accept an Indian language as the official language of the country. When extremists on one side talk of using force to subdue or overcome the opposition of linguistic minorities and extremists on the other side talk of secession, the ideal of national unity is called in question.

Regional Disparities

The resentment that is felt in many States against disparities in economic development is another powerful factor that is being used to create doubts about the value of national unity. Every State demands an increased share of the national resources, increased investment in industries and development and increased opportunities for employment for the people of the State. When there is delay in accepting the demand or the Centre draws attention to paucity of resources or techno-economic considerations that should govern the location of industries, there is a general talk of "discrimination" and "neglect", and extremists begin to tell of how easy economic development would have been if the States were free to manage their own resources and seek economic and technical assistance from outside. An attempt is made to create the impression that national unity is a hindrance to the economic development of the States.

There is no need to assume that those who want to disrupt the unity of a country would do so only by mounting a frontal attack and preaching secession. A frontal attack will open many eyes, increase vigilance and invite organized and united resistance. An insidious effort to undermine unity by slowly eroding faith in the positive advantages of unity is a far more dangerous tactic since it is much less obvious and much more difficult to counter. One need not even decry unity. In fact one can profess faith in unity, and ask "unity certainly, but unity at what cost ?"

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Democracy

Scepticism about the effectiveness of democracy is perhaps more widely voiced than doubts about the value of independence or national unity. One can hear democracy being blamed for a host of sins. It is often blamed for the slow pace of our economic development, for the calibre of our leadership, the character and effectiveness of our representatives, the inefficiency and incompetence of the government in many fields of administration. It is blamed for corruption in the services and in public life. It is cited as the reason for our slow progress towards economic equality. It is said that democracy has only helped to entrench the forces of feudalism, separatism, parochialism, casteism and linguism. It is even said that democracy has weakened national unity by promoting the emergence and exploitation of divisive forces. Administrative delays, inefficiency and waywardness are often described as the consequences of democracy, and there are some who would say that democracy is paving the way for national disintegration.

Adult Suffrage

It is strange that democracy is discredited not only by those who do not believe in it, but also by some who believe in it. Some of those who swear by democracy and yet ascribe many of our ills to it, do so because they believe that the responsibilities of a democracy were transferred too suddenly to our voters. They believe that our voters should have been prepared more assiduously and effectively for the responsibilities that devolved on them with adult suffrage. They would hold that poverty, illiteracy, inadequate civic and political education and proneness to the influence of superstitions, caste, community and feudal loyalties made it difficult to assume that the electorate would be effective and enlightened masters of the Government. In fact, they have grave misgivings that these shortcomings may not only distort the functioning of democracy and lead to disillusionment but also enable the enemies of democracy to exploit the fundamental freedoms of the democratic system to destroy democracy from within. Some of them have begun to suggest that a regime that can protect national unity and enforce the elementary disciplines of public life has become inevitable and essential for the eventual success of democracy.

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Among those who question the effectiveness of democracy are those who believe that rapid economic development, economic equality and real socialism can be achieved only through the dictatorship of the proletariat. They have no value or a kind of democracy that excludes the use of coercion, regimentation and the liquidation of opposition that the Party of the Proletariat has used in its struggle to establish "Socialism" in the U.S.S.R., China and other countries.

Apart from these fundamental ideals of independence, national unity and democracy, it appears that some basic tenets of policy are also being subject to sceptical introspection. One such is in the field of foreign policy, and another is that of national security or defence.

Non-Alignment

For nearly two decades since Independence we have been defining our foreign policy as non-alignment. The Government has tended to take the view that it was neither possible nor necessary to define the national interests that we hoped to promote in the field of foreign affairs or the manner in which we proposed to use non-alignment to serve these national interests. Non-alignment almost seemed to take on the role of the end as well as the means, of foreign policy. Any demand for a definition of the objectives that non-alignment was meant to serve was either ignored or dubbed as the result of lack of faith in non-alignment. It was even difficult to point out departures from non-alignment without attracting the charge that one was really not non-aligned. It appeared as though periodic definition of policy had become unnecessary or outside the competence of public debate. The events of the last six years have given rude and repeated shocks to the psychosis of complacence that seemed to have developed. Very few people, perhaps no one, questions the excellence of the principle of non-alignment or the need to be non-aligned if an independent nation is to serve and protect its independent national interests. Non-alignment is the preservation of independence, but saying that is not to absolve oneself of the responsibility to indicate how independence will be used to promote the independent interests of the nation-state.

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Though the principle that non-alignment is essential for preserving independence of judgment is basic to any foreign policy, the secondary assumptions that were associated with the principle in the 1950's seem to have been badly battered by the events and developments of the last few years. The world is no longer divided into two hostile blocs, armed to the teeth and ready to fly at each other's throat. The blocs have ceased to be monolithic. The ties that bind the Warsaw powers have become looser. Rumania and Czechoslovakia have moved towards an assertion of national independence. The Nato community is no longer as well-knit as it was. France has struck out on a path of her own. China has emerged as a power that does not recognize the ideological or military leadership of the Soviet Union. It has given enough proof to convince everyone that it has a global strategy of its own. Many countries have become independent in Africa and Asia, and have chosen to adopt the policy of non-alignment. In fact, the majority of the members of the U.N. are countries that accept the policy of non-alignment. Above all, the diplomacy of Pakistan has demonstrated the meaninglessness of clinging to the belief that the world is divided into two hostile camps. Pakistan has proved that she can be friendly with the U.S.A., U.S.S.R., and China at the same time, and receive military and economic assistance from all of them.

Another assumption that was associated with non-alignment was that non-aligned countries that did not enter military alliances with the Big Powers would be immune from attack or aggression. This assumption has been called in question by the Chinese aggression in India.

Yet another assumption was that the policies and interests of the U.S.A., and U.S.S.R. were in irreconcilable conflict and that they could not therefore take joint action to compel the newly independent nations to accept positions that they might not accept on their own. The course of the Indo-Pak conflict, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the campaign for the acceptance of the U.S.-U.S.S.R. stand on non-proliferation are instances that cast doubt on the validity of this assumption.

All these developments and the spectacular diplomatic success of those whom India has to contend against have created a climate of introspection on the adequacy of our foreign policy.

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The dilemma that India faces in the field of defence has become another target of sceptical introspection. The traditions of the national struggle for independence perhaps started us off with a considerable degree of reluctance to contemplate a role for force in international relations. We abhorred war and violence, and believed that all disputes between nations should be settled amicably and peacefully. We felt that the historical traditions of India and the values of our national struggle had cast a duty on us to take a leading role in turning the world away from war and the use of force. We believed that our non-alignment would give us immunity. We would provoke no one, and we would be left alone to work for peace and enjoy the fruits of peace. Yet within a few days of our becoming independent, we were given an opportunity to learn that it was naive to believe that aggression could not take place without provocation, that aggression could confront a nation with the choice to surrender or to use force to counter the force of the aggressor. The lesson was re-read to us by China in 1962, and yet again by Pakistan in 1965. We seemed to have learned that a nation might be called upon to defend itself any time, and it has to be prepared to defend itself. We seem to have learnt as well that though the will to defend is the basis of all defence, the will itself has to be backed by the arms and tactics that are necessary to match and overcome the force against which they are pitted.

But many irksome questions arise to plague us. Can a nation depend on external assistance in crucial matters like defence in which decisions of when to fight, how to fight, how long to fight, what weapons to use, when to make peace and on what terms to make peace, are all decisions that the sovereign nation wants to make for itself ? If the nation is to be self-reliant in the matter of military equipment, how much of its resources will it be able to divert from investment on direly needed projects of development without retarding the pace of development and exposing itself to the dangerous internal consequences of poverty and discontent? If the nation is to defend itself against an unscrupulous enemy whose armoury includes nuclear weapons, is it permissible to plan on the assumption that nuclear arms will not be used against it? Or, is it necessary to prepare for the eventuality that the enemy may use its nuclear weapons ? Is a nation that started out with

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the desire to eschew all use of force in international affairs to be compelled, by exigencies, to arm itself with nuclear weapons ? It is indeed a cruel and relentless dilemma, and it is no wonder that the realization that dilemma can no longer be evaded is compelling a sceptical examination of many old assumptions and beliefs.

III. POLITICAL PARTIES

When a political community is assailed by doubts about the utility of its basic values and the effectiveness of its institutions, organs of public opinion like political parties have to play the key role in ensuring that prolonged and unconstructive reappraisal does not lead to anarchy or disintegration. The political parties of our country therefore have a special responsibility to lead us away from the desert sands that we seem to be approaching.

We have many political parties in our country. There is hardly anything in our system which prevents a group of people with a set of common beliefs or common interests from setting themselves up as a party, provided they do not use violence or incite the use of violence or prepare for the use of violence. The result is that we have a large number of political parties of varying size and character. There are a few parties which are local or regional in character. But with the exception of one or two like the D.M.K. and D.K., most parties seem to envisage a national role for themselves and talk in terms of national policies and national programmes. Even the small parties, that find their following restricted to a State or a region either due to the circumstances in which they emerged or the successive splits through which they have passed, are almost continuously searching for like-minded allies who can help them to create the impression that they are parts of an All-India body. Apart from these parties that are still struggling to acquire a multi-regional or All India personality, the Congress Party, the Swatantra Party, the Communist Party of India (R), the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the Praja Socialist Party, the Samyukta Socialist Party and the Jana Sangh can be described as parties that have been functioning as All-India parties for some time.

The Congress as a Movement

Of these, the Congress Party is the oldest, and by far, the

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largest party. It has been in existence for over eighty years, and has an impressive record of service and achievements to its credit. It is known in practically every village and town of this country. It is also known that the Congress was the organization that challenged the might of Imperial Britain and led the country to Independence. The struggle that the Congress led became a saga of suffering and sacrifice in which every part of the country and every section of the people played a heroic part. This struggle has left an indelible impression on the minds of many generations of people who had accepted the Congress as the symbol of national resurgence, emotionally identified themselves with it and even participated in its programmes of non-co-operation. In the course of nearly 8 decades of struggle and constructive service it has built up an organization that has branches and members in every corner of the country. The ancillary movements like the Khadi and Village Industries Movement, the Anti-Untouchability Movement, the Prohibition Movement, etc. that it had started in the days of the struggle had helped it to reach the poorest and lowliest and most downtrodden sections of the population, and to earn their sympathy and co-operation. At the national level, the struggle and the constructive movements had thrown up a galaxy of leaders who commanded universal respect and admiration for their devotion and selflessness. Even at the lower levels, the Congress organization could claim a number of leaders and workers who had roots in the soil and considerable support from the people of their areas. All these assets were built up when the Congress was in the wilderness and had the character of a national phalanx fighting for freedom. Many of those who find themselves today in the Praja Socialist Party, the S.S.P., the Swatantra and Communist Parties were in the Congress organization when these assets were built up and they feel today that the Congress is continuing to reap the benefits of an unfair advantage that accidental circumstances have conspired to confer on it.

As a Party

With the advent of Independence in 1948 the Congress gradually began to lose the role of a national movement and take on the role of a political party that functions in a parliamentary democracy. There is no doubt that it had a lead over other parties, and it had the advantages of the past to build on. It was almost the only organized party on the scene with clear cut policies and

programmes and with workers whom the masses knew and held in affection. The result was that it was swept to power with huge and overwhelming majorities at the Centre and in almost all States. Its position in power gave it an opportunity to further consolidate its base and claim and use the advantages that a Party in power possesses even in democracy.

Other Political Parties

All the other political parties in the country took shape or acquired independent organized personalities only after Independence. The forerunners of the two Socialist Parties and the two Communist Parties had worked as groups within the Indian National Congress. The Jana Sangh was formed in the 1950's and drew its main strength and support from some sections of the Hindu Mahasabha and the leaders and sympathizers of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh, a highly militant Hindu organization that was well-known for its para-military organization, training and lines of authority and command. The Swatantra Party took shape in the Sixties. Quite a few of its leaders like Rajaji and Mr. Ranga were persons who had a distinguished record of service in the national movement and in the Congress itself, and they received powerful support from some of the Princely Houses, some distinguished civil servants who had retired from service, and many leaders of industry and trade.

Ideological Spectrum

In terms of the ideologies that they profess, our political parties cover a wide range of the spectrum of political thought. The Congress, the Praja-Socialist Party and the Samyukta Socialist Party believe in democracy and socialism. The Swatantra Party believes in democracy and free enterprise and the minimization of State intervention in economic and social activity. Both the Communist Party of India (R) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) believe in Communism and the teachings of Marx and Lenin about the inevitability of the dictatorship of the Proletariat. Both of them have accepted the possibility and necessity of working in the democratic institutions set up by the Constitution, but neither of them has abjured the Marxist belief in combining constitutional activity with extra-constitutional activity, or legal activity with "illegal" (extra-legal) activity. On matters of

foreign policy and the interpretation of national and international developments, the attitude and position taken by the CPI (R) are very similar to those taken by U.S.S.R., and those taken by the CPI (M) are very similar to those taken by China. The Congress Party, the P.S.P., the S.S.P., the Swatantra and the Communist Parties believe that the State should be secular. The Jana Sangh believes in democracy and nationalism, and believes that nationalism has to be based on the cultural consensus that the mores and traditions of the cultural (and religious) majority induces in the political community. Its attitude to secularism is therefore different from that of the other Parties. Its ideas on economic organization are not yet as clearly defined as those of the Congress, the Swatantra Party, the Socialist Parties and the Communist Parties.

Financing the Parties

All these Political Parties derive their financial support mainly from membership fees and donations and contributions. Almost all Parties raise some money through the small contributions that they canvass from many sympathizers among the poor and the middle classes. But the bulk of the incomes of most parties does not come from these contributions. Almost all parties receive financial contributions from Companies and industrial and trade enterprises. It can be said that in the past the Congress and the Swatantra Parties have found it easier to receive donations from industry and trade. But recent reports indicate that every Party that has been in power or every group of Parties that has been in power has been able to increase its financial resources through donations or contributions. The Parliament is now considering a proposal to prohibit Companies from making financial contributions to the funds of Political Parties. It is not yet clear whether this ban will plug the channels through which money flows to political parties or put every party at an equal disadvantage or encourage dependence on undisclosed, clandestine and intractable sources of income that may tilt the balances and influence the course of events much more dangerously than open and disclosed donations. Political Parties incur enormous expenditures for the Elections. It is well known that they raise and receive special contributions for this purpose. All these contributions are not acknowledged and accounted for to the public, and there has been increasing talk of the role that foreign powers may be playing by

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surreptitiously financing parties or candidates of their choice. These are grave issues that emphasize the need for radical thinking on election expenses, party funds and the action that the democratic state can take to prevent money from eroding the equality of opportunity that candidates need at elections.

The Congress Decline

It cannot be said that the Congress Party today is what it was twenty years ago. It has ceased to be a national front of freedom fighters, and is gradually transforming itself into a political party of the kind that one visualizes in a Parliamentary Democracy. When it took over the reins of power, it had hardly any organized opposition to contend against in the legislatures or outside. It was virtually the only party that mattered. It was in power. The monopoly of power in the States and the Centre and the absence of any powerful competition even outside the legislatures did not fail to affect the Congress Party. The Party seemed to develop a feeling that all its policies and constructive programmes could be implemented through the machinery of the Government, and there was not much that the organizational machinery of the party had to do. All eyes turned to the seats of power and the machinery of the Government. There was little thought given to the role that the organizational machinery of the party had still to play in interpreting the Government to the people, transmitting the aspirations and feelings of the people to the Government, formulating public opinion and securing public co-operation. The question of the relation, between the parliamentary and 'administrative' wing of the party and the organizational wing of the party was ignored or evaded. An impression was created that the organizational wing of the party did not matter, and the leadership in this wing could be allowed to pass into the hands of the bosses and the mediocre, without affecting the image or the future of the party. The States saw a number of fights between ambitious party bosses and Chief Ministers till the unquestioned supremacy of the same leader or group was established in both the legislative and organizational wings of the party. Obviously this could not be achieved in many places without manipulating membership to corner control of the organization, rigging elections, carrying on campaigns of character assassination against long-term colleagues, using the corrupting influence of the spoils of office, and squeezing competitors out of the organization.

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The fact that these trends did not simultaneously make their appearance at the national level was primarily due to the fortuitous circumstance that the national leadership had no internal challenge or competition within the organization as long as Mr. Nehru was alive. But all this was bound to have its effect on the organization at all levels, and on the public mind. The cumulative effects have now begun to become apparent.

IV. RECENT EVENTS AND THE CONSTITUTION

Party *vs* Government

The downgrading of the organizational machinery and the forums of the organization also affected the democratic process in other ways.

Political parties have a very important function to perform in formulating opinion on the policies and programmes of Government. It is not enough if the party discusses and adopts a manifesto in the year of a General Election. The implementation of the manifesto and the attitude that the Government adopts or should adopt to current events and the problems that arise from time to time have to be subjected to periodic examination by all levels of the party both to invest the action of the administrative wing with the sanction of the organization in whose name it seeks the suffrage and support of the people, and to complete the processes of participation, political education and consent on which democracy depends. If the Councils of a political party are given the feeling that their functions end with the election of their officers, and the approval of policy is a ritual by which the party demonstrates its continued support for the leadership, democracy tends to become "plebiscitary" or "messianic" and suffers an ellipsis of some of the essentials that distinguish it from other systems of Government. It is difficult to say that the Congress has shown a keen awareness of this danger.

It is perhaps true that the errors of omission and commission committed by the Congress during the last two decades are often examined more critically than those of other Parties. This is primarily because the Congress has been in power, holding the reins of responsibility including the administration's share of the responsibility for working and protecting democracy. This does

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not absolve the opposition parties from their share of the responsibility for building up the institutions and traditions of democracy.

The Failure to Create an Effective Opposition

Two decades in the twentieth century is not a negligible period of time. There were no limitations on the freedom of the opposition to organize itself. There was no dearth of discontent. There was no dearth of issues. There were failures and shortcomings in the Congress administrations. There were grievous blunders and miscalculations for which the nation has had to pay dearly. Yet, none of the opposition parties succeeded in using these opportunities and building up a strong, viable and credible alternative to the Congress. On most of the basic issues with which the Congress tried to capture popular imagination and garner public support, most of the opposition parties had very little difference of opinion, and if they did have differences, they did not succeed in defining the difference and presenting an alternative. Planning, the concept of a Mixed Economy, the need for a public sector, the need for non-alignment and the objective of a Socialist pattern of Society are all instances of basic issues on which the opposition found it difficult to oppose or provide an alternative. Inadequate clarity on points of difference, inability to present alternative policies and programmes and insufficient recognition of the need for constructive work to build up the foundations of public support were some of the main reasons for the failure of the opposition parties to measure up to the stature of an alternative. Individually, they were almost incapable of being looked upon as rivals of the Congress. Yet, their ambition to capture power was the legitimate ambition of any political party; and their long-spell in the wilderness seemed to them to be ununderstandable and unfair. They were getting bitter and impatient. Power and the Congress had become the two common obsessions of the Opposition Parties by the time the Fourth General Elections arrived in 1967.

The Fourth General Election

The Fourth General Elections, therefore, saw a major change in the electoral strategy of the opposition. In the past the general policy was for each party to fight, on its own.

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Each Party set up its own candidates in as many constituencies as possible, and hoped that the electorate would accept it as the alternative to the Congress. The result was that there were multi-cornered contests in most constituencies, the vote was divided among the candidates of the many parties that had contested, and the Congress romped home to victory as the party that had secured the maximum number of votes, although the number of votes that it secured in many constituencies was far below the total number of votes polled against it. In fact, the Opposition Parties had often complained that the Congress was winning on the strength of a minority of votes in many constituencies, and that it represented only a minority of the voters in the country, even though it had managed to secure a majority of the seats in the legislatures and the Parliament. They had often referred to this vagary of the electoral system as the real reason for what they regarded as the unmerited success of the Congress. In 1967 they decided that they should not allow the Congress to derive the advantage that the electoral system conferred on the single biggest party in the Constituency. They decided to do this by forging an electoral understanding or alliance among themselves and confronting the Congress and the electorate with a single candidate who was backed by all or most of the Opposition Parties. In most places where the Opposition Parties succeeded in this tactics, they succeeded in polarizing the electorate, and restricting the success of the Congress to constituencies in which it had a clear majority of the votes polled. Even in constituencies where opposition disunity left more than one non-Congress candidate in the field, the extent of unity that was achieved did add to the odds against the Congress. Thus in 1967, the opposition strategy by and large, was not to ask the electorate to consider each of the Opposition Parties as an alternative to the Congress, but to ask them to consider the totality of the opposition as an alternative to the Congress. While the results of the General Election have proved that this strategy has had desirable electoral advantages, the events and developments of the year, after the Elections, have shown that such an electoral strategy is not free from grave political hazards.

The increased unity in the ranks of the opposition, the fratricidal strife in the Congress, the new and flexible electoral strategy of the opposition, the rigid strategy of the Congress, the

uncertainties in the Congress organization and the pressure of new forces contributed to give considerable success to the candidates of the opposition. The results of the Elections came as a surprise to many who had not cared to assess the implications of the Opposition's new electoral strategy. The Congress lost its majority and was swept out of office in many States. In the Centre, it lost its massive majority, and scraped through with a slender majority. Within a few months of the Elections, the Congress was hit further by a wave of defections in some of the States where the majority that it had won at the Elections was marginal and vulnerable. Thus, by the end of 1967, the Congress had been pushed out of power in several States, and was running the Government only in a minority of States and at the Centre.

Defections

Among the States in which the Congress lost its majority, it was only in one State that a single Opposition Party secured an absolute majority in the Legislature, independent of the support that it might receive from other Opposition Parties with whom it had entered into electoral adjustments or alliances. This was in Madras where the D.M.K. came to power. In other States where the electorate terminated the majority of the Congress in the Legislatures, the Opposition Parties that had electoral adjustments or alliances, or as many of the Opposition Parties as possible, came together in a coalition to take over the responsibility for administration and to form a Government. In States where the Congress had been returned with marginal and vulnerable majorities, groups of Opposition Parties began attempts to persuade or induce the "marginal" men or groups in the Congress Party to defect to the Opposition and thus convert the opposition into the majority. In their exuberance and enthusiasm for toppling the Governments of the Congress, the spokesmen of some Opposition Parties began to refer to defectors from the Congress as the "saviours of democracy". It will be wrong to say that the successes of the Opposition led to a wave of defections from the Congress in every State, but defections did take place in most of the States where a marginal number could convert the Congress into a minority. Thus coalition Governments led by defecting Congressmen came to power in the U.P., Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Bihar. The dividends of defection soon became appa-

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rent to ambitious groups and individuals, and in some States these groups and individuals attempted to exact the full rewards of defection, as also handsome and recurrent ransom for desisting from re-defection, in cynical unconcern for the wishes of the elector. Congressmen were not too dull-witted to learn the lesson that the Opposition was teaching, and in spite of the general stand that the Congress High Command took against attempts to topple non-Congress Governments with unseemly haste and questionable means, Congressmen in some States showed that the use of defection as a means of making and unmaking Legislative majorities is open to both sides in the game. This provoked an immediate accusation from the Opposition that the Congress was attempting to disrupt opposition unity and plotting to restore its "monopoly" of power through questionable and undemocratic methods. Meanwhile the see-saw of defections in some States led to situations in which the claims of Governments that they enjoyed the support of the majority were constantly in doubt and yet they were either unwilling or unable to face a test on the floor of the House. When these situations led to constitutional crisis and the Centre acted to bring the Governments of these States under President's rule, the Opposition accused the Centre of abusing the Constitution and of exploiting its provisions to prevent the working of democracy and to restore its monopoly of power through the backdoor.

Failure of Coalitions

In a Parliamentary system in which more than two Parties contend for power, it is conceivable that a General Election may not yield an absolute majority to any single Party. In such a circumstance, a coalition of Parties that can command a majority in the Legislature forms a Coalition Government. This is a common practice in all multi-party parliamentary democracies. Even in India, during the last two decades, we have had Coalition Governments in a few States, some led by the Congress Party, and others led by non-Congress Parties. But the simultaneous formation of Coalition Governments in many States after the last General Election, the manner in which some of them came to power and remained in power and the manner in which some of them have been functioning, have helped to focus attention on some of the dangers that may arise when no single Party commands the majority necessary to form and run a Government.

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Except in one or two instances the Parties that came together after the Elections to form coalition Governments in the States had not constituted themselves into a United Front before the Elections and sought the mandate of the people on the basis of a common manifesto or a common minimum programme or the declared intention of forming a Coalition Government if the United Front candidates were returned in a majority. Electoral agreements or adjustments had been made only to prevent the fragmentation of the non-Congress vote. When the results of the Elections showed that the Congress had failed to secure an absolute majority, and was not anxious to form Governments in coalition with other Parties, the Opposition Parties suddenly realized that they had been put on trial. They had to offer to take up the responsibility that their position as the majority in the Legislature put on them or accept their failure to come together to take up constructive responsibility, and confess that even when the electorate gave them a chance, they (the Opposition Parties), singly or collectively, could not provide an alternative to the Congress. They had to accept the challenge, and they did so by combining into United Legislative Parties (Samyukta Vidhayak Dals) and forming Coalition Governments. These United Legislative Parties consisted of diverse and heterogenous elements that had hardly anything in common except their opposition to the Congress and their desire to take over or share power. Their unity was more the acceptance of a pre-condition for power or for keeping the Congress out of power than the reflection of political or ideological affinity. They found it hard to agree on many basic issues or programmes, and had often to satisfy themselves with programmes that were platitudinous, inconsequential or patently impracticable. Their differences were so fundamental that they viewed each other with suspicion and reserved to themselves the right to campaign against each other's views in public. They had grave difficulties in dividing portfolios and an intense distrust of each other that prevented them from permitting ministerial colleagues to exercise the normal "independent" responsibility for a portfolio without constant collective surveillance and interference by the heterogenous components of the coalition. They had difficulties in agreeing on the selection of senior civil servants for the key positions in the administration. There were instances of Ministers accusing and maligning each other in public, and constituent parties of the coalition carrying on public agitation and 'Satyagraha' against the decisions and

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policies of the Government. The delicate balance in the rela-
tionship between the Legislative Party and its executive on the
one hand and the Cabinet on the other, which even single Party
Governments find necessary but difficult to achieve, became even
more inaccessible, and there were instances in which it became
difficult to say whether the Cabinet or the Coordinating Com-
mittee of the U.L.F. wielded the highest administrative authori-
ty. This had its effect on the Legislature and Executive as well.
Legislation slowed down. The majority in the legislature had to
be maintained in the face of the constant danger of defection
and collapse, and this led to use of power to attract and retain
the loyalty of the marginal men. The control over the Civil
Service became ineffective. The authority of the Ministry stood
self-eroded, and the power of the Civil Service increased. The
effectiveness of Cabinet control exposed the Civil Service to the
danger of arbitrariness, corruption and erosion of neutrality.
The principles of the collective responsibility of the Cabinet and
Ministerial responsibility seemed to have been reduced to a
mockery, and there were occasions on which the machinery of
the Constitution seemed obstructed, inadequate or rendered
ineffective.

Constitution on Trial

Though the Constitution of India came into force in 1950, it
had hardly an occasion to face the severe strains of internal
dissensions or prolonged external aggression. The Congress
Party was in power in the States as well as the Centre. The fact
that the same Party was in power in the States and the Centre
had promoted a considerable degree of uniformity of approach,
policy and administrative practice. Differences were less
likely to arise among those who drew their inspiration
from the same ideals and tradition and owed allegiance to
the same political party. Even when differences arose, they
hardly became matters of open controversy or public agita-
tion. They were dealt with and resolved in the Councils
of the Party. There were, therefore, no occasions for the
States or the Centre to assert their constitutional rights and
depend exclusively on the machinery that the constitution has
provided for the solution of disputes between the States and the
Centre or between different parts of the machinery of Govern-
ment. But the results of the General Elections in 1967 completely

changed this situation. Non-Congress Governments came to power in many of the States. The massive majority that the Congress enjoyed at the Centre was whittled down to a minimal majority. The new non-Congress Governments in the States were on trial in their own eyes as well as those of the public. They had to prove that they were making full use of their powers, and that delays and failures were due to factors beyond their control. They had to see that the Congress Government at the Centre did not attempt to erode their powers or checkmate them. They had, therefore, to be jealous and vigilant of their powers and rights. The subjects that the Constitution had reserved for the States had to be protected from poaching by the Centre. The full weight of the different views of the State must be felt on concurrent subjects. But they soon discovered that the concept of Central Planning, determination of priorities and mobilization and allocation of resources had already begun to affect the freedom of the State to plan and carry out programmes that related to State subjects as well as concurrent subjects. The State Budgets and the Revenue and Expenditure of the States had become heavily susceptible to the Plan policies, which were not within the sole competence of the State Government.

The Role of the Governor

There were other spheres too in which the powers of the Centre and the manner in which the Centre exercised them became matters of acute and explosive controversy. These mainly centred round the powers and the manner of appointment of the Governor who was the Constitutional head of the administration in the States. When no single Party in the Legislature had the requisite majority to form a Ministry, and the Government consisted of a Coalition of Parties and unattached individual Members of the Legislature, the Government often had to face extraordinary situations. The shifting moods and loyalties of the partners of the Coalition or the "marginal" Independents, who gave a majority to the Government sometimes reduced the Government to a minority when the House was not in session. The Government's claim to majority was often challenged when the House was in session or when it was in recess. The Governor had the responsibility to satisfy himself that the Government did enjoy the support of a majority, and if the reluctance of the leader of the Coalition Government or the Presiding Officer of the Legislature

prevented an opportunity for a trial of strength on the floor of the House from materializing, or the loyalty of the "marginal" Members remained indeterminate or inconstant, the Governor was confronted with an impasse. He had then to take recourse to his constitutional powers, and if they were found inadequate, report to the President that the Constitutional machinery of the State Legislative system had broken down, and the President should take over the administration. But since the Governor was a nominee of the Centre and a different Party was in power in the Centre, the actions of the Governor were often impugned by the Opposition or Coalition Parties as being motivated by the desire of the Congress Party to use its position at the Centre to usurp power in the States, to remove the opposition Governments and to re-establish its monopoly of power through unfair and unconstitutional means.

Responsibilities of the Centre

Another area in which an ominous controversy has developed on Constitutional issues is that relating to law and order. The maintenance of law and order is the responsibility of the State, but the Centre has the responsibility to protect every State against external aggression and "internal disturbances and to ensure that the Government of every State is carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution." These provisions obviously include the fundamental rights, freedoms and the rule of law. Normally the Centre may hold a watching brief for the Constitution. But if a State Government begins to discriminate between one citizen and another or one group of citizens and another on the basis of the social or economic class from which he comes or the religion which he professes; if the Government decides that blackmail and constraint and violence are permissible in the struggle of the working class and it would not therefore intervene to protect the life, personal liberty and property of those against whom the working class or its organizations may decide to fight; if the Police is instructed to remain 'neutral' and not to take steps to protect life, liberty and the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, and private groups of armed or unarmed party activists are allowed to take over the functions of the Police; if those who do not support the Government find that they have forfeited the protection of the State's Police force and have to organize themselves for "self-defence" against the lawless rule of Party activists,

and conditions reach the brink of civil war, does the Centre have responsibility to prevent the drift to civil war in a State ? If those in Government occupying seats at the top of the administration, keep the administrative machinery at a stand-still and use public agitation as an instrument that helps them to circumvent the limitations and processes that the Constitution imposes, does the Centre have any responsibility to uphold and protect the Constitution ?

Centre-State Relations

Yet another grave threat to the integrity of the Constitution has come from the State Governments that have whipped up popular feelings against the Centre, accusing the Centre of discriminating against the people of State, and have staged popular demonstrations to condemn the Centre, and threatened to launch "non-violent direct action" or "Satyagraha" against the Centre to press the Centre to accede to the demands of the State for more grains or more grants or more allocations or the location of industrial projects or on issues like the Official Language. The questions that arise are not questions of mere propriety, but basic questions about the spheres of the Centre and the State, the machinery through which the people of the States take decisions on matters that fall within the sphere of the Centre and the machinery for settling differences of opinion between the States and the Centre. If the Governments of the States are to bully the Central Government into taking decisions of their liking by leading public demonstrations and "Satyagraha" against the Centre in their States and at Delhi, what is left of the role and functions of the Parliament ? If decisions on Central subjects are not to be taken by discussion and decision in Parliament, and if differences of opinion between the States and the Centre are not to be resolved by the independent judiciary that the Constitution has visualized, what will be the machinery or method for a peaceful, rational and just reconciliation of the interests and claims of the different States ? If the function of the Parliament and of the judiciary are taken over by constant, but ad hoc 'direct action' in the streets, what will remain of unity and the Constitution ? What form will the direct action or Satyagraha by the State Government or the constituents of a Coalition Government against the Central Government take in their State, and in Delhi? If the Ministers of the State Government break Central laws and

defy the orders of the Central Government and lead a campaign of Satyagraha against the Central Government, or go to another State against which their State has a dispute and break laws or lead a Satyagraha against the Government of that State, can they claim ministerial immunity from arrest and trial ? What will be the consequences, if the colleagues of Ministers arrested for such Civil Disobedience or Satyagraha threaten 'retaliatory action' on Central Ministers who might be passing through their States? The political consequences of such 'Satyagrahas' and 'retaliatory action' may well be anarchy or civil war. And yet, during the agitation on the Official Language, the country did see the spectacle of two Ministers of U.P. offering Satyagraha and courting arrest in Delhi, and their Ministerial colleagues in U.P. threatening retaliatory action against Central Ministers passing through U.P. All these are portents that cannot be ignored by those who want to preserve the unity of the country.

The results of the Fourth General Elections and the events of the last few months have, therefore, given rise to a widespread feeling that the time has come to review the working of our Constitution and political institutions, examine alternatives that can remove defects and dangers that have been exposed, and evolve a national consensus in favour of the reforms that may be necessary. It is not, therefore, surprising that many alternatives, including very radical changes, are being advocated. Most of these relate to the powers of the States and the Centre and the machinery for dissolving differences. But it appears that the two basic issues on which a national debate might crystallize and become unavoidable might well be the virtues of adopting a Unitary constitution and the desirability of changing over to the Presidential system of Government in the States, or at the Centre as well as the States. An informed and dispassionate national debate on these issues and objective discussions by the duly elected representatives of the people will no doubt be the sane and constitutional alternative to burying one's head in the sands or drifting into violent conflict.

Minorities

There is another area in which the provisions of the Constitution and the progress that has been made in implementing the intentions and principles of the Constitution needs national introspection and review. This relates to the minorities, the back-

ward classes, and the scheduled castes and tribes of the country. In spite of the base of secularism, the fundamental freedoms and rights guaranteed by the Constitution and its Schedules and the Directive Principles regarding social and economic equality and the equality of opportunity, the minorities have not lost the fear of majority chauvinism or cultural assimilation. Nor has the emotional integration necessary for harmony been achieved. There are periodic outbursts of communal violence. The ferocity and pattern of these outbursts have often aroused the suspicion that many of these disturbances are not the results of accidental flareups, but of planned and well-organized action, sometimes inspired by propaganda or incitement from outside the country. It is clear that the sparks that touch off these explosions arise from the mutual suspicion that seems to be persisting in the minds of the communities. If the freedom to profess different religions and practise different forms of worship is accepted, and it has been traditionally accepted almost in every period of India's history, and if the State does not confer special favours on the followers of one religion, tension can arise only from offence to susceptibilities (like music before the mosque, or cow-slaughter and beefeating, etc). The minorities seem to fear that their cultural identity may be eroded and their practices and institutions may be tampered with in the name of 'National integration'. The majority seems to entertain suspicions on two counts; proselytization, and the possibility that a religious minority may have sympathies for the political stands taken by foreign countries that profess the same religion. Proselytization and the motives and methods of proselytization are suspected because of a widespread feeling that political and economic inducements have played a part in proselytization in the past, and might do so in the present as well. This leads to situations in which Missionaries, especially foreign Missionaries working in vulnerable areas or among vulnerable sections of the community become objects of suspicion, promotes the view that what might be true of exceptional cases is true of all cases, and this, in turn, creates an atmosphere of unmerited suspicion, intolerance and bitterness. The suspicion that religious minorities may entertain sympathies for the political policies of foreign countries that profess the same religion does not seem to be confined to the majority community. The attack on Churches and Christians that took place in some parts of the country at the time of the Arab Israeli war further exposed the irrational assumptions that many seem to have adopted.

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Harijans

The Constitution has abolished Untouchability, and has made it an offence to practise discrimination in public places and institutions. It has guaranteed social equality. Yet, years after the Constitution was adopted, there are reports of inhuman and barbarous treatment meted out to Harijans in the rural areas. Recently there have been reports of Harijans being burnt or beaten to death in some villages. These reports have shocked the conscience of all those who are dedicated to equality, and have strengthened the demands for a review of the progress that has been made in the direction of ending all discrimination against Harijans. The review will have to examine the adequacy of the provisions in the Constitution and in our Laws, to eradicate discrimination; the adequacy of programmes for economic relief and advancement of the Harijans; and the need and desirability, as well as the dangers, of persisting with the reservation of seats in Legislatures and special quotas in the Services. The object of extending special treatment to a section of the community can only be to obviate the disadvantages that have resulted from hostile discrimination in the past and to promote integration, and not to entrench feelings of separatism, or retard the progress of integration.

Tribal People

The ferment in the tribal areas of the country and the demands for separate States or secession in the Hill areas of our North Eastern Frontier point to another problem that is acquiring dangerous dimensions. The Constitution and its Schedules provide for the protection of the cultural traditions and interests of the tribal population, for special attention to their economic and educational problems, and for institutions that guarantee a large measure of autonomy to the tribes of certain regions. But the progress that has been made in dealing with the economic problems of the tribal population, including the problems of enabling the plain tribals to take full part in the civic and economic life of the regions, has been shamefully tardy. The adequacy of the measures that have been planned and the machinery that has been used will have to be reviewed, and radical and immediate steps taken, if the dangerous trends that are already visible (in Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Chota Nagpur) are not to

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lead to an explosive situation that may rock many parts of the country. The demands for separate States have been made not only in the Hill Areas of Assam, but also in the plain districts of Assam and Chota Nagpur. China and Pakistan have supported these demands as legitimate, and are aiding the Underground Nagas, Mizos and Kukis in the North East Frontier, by providing arms and military training in guerilla warfare. The Communist Party of India (M) has declared its support for the demands for separate tribal states in the North East Frontier and in Chota Nagpur. While the effectiveness of the machinery for the protection and preservation of cultural identity and for rapid economic advancement should be reviewed and made effective and satisfactory, the demand for separate States raises certain basic issues that cannot be ignored. If the demand for a separate State is based on ethnological considerations, does it not mean that every tribal group is entitled to a separate state of its own ? If the demand is based on the right to protect cultural identity or cultural interests, can it be argued that cultural interests or identity can be protected only by autonomy? Can cultural autonomy be ensured only by administrative separateness or political separation on the ground of cultural difference ? If this is the view one takes, how is it different from the view of those who say that people of different religions or linguistic or cultural groups cannot constitute one nation, but need different states to protect their identity ? If it is to be recognized that each group, with something that makes it distinctive, has the right to a separate administrative existence, and needs a separate administrative unit to exist, what will be left of the unity of the country or the concept of Indian nationhood ? These are basic, but inconvenient questions, and the pragmatic responses to the pressures of situations may not absolve us of the need to look at them in the larger perspective of time and the goals that the nation wants to pursue.

Law and Order

There are other trends too that should cause concern to anyone who looks at the political situation in India today. There is an undeniable deterioration in the law and order situation in many parts of the country. Unemployment, low incomes, rising prices, glaring inequalities, the poverty of the rural masses, the problems of industrial workers, general discontent and the activities of anti-social forces may be responsible for this deteriora-

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tion. The general deterioration in discipline and efficiency seems to have affected the Police force as well. The uncertainties of Coalition Governments and the deliberate policy of 'neutralization' of the Police force that some of them pursued seem to have affected the morale of the custodians of law and order. The calibre of the leaders in charge of the administration, the considerations that often govern the choice of Ministers intraparty intrigues and rivalries, and the mutual suspicion and lack of cohesion of the Coalition Governments seem to have attenuated or eroded Ministerial authority and blurred ministerial responsibility. This seems to have led to an informal and indirect delegation of powers to, or indirect assumption of powers by the Civil Service, and in some cases, to the release of forces that may undermine the impartiality of administrative personnel and invest them with power without responsibility, or effective ministerial supervision.

Bureaucracy

Discontent and disaffection have increased in the ranks of the lower grade employees of the Government. There may be many valid reasons for this discontent, and many of those reasons may be remediable or removable. But discontent has bred indiscipline, and increased inefficiency. Low salaries, high prices, and the increase in the discretionary authority and powers vested in the minor officials to deal with matters of common need for the citizen, have led to increased corruption, arbitrariness and conceit. The administrative machinery continues to be slow, cumbrous, expensive and soulless. In spite of the elementary principle of jurisprudence that no one should be presumed to be guilty unless his guilt has been proved to an impartial judge, and the truism that Government officials are servants of the public, the common citizen cannot avoid feeling that the administration treats him like a suspect, if not a criminal, and believes that the most effective way in which a democratic government can demonstrate its power is not by serving the people, but by humiliating them for seeking its services.

Unemployment, underemployment, low productivity, resistance to the logic of modernisation in industry, political factionalism in the labour movement and slowness in promoting increased participation in management and increased sharing of

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profits seem to be promoting disorder and retarding development in the economic field.

V. CONCLUSION

We have a democratic system of Government. We have accepted adult suffrage. Millions of our voters are poor and illiterate, and susceptible to the influence of religion, caste, superstition and feudal loyalties. They are also susceptible to the laws that govern the dynamics of social, economic and political discontent. They, as well as the middle classes and middle income groups in the rural and urban areas of the country, are in a mood of scepticism, a mood that demands quick and convincing evidence of the meaningfulness of values, the viability of institutions and the bonafides of Political Parties. There are powerful forces that strengthen this scepticism and pose grave threats to the unity, integrity and independence of the country. Language, religion and regional loyalties are being exploited by some groups to undermine the unity of the country and set us on the road to civil war and disintegration. The rise of the parochial Senas in the different parts of the country is an ominous portent of the dangers that lie ahead if we do not turn our steps in a different direction. The security and sovereignty of the country are threatened by external forces that may prefer to seek their objectives through subversion rather than open aggression, since open aggression may alienate international sympathy, extend the area of conflict, rally the forces of unity within the country and increase the possibility of assistance from outside.

Some of these problems may be the legacy of foreign rule and the methods by which the foreign power retained its control of the country; some others may be the legacy of the methods that we adopted in our struggle for freedom; and yet others may be the result of the failings of the present institutions, leaders and all those who have to contribute to the success of a nation's efforts. But a nation cannot solve its problems by burying its head in the sands of history or indulging in day dreams. India today needs clear thinking and dedicated action, on the part of every one, to overcome the colossal problems that she seems to be facing.

B. CATHOLICS IN THE NEW INDIA

In the India of Independence, Catholics are called upon by their vocation as Christians to throw themselves into the new life that has been brought into being. It is a new life, a life of freedom and progress such as had not been known before. Its political life is to be one of freedom. Its economic and social life is to be one of progress. The preamble of the Constitution of India, which may be taken as laying down the guide lines of the new political life of the people, has indicated that it is to secure "Justice, social, economic and political, liberty of thought, expression and belief, public worship, equality of status and opportunity and to promote fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation." And the directive principles of State-policy although they are not justifiable, that it cannot be vindicated and secured legally by the sanctions of law, are to guide the new Governments at the Centre and in the States in their Plans and policies towards "provision of free and compulsory education for all children till they complete the age of 14 years and for the promotion with special care of the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes and the protection against social injustice and all forms of exploitation, and for raising the level of nutrition and the standard of living of the people and the improvement of public health and the organisation of agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines". Here is a political, social and economic programme which calls for the work and endeavour of the rulers and the ruled, of Governments and people. For, being a free Government, a Government by consent of the people, the success of such a system and such plans and programmes, requires activity of the people as well as of the Government.

I. CATHOLICS AND POLITICAL LIFE

First, in the political field it is a representative and responsible system of Government that has been introduced by the Constitution. It is Government by the people through representatives elected by the people and responsible to the people. The rulers and ruling authorities are either Ministers who are members of the

Legislatures elected by the people or officials responsible to such Ministers. And the people elect their representatives to the legislatures through the system of universal suffrage which provides for each citizen possessing certain minimum qualifications of age, residence and physical and mental capacity, the right to vote and elect his representative. That is the system of Government which prevails from the Centre down through the States to the villages.

It is in this political system that Catholics are called upon to take part. As citizens they have the right and the duty to take part in it. It is because they have the right to elect their representatives and, through their elected representatives, the Ministers, they have the duty to take part in electing them. If they do not do so, they must not complain if they do not get their representatives and the Ministers that they should get. Catholics as Chatholics have a special duty to take part in these elections. They have to make their contribution to the purity, integrity, and efficiency of these elections. Elections in India, on account of the poverty, the illiteracy, the social dependence of the majority of the voters on the higher castes, have acquired an evil reputation. Votes are bought and sold. Money is freely used by certain political parties, with a plentiful supply of it, to influence the course of elections. The ruling caste or castes in the village or district in the electoral constituency try to influence, with threats or with inducements, the poorer class of voters to vote for their candidates. Landlords browbeat their tenants or their labourers to vote for them or their side. Against all these evil and corrupting influences Catholic voters must set their faces. Catholics cannot abdicate their conscience in political life. If it is wrong in private life to get what belongs to another by unlawful means, in public life too one cannot secure political advantages by unlawful means. Catholic candidates and voters must resist this growing laxity. Priests and leading laymen must guide poor and ignorant Catholic voters in regard to the proper use of the vote. But to vote rightly they must first of all vote. Large numbers of Catholics, like large numbers of educated people, do not take the trouble of going to the polling station on polling day to exercise their right of voting. Catholics, like the educated section of the general public think that because they are a minority in every constituency they may not be able to influence the course of elections. But many an election

is won or lost by a small margin. And the votes of a minority could tell in such elections especially when there are a number of parties striving for a single seat. This has actually happened in elections in Andhra Pradesh and in Tuticorin when the votes of a Catholic minority secured the victory of a Congress candidate over his Communist rival.

It is not only as voters that Catholics must take part in the political life of the country. They must do so as candidates. Wher ever possible Catholics must offer themselves as candidates for election to representative assemblies at all levels. But candidates are not made over night. Some preparatory work must precede, they must have done some political work, if only playing an active part in other people's elections, speaking for the candidates of their choice, canvassing and doing propaganda for them, getting the voters registered and organising their voting. They should be known for their political activity, speaking at meetings on political matters taking part in constitutional agitations, help their fellow citizens in their locality by way of taking up cases of complaints against public authority and securing redress of them.

In the modern democratic State with the system of parliamentary Government, individual, independent politicians cannot do much. The political life of a parliamentary democracy is organised by political parties. To be of any political use, Catholic political aspirants must attach themselves to some political party or other. Of the political parties now operating in India some are out of the reckoning for Catholics— the Communists for obvious reasons and the Jan Sangh for its anti-Christian and anti-Muslim bias. Of the Socialist parties they could choose either the Congress or the Praja Socialist Party (or perhaps even the Samyukta Socialist Party, though it tends to be violent and extremist) and the DMK which is also a Socialist Party. But to join the Congress or other Socialist parties, Catholic voters and candidates must adopt socialism as their political creed which means not only the promotion of social welfare but almost complete control by the State of the means of production, distribution and exchange of what are termed basic industries. They may not join a socialist party just because it is a ruling party and there are takings in it. If they are against Socialism but stand only for social welfare they could join the Swatantra Party. But one party or

the other they must join. They must take sides. The position of Independents is an anomaly in political life. They are in politics neither flesh nor fish nor good red herring. And in the Legislatures they cannot achieve much either for themselves or their constituents or their country, for as Independents they have no political strength to exert in the Legislatures.

II. CATHOLICS IN PUBLIC LIFE

It is not only in assemblies that the whole political duty of a citizen in a democracy consists. There are the administrative offices in which the executive work of the Government is carried on. The policies of Government are carried out by them. Catholics must have their share in the administration. Competitive examinations conducted by Public Service Commissions, offer careers open to talent. Thanks to the Training Institute organised by the Catholic Union of India at the Catholic Centre at Madras, opportunities for brilliant but poor Catholic graduates to compete at these examinations present themselves. To ensure a steady flow of Catholics into public higher services, the heads of Catholic schools and colleges should bring these opportunities of entering the public services to the notice of their students; they should fire them with ambition and combat the pull of home or community to stick fast to the safe and the secure. It is in Catholic schools and colleges that the zeal and enthusiasm for public services, political and social, should be first ignited. It is in Catholic schools and colleges that the love of reading and study of serious literature with a view to acquire political and economic knowledge required for effective public service must be fostered. Catholic Headmasters, Principals and teachers have a duty in this respect which they cannot repudiate for want of time and energy to spare from the task of preparing their pupils for success in examinations.

Service in public assemblies and public offices does not exhaust the political duty of the Catholic citizen. The organs of public opinion, the press and the platform and the modern mass media of communication, the wireless and the cinema must be used by Catholics as part of their public duties and they must seek opportunities of making use of them. Catholic youth must take to journalism ; it is becoming more and more a paying profession in India. There is the shining example of Frank Moraes

to inspire them. Catholic papers must devote themselves more and more to treatment of political, social and economic subjects written by Catholic public men. Catholic publicists should not restrict themselves to Catholic journals but push their way into the general newspapers and weekly periodicals. But mere facility in writing will not secure them this entry. Study, wide reading, reflection on the political, social and economic problems of the country, must precede such attempts at entry into the organs of public opinion.

III. CATHOLICS AND THE NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY

Political action and service is not yet the entire public duty of Catholics. There is the whole field of social work and service open to them. Even in Welfare States, Governments cannot do without the voluntary social work and service of the citizen. The great social scientist Beveridge who did so much for English social legislation wrote a book on the Voluntary Citizen. In England which is a more advanced Welfare State than India, there are as many as hundred voluntary social service organisations. The need for such organisations in India arises now more than ever before. For, governmental social service organisations like hospitals or maternity or child welfare centres do not give that human touch which comforts and consoles the sufferer from poverty or disease. And the Christian touch is especially welcome. We find this welcome in the greatful faces of the beneficiaries of our hospitals, dispensaries, homes for the aged, incurable-illness homes. Mother Theresa and her Sisters are treated as angels of comfort in slums and bustis. But it is high time that laymen and laywomen took to social work and service in larger numbers. Vincent de Paul Societies must go beyond the Catholic poor. Hospital visiting must attract more and more laymen. Catholic schools and colleges must allow their classrooms to be used by Catholic laymen and women who would undertake teaching in adult literacy classes in towns and villages. In the rural parts, the Community Development projects offer Catholic priests and Catholic leaders in villages opportunities for social work and service. The Bharat Sevak Samaj must be used by Catholics. There is all the less excuse for Catholics to lag behind their fellow citizens in the use of these social service organisation promoted by Government as the finances for these organisations are supplied by Government. They are all there

ready to be used by Catholics. Only the social sense and conscience of Catholics has to be aroused into action.

And there is the field of Labour in which Catholics could render useful service to the country. First, by furnishing India with the skilled labour that it needs. As things are, most factories have to train the skilled labour that they need. They would be grateful to any organisation which would supply skilled labour readymade and ready to go into action as soon as the workers enter the factory. Industrial schools must be set up in sufficient numbers, say one in each of the smaller dioceses and two or three in the larger dioceses especially with industrial centres in their territory they could render this service to the industrial needs of the country. In view of the general traditional antipathy of the higher castes to manual labour, Catholics could fill the whole of the gap between what is needed and what is available in the matter of skilled labour. But even Catholic youth have to be educated into a liking for manual labour and vocation. To bring this about every Catholic school should have a workshop attached to it like the one at Ajmer, where every boy has to spend at least one hour a week in the workshop learning to handle mechanical tools and is taught to make simple things like chairs, tables, desks and metal work of all kinds.

Another great service that may be rendered by Catholics to Indian Labour is to organise the training of workers for Leadership in labour organisation so that Labour may find its own leaders from within itself and not be obliged to look for leaders outside who may be more political than industrial in their work. Not only in Jamshedpur, where there is one such training centre, but every large industrial centre should have its Catholic training institute for labour-leadership and industrial-relations training.

Finally there is a great service that Catholics may render their country: that is, in the promotion of the unity of the country. The country has been greatly disturbed by recent developments, the growth of communal antagonism and clashes ending in riots, the disputes between States in regard to boundaries and distribution of the waters of rivers running through more than one State. Many ideas and institutions have been suggested to meet and overcome this danger. But in addition to these and to make up

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for a serious omission, Catholics should devote themselves to the promotion of the love of the land of India. The love of the land has been the foundation of patriotism in many a Christian country in Europe. In England for instance poets from Shakespeare to Rupert Brooke and painters like Constable and Turner have made Englishmen live their country by celebrating the beauty of this or that spot in England. Catholics should do the same kind of service to India. Catholic writers, artists must be encouraged to teach the love of the land of India through their works. Money awards might be offered for the production of such works. In Catholic schools and colleges, there should be a map of India in every class-room and the walls of verandahs and corridors should be hung with pictures of the natural scenery of India. Religion, the social system of the country, the languages divide India. It may be that only the love of the land of India, spread wide and sinking deep into the hearts of the people, may promote and strengthen the unity of the people.

Cultural Forces Shaping India Today

The purpose of this orientation paper is threefold. First, to identify the cultural forces at work in India today. The selection of these will depend largely on the definition of "Culture", together with the relationship of this paper with the other orientation papers and the topics listed in the workshop: "Indian Culture, Traditional and Modern". Second, to spell out the nature of the Shaping Process i.e. the dynamics of culture charge. Third, to specify some of the main implications arising from the above two points for the Church in India today, and the Church in India tomorrow according to the Documents of Vatican II.

OUTLINE

I. THE CULTURAL FORCES
  (a) WHAT IS MEANT BY 'CULTURAL FORCES' ?
  (b) THE SIGNIFICANT ONES AT WORK IN INDIA TODAY

II. THE SHAPING PROCESS
  RELEVANT ASPECTS OF THE DYNAMICS OF CULTURE CHANGE WITH SPECIAL APPLICATION TO THE GENERAL SITUATION IN INDIA TODAY, AND TO THE CHURCH IN PARTICULAR

III. THE MAIN PROBLEMS FOR THE CHURCH IN INDIA
  ARISING OUT OF ITS CONFRONTATION WITH THE ABOVE CULTURAL FORCES, ITS PRESENT CONDITION, ITS HOPES FOR THE FUTURE
  (a) A SURVEY OF THE STATE OF THE CHURCH IN INDIA TODAY
  (b) A SUMMARY OF THE GOALS OF THE CHURCH IN INDIA, 2000 AD, ACCORDING TO VATICAN II
  (c) THE MAIN PROBLEMS

I. THE CULTURAL FORCES

(a) Concept of cultural forces

By "Cultural Forces" we understand those aspects of a culture which contain within themselves the power to change, effectively or at least influence significantly other aspects within the same culture, or in other cultures. Obviously, to bring about change, they must become concretized, personified as it were, in the people who belong to the particular cultural tradition, i.e. to the society or social group.

What then is a culture ? And what is its connection with a society or social group ? Since the beginning of the social sciences of cultural anthropology and sociology over a century ago, hundreds of definitions have been given. For convenience sake, we here follow an attempt made by Alfred Kroeber and Talcott Parsons in 1958 (1), the former a renowned anthropologist, the latter a well-known sociologist, to analyse the two concepts. They suggest that we should restrict the term *Culture* to "the transmitted and created content and the patterns of values ideas and other symbolic and meaningful factors in the shaping of human behaviour and the artifacts produced through this behaviour." *A society or particular social structure*, social organisation or system, should be restricted to "the specifically relational system of interaction among individuals and collectivities". They add that by separating the societal and cultural aspects, we are not classifying sets of phenomena which are empirically distinct or discrete, but rather are forming distinct systems by abstracting from the same concrete phenomena. "Culture" and "Society" then constitute two distinct ways of looking at, analysing, studying human individual and group life. *Hence the forces which can be called cultural are those value systems, ideals, and meaningful symbols which a society has received from its forebears and which shape the behaviour of its members.* By **values**, we understand those emotionally charged attitudes or tendencies to action which are dominant within the culture (also called interests, attitudes). By **goals**, we understand those

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(1) American Sociological Review, Oct. 1958, pp. 582-3.

dominant tendencies of a culture, viewed as approved motivating forces in action (also called purposes, ideals, sanctions). *The cultural values* provide preferences among possible alternatives for the adherents of the culture. The total value orientations, explicit and implicit in a cultural system, make up the value system of that culture. (2)

Accepting the above definition of culture, it must be concluded that India is multi-cultural and multi-societal. This is not to say that the various socio-cultural groups are absolutely discrete, that there are no cultural continuities interlinking them. (3) These continuities will be stressed again later, especially when dealing with "secularism"; further they will receive special emphasis when the problems facing the Church in India are analysed. For the purpose of analysis of the Indian socio-cultural scene, however it is important to consider not just the continuities but also the differences, for these are just as much a part of the real as are the continuities. These differences and continuities separating and yet linking the many socio-cultural groups within the Indian Nation, can be highlighted by analysing the Indian population vertically and horizontally (i.e. according to historical layers).

Vertically : The Indian population is made up of many separate socio-cultural groups each with its own value system, custom system, status and role system. Thus there are Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Parsees, Tribals, Jews, Sikhs, Buddhists etc. These in turn could be subdivided into many significant subgroups. Though distinct, these culture groups possess many cultural continuities which interlink them, especially on the level of the 'Little Traditions', (see below). These cultural continuities are largely due to the fact that when the ancestors of the present members of the groups joined the groups, they brought along with them their Little Traditions and regional cultures and incorporated them into the new culture. A case perhaps could also be made out for dividing India vertically into

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(2) We therefore exclude socio-economic forces as such, though obviously there will be much overlapping, for most socio-economic forces at work within a society are based on the values and goals of that particular culture.

(3) For a discussion which stresses the continuities, cf. Unnithan T.K. and others, (1967) pp. 1-35.

roughly four groups—north, south, east and west, for though the cultural continuities linking them are great, the differences are also marked.

Horizontally : If we study the Indian population historically according to cultural layers, again we see a wide range of diverse cultures intermingled and interposed one on the other, e.g. various tribal cultures, Dravidian, Aryan, Buddhist, Islam, Christian, Western cultures.

What then are some of the significant, emotionally charged tendencies to action, which people in India consider preferential as standards of worth, which will determine their choices, conscious or unconscious, among alternatives ?

—The desire to maintain and preserve *traditional values and goals,* etc. traditional status and power systems (caste), or to improve one's status and power (sanskritisation).

—The desire to preserve one's traditional religion and way of life (communalism, revivalism) one's traditional regional customs and language (regionalism, linguism).

—The *desire for a unified strong nation* (secularism, modernisation, westernisation,communalism etc.).

—The desire for things 'modern', as a total or partial reaction of dissatisfaction against things traditional. (westernisation, modernisation, industrialisation, communism, agnosticism, atheism).

(b) **Some of the main cultural forces shaping India today**

1. *Modernisation/Westernisation.* (4) We shall take both these processes together, for though they may denote different

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(4) cf. Srinivas M. N. (1965) ch. 2.
  Mason P. (ed. 1967) pp. 23-4 et alia.
  Seminar, 55, (March, 1964).
  Myrdal G (1968) pp. 49-128.
  Moddie A.D. (1968) pp. 18-72.

phenomena, they very often overlap, and indeed are often different aspects of the same thing.

First of all, it must be said that the choice of these names for describing the reality which is occurring in India, is inadequate. Westernisation, in so far as the etymology of the word is concerned, implies a process of acquiring, adapting, and re-interpreting within one's own culture, traits, complexes, institutions and their underlying values, belonging to countries either of the West (i.e. Europe) or of European culture (i.e. U.S.A., Canada etc.). Modernisation, on the other hand, implies the process of borrowing, adapting and re-interpreting within ones own culture, the culture complexes, institutions and value systems which we call 'modern'. It is the acquiring of modernity.

The inadequacies of the terms are seen first of all in the fact that the 'modern' and the 'western' are not mutually exclusive. Very often the distinction is nothing other than the looking at the same trait or institution from different points of view, the seeing in a trait previously considered 'western', a new dimension, that of 'modernity'. The discernment of this dimension often results in a change of attitude towards it. Another inadequacy is that because 'westernisation' implies that the source of the borrowed item, is 'the West', all such borrowing tends to arouse the attitudes of suspicion, fear, distrust and xenophobia, associated with Western Imperialism, Colonialism etc. This inadequacy is accentuated when linked with the overlapping of the 'western' and the 'modern' mentioned above. Finally, modernisation suffers from the weakness that the term 'modern' might be understood to imply that all that is not 'modern' is 'dated', 'old fashioned', 'to be discarded'. This possible implication has of course to be carefully neutralised whenever the term is used.

Despite the fact that the 'modern' and the 'western' often overlap, it is possible to identify many cultural features, which though originating from the West, are yet commonly accepted throughout the world, as 'modern'. These features include both institutions, value systems and the processes for developing these. Thus the process of modernisation includes such sub-processes as industrialisation, urbanisation, secularisation, democratisation, etc. It thereby involves the dissatisfaction with

traditional social institutions and cultural values as means of bringing about economic, educational, social and technological change, together with the admiration for modern social institutions and cultural values as means for bringing about the desired change. The process introduces new institutions (e.g. newspapers, elections, judiciary, parliament etc.) together with changes in the old ones (e.g. the joint family, caste, the traditional educational system). It involves certain changes in value preferences, e.g. secularisation humanitarianism, equalitarianism. It involves, further, 'an active concern for the welfare of all human beings irrespective of caste, economic position, religion, age, sex and the expression of these in the country's legal, political, educational and social institutions.' It is this expression in the country's public institutions which distinguishes the modern idea of humanitarianism from that found in sanskritic thought and ritual. Modernisation stresses such values as hard work, efficiency, the evil of waste (be it in men, money, food or time), achievement and merit. It finally involves a disquieting 'positivist' attitude towards traditional public institutions and private aspirations; a revolution in communications: roads, railways, aeroplanes, ships, newspapers, radio, telegraph, cinema, T.V.; the spread of literacy and the exposure of an increasingly wider range of the population to mass communications media; wider economic and political participation; increased social and territorial mobility.

Now though all the above can validly be called 'western' because they originated there, they can with equal validity be called 'modern' because they have become the common property of all nations. To try to do away with such cultural items because they are 'western', is to miss their equally valid 'modern' dimension. On the other hand, some items are clearly western, but by no means modern. Thus, for example, our church vestments are clearly western, but apparently not modern, for the western church itself is attempting in many places to do away with them, in its effort to modernise.

This leads us to the next point. Not all western countries are also modern, i.e. not all of them possess the dimension of modernity. Life in some European countries is still lived largely on the level of pre-industrial folk society, especially in rural

areas. (5)

It should further be noted that in modernising, each of the so-called developed or modernised nations has proceeded in significantly different ways, and consequently there are many different modernisation models for a country like India to follow in her attempt to integrate modernity in other cultural system. It can be said with some truth that whilst many of the values and even institutions of modern Europe were present there at least in embryo in the 13 century, if not before, the real dynamic impulse for their development, for the whole modernisation process to come alive, appeared with the advent of the Industrial Revolution in the middle of the 18th century. Thus it began in England, spread from there to France in the early 19th century and later to U.S.A., Germany and Japan in the second half the same century. Russia's industrialisation program began largely after the Revolution in 1917 and India's, largely with the coming of Independence, in 1947. Now India, in her modernisation endeavours, has in fact, chosen to follow not just this or that model solely, but to pick and choose from each of them, according to her needs. For example, she has chosen to follow the British model where Parliament and Law are concerned, the Russian model, where rapid planned economic growth is concerned. In doing this, she has tried, and rightly so, to reinterpret the borrowed cultural item in such a way as to suit Indian conditions and values. Her borrowing and modernising has not always been a mere salvish apeing of foreign models. The truth of this is seen in the discussions on 'Secularism' and 'Socialism' below. These basic facts should always be kept in mind when any discussion on modernisation is involved.

Let us then try to sum up the point that we have been trying to make so far. Modernity is not the property of this nation or that, of the West or the East, just as many arithmetical concepts are not the property of India or the East i.e., of their country of origin. Such things are part of the growth of the human culture, they belong to mankind. Modernity should be seen as another step in the cultural growth of mankind, originating perhaps in the West, but nevertheless an achievement by men, for all men.

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(5) e.g. for a discussion on the need to modernise agriculture in Europe, cf. Econ. and Political Weekly, Annual No. (1969) pp. 29-30.

Gunnar Myrdal, in his recent comprehensive three volume enquiry into the poverty of South Asian nations, *Asian Drama*,"(6) deals with the problem of modernisation in great detail; some of his more pertinent observations deserve mention here, because of their import for India and for the Church in India. He first points out that in these countries, modernisation ideals are mainly restricted to the ideology of the politically alert and articulate action groups of the country, especially the intellectual elite—though they are not necessarily the values held by those holding political power. They therefore have to compete with conflicting value systems. This would certainly seem to be the case in India. (cf. e.g. the discussion on "Traditional Values" below.)

He then goes on to enumerate the following eleven values of modernisation ideology in developing countries. That they are part of India's modernisation ideology is seen from the Constitution, the national policy and the frequency of their occurrence in public speeches by national and state leaders.(7)

1. *Rationality,* i.e. policies should be founded on rational rather than a-rational considerations (e.g. superstitions, family, caste, regional, linguistic loyalties.(8) This ideal is seen to be fundamental to all the others.

2. *Development and planning for development.* Planning is seen as the search for a rationally coordinated system of policy measures that can bring about development. (e.g. assessment, project and progress studies and reports.)

2. *Rise in productivity.* This is also interdependent on the features mentioned below.

4. *Rise in levels of living.* The interdependence of 3 and 4

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(6) This study by a world famous sociologist and a team of international scholars deserves close study by our leaders. It will surely be closely read by Government officials and their advisors. For example, it has some hard and adverse things to say about private educational institutions in South Asian nations and the part they place in hindering educational reform.
(7) ibid. pp. 57-69.
(8) Moddie A.D. (1968) is full of examples of how traditional a-rational values persist in Modern Indian Government and Business.

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is seen in the fact that in poorer countries, whilst improved levels of living are a pre-condition for high productivity and changes in attitudes conducive to this, too great an improvement in living standards often becomes an obstacle or drag on such things as capital formation, so necessary for increased productivity.

5. *Improved institutions and attitudes.* This is necessary to increase labour efficiency and diligence, effective competition and cooperation, rationality, to bring about an achievement oriented society, national integration and consolidation. He questions the assumption of many that economic development and industrialisation will automatically change traditional attitudes and institutions.(9)

6. *Social and economic equalisation.* He observes that recent changes have tended to increase the disparity, especially in the economic sphere.

7. *National consolidation,* i.e. "a national system of government, courts and administration that is effective, cohesive and internally suited in purpose and action, with unchallenged authority over all regions and groups within the boundaries of the state." This does not necessarily imply, he adds, a highly centralised government. Further, whilst India approaches closest to this goal among South Asian nations, a much higher level is still needed, and therefore also, a drastic change in attitudes and reform of whole institutions. Divisions of caste, region, culture, linguistic group, religion etc. still work against it.(10)

8. *National Independence.* Along with national consolidation, this holds the key position among modernisation values. Whilst all nations are now politically independent, there is much fear among them that they might lose their independence in the subtler fields of economics, foreign affairs, etc.

9. *Political Democracy in the narrower sense.* He says, how-

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(9) Myrdal points out that the use of western planning models and a purely "economic" conception of man often leads Indian planners to overlook other important socio-cultural dimensions. This greatly impairs plan implementation.

(10) Weiner M. (ed.) (1968). A perusal of the studies in this book will show the degree to which these smaller loyalties influence State Politics.

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ever with regret, that one of the conclusions of the study has been that this is not an essential element for modernisation. The other modernisation ideals can, and have been attained in authoritarian structures, though, an authoritarian type of government does not and has not always brought about the modernisation of the nation.

10. *Democracy at the grass roots*, i.e. a sharing of responsibility by the national government, whether it be democratic or authoritarian, with local communities in order to get a high level of popular acceptance for development goals.

11. *Social Discipline verses Democratic Planning*. Democratic planning is usually understood in South Asia to imply that policies should be decided and implemented by democratic political procedures, by cooperation and not by compulsion. Yet his investigation has convinced him that the "success of planning for development requires a readiness to place obligations on people in *all* social strata to a much greater extent than is now being done in any of the South Asian countries. It requires, in addition, rigorous enforcement of obligations in which compulsion plays a strategic role. This value promise runs parallel to, and is partly identical with, the quest for national consolidation" and "would not in principle conflict with the ideal of political democracy, which only concerns the manner in which policies are decided upon....". "Under present Asian conditions development cannot be achieved without much more social discipline than the prevailing interpretation of democracy in the region, permits."

Later on in the study(11), he returns to the topic of 'compulsion' versus 'voluntariness'. He characterises India and other South Asian states as "soft states", i.e. unlike "strong states", which require extraordinarily little of their citizens. "There are few obligations either to do things in the interest of the community, or to avoid actions opposed to that interest. And even those obligations that do exist are enforced inadequately if at all." (12) (e.g. the enforcement of untouchability laws, compulsory primary education laws). He says that these 'soft states' whether

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(11) Myrdal G. (1968) pp. 891-900.

(12) ibid. p. 879.

they have a democratic system of government or not, have generally placed fewer obligations on their citizens, and have enforced even these obligations much less effectively than have Western democracies. Yet, he adds, all leaders of these states, including the Communists, are hesitant to advise the use of more compulsion and seem to feel that such coercion and compulsion is contrary to democracy. One reason for their hesitance, he thinks, is that such compulsion and discipline will bring governments into face to face conflict with traditional values, and therefore amount to political suicide. Examples cited are : enforcing mass education of women, eradication of rats and crop destroying monkeys, the problem of unproductive cows. Yet, he adds, "Nothing is more dangerous for democracy than lack of discipline".(13)

Is there then any fundamental key factor in the modernisation process ? Myrdal, along with a growing number of others, thinks there is. It is educational reform.(14) The author spends nearly 200 pages discussing the problem. We shall touch upon but a few of the relevant points here.

He first summarises, (15) those features of education in India which tend to be obstacles to modernisation ideals. Thus teaching and learning tends to be by rote, dogmatic, authoritarian. Questioning, critical attitudes, interest in self-education in and outside of school is not encouraged. Degrees are sought as objects, status giving symbols, not for the attaining of learning, knowledge and skills, to whose presence the degrees should but testify. Education is also seen as a badge which exempts one from the obligation to do manual work.(16) Modernisation is impossible without a change in these attitudes, without mass popular education, including that of women, without a crash program for the rapid spread of *functional literacy*. By functional literacy, is meant, not just the ability to write a few words

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(13) ibid. p. 895.
(14) ibid. pp. 1621-1828. The author thus spends over 200 pages—in small print, much footnoting, many quotations—discussing this all important item.
(15) ibid. p. 1667.
(16) This is especially the case where "unclean work" is concerned. He sees this as an explanation why so few people in India enter the nursing profession.

in a language; rather it means the capacity to utilise a language so as to enable an individual to put his skills to practical use. It includes "arithmetical literacy" i.e. the ability to add, subtract, multiply, divide. Unfortunately, he adds, since Independence, the spread of functional literacy has been given a low priority in the Five Year Plans. (17) He refers to a recent UNESCO study (18) which has indicated that only if each year 10% of the illiterate adults are given an opportunity to take a literacy course, there is good prospect that illiteracy will be eradicated. It was not until the draft outline of India's Fourth Five Year Plan that a resolution was made to launch a mass literacy movement.(19)

Why are modern education and mass adult literacy, key factors in the modernisation process? Another important study gives the following answer. (20) The study is of five Middle East Developing Nations, by D. Lerner. Lerner says, that for any rapid modernisation program, it is necessary to develop in the masses of the population, a capacity which he calls "empathy". By this, he means, that the people acquire a capacity for a vicarious experience of the world outside of the one that which they have traditionally experienced and access to which is barred them because of various economic, social and political factors. Empathy enables them to project themselves into places, positions, situations where previously they never dared to hope to be, nor, where, in present circumstances, they can hope to be. This projection in turn arouses in them the desire to experience that world personally, be it by travelling abroad, by the possession of clothes seen in a film, of a transistor, of a job, skill or leader-

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(17) Myrdal G. (1968) p. 1686 points out that prior to Independence Indian leaders gave enthusiastic advocacy to literary campaigns. After Independence, this enthusiasm and emphasis all but disappeared, until quite recently. According to the 1961 census, India is 75% illiterate: rural India 81%, urban India 53%.

(18) ibid. p. 1685.

(19) However, with the present financial restrictions and resource shortages it is difficult to see how this priority will be maintained. Myrdal also points out that the effectiveness of adult literacy as a means to spread modern ideas and values depends especially on the availability of newspapers. Now the numbers of newspapers printed in India are totally insufficient for the number of the population, the reason being that newsprint paper is largely imported. This however means foreign exchange. Hence a vicious circle.

(20) Lerner D. (1958), pp. 49-54.

ship position. It is this ability that is developed by education and literacy, for through these the individual begins to benefit from the mass communication media. To initiate such a program, however, it is not just sufficient to pass laws, to allocate finances. Rapid spread of functional literacy among men and women is needed most in rural areas, and it is precisely here that the need for it is felt least. Any mass literacy campaign must be preceded and accompanied by a campaign to enthuse the people, to create in them the felt need for such knowledge, and to sustain this desire. Otherwise it is likely, that as with so many other plans, this too will remain largely on paper.

We have given a rather extended treatment of the above topic. Yet it is obviously of great importance for the Church in India— a Church which has committed itself in such a proportionately high degree to educational work, a Church which has also largely ignored adult literacy work. Through her educational institutions, the Church can surely work to spread modernisation ideals and social discipline, or to put it another way, to spread the ideals of the Indian Constitution; through her organisational skills, she can surely and immediately contribute her share to the spread of adult literacy, which compared with formal education, demands comparatively little in terms of trained teachers, buildings, money and equipment. Here is a critical and strategic area where the Church could pull her full weight and thereby contribute to nation-building in a decisive way.

2. Socialism (21)

The value and goal system that is covered by the term "socialism", is difficult to define. This is because the *ideologies* of the various political parties both within and outside India, which call themselves 'socialist' differ so much; e.g. Communist Parties throughout the world, the Fabianist Socialists, the Congress, SSP, and PSP parties; because the national socialist states that have arisen under the name of Socialist States also vary greatly: Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, Labour Party in England with its Welfare State Programme, Communist Russia, China,

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(21) cf. "Seminar", 17 (Jan. 1961). Third Five Year Plan, Govt. of India, Planning Commission, esp. pp. 1-19.

Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Congress Party in India; because the *means* which the various socialist parties throughout the world advocate for attaining and sustaining a national socialist system, also differ so much.

However, certain elements occur, more or less commonly in most of the above socialist value and goal systems. They are the following:

(*i*) Socialism is seen as part of a 'modernising' program, embraced so as to achieve rapid and sustained socio-economic reform and development for all the people of a nation. It aims at the early prosperity of all the people, at giving all the people a highstandard of modern living.

(*ii*) To do this, it advocates the rapid industrialisation of the nation, the speedy increase of industrial and agricultural production, sustained over a long period. Those industries which are basic to the life of the nation or which are of strategic importance, those services which are essential for public utility, and those important industries which demand an investment such as only the State can make, all of these should be in the hands of the State (i.e. the public sector).

(*iii*) There should be a levelling of incomes and economic power, so that the gap separating the few very rich and the masses of the employed poor is closed. This involves usually land reforms, breaking up of existing monopolies of any sort, and the ensuring that the very growth of industrial and agricultural production does not lead to a further concentration of wealth and power in a few hands.

(*iv*) In order to ensure that there will be equal opportunities for all the citizens and not just for the privileged few, basic necessities like education, improved housing and sanitation, health services, minimum level of income, employment opportunities etc. should be provided for all.

(*v*) To attain and maintain such a sustained spurt in national development, drastic social reform is often also needed, together with the development of a sense of common national interest and sense of obligation among all sections of the population, based on the sense of common, shared,

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national values and citizenship.

The means by which these aims are attained, of course, differ as mentioned above, and range from the democratic to the totalitarian. India, according to the Directive Principles of the Constitution and the Five Year Plans, has chosen to work for a Socialist type Welfare State and to attain it through democratic means.

Besides the above five elements which are common to most socialist states—though the individual interpretation will differ, especially concerning what to nationalise and what not to nationalise—India is also stressing the development of Cooperatives and State Trading, as means to attain her ends. She also gives Private Enterprise (the private sector) a legitimate place in the planning of her socio-economic development. What would happen however, should the Congress Party fall from power at the Centre, to the nature of the Five Year Plans, the Private Sector, and with regard to the means chosen to attain Socialism, is another question and one which should provide much food for thought to any reflecting Indian citizen.

The opponents to such a socialistic program are of course the entrenched vested interests, be they in business, government, or agriculture. Some say India is socialist only in Constitution, but not in popular aspiration. Certainly it is probably the conscious aspiration of a few. Yet it is difficult to read the papers and not to get the impression that the masses, if not socialist consciously and by profession, are tending to socialism in their deepest spontaneous responses to the present day situation. A strong sense of dissatisfaction and frustration seems to be growing in the country over the promises of the three Five Year Plans and their lack of fulfilment and the absence of any decrease in the disparities between the very rich few, and the very poor many. The Church in India seems to have given little thought to this whole matter. Yet as will be shown latter in III, it is something she should be very much concerned with, and this for two reasons: (*i*) because of her nature as the Sacrament of Christ and the Leaven of Society, and (*ii*) because such frustration can easily build up to explosion point, anarchy can set in, and a dictatorship result as its aftermath—a dictatorship of the right, the left, or the centre. Certainly, a dictatorship of the extreme

right or left, might make the Church's existence very difficult indeed. There would seem to be an urgent need here for the Church to take the teaching of Vatican II on social justice, land reform etc. to heart, and become a really outspoken advocate of justice for all, democracy, etc. using all the means at her disposal to spread these cultural values, for they are vital for the continuance of a democratic India. And by "the Church" it must be kept in mind, not just the bishops and priests, not just the laity, but both.

3. Secularism

Secularism (22), as understood here, is to be distinguished from *"secularisation"* which will be treated below. A study of the references given above shows that the definition of "secularism" is difficult and by no means clear as yet. There seems to be a secularism advocated in the Indian Constitution and legal traditions, which is distinctive of the Indian situation. It is not the secu'arism of the United States or Western Europe. For example, whilst the secularism of the United States tends towards the theory of complete separation of state and religion, with the State supporting or helping, *no religious group or religion*, the secularism of India tends towards the emphasis that whilst it will support no one religious group exclusively, it will help and aid them all equally. Indian secularism seems to accept the fact that as man in the Indian tradition is essentially religious, all religions are equal before the law, and the Government therefore, should help all equally, without discriminating between them. Nevertheless, because religion is so interwoven with the socio-economic life of the people, the Government has the right and duty to interfere wherever these socio-economic implications prevent the attainment of social justice and constitutional rights by its citizens, or wherever there are malpractices in these areas e.g. caste, money belonging to temples and maths, etc.

Indian secularism further differs from American and European

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(22) cf. Sharma G. S. (ed.) 1966.
Smith D. E. (1963).
"Seminar" 67, (March, 1965); 90, (Feb. 1967).
Mason P. (ed. 1967) ch. 13.
Bhasin P. (1968).
Gadre K. (1966).

secularism *in its origin and history*. For example, European secularism arose out of opposition movements to religion and especially to the socio-economic and political power of organised religion, and from the need to separate the Church from the state in multi-religious societies. Indian secularism came as an ideal from the West; it was taken over as a political necessity in view of the Hindu-Muslim tensions during the independence movement. It was seen as the only possible solution to the problem of how to create a united India in the face of the violent communal feelings affecting the land before and after Independence, and Partition. The Two Nation Theory, the persisting advocacy of this theory by Pakistan and some communal groups within India, the War with Pakistan, the Kashmir problem, and the continuance of communalism within the country, all constitute *continued* threats to the secular ideal of the Indian Constitution.

Authors add that whilst India is *secular in fact* (i.e. constitutionally and legally) it is not yet *secular by popular aspiration*. The aspiration for a secular State has not yet been personally appropriated by masses; it has not yet become a motivating force in the racial, spiritual and cultural motivations of the social traditions of the country. Further, because at present, religious caste and regional loyalties are the only real ties which unite and divide the Indian masses into its various segments, job selection in business and government, selection of political candidates and bestowal of one's vote, tend to be based more and more on religious, caste and regional considerations, not on merit and achievement. Thus, where caste and religion were formerly forces having little influence and impact on politics, government and business, today they are becoming increasingly important as forces to be reckoned with in the political and economic life of the country. This is of course the very antithesis of secularism. For secularism to thrive in the country, it will be necessary to build up and institutionalise common interest groups based on factors other than religion and caste, e.g. business, occupational, professional, socialistic, recreational interest groups. These will then so interlink politicians, employers, employees, farmers etc. that the force and power of the caste and of religious loyalties will be thereby balanced and weakened. (23)

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(23) Sharma G. S. (ed. 1966) p. *ii*.

In order that the modern secular ideal as contained in the Indian Constitution become a living, efficacious value in the aspirations of the masses as quickly and as easily as possible, it is of the utmost importance that its *continuity with traditional values* be highlighted and strengthened. This continuity is not difficult to establish where Christianity is concerned. Christian acceptance of the secular ideal as outlined in the Indian Constitution permeates many documents of Vatican II. It is more difficult to establish where Islam and Hinduism are concerned. We shall here discuss possibilities for Hinduism only, for the success of the secular ideal in India depends more on their acceptance of it (because of their numerical predominance) than on its acceptance by any of the minority communities. Three possibilities present themselves.

(i) *The Hindu tradition of religious tolerance and religious pluralism*, as reinterpreted by Gandhiji and Dr. Radhakrishnan. Smith (24) commenting on this tradition says the following :

"This is a living tradition which has contributed vitally to the establishment of a secular, and democratic state in India....It depends on the Hindu doctrinal assertion of the essential oneness of all religions and takes a general attitude of live and let live towards the manifestations of religious diversity": He continues elsewhere: (25) "Gandhi once wrote that the different religions were branches of the same majestic tree; all faiths were 'equally true though, being received and interpreted through human instruments, equally imperfect'. This great truth should preclude even the thought that another individual embrace one's own faith. 'Accepting this position, we can only pray, if we are Hindus, not that a Christian should become a Hindu, or if we are Mussalman not that a Hindu or a Christian should become Mussalman, nor should we even secretly pray that any one should be converted, but our inmost prayer should be that a Hindu should be a better Hindu, a Muslim, a better Muslim, and a Christian, a better Christian".

Smith then goes on to quote the analysis of Bishop Newbigin of the Church of South India, concerning the metaphysical basis

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(24) Smith D. E. (1963) pp. 147-152.
(25) ibid. p. 168.

for this ideal of religious tolerance and pluralism. (26)

"Because this theory is based on the monism of the Vedanta, it destroys in advance all claims on behalf of any religion for the allegiance of all men. To those who are under the influence of the Vedanta, Christian evangelism is an intolerable assertion of ultimate truth on behalf of one among the many forms of illusion. Hence for most well-educated Hindus the attempt to persuade a man to change his faith is something that arouses the deepest hostility and disgust".

This *universalist Hindu view*, whilst it has the same attitude to conversions and proselytising as the *communalist Hindu* viewpoint to be discussed below, nevertheless has a theoretical base which differs quite clearly from that of the latter. Further, it must be realised that this universalist view is based on a religious belief of one particular group, and therefore, to advocate it as the basis of Indian secularism is to contradict the very notion of secularism as contained in the Constitution. (27)

(*ii*) *The second possibility is the concept of dharma.* We shall limit ourselves here to two observations. According to some Indian scholars, there has been an evolution in the meaning of the concept of dharma from the times of Manu to those of Kautilya in which the primary element for determining one's dharma has changed from the injunctions of the sacred texts, to the decrees of the secular government, civil law established by the courts and the established code of conduct. (28) Now if this is so, then the dharma concept would seem to provide a traditional base in which to root the modern secular ideal so as to facilitate its acceptance by the people.

(*iii*) The third possibility for facilitating the acceptance of modern secularism is to base *it on the ideal of the Indian nation,*

(26) ibid. p. 169.
(27) Smith thinks that as a starting point for rooting the ideal of modern secularism solidly in traditional Indian values, this universalist Hindu view is very important. Though it might need complementing and modifying, it could provide the continuity with the past, which is so necessary for accepting something new into the popular value system. Smith's opinion could, of course, be debated.
(28) Sharma G. S. (ed. 1966) pp. 106-109.

taken as a territorial entity. Now, as such, the Indian nation is multi-ethnic; various cultural traditions have contributed to the present national culture, if we wish to use that expression. The tendency to equate the Indian national culture with the Hindu cultural tradition (and therefore Indian nationality with membership in the Hindu religion) by saying that the latter has remained intact whilst absorbing elements over the centuries from other cultural traditions, is certainly not the whole truth and certainly not in the interests of the maintenance of the Indian nation as such. If the Indian nation is a geographical entity, made up of all those living within its borders, if the Two Nation Theory is regarded as unacceptable (except by communal advocates, Hindu and Muslim, then the above tendency would seem to be inaccurate and even erroneous. When discussing this point, Smith (29) quotes K.G. Saiyidain, Joint Educational Adviser to the Government of India and a Muslim, as saying that India must be seen as a multi-cultured nation with a cultural tradition made up of many strands—Dravidian, Aryan-Hindu (with its Buddhist variations), Muslim (with its Turkish, Persian and Mughal variations) and the Western culture brought by the British. Regarding the contributions of the Muslim culture, Saiyidain says that they were "so many and so varied and are so securely woven into the total pattern of Indian culture that they cannot be disentangled and removed without weakening and impoverishing the whole pattern." To identify Indian national culture with preislamic or, worse, Aryan traditions, as many Hindu communalists do, is to advocate a two nation theory, a Hindu nationalism and state, and to attack the very basic principles of the Indian Constitution. What nationalism was for the Indian Independence movement in its effort to attain freedom, secularism is today for the maintenance of the national unity and freedom. Gandhi, Nehru etc. were strong advocates of the same idea. "Indian Culture", wrote Gandhi, "is neither Hindu, nor Islamic, nor any other wholly. It is a fusion of all." (30)

4. Secularisation

Secularisation (31) should be distinguished from 'secularism'

(29) Smith, D. E. (1963) pp. 376-8.
(30) ibid. pp. 377-8.
(31) Srinivas M. N. (1965) ch. 4.

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as discussed above. The term implies *"that what was previously regarded as religious, is now ceasing to be such, and it also implies a process of differentiation which results in the various aspects of society, economic, political, legal and moral, becoming increasingly discrete in relation to each other.."* It includes "rationalism", "a comprehensive expression applied to various theoretical and practical tendencies which aim to interpret the universe purely in terms of thought, or which aim to regulate individual and social life in accordance with the principles of reason and to eliminate as far as possible or to relegate to the background everything irrational.." It involves among other things, the replacement of traditional beliefs and ideas by modern knowledge. It especially affects Hindus more than any other religious group in India because it attacks the pervasive concepts of pollution and purity, as well as such social institutions as caste, joint family and village community. It influences different Hindu groups differently e.g. more the young than the old, and increases with urbanisation. With urbanisation, it leads to the abbreviation of life cycle rituals (marriages etc.). It has led to the loss of prestige of the traditional orthodox leaders among the Hindus (e.g. Brahmin caste) who had monopoly on the sacred language and knowledge, and the *rise in prestige of the new intellectual elite* who have taken the lead in religious and social reform. This elite tends to be antiritualistic and their reforms tend to strip Hinduism of much of its traditional content. The new elite, acting through Government, tends thus to become an important agent for reinterpreting Hinduism. In this new elite, there is a strong ambivalence—strong self-criticism of traditional Indian life, and admiration for 'modern' ideas etc., yet great pride in the Indian cultural tradition and its wealth. These of course are not necessarily irreconciliable, at least up to a point. The elite, especially the national bureaucracy (IAS, IFS, Military forces, etc.), generally comes from English medium schools and colleges, and among these, from a certain few 'public schools'. This tends to provide them with certain *esprit de corps*, yet it also gives them the means of perpetuating their 'job monopoly' within their families, and alienates from critically from the vernacular educated lower middle class masses. This produces frictions, tensions, etc. This is not so much the case with the political and library elite.

Inherent in this secularisation process, is another danger—

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that of the creation of a *religious vacuum* in the life of the young leading to religious agnosticism. Social science tells us that the most resistant force to such a development, is a personal religious attitude to a personal God i.e. not a magical coercive attitude to a personal or impersonal supernatural power. This agrees with the facts reported of Madras when faced with the increase of atheism, religious groups have turned to bhakti cults as their best defence.

5. Sanskritization

Sanskritization (32) is the process by which a 'low' Hindu caste, or tribal group, changes its customs, ritual, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high, and frequently "twice-born' caste in order to gain greater prestige and power. Generally, such changes are followed by a claim to a higher position in the caste hierarchy than that traditionally conceded to the claimant caste by the local community. The claim is usually made over a generation or two, before the "arrival' is conceded. National censuses have been regularly used for this purpose. The attempt is due to dissatisfaction with the traditional status of the group, and from a desire to enhance status, prestige and power. The model to be imitated is the local dominant caste group, for it is this prestige group that matters in the life of the subordinate group. This local dominant group may be a Brahmin group, a Rajput (kshatriya), a Vaishya or even a Shudra caste group. (The last however would have sanskritized itself). De-sanskritizing is also occurring among the Higher Castes, who are modernising as their means of attaining new status. Paradoxically enough, modernisation is itself a force in the spread of sanskritization e.g. through the government legislation banning sacrifice of birds and animals in Hindu temples and outlawing untouchability. Resistance to this sanskritization is liable to come, not just from the caste group being imitated, but from that group immediately above it in the local ranking. It is less widespread than secularization—which touches all levels of Indian life—and occurs especially among the low caste groups and the tribals.

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(32) ibid. ch. 1.
   Mason P. (ed. 1967) pp. 10-12, 17f, 67-82,93-103, 107f, et alia. This is a technical term first made popular by Srinivas and since taken over into general theory.

6. Casteism

Casteism (33) is especially important in rural areas. Besides what has been mentioned above, the following points can be considered. Traditionally, for a caste group to obtain 'dominance', it was necessary that it should :

(*i*) own a sizable amount of arable land, locally available.

(*ii*) be numerically strong (relatively).

(*iii*) occupy a high place in the local caste hierarchy.

(*iv*) be relatively free from endemic factionalism latent within itself.

These conditions for dominance seen to be persisting, though they are being increasingly challenged, for, today, there are other means by which the depressed classes can obtain power (education, jobs, political promises in return for votes). Caste grouping and its dominance tends to be spreading out over larger localities and regions with regional caste groups establishing formal organisations to protect their interests (caste sabhas). Land reform legislation is often a threat to this dominance and hence is opposed by dominant groups. Education (especially through reserved scholarships) reserved government posts and political organisation offer new means for Backward Classes and Scheduled Castes and Tribes, to attain dominance and power. This process works contrary to the sanskritizing one, for where, in the latter, the caste group tries to 'pass' as a higher caste, denying their former caste status, in the former process, it is by specifically proclaiming their original caste status, that they endeavour to attain power. The lower castes, then, can be seen as becoming more and more awake to the power of their passive voting rights, especially where political parties compete for it. Because of all this, friction can be expected to increase between the dominant and the Backward Classes etc. Through national law, social control by the dominant groups has been restricted; they can be expected to resort to private use of force and other means to maintain their

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(33) Srinivas M. N. (1965) ch. 3 et alia.
   Mason P. (ed. 1967) ch. 5-10.
   Singh B. & Singh V. B. (ed. 1967) pp. 208-225.

traditional place, which may seriously test the law and order machinery in the country in coming years. Often interlinked with casteism, are communalism, regionalism, revivalism, colour prejudice. Caste feeling is utilised by many political parties, e.g. the communist party in Andhra Pradesh. It may even dominate (and begin to typify in the public eye) certain political parties; e.g. DMK—anti-Brahmin, anti-Aryan, anti-north. The threat of overpopulation and food shortage, economic want etc. are liable to be felt first by the Harijans (64 million) and Tribals (29 million) and make them fertile soil for communism and/or other unsophisticated forms of political protest. The Tribals historically speaking have often not felt the impact of the caste system. Today, through their increasingly common classification in Central and Peninsular India as Hindus in census and elsewhere (though without any appreciable change in their culture), the Tribals are tending to become endogamous caste groups; presuming that caste will continue for some generations, they too will increasingly feel the impact of caste, and, as poor lower caste groups, will be in a situation similar to that of the Harijans and Backward Classes. The situation of the north-east Tribes of course is different and more akin to that of minority groups.

7. Regionalism and Linguistic Rivalries
(Senas, DMK, etc.)

This phenomenon (34) is often *interlinked* with other forces e.g. casteism, atheism, communalism, revivalism. It arises from dissatisfaction with the domination—cultural, economic, political, religious, linguistic—of the people of a region, by outsiders, be these migrants living in the region or those working through political or economic machinery. It develops also where there is a power imbalance between different regions. *Historical memories and geography* are often important factors in its development and persistence. It stresses the importance of the regional language script, regional cultural history, regional literature and language press. It is a serious threat to national unity, unity in the public services, military forces. Regional separatism seems to have been eased for a time by the creation of linguistic

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(34) "Seminar" 23, (July, 1961 ; 68, (April 1965); 76, (Dec. 1965); 90, (Feb., 1967).

states.   It now seems to be on the increase again.

8. Movements away from Religion

Three main expressions will be considered.

(i) *The DMK type* has already been discussed. Anti-Brahmin and Anti-sanskritic influence (gods, rituals, etc.) Backward classes and Scheduled castes based membership; anti-Hindi, anti-religion; stresses regional culture, language, secularization, 'modernisation', inter-caste marriages etc. The DMK would seem to be a crystalisation, among other things, of the agnosticism which was discussed under Secularisation which, as in Europe, arises from contact with the secularisation Process, the scientific and rationalistic attitude and the religious practice which is mainly devotional, customary and with little intellectual base.

(ii) *The neo-Buddhist movement* (35) among the Harijans begun by Dr. Ambedkar, would also seem to be a movement away from the traditional religion and religious practices of the masses. The degree to which it has been really assimilated by these masses, from all accounts, is as yet slight.

(iii) *The Communist movement* (36) is not yet a truly national party, for it is split by regional and ideological factions.   It has manipulated regional patriotism successfully in the past, and can be presumed to continue to do so.   It is an important force of 'modernisation' and such socialist programmes as nationalisation of banking, industry, education; it advocates land reform, is the inveterate enemy of rightist, regional, communal, revivalist groups. It insists on the 'party line', violent agitation, Anomalously it has often been successful in politics, by obtaining the support of rich landowning and peasant castes in certain states; it would seem to have a fertile field for its programmes in the disgruntled Harijan-Tribal community and labour classes.   The problem however is how to unite them with the rich land-owning classes.   The dissatisfied student com-

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(35) Just how atheistic the New Buddhist cult is, in both theory and practice is of course debatable.
(36) Harrison S. (1960) ch. 5-7; also "Socialism" above.

munity would also seem to be fertile soil for its activities.

9. Communalism and Revivalism (nativism, traditionalism)

Communalism in India is defined as "that ideology which emphasises as the social, political and economic unit, the group of adherents of each religion," as well as "the distinction and even the antagonism between such groups" (37) *Nativism-revivalism,* while difficult to define, usually contains the following aspects. It is usually traceable to frustration and is generally a *reaction against suppression* by a dominant culture. It is an attempt to restore group integrity, self-respect and solidarity. It is often *anti-acculturative* and aims to restore or perpetuate selected traditional ways and values; it may at the same time be also *pro-acculturative*, aiming to hasten assimilation of selected desirable elements of foreign ways, while encouraging the preservation of certain traditional, highly appreciated values. This aim of preservation-restoration is always a *conscious* one in these movements. Because it frequently arises from suppression-deprivation of especially traditional values and because these values are especially enshrined in the native religion, these movements tend to be religious in nature, i.e. communalistic, in the above sense. It is for this reason that they are here treated together.

The dissatisfaction out of which these movements arise in India are : (*i*) the serious threat to Indian cultural continuity by 'westernisation', 'modernisation' and English-medium education as a condition for entering many elite groups; (*ii*) the fear by the majority group of the loss of its majority, the loss of its cultural continuity and consequently its break-up from within; (*e.g.* Hindus fear Muslim opposition to population control and Muslim polygamy, Christian conversions, etc. The presumption is that the latter are forced—morally, economically—unless proved otherwise). (*iii*) Historical memories also enter into the picture—the inquisition and Portuguese oppression of Hindus, Muslim oppression of Hindus, the Partition incidents and the Parti-

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(37) "Seminar", 24, (Aug. 1961).
Srinivas M.N. (1966) pp. 55f, 80, 142, 178 et alia.
Smith E. (1963)
Golwalkar M.S. (1966).
Samagra Savarkar Wangmaya (1964).

tion itself; the Indo-Pakistan war; treatment of Hindus in Pakistan; the behaviour of some Muslims in India; the Christian Nagas and Mizos and the revolts. Among the Muslims, there is the fear of becoming second class citizens, the tensions on the local level, the split among themselves between the "conformists" tending towards Indian nationalism and the Congress, and the militants.

As mentioned above, (cf. Secularism) India is traditionally multi-ethnic, with many culture streams integrated in varying degrees. Within Hinduism itself there are various streams. The Indian 'culture' that Hindu communalists seek to revive is but one of these traditions. Social scientists speak of the Great Tradition of the Sanskrit Books (with the Brahmanic gods, prohibition of meat and alcohol, Brahmin priests for ritual, etc.) and the Little Traditions of the locality and region, with their local gods, beliefs, spirits and the practice of drinking alcohol, meat eating, sacrifice of animals, birds etc. Now these revivalists etc. tend to stress the Great Tradition only, and the Vedas as its source. The RSS and Hindu Mahasabha stress 'Back to the Vedas', Sankara's philosophy and its modern re-interpretations by Swami Vivekananda, India as the cultural home of the Hindus and the Aryans. Through their evolutionary and graded view of religions, they see the possibility of the total assimilation of Christians, Muslims, Tribals—not a stabilised pluralism or unity in diversity (see below). Their stress is on a national government and centralisation. In this sense they are nationalists, though between them and the secular nationalist parties, there is irreconciliable conflict. The Nation—Hindu cultural nation—must be placed before all else; as 'Mother, everything else must be subordinated to it.

Three further observations seem in order here. First, educated Hindus comment that historically speaking, the Hindus have often been treated as a minority community, politically, culturally, socially for the past centuries by the Muslims, Portuguese and British rulers. *The Hindu community*, consequently and understandably, *manifests all the fear, suspicion and insecurity characteristic of a threatened minority*. (.e.g. in the face of Christian unity, organisation, institutional power, money, dedication etc.) Further, the fact that the government today seems to be reforming Hindu religious institutions alone, and not touching

Muslim and Christian religious institutions through fear of their susceptibilities, perpetuates these Hindu 'minority feelings' at the same time these reforms makes the government and state appear to be Hindu. One of the great needs of the times, calling for the common unprejudiced co-operation of all Indians, Hindus, Christians and Muslims, is the working out of a common civil code of law for the whole nation, as directed by the Indian Constitution. (38)

Secondly, *the revivalism, nativism,* etc. mentioned above, *is also a real 'finding of one's soul' on the part of many Hindus.* Educated in a modern tradition of science, rationalism and secularisation, with the underlying value systems, a feeling of 'astrangement', of 'being all at sea' arises in them. Their answer is a return to and drinking deep of the ideas and values upon which their cultural roots are nourished. This helps them to find themselves. Nevertheless it is not the final solution to their more basic problem. Sooner or later they will have to face the fact that they stand between two conflicting orientation systems, between "the Sanskritic world-view and the western world-view, and the scientific world-view."(39)

Thirdly, what is the Hindu attitude to conversion ? E. Smith (40) isolates three different attitudes to conversion prevalent among Hindus ; *the universalist* attitude of Gandhi etc. explained under "secularism" above; the *general Hindu attitude*; the *communalist* attitude. He summarises the *general Hindu attitude* as follows :

"From the days of the Upanishads to the present, the emphasis among Hindus has been to teach i.e., explain abstruse religious doctrines, not to preach or convert. In recent years there has been a new emphasis within Hinduism on the systematic propagation of religious teaching among the masses. Swamis expounding the Gita or other scriptures attract vast audiences. Concerned with the growth of secularist and materialist influences in Hindu society, religious leaders sense the need

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(38) Indian Constitution, 44 (Directive Principles).
(39) Srinivas M. N. "Changing Institutions and values in Modern India," Unnithan T.K.N. (1965) p. 437.
(40) Srinivas M.N. 1963 pp. 163-8.

for more coordinated efforts to teach the principles of Hindu dharma."

Smith thinks that the constitutional guarantee of the right to propagate religion will perhaps have greater significance for the Hindu in the future than it had in the past. Nevertheless, the general Hindu attitude towards propagation which results in conversion from one religion to another is a decidedly negative one. The basic objections put forth are: (*i*) conversions have tended to disrupt the established patterns of family, caste and village social life. Whilst Hinduism allows the greatest freedom in religious and philosophical beliefs, actions which threaten its social solidarity are vigorously resisted. Social cohesion is more important than individual freedom. (*ii*) Conversion, especially to Christianity, leads to the virtual abandonment of Indian culture, to "denationalisation and westernisation". (*iii*) conversions, especially before independence, were often motivated by political considerations (under the system of separate electorates). (*iv*) conversions are frequently promoted by unethical or at least questionable methods. Further, mass conversions, which did not unduly disturb the social solidarity of the family or village, frequently meant in reality only a formal conversion with very little understanding of the new faith.

The Hindu communalist position (41) went much further. Asserting the superiority of the Hindu religion over the Christian and Islamic, it organised a Hindu proselytisation and shuddhi (cleansing) movement both to make new converts and reconvert and readmit Christian and Muslim converts or their descendants back into Hinduism. Conversion to non-Hindu religions is seen as anti-national, is considered as a denial of one's birthright and cultural heritage, as almost treachery and treason, whether these converts be Harijans, Tribals or High Caste Hindus.

10. Traditional Values.(42)

We here attempt a summary of some of the deepest beliefs,

(41) ibid. pp. 169 ff. For a further discussion of the cultural problems of economic development in India, cf. Dube in Bellah R. (ed. 1965) pp. 43-55.
(42) Moddie A.D. (1968) pp. 9-72.
Myrdal G. (1968) pp. 71-128.
Prabhu P. H. (1963) ch. 3-8.
Kapadia K.M. (1958) ch. 8.

values and ideals embodied in the Smritis, Epics and Puranas, which persist as vital cultural forces, more or less, in India today. We shall also indicate some of the ways that they interact with Modernisation values.

(*i*) The basic aims of man's life (purusartha) are seen as artha, kama, dharma and moksa, in an ascending order of importance. The ideal man is the 'saint'—one who has attained the spiritual freedom of moksa.(43) This is contrary to the commonly held ideal of modern man—the successful economic man. The ideal individual should pass through four life stages (ashramas); in so doing, he will be enabled to develop his faculties according to his age and status. Moddie(44) thinks that this ideal still permeates many of the educated and managerial elite, and as such becomes an obstacle in the modernising process. He says that it is not so much that members of these elites desire moksa or to retire to a forest alone and live out their life according to the fourth stage; rather, the traditional ideal is re-interpreted, and manifests itself 'in what sometimes seems a very distinctive downturn of vitality in many Indian executives in their middle years, when at the same time their counterparts abroad seem to be at the height of their powers or progressing towards it. At such critical times of their careers.... his Indian counterpart is looking forward to a quiet and secure, if not ashramic, retirement. Therefore what was once pure renunciation, may now take the shape of an early wearing down, a detachment from purpose,....a desire to escape from the struggle of market, hearth and committee room."

(*ii*) Every man is born with five debts to pay off during his life through his five daily offerings (maha yagnas). He has debts towards the gods (devas), his forefathers (pitrs), all living creatures (bhutas), all other human beings especially guests (manusyas), and the word of God (the brahmin). Whilst the attitudes involved in these five debts are interpreted variously, ideally they foster a great awareness of man's dependence on God, a concerned and loving attitude to his fellow man, and to all other creatures. This could help a 'modern' Indian towards a deep religious and spiritual understanding of his life.

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(43) e.g. Chaitanya, Tukaram, Tulsidas, Ramakrishna, Raman Maharishi.
(44) Moddie (1968) p. 21.

(*iii*) All men in society are divided into four groups, accor-ding to the Varnas. According to their varna membership, they regulate their dealings with others in society. Now there is little doubt that these caste or varna ties persist and are mani-festing themselves in new fields. (45)

(*iv*) All education should be based on the guru-sisya rela-tionship in which the master and student are bound together in mutual love, respect and concern for each other. This ideal can certainly be a great help in any modernising programme, but un-fortunately, as both Myrdal and Moddie point out, it often be-comes a hindrance. First of all, the teacher is usually poorly paid, poorly educated and trained, of little prestige. Secondly, too often the personal contact characteristic of the guru-sisya re-lationship is left undeveloped, whilst the authoritarian acceptance aspect is stressed. The result is that little emphasis is placed on developing an open discussive atmosphere, a questioning attitude in the student. What is taught must be accepted, learned, repea-ted, irrespective of its quality. This is certainly contrary to the rationality ideal of modernisation. Finally, as regards education in general, it must be remembered that learning was traditionally the preserve of males of the 'twice born' castes. Mass education, irrespective of caste or sex, is therefore something new, some-thing which demands a change in traditional values.

(*v*) Marriage is something holy, Rama and Sita being the ideal married pair. It is the only sacrament (samskara) that women can receive. Sita as the wife and mother is the ideal whom women would strive to imitate. Once again, this ideal provides a traditional basis upon which a modernising nation can build, yet one which demands adaptation. Kapadia (46) says that tra-ditionally, the ideal wife is one who loses her individuality and merges it entirely in that of her husband. In this aspect then this ideal surely runs counter to the modern ideal of woman. For one thing, the modernising process stresses the equality of man and woman, husband and wife; it aims at developing the individuality and talents of woman equally with those of the man; it stresses cooperation within marriage between two equal

(45) cf. Casteism and references above. R.C. Prasad's "Educational Deve-lopment'', Seminar, 107 (July 1968) shows clearly how caste loyalties have affected University administration in Bihar.
(46) Kapadia K.M. (1958) pp. 72ff.

mature individuals, each with their own personality, individuality, their own mind and opinion. Modern values also open the way for career women, who attain a respected place in society, outside of marriage and motherhood; marriage and motherhood is not the only career or source of fulfilment for the modern woman, something which does not seem to be the case for the traditional Indian woman. (47)

(*vi*) Traditionally the family, as also the caste, village and religious groups are seen as instituted by God. They must therefore be highly cherished and their unity be preserved at all costs, even though this means that an individual—and especially the wife—has thereby to endure great injustice. As with the other values, these are good but need adaptation if they are to become aids for modernisation, rather than hindrances. Thus, for example, Moddie points out how too often ties of family, caste, region and religion are given precedence over merit, ability, achievement in education. This often has serious and harmful effects on efficiency, planning, production and administration.

(*vii*) Some traditional virtues that should characterise the ideal man are : austerity in living self-control, truthfulness, equal behaviour toward all, inner peace and freedom from malice, spite, hatred and anger, firmness of mind, an attitude of non-violence and compassion towards all (ahimsa). These ideals again, form an excellent basis for the building of a modern society, but they need to be subjected to rational analysis and graded in priority against the needs of the whole nation and its socio-economic development; otherwise they become obstacles. Unfortunately, adherents of these values seem reluctant, to say the least, to permit this rational examination. Thus for example, we have the problems of "cow slaughter", eradication of rats, control of the destructive activities of monkeys, the use of non-violent agitation (satyagraha) against one's own governments etc. The reason for this is sometimes that the basis for these ideals is explained in terms of such religious values as karma and rebirth; the life of all creatures, men or animals, becomes equally important, equally sacrosanct. Further, few political leaders seem willing to tackle the task of such rational

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(47) Consider the modern right of women to initiate divorce proceedings, and to inherit property equally with men.

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reformulation, because of the risks involved to their careers. Others use them for their own political ends.

(*viii*) Among many in India, the world is traditionally seen as 'maya'; man's existence in it is explained by the doctrines of 'karma' and rebirth. As mentioned elsewhere in various parts of the paper, many authors consider that these values also provide serious checks to the modernising process.

(*ix*) Among the other traditional values, some clearly act as obstacles to the modernising process: e.g. the degrading effect of manual work, the ritual polluting effect of certain occupations and situations, the inferior status of women. Others, like vegetarianism, ritual hygiene are such that they could easily be incorporated into the modernisation program. The same can be said of such things as pride in the nation's history, its achievements—cultural, artistic, intellectual and political, pride in one's language, script, literature, pride in one's religion. By utilising these for the building of a modern India, the continuity between the past, present and future would be preserved.

Conclusion

It will be seen from the above, that the ten sets of values studied can be subsumed under the first-Modernisation, and the last-Traditional. As has been pointed out repeatedly, the Traditional need not always or essentially be in conflict with the Modern, nor vice versa. Re-adaptation and re-interpretation of both sets of values are necessary for building the India of the future. That India will not be an India of traditional values only, nor an India of modern values only. Rather it will be an India in which the modern and traditional have been integrated into a new synthesis, so as to make not just a modern nation, nor an Indian nation, but a modern Indian nation. It will be an India, securely rooted in her past, yet living fully in the present and looking confidently towards the future.

The nation therefore urgently needs men and women who can lead the masses towards this reformulation, people who can eschew appeals to and manipulating of the emotions of the masses for their own narrow selfish interests, people who will put the nation and its needs above themselves and their narrower kin,

caste, regional, linguistic loyalties. (48) The masses of the Indian people still live by their traditional values; they tend to accept them in an emotional, a-rational and unreflective way. These values lead a sort of shadow life, are difficult to observe, and hard to classify. Often they are not verbalised, let alone comprehensively articulated in public debate. Yet they are easily aroused, at times almost to a fanatical degree, and are therefore ready fuel in the hands of the unscrupulous. It is because of this that national leaders of the calibre of Nehru, Gandhi and others are needed who can help them apply the basic modern values of rationality and national consolidation to their analysis. Fortunately, the modernisation ideals have already become indigenous in a section of the population, through modern education. It is the immediate task of these men to come to the fore and break the gap that has for so long separated the modern educated elite from the masses, and to help to provide the sanity and rationality which the country so badly needs. It is the urgent need also that educators, at all levels, try in their every endeavour to instil such ideals into their students. Finally, whilst Hindu leaders will have to stress primarily the adaptation of the traditional to the modern, Christian leaders are needed who will have to stress the adaptation of the modern and western to the Indian. Christians surely have to think long and hard about traditional Indian values and customs, asking themselves whether or not they should be incorporated in some way into their spiritual and religious structures and thought systems, and if so, how. To put it more correctly, Christians have to ask themselves whether or not basic Christian religious values can be re-expressed in traditional Indian values and thought systems, and if so how.

As an appendix to this paper, four quotations have been added—three from J. Nehru, one from Aurobindo Ghose. They clearly indicate how truly the above re-echoes the words of great national leaders of yesterday and today.

II. THE SHAPING PROCESS

Some relevant aspects of the dynamics of the culture change

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(48) cf. Times of India, June 5th, 1968; Dec. 10th, 1968; "Seminar", July 1968, pp. 26ff.

with special reference to the general situation in India today and to the Church in particular are given below.

(a) **From the Nature of Culture in general**: Culture, following the above definitions, is to be seen as a more or less integrated whole, containing material aspects (technology, machines, habits of clothing, dress, eating etc.) and non-material aspects (values, goals, world views, thought systems, language and symbol systems, status and role systems). Because of this integration and interdependance, change in one aspect has its repercussions on other aspects e.g. the impact of urbanisation on joint family living; the impact of mass education and an industrial-monetary economy on the caste system. A culture should not be seen as if it were a set of unconnected compartments from which items can be withdrawn and replaced at will. Rather it is more like a network of ties, in which a change in one, produces a change in stress on and relationship with many others.

Certain aspects (be they traits, complexes or institutions) *are more conducive to change, others more resistant to change.* It can be generally said that the *non-material* aspects are slower to change, more resistant to change, than the *material aspects.* Thus e.g. whilst the technology of a culture can be changed comparatively easily, social institutions, religion and other value and thought systems, prove much more difficult even to adapt, let alone change radically. Because of this unevenness in a culture with relation to the speed of change, a phenomenon which is called *cultural lag* often results, with serious consequences. A consequence of this cultural lag is that serious tensions arise in the society. An obvious example is the relative ease with which any nation today can acquire atomic technological know-how, yet the ethical problem of how to use this knowledge remains unsolved for all. Other examples of cultural lag would be the constitutional abolition of untouchability and yet its continuance in the villages; modern medical and hygiene education and yet the continued popularity of magical cures and unhygienic practices in the home.

Culture change also occurs *unevenly among the members of the society itself.* Certain individuals and sub-groups within a society will be more open to and in favour of change, whilst other individuals and sub-groups will be more reluctant and even

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resistant to change. Entrenched power-groups and elites are likely to be more resistant to change where they see it as a threat to their power and position; on the other hand, where they see it as a means of maintaining or increasing their position and power, they often prove powerful agents of change in society. The activities of dominant local caste groups political parties and factions, the elites of government administration, military forces and business, all provide many examples, as reported in the Press, of the varying attitude to change of differing segments of the population.

A word here might be useful concerning the word 'elite'.(49) The term itself defies accurate definition, because the social phenomenon that it seeks to symbolise is itself vague and varies almost as much as the colours on the spectrum. Its value lies in this, that just as the colours of the spectrum merge into one, possess continuity and form a real unity, so too the phenomena which the word 'elite' seeks to symbolise, whilst differing greatly from each other, do possess a real social unity. The elite of a population *"is that stratum which, for whatever reason, can claim a position of superiority and hence a corresponding measure of influence over the rest of the community"*.(50) Its superiority depends heterogenously on special acquired skills and talents, or perhaps traditional and unspecialised claims, or perhaps that it is a reservoir of skills and talents of all kinds. It includes aristocracy, ruling class, leadership and more. An elite is always a collective of persons, who enjoy pre-eminence over others. *The demarcation of membership in the elite will differ from elite group to elite group*, from a sharply defined membership to a vague one e.g. the military elite as contrasted with the intellectual elite. Nevertheless it must have some degree of corporate and group organisation by which it can include or exclude aspirants for membership, maintain and preserve its superiority and position of power and its privileges, defend itself against the challenges and threats of non-members. Further the skills, talents, knowledge etc., on the possession of which its superiority depends, must be valued by other members of the society.

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(49) Whilst elite groups might be seen as socio-economic groups, they are briefly discussed here because they represent the embodiment of dominant group values, and are often key factors in the culture change process.

(50) Nadel, S.F. (1956) p. 413.

They must be *imitable* and possible of attainment at least for
some. *It is almost as if the elite group were the personification
of certain sets of values and ideals, highly cherished by the society,
made visible and living before their eyes.* These skills, talents
etc. are not just the specialisations of the specialists but they
spread over into social graces and other characteristics idealised
by the society. Precisely because elite groups are models of
the society's values, *they easily become rigid* and, unable to
respond to the everchanging flow of new ideas, become stagnated
and vulnerable.

Beteille (51) distinguishes the following types of elite groups
in India:

Political

Non-political : bureaucractic (administrative, managerial, mili-
tary) professional (writers, intellectuals, doctors,
lawyers, scholars)
business
landed aristocracy

Besides what has been said concerning the present condition
of these elites, three further significant points need to be made:
First, whilst the common attitude towards the old ICS and the
present IAS and IFS seems to be one of high regard, there
is also present in the country a strongly critical dissident view-
point. (53) *Secondly*, the growing factionalism in these services
witnesses to important changes occurring in values and ideals in
post-independence India. *Thirdly*, recent studies (54) have shown
that there has been a marked change in the composition of the
political elite of the Lok Sabha, since Independence. Thus whilst
in the first Lok Sabha after Independence, some three-fourths
of the total membership came from the modernised elite (lawyers,
doctors, journalists, educators) and the landed rural elite held
only six per cent of the seats, in the second Lok Sabha, the former
were eclipsed by both the agriculturalist (22%) and a group

(51) Mason P. (ed. 1967) p. 225; Unnithan T.K.N. et alaia (ed. 1965) ch.
6, 7, 9.
(52) "Econ. and Political Weekly", Annual No., Jan. 1969, pp. 179-189.
"Seminar", 30 (Feb. 1962, pp. 10-13).
(53) "Seminar", 84, (Aug. 1964); 51, (Nov. 1963).

called Public Workers or Social Workers (more than 30%). These are made up largely of people without a specific occupation. Journalists and educators were almost entirely eliminated, doctors and lawyers partially held their own (Lawyers: 1st Lok Sabha, 35.6%; present Lok Sabha, 1968, 17.7%). Though the figures are inadequate, they point to the fact that whilst the representation is becoming more truly representative (i.e. of a predominantly rural India), it is also becoming one in which men of strong traditional values have gained the majority. Facts which seem to counterbalance this are : first there is a tendancy in Parliament for the majority of the members to be passive, spectators, a tiny minority (perhaps as low as 10%) being the ones who actively participate in the business of Government; second, more than 50% of the members are graduates, and therefore have been exposed to modern education.

We might finally add three further observations under this point concerning the change process : *First*, women and the elderly are usually more resistant to change than men, and the young respectively. *Secondly*, it cannot be maintained that change as such is good in itself. The resistors of culture change play the role of conservers of culture heritage and a brake on irresponsible, unnecessary culture change, thus providing for the stability and cultural continuity, so necessary in all cultural development. *Thirdly*, because of this unevenness in the population in its attitude to and advocacy of change, tensions and frictions arise within the society—between the young and the old, the powerful and the depressed classes (labouring and landless peasant classes), between husbands and wives, mothers etc. Especially where the culture change is a controlled and planned one, these tensions should be foreseen and forearmed against as far as possible. India is seeking to change in a planned way; so also is the Church in India.

One of the most significant aspects of all change-situations is that along with any major culture change, a *reorganisation of states and role systems also occurs*. India as a traditional culture possessed a status and role system—the caste system—that was static. One's status and attendant role were specified at birth and from that moment on, that person's status in society was fixed pretty well for life. One's role or expected behaviour pattern as a son, brother, father, mother, artisan, landowner,

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village and caste member etc. were all fixed and clearly formulated, easily learnt. Deviation from the expected pattern was met by disapproval, punishment. India today, as a nation embarking on a programme of planned change, industrialisation, mass education etc. is changing from a static social system to a dynamic one. One's ascribed status at birth can be changed by achievement, by education, technological training, political involvement. New expected role behaviour patterns attached to the new status have, to be learned, even before they are clearly institutionalised. Some people still live in the old ascribed status system, wanting to perpetuate it; others live in the new achieved status system; many are confused and live in neither entirely. All of these social facts produce frustration and tension.

One final point may be made concerning culture change in general which is of importance for India and the Church in the coming decades. Social anthropologists have noted that in a society where vast and rapid culture change occurs, personality disorders increase significantly, especially among lower income groups. Because of their poor and deficient diet, their physical constitution suffers from weakness and cannot stand the strain of the insecurity and frustration and tension arising from the ever new situations they have to meet in life. These tensions seem to find their way out in mental and personality disturbances, often of a serious kind.

(b) The Change Process in Particular

We shall discuss the shaping process under three headings: (1) the end product; (2) dynamics of the change process itself; (3) factors conducive to change.

(1) The end product

The possible end products of culture change range between a *new integration* and *cultural equilibrium*, and *disintegration* and *disequilibrium*. Culture change ending in *disequilibrium* can take the form of cultural decay, cultural death or a state of disorganisation. Here it is well to point out that the temporary disorganisation and apparent disintegration arising out of the change process itself should be carefully distinguished from disintegra-

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tion as an end product. For example, it is said today that the break up of the joint family system in many urban areas is but a transitional stage on the way to a new kind of family organisation.

"Culture change ending in integration and equilibrium can take at least three forms : (i) The *state of cultural symbiosis*: the cultures in contact remain distinct and separate, but specialise in certain activities and depend on each other for these services. The jajmani economic system between castes in Northern India would be an example of this. (ii) The *state of stabilised pluralism*: the societies in contact control both the borrowing and the direction of the culture change in such a way that the particular way of life of each remains relatively intact. This seems to be what Pandit Nehru meant by the term 'integration' when referring to the future of the tribal peoples in India. (54) (iii) The *state of assimilation* : here there is a complete blending of distinct cultures, so that each socio-cultural group loses its identity and a new socio-cultural group arises (the melting pot explanation of United States cultural growth). The RSS often speak of assimilation, but in doing so they always mean that minority groups alone must lose their cultural identity and be assimilated into the Vedic-based socio-cultural Hindu majority group.

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 to the *symbiotic model of cultural integration*. In spite of certain cultural continuities mentioned above, each tends to exist as a separate self-contained socio-cultural group independent of the other. The possibility of the *assimilation model* ever occuring in India in the foreseeable future seems remote, though a certain form of it seems to be advocated by some communalist parties. *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."

(54) This would seem to be the aim of the recent National Integration Council Meeting, held in Srinagar, June 1968.

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Another consequence of the nature of culture change and the possible end products deserves to be mentioned here. Culture change must be seen as an *on-going process*. India itself has launched upon a massive and rapid change programme. The India of 2000 A.D. will be a vastly different India, all going well, from the India of 1968. Now the Church in India in many aspects of its socio-cultural life, is isolated from, living apart from the socio-cultural life of the majority of the population. This of course can also be said of many other large minority groups. The point however, is this: because all culture change processes are on-going ones, if the Church is now seeking to 'indianise', to establish more and more continuity with a wider stream of Indian socio-cultural tradition and life, she cannot hope to do this much before 2000 A.D. Therefore she must aim at entering into the stabilised pluralism of the India 2000 A.D. and not the India 1968. By 2000 A.D. many features of Indian socio-cultural life will be perhaps radically altered, or at least be quite changed; many features which are there today in embryo will have reached their full growth. If the Church enters too rashly into a rigid action-programme aimed at establishing continuities with the India of 1968, she might find that in 2000 A.D. plus she is out-dated and still far from the goal that she set herself in 1968.

Can we hazard a guess concerning some of the characteristic features of the India of the next 30 *years* ? From the above analysis of the cultural forces shaping India today to produce the India of tomorrow, and barring violent revolution and takeover by communalist and communist parties we can say: industrialisation, urbanisation, mass education, socialism and the characteristics accompanying these will increase and spread more widely over rural India. This will lead also to changes in such aspects as say external dress, furniture etc. The joint family will give way more and more to a nuclear family system, especially in the towns, and the population growth and migration to the cities will also hasten this change for the villages. Nevertheless, it must be added that India will remain a predominantly agricultural country, with the rural population forming the great majority. There will be an increasing threat to the law and order enforcement in the country because of increased communalist

regionalist, revivalist, linguistic and casteist pressures. (55)
The tribals and harijans will increasingly challenge the entrenched
vested powers for a greater share in the fruits of a welfare state.

Among these vested interests, perhaps the most powerful
today are the landed peasant classes.   These have tremendous
influence in local, state and national politics.   They can be
judged as one of the great anti-change forces present in the
country, with regard to any radical socio-economic change.   They
do not want any change in the status-quo, and to maintain their
dominance they can be expected to enlist all the resources at
their disposal especially casteism, communalism, regionalism etc
The inherent danger in this is that other groups, through frus
tration, will resort to violent means to eradicate such an oppressive
obstacle standing in the way of the socio-economic uplift, de
mocratic means having failed.   One special consequence of this
for the Church is that many of the clergy, hierarchy and laity
belong to these landed peasant classes.   The problem is not
just one of Christians living according to the social teaching
of the Church, it is even more so a problem of shedding the
whole mentality characteristic of such landed classes—pat-
ronising superiority over and often contempt for the landless
depressed labourers.   Unless this is done, the history of the
Church in Poland, France and Hungary could be repeated in
India.

Agnosticism will increase perhaps on a vast scale, with the
spread of the secularisation process and mass scientific education.
There will be less and less time and money available for lengthy
and expensive religious rituals among the urban, middle and
rural poorer classes and increased amount of money will be
spent by the urban and rural upper classes.   The present solu-
tion which the Madras Hindus are offering to this spread of

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(55) It should be noted that this struggle between the 'modernising' reformers
     and the traditionalists is not a new problem in India.   It already has
     quite a long history; Raj Mohun Roy lived 150 years ago.   Further,
     many reform proposals which were the centre of fierce controversy at
     the turn of the century, are today taken for granted by the traditionalists.
     Up to the present time, the reformists and modernisers seem to have
     held the ascendancy, though Myrdal notes that since Independence few
     public officials have dared to advocate publicly new reforms of tradi-
     tional values and institutions.

atheism and agnosticism is a revival of Bhakti religion and Bhajan singing. How effective this will be in the long run against the challenge of rationalism and secularisation can be doubted or questioned. Bhakti religious worship resembles the non-intellectual pietistic religious practice of Europe, and these did not withstand the attacks of rationalism, etc. at the turn of the century.

Christianity, based as it is in India on devotional and pietistic approaches and at present with little enquiring intellectual spirit, will also surely suffer much from the effects of secularisation and rationalism and will hardly be safe from this spread of agnosticism.

(iii) *The degree of integration possible.* Among other factors, the degree of integration possible depends on *the values and goals of the cultural groups concerned.* The degree of integration possible therefore will depend on the *relatedness of* these values and goals and the possibility of their being interlinked ; *the degree of consistency* which these values and goals have with each other and with other aspects of the different cultural systems ; *the degree of reciprocity* possible between these parts i.e. the possibility of achieving cultural equilibrium should the desired change be introduced. Thus e.g. it would seem that certain aspects of the Christian world-view, as expressed in "The Church in the Modern World" are more easily integrated with science, efficiency and technology than perhaps those of karma and maya. If the Indian Government is to really effect planned industrial change and development in the country, it must seek not just to introduce steel plants, industry and efficient management but also try to see that Hindu thinkers provide a reinterpretation of traditional Hindu values and goals concerning work and achievement which will be able to motivate such technology. Otherwise there will be a serious culture lag and a disorganisation in the cultural system. The same problem would seem to arise from the situation in which the caste system has been abolished, yet with no widespread attempt to reinterpret the karma doctrine which supports it.

Finally, the most important factor for all change and development in India in the next 30 years is clearly the economic one. The rate and extension of economic growth together with population growth and socialistic reforms will determine whether the

change will be made by democratic means or by violent revolutionary dictatorial means (rightist or leftist). This economic growth will differ regionally, depending on the traditional economic life and economic resources of the region. When allied with regionalistic and linguistic tendencies becoming increasingly strong today, it would appear that in the next 30 years, this regional development, under greater regional impetus, management and guidance, will increase along the lines of the distinctive nature of the region. The Indian nation as such will tend to become more and more federalistic, with a weaker centre and stronger linguistic regional states. This has importance for the Church in many ways. In so far as this paper is concerned, the importance lies at least here : to plan any 'indianisation' on an "All India" level would be inadequate. Change programmes (56) will have to be on a regional basis, and even within regions, on an urban-rural basis. The regional states therefore will stress their diversities and strengths, with say the Punjab becoming highly developed agriculturally through mechanisation, etc., U.P. and Bihar also developing agriculturally, but with a different agricultural genius, Maharashtra acquiring a more contrasting economy—industry in one area, agriculture in another.

(2) The dynamics of the shaping process

In studying the dynamics of all culture change, the following points would seem to be relevant here : As mentioned above, culture is an integrated dynamic whole of values, goals, symbols, knowledge systems, techniques, etc. *Now any change initiated within the cultural whole* and *touching any of its parts, be they traits, complexes, institutions, triggers off changes in other parts of the culture.* These changes are often not foreseen by those who initiate the change process. Further, where the change in the culture involves the introduction of something new into the culture (or the eradication of something old), the new trait complex or institution has always to be *interpreted* in a way different from that in which it was interpreted in its parent culture, before it can be interlinked with the other parts of the new

(56) There is a great need on the local and regional level, for scientific studies to be made in order to ascertain just what is changing and what is persisting, what is being accepted and what is being rejected. It is only on the basis of such studies that adequate planning can be effected.

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culture. A culture should not been seen as a set of pigeon holes, in which parts can be inserted or taken out at will. Rather it should be seen as a sort of organic unity comprising many parts, all of which are united into a whole of a unique configuration, a unique arrangement and inter-relationship system. Consequently any new insertion of a culture trait into another cultural whole demands that the borrowed trait, in being re-integrated, is also changed and reinterpreted according to the values, understandings and basic postulates of the new cultural system. An example of this would be the borrowing of the terms *Parmeshwar, Prabhu, Prasad* from the Hindu knowledge system using them in the Christian knowledge system. By inserting them into the new symbol system they take on a meaning quite different from what they have in their parent system. This of course produces ambiguities for any dialogue between the two systems, yet it is not necessarily a bad thing. All translations from one language symbol system into another suffer from the same weakness and yet it is considered essential for establishing continuity between linguistic groups that such translations be made. The point is that if the Church is to go in for a deliberate programme of guided change, it must do so with its eyes wide open, attentive to as many of the implications as possible.

(3) *The following factors which are conducive to change* would seem to be pertinent here.

(i) *Attitudes.* Change is easier and fraught with less tension and opposition where there exist in the society attitudes favouring the taking over of the new culture traits, complexes and institutions. These attitudes may be present generally in the whole population or in certain sections only ; they may favour change in general or in certain sections only.

(ii) *The presence of powerful elite groups who favour the desired change* is also important for a successful acceptance of any innovation (cf. 'elite groups' discussed above).

(iii) *Freedom of enquiry and action also* helps the rapidity of change and reduce the inherent frictions which nearly always arise i n such a process. Where the 'party line' approach is less, and 'open discussion' and 'evaluation of merits' approach

is more, there will be greater likelihood that dictatorial use of force by the few will not be required and that the change will be generally accepted by a wide section of the population. Through such an open enquiry and discussion of the merits of the case, people will be more likely to feel a need for the change; there will be less chance of that widespread obstinate resistance to anything new arising; that blind attachment to "what our fathers did", which is so often associated with ignorance. Of course this presupposes literate masses and a high priority being given to the nationality ideal.

(iv) One final factor of importance in all change processes and is that of *factionalism* (i.e. the relative force of opposing actions). Factionalism is a distinctive characteristic of Indian life, be it communal, linguistic, regional or caste based; it can be a powerful force influencing the acceptance or rejection of any innovation. Newspaper reports concerning the influence of factions on the implementation of election manifestos of various political parties are a daily witness to this fact.

(v) In a situation where two culture groups stand in a comparatively isolated position to each other, as the Church is to much of Indian life, and where closer integration is being sought by either or both the groups, it is important to realise that the *success of any integration* will depend not only on the intensity with which one group wants to integrate with the other, but *also with the attitude of the other group to it and to its integration programme*. To put it in other words, it is not just enough that the Church might want to integrate, to 'indianise itself' ; much will depend on the social image that the Church projects of herself to the population at large ; much will depend on how the population at large sees the Church and Christians in general ; much will depend on whether they are willing to accept her or not. It is possible that prior to any 'indianising' attempts, or at least along with the initial attempts, *the primary effort* will have to be in recreating a new and more acceptable image, more acceptable to the majority community, in order to ensure a more successful 'indianising' programme.

The above factors point to the necessity for the Church of establishing an elite of *informed, thinking and personally responsible Christians*, clerical and lay, who can become the spear-

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head of the Church's 'indianisation' programme. Besides this, *structures and institutions* must be set up for building up this elite, for training and informing them, for research, so as to have the necessary information with which to inform them. (57) Such structures and institutions should concern themselves not just with the formation of a Christian elite but with the spread of the results of their research in specific key problems to the other elite groups in the country. As mentioned in the introduction, the cultural values and goals of the Church are one of the cultural forces shaping India today, whilst she herself is being shaped by all other forces at work in the Nation. Unfortunately the Church's influence seems to be but little felt. It is the purpose of this Seminar to seek ways and means of making Christian values and goals more influential in Indian national life, for the good of the whole nation. For this purpose, it is essential that a climate of healthy discussion and enquiry be created among all Christians, that all Christians be made to feel their responsibility to think, to think creatively on particular national and international issues, to make their creative contribution to the cultural life and development of the country, so that it may make its offering to international life, in accord with its own unique cultural tradition. In order to do this, the Church must take greater pains concerning the social image she projects of herself and her nature, discarding from it those features, whether good or bad, which are linked with outdated historical periods, or particular national manifestations of Christian life. In other words, to use modern technical language, the Church has to worry about her Public Relations Department, much more than she has ever done in the past. In this way alone, by word and deed on the part of every Christian, can she hope to correct the harmful image which many other Indians have of her.

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(57) e.g. the Labour Institute at Jamshedpur, the School of Business Management in Bombay and the recently begun Institute of Indian Culture, Bombay. The last named Institute, set up under the aegis of Cardinal Gracias, aims at being a mixed endeavour i.e. it seeks to draw its staff from both the secular and religious clergy as well as the laity. It is interesting that the need to set up an "Institutum Indianicum" was discussed in detail in the Catholic Bishops of India Conferences of 1945, 1946, 1948. Topics to be studied were outlined. It was felt then that three such Institutes were needed, one each for the North, West and South of India. Nothing further is mentioned in the reports of succeeding years concerning the proposals.

III. THE MAIN PROBLEMS FACING
THE CHURCH IN INDIA

This assessment(58) necessarily has to be selective and summary; more details will surely be found in the other papers. Nevertheless such an assessment is essential in order to pinpoint the problem areas for the Church in relation to the cultural forces at work in India Today and shaping the India of Tomorrow.

(a) **The Church Today** : First, it must be said that the most important factor which defines the Church today in India, is its history. Christianity came to India in three waves: that of the period of missionary activity of the apostolic Church, that of the period of Portuguese Colonial expansions, and that of the period of British colonial activity. Christianity resulting from the first

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(58) cf. "The Church in India; witness to Christ in a Hindu environment." "Herder Correspondence, Sept.-Oct., 1966, pp. 281-88. "The Church in New Goa", ibid. Nov. 1964, pp. 330-333. The 38th International Eucharistic Congress, Bombay, India, 1964, Vol. II, Reports and Texts of Speeches, esp. pp. 91f. 269, 285, 296ff, 302.
C.B.C.I. Reports from 1945-1965.

The assessment of the Church of the Future, according to Vat. II, will follow, so that by comparison the direction of the change which should occur within the Church herself, will stand out more clearly. It is interesting that the CBCI reports of 1945 and 1960 both admit that much spadework still has to be done in the study of "things Indian" in the Seminaries. In the 1962-66 Report, little discussion is given to the question. The 1956 Report gives the following reason why these studies should be pursued: "..in order to fall into line with the culture and way of life of the country" (p. 22) and to counteract the "slanderous slur of anti-nationalism levelled against Christianity". p. 14. The 1946 Report mentions the need for hesitancy and prudence in such studies "Interest might evolve false esteem." "Experience shows that defections were due to too much study of Indian Philosophy and Hindu Religion." p. 27, cf. also 1957 Report, p. 52. In the 1956 Report under "Indian Art, Liturgical Art and Music, the Head of the Commission reported" "I have no evidence that the majority of our seminaries and schools take a very active interest in questions of adaptation and Indian religious art." pp.110f. At the 1960 meeting, he resigned from the post because of ill-health. He felt that over the last 9 years his proposals were not taken seriously, much less carried out. p.6.

wave resulted in many high caste conversions and was confined largely, perhaps entirely, to Kerala. (59) Christianity resulting from the other two waves resulted in conversions from many castes, with the lower castes, harijans and tribals in the preponderance and was confined to Goa, Mangalore, Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and the tribal areas of Central and North East India. The weakness of the Christianity resulting from the last two waves was that it is *seen* as the *fruit* of colonial expansion, was often accompanied by the Inquisition and Inquisitional methods. Christians were sometimes given preferences for employment, for building sites, etc. by the Government, and usually freedom for their activities, conversions, etc. Christians, at least some of them, on their part were usually loyal to the colonial powers, often sought to upgrade their status by imitating them, were cut off from political involvement in the anti-colonial movements, and the independence struggle. Further, Christians sometimes were encouraged to look down upon their Hindu and Muslim brethren, and their practices. An exaggerated and even incorrect theology concerning her exclusive claim to Truth, the Church's doctrine concerning the salvation of non-Christians, and "outside the Church there is no salvation", all these further developed a split between the Christians and the rest of the people. Contempt for the "heathen", idolator", "pagan" often attended this split. In some ways this isolation aspect was helped by the caste social structure of Indian life, for Christians, to the Hindus, thus became just an other closed 'caste' or 'untouchable' group.

The results, for the Church in India today, of this history, are that Indian Christians form closed groups, are largely uninvolved in the social and political life of the country at large. There are, of course, exceptions and it would seem that with the passage of one election year after another, this isolation is breaking down. Christians do seem to be becoming more politically conscious and willing even to get involved in the political life. On the other hand, the ignorance and contempt of many Christians for things Indians and their adulation for things foreign persists. Non-Christian Indians tend to see them in the light of

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(59) We do not here want to enter into controversy concerning St. Bartholomew and his Konkan converts.

this history, as foreign, western. They suspect and fear them as the possible colonial agents of the future.

As regards the Churches resulting from the first wave of missionary effort, it would seem that today they and their members represent the powerful moneyed and landed classes; they are therefore separated by a wide gulf from the masses, including many converts of the locality dating from the Portuguese period, and are a clear target for the attacks of socialistic reform movements like the Communists etc.

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. The philosophy taught is predominantly western, with little attempt, up to date, to even tackle, except at the most in corrolaries, problems raised by Indian philosophical system. The text books on all these items are all "from out", by foreign authors. There is the unhealthy suspicious attitude to all forms of mystical prayer, and mysticism in general, inherited from the West. The education imparted in our schools and seminaries, is again, largely, modern and western, with little if anything from Indian cultural traditions being included in the curricular or co-curricular activities. 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 forms, and to incorporate valid Indian ideals into Christian religious and spiritual life.

Together with this there is often a mental and intellectual dependence on foreign churches, an attitude of always waiting for them to show the way: an 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 to be learnt by heart, with little need to question, to explore, to understand and disagree. This often seems to result in an apparent anti-intellectual attitude, or at least indifference to the intellectual approach to the faith. There are of course, healthy signs of renewal on the horizon. There is the new interest in catechetics and liturgy present in

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various parts of the country; there are the small yet important groups studying Hinduism, the Bible, modern Christian Theology; there is the very fact of this Seminar, and the many other study seminars and workshops held over the past few years; there are the various centres of research that are beginning to spring up throughout the country. But these are still in the very initial stage, and need to be strengthened and developed.

It must be said that the Church in India today, like the Church in many other countries throughout the world, is clergy dominated, with all the implications of paternalism, patronalism, authoritarianism, that this phrase contains. The laity have yet to be made to realise that they are the Church in their own sphere 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.(60)

Finally it must be said, on the negative side, that the Church in India tends to be parochial; each parish and diocese is concerned with its own world, 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.

Positively we can genuinely say that the Church, though dependant mentally and often financially on the West, is becoming more and more self sufficient where, clergy and vocations are concerned. Unfortunately some have developed the unhealthy mentality that it is in the order of things that the Church in India should always be helped along from outside.(61)

The hierarchy and religious orders are Indian to a great extent and becoming increasingly so. The Church, further, is well rooted in India. Large communities of Christians exist who can trace their history back over four to nineteen centuries. She has developed an educational and charitable welfare system which is appreciated and respected throughout India, though this appreciation is often accompanied ambivalently by suspicion and fear.

(60) Const. on the Church, 33, 40.
61) Herder Correspondence, 1966, p. 287.

She, disproportionately to her numerical strength, is well represented in all administrative and non-governmental organisations. These are solid achievements not to be overlooked, though they should not become grounds for complacency.

One final point would seem to be in order. 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 in the past 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 are education and social welfare 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 welfare work. The same self examination must also be made of her church and seminary building programmes.

(b) **The Church of the Future, according to Vatican II:** Against the foregoing assessment of the state of the Church today, what goals does she wish to aim at in her renewal programme for the next 30 years, in order to make her true nature more visible and present in the world ? Further, because the Church is one of the cultural forces shaping India, what beneficial values and goals can she contribute to the national development ?

The Church sees herself as a sort of sacrament of Christ, through and by which Christ becomes present in the world, and through which He acts to save, perfect and fulfil men by His truths and grace. (62) (Church 8, 48; Liturgy 1, 5; World 20, 45). Using another analogy she sees herself as the leaven and soul

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(62) In this section, the references to the documents of Vat. II are left within the text for the sake of ready reference and in the belief that they thereby strengthen the statements made.

of human society, both interpenetrating the other (World 40).
The Church must seek to become this more realistically in the
next 30 years. To do this she must continually reform and re-
new herself, (World 43) all her members, clerical and lay being
called to participate in this task (Ecumenism 4-5). All her mem-
bers must become aware that each and every one is called to the
same holiness, not just religious or priest, and that they are to
find this holiness in the duties of their daily life and vocation
(Church 41). The laity must become increasingly aware that they
have an apostolate proper to them, over and above that of helping
the hierarchy in their proper apostolate; this apostolate is to in-
fuse the Christian spirit into the temporal order. (Laity, 18, 43).
This demands that the laity become thinking and responsible, so
that they can infuse the Christian spirit into the field of their spe-
ciality, (the working of like with like) (Laity, 13). The Church
must work to cure one of the greatest errors of the time—the
split between life and faith, the cultural lag of religious and moral
values behind technological and scientific advancement; a new
vital synthesis is necessary, demanding radical rethinking of many
former theological positions (World 43,59,62). (63) The same
need arises when the Church is confronted with non-western
cultures, and seeks to accept whatever is good in those cultures,
and allow herself to leaven them (World 58-59, 62). The Church
must honour in practical terms the right of every individual and
nation to their own culture and their right to be able to use it
to express themselves spiritually and religiously. (ibid)

All Christians have the duty to work for a socio-economic
and political order where the rights of an individual for a full per-
sonal life are guaranteed; where the individual can develop his
personality in civil and religious freedom (World 73) and
receive an adequate education proportionate to his abilities
and need.

All have the *duty* to become positively involved in politics
according to their circumstances, to work for rule by law, to
fight against all injustice, intolerance and oppression wherever

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(63) e.g. her exclusive claim to Truth; her doctrine on "outside the Church,
there is no salvation"; the need and nature of the "Missions"; the theo-
logical questions arising out of the various Indian philosophies concer-
ning man, God, sin, the world, rebirth etc.

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they may occur (World 75,76). They must work for the total banning of war, and the arms race (World 79-82). They must work for upholding the sanctity of marriage and family (World 47ff). They must work towards correcting the imbalance in the distribution of wealth, whether within the nation or between nations, for the goods of the earth are for the service of mankind not just for that of a few individuals (World 69). They must work to see that more and more of the workers are given an active share in directing the development of the nation (World 66), that land reform be made wherever private property is misused to the harm of the common good (World 71). They must work to make men realise both the dignity of labour and the duty of all men to labour, yet also that all men have the right to leisure (World 67).

All must realise that human enterprise, the advance of knowledge and the subjection of nature for the advancement of the human good is an unfolding of the mysterious designs of the Creator. This applies especially to the man's unfolding of himself (World 35). In the New Kingdom of Christ, man will again find whatever good he has achieved, burnished and transfigured (World 34, 35, 39, 67).

Nevertheless, they must work with the realisation that there is a mysterious presence of evil in the world and in men, which manifests itself in the corruption of morals and human institutions, contempt for the human person, and idolatory of temporal things (Church 15-16). In the face of this evil, there must be supreme patience and confidence in the victorious power of Christ.

A comparison between the two foregoing summaries, will clearly show that the Church in India today has a tremendous work of reform and renewal ahead of her if she is to become the living embodiment of the picture portrayed in the Vatican II documents. Nevertheless, if she is to become one of the dynamic cultural forces, active and leavening the Indian nature, such reform and renewal is vital.

(c) The Problem for (Catholic) Christians

As mentioned in III (a) above, it can be said with a certain

amount of truth, that the Church, as made concrete in the local communities of Christians, is to a greater or lesser extent, outside of, set apart from much of public and national life. If she is to become a leaven for Indian society, "a kind of soul", healing and elevating the human person, individually and in public social institutions, her first and basic problem and need is to become present in public and national life. At the same time, she has to face the fact that she will have to live in a pluralist society. The problem of 'becoming present' in Indian life, of integrating herself with other Indian communities to form the higher unity of an integrated Indian national whole, contains at least two aspects : that of establishing greater and greater continuity with other communities, so that all are interlinked and interacting, as explained under secularism above; and the willingness of the other communities to establish, permit and recognise this continuity and interrelatedness. This latter depends to a large extent on the social image that the majority community, with which the Church is seeking to integrate, has of her. It also depends upon the majority community's attitude to indianization as such. Many Hindus would seem to be suspicious of the very practise of "Indianisation". Raymond Panikkar writes : "Hinduism tolerates and even likes coexistence, but does not allow interference......Hinduism, even though friendly with 'Western' Christianity, does not like to be imitated. It stands against the so called Christian adaption, because it considers it a kind of unlawful intrusion into its own field." (64) Thus the Church is accused as being unindian and foreign because she has not indianised herself and yet is suspected when she does attempt to shed her foreignness.

What is the cultural nature of the minority Christian community? What degree of cultural continuity exists already between her and other communities, especially the majority community' and how can it be strengthened, made more manifest, increased and developed ? This is the first great problem and need.

First, there is a wide variation in cultural continuity between the various local Christian communities and the majority

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(64) Herder Corr., 1966.

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community. The cultural continuity can be highlighted by stu-
dying the local Christian communities from two angles: with
respect to the *origin* of the local Christian community, and with
respect to the 'Indianness' and westernisation/modernisation'
of the local community.

(*i*) With respect to the *origin* of the local Christian commu-
nities; in order to evaluate the extent to which these have roots
in traditional Indian culture, we must always compare them in
their socio-cultural life, with that of the local group from which,
prior to conversion, they have sprung.

(*ii*) With respect to the *'indianness and westernisation/mo-
dernisation'* of the local Christian communities, each of the local
Christian communities differs significantly from each other and
indeed within themselves. The local communities, taken collec-
tively and individually, are spread over a range, extending from
'indianness' to 'westernisation'. This aspect too brings out the
complexity of the problem of integration. It should seem that
no all embracing programme and model can be set up for "the
Church in India", as a whole. At the most, the direction to be
taken can be pointed out and these will have to be applied and
implemented by the local churches.

(*iii*) There is a third set of factors hinted at in Part II above,
which further adds to the complexity of the problem, yet which
it is essential to consider; for it is only by first isolating all the
significant and relevant factors involved that an adequate action
programme can be drawn up for implementation.

This third set of factors which adds to the complexity of the
problem, is the *very complexity itself of the Indian cultural tradi-
tion*. Just what does 'indianness' mean ? 'Indianness' (65)

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(65) Times of India, Sunday Supplement, Jan. 12th, 1969. In an interview
    Prof. Srinivas of the Dept. of Sociology, University of Delhi was asked:
    How would you define Indianisation ? He replied : "Let me say at once,
    frankly, it is not clear to me. Secondly, I am frightened by the use of
    the term. Carelessly or casually used, it can become a slogan for dang-
    erous, obscurantist ideas, practices and instiutions. Knowing how deep
    and powerful are the forces of obscurantism in this country, I would be
    personally chary of using that term." He went on to say that Indian
    (Footnote continued on next page)

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even if identified with Hindu traditions includes : The sanskritic tradition comprising Brahminic tradition which e.g. does not permit meat or alcohol; the Kshatriya tradition which does permit alcohol and meat; the Vaishya tradition; the Shudra tradition; the various and varying Tribal traditions. It is also important to distinguish the Little Traditions and the Great Tradition. These latter terms are vague, especially on their periphery— where does one stop and the other begin—but they are the best constructs so far devised by social scientists, to help in the penetration and analysis of complex socio-cultural phenomena. Tradition is here used to mean a culture in so far as it is transmitted from generation to generation in a particular society; it includes not only oral traditions (i.e. tradition in the strict sense), but also practices, rituals, values, dance, music, clothing, art, philosophical systems, status and role systems, etc. and everything else that goes into the making of a culture.

Certain questions immediately come to mind, in the light of the above considerations: How aware is the majority community of this complexity? Is there ambivalence in their attitude to the 'indianness', with a sort of sub-conscious inferiority complex to the brahminic tradition ? How aware are the minority Christian communities of this cultural complexity ? How much cultural continuity does exist in our varying Christian communities with the 'present Hindu groups from which they were converted'? e.g. Christian kunbis with Hindu kunbis of the same locality. The degree of continuity will vary from community to community, from sub-group to sub-group within each community, from culture trait to culture trait within these various sub-groups.

(Footnote continued from previous page)

education must aim at building a new India based on our own needs and ideas. It must first of all cultivate a sense of nationalism. It must give citizenship training through social work. "We must reinterpret traditional thought to suit modern living. We must hand over not an old fossilised India, but a revitalised 20th century country to our children. The cover of sanctity must be stripped from the past. We must let children study the Ramayana and Mahabharata not as sacred literature and so above debate and controversy, but as folk tales which have certain sociological significance." The same applies to the scriptures of other religions which flourish in this country. Surely the reply of a man embued with the modernisation ideals as discussed above! J.P. Naik's answers to the same questions are basically the same.

(2) What is the *Christian Socio-Cultural Image*, as seen by other Indians, especially the majority community? (This problem was touched earlier to the Paper). The problem here to be considered is not what the Christian community is, but rather how do *other communities see* it. When an Indian identifies himself as a Christian, what image do other non-Christian Indians project upon him, what attitudes do they take towards him because of this 'pre-judgement', this projection? What emotional overtones are aroused in them when they hear the word 'Christian'? To what degree is this projection based on reality ? It is important to consider this for no matter how 'Indian' the Christian may be, and may feel himself to be, others see him differently, and those others happen to be the preponderant majority.

(*i*) How do non-Christians 'see' a Christian? Obviously this may vary from region to region, group to group, but the following judgements would seem to be fairly common among non-Christians concerning Christians.

Christians are considered to be not fully Indians, to be foreign, to be cut off more or less from the Indian cultural stream, to be too westernised, and more western than Indian; to despise things 'Indian' and desire and admire things foreign; to be too free in things sexual, and therefore to be morally lax. Many others could be suggested and added, but they could probably be included more or less under the one or other of the above.

(*ii*) *How based on reality are these assertions*, and what are the reasons behind these prejudgements, these projections? The reality of the prejudgements, is difficult to assess and indeed is not so important for reasons to be discussed. As regards the reasons behind these prejudgements, the following could be enumerated:

—Historical memories: these were discussed in (*ii*) above.

—Cultural continuity of Christian groups with their pre-Christian days, is often along the lines of Little Traditions and non sanskritic traditions. These were usually less visible or perceptible.

—Social isolation: This is perhaps a basic tendency of tradi-

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tional Indian life, under the influence of caste principles. Christians on their side often isolated themselves from Hindus and vice versa, because of their (differing) ideas of 'pollution' danger.

—Possible lack of discernment among Hindus *of the complexity* of the Indian cultural tradition. (see above)

—The fact that *most of the schools*, attendance at which is necessary for admission into many of the country's elite groups, *are English Medium* and *run by Christians*. (Opposition to these schools may be based on a complex of motives involving all three of these factors)

—The metaphysical presuppositions of the various schools of Hinduism towards the nature of religion, the nature of India, the place of conversion. These have been discussed above.

It is important, when considering the above, to realise that it is not just this factor or that, which is important in determining the socio-cultural image that 'Christians' project or that the majority groups project on a 'Christian'; rather *it is the composite of a number of factors.* Thus, e.g. why is it that other minorities like the Parsees, do not seem to have been accused so commonly of being 'unindian' etc. even though they do possess certain of the above characteristics. The significant difference between Parsees and Christians would seem to be that many of the Christian groups can be easily recognised by a *large number of highly visible* identification symbols: e.g. Portuguese names, western music and dancing, meat eating, alcohol drinking, western dress and home furnishings, etc. Most of these symbols are associated with the West, the former colonial powers, though inaccurately. The composite of these symbols and the factors mentioned above, do not seem to apply to the Parsees. (66)

(3) *Some Specific Problems and Tasks for 'Cultural Integration'*
When dealing with specific problems and tasks of cultural integration, we must keep in mind two points already discussed above. *First*, because all cultural integration is an ongoing process, the aim must be that the Church be integrated into the India of 2000 plus, and not into the India of 1968. As a conse-

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(66) The same might be said of many modernised Hindus. (Westernised)

quence, any action programme must be highly flexible and locally based as was discussed earlier when dealing with the India of Tomorrow. An 'All India' detailed plan, be it Liturgy, Education, etc., would seem to be ruled out.

Second, that the Puranic world view—at least one important stream of it—does conflict with the scientific 'Westernised' world view. Any attempt to Indianise Christian thought-systems so as to build them upon this Puranic tradition must take this conflict into account. Otherwise, we would seem to be building up a system with a 'built-in conflict" for the modern Christian Indian scientific man. This danger does not mean that such an attempt in some way or another should not be made. It is only means that we must look well before we leap. Perhaps it will be precisely by such an "Indianisation" of our thought and value systems, on the deepest level of motivation and human life, that our Indian Christians will find their true soul.

What then are the consequences to be drawn from the above analysis of India Today, and the position of the Christian communities ?

(*i*) The areas in the life of Christian communities in which *cultural continuity* already exists, *should be strengthened, developed*. Christians should be made more and more aware of this continuity so that they can assert it, be proud of it. Public relations organisations should be developed, no matter how simple, and social media of communications should be utilised to project this continuity and educate the Indian community at large. Emphasis should be put on those elements which are highly visible symbols of 'indianness', e.g. clothing, language, dance, music, songs, hymns, public ritual, customs etc.

Now, against the background of this principle, the education offered in many of our schools, especially English medium schools, present us with a special problem. Our children attend Catholic schools, mainly, schools especially set up for their educational benefit. At home, many receive little of traditional Indian culture. They go to our schools which teach syllabuses regulated by the Government. These syllabuses are science ("Modernity") oriented. The children are made to study Indian history, Indian geography and some Indian languages, but this study

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for one reason or another more often results in dislike for these subjects (especially where the Indian languages are concerned) rather than in appreciation and love. The schools often do include some 'things Indian' in their co-curricular programme e.g. vernacular plays, dramas, Indian music and dancing. (In two-shift schools this aspect of their education has to be drastically curtailed). Now generally in many schools, the Catholic children are notorious for their absence or lack of interest in these activities. Nor are they often encouraged or picked to participate in them. The non-Christian students, on the other hand who study in our schools, whilst generally receiving much from the all India cultural tradition in their homes, also make the most of the modern and Indian elements given in the school educational activities. They are thus availing themselves rightly of all that our schools have to offer, whilst many of our Catholic children are not. Our educationists have to make a deliberate effort to popularise and strengthen whatever "things Indian" are offered in our schools among the Catholic children, encouraging purposely these Catholic children who show interest in them. This will both help to break down the impression often given that such things are not for Catholics, and at the same time be itself an inspiration to other Catholics to do likewise.

(ii) In the light of 2000 plus, those areas of highly visible differentiating symbols by which a 'Christian' is easily identified, and the 'attribute of foreignness', etc. projected on to him *should be decreased*, e.g. Portuguese names, *exclusive* western music, dress, dancing, social customs, religious ritual, hymns, language (English). This does not necessarily mean doing away with these things for many of them have and will continue to be great helps to the Christian population in securing jobs, etc. Further, through the Modernisation process, they are and will continue to spread wider and wider in the whole Indian national community.

The Modernisation process is at work in Indian society like leaven in dough. It is working imperceptibly, silently, persistently, relentlessly. It is eating away at all the props and prejudices upon which traditional groupism, casteism, communalism is based. Secularism, secularisation, and even religious indifference, whether we like it or not, are spreading through the country, especially in urban areas, and among the educated. Catholics,

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Hindus and others are tending to leave their ghettos for a number of reasons—mostly socio-economic—and are moving into cosmopolitan housing blocks to live alongside people belonging to many communities. Increased educational and job opportunities have resulted in Catholics and others becoming more and more involved in a secular world—a world where the men they deal with rarely belong to the same faith, where advancement often means that they must take a post in some town where members of their own community are few, where the only people of their own background with whom they can seek friendship and recreation are members of other communities. These influences, which we should note well are not originating from within the Catholic community, are having a silent imperceptible effect in breaking down divisions within the country, are forcing people to develop new and wider loyalties, other than those based on religion, kin or caste. Anything, therefore, that Catholics can do to further and quicken this modernising process is to be encouraged, for if guided and helped, and freed from it's accompanying dangers of agnosticism, religious indifference and anti-religionism, it is one of the most potent forces working on our behalf for fuller integration of Christians into Indian life. Further, as mentioned above, it would seem that the strategic place to concentrate our efforts to help the modernisation process is in our schools, colleges and the urban centres and cities and in mass adult education and literacy classes in rural areas.

- (iii) *Greater involvement of Christian individuals and groups,* in Indian social, political and public life, than hitherto has been the case. Christians have to identify themselves with India, India's problems, show forth concern for their Indian fellowmen, by their active involvement in politics, social welfare schemes, on all levels—local, municipal, state and national. Thus, there should be involvement, not just in special 'Christian organisations' but in non-sectarian public organisations.

(iv) Education of people, priests, nuns, etc. in things 'Indian', especially the highly visible aspect of the Indian Cultural Tradition e.g. music, language, literature, dance, etc. Where Indian literature is concerned, great stress should be placed on the knowledge and appreciation of such classical texts, as Mahabharata, Ramayana, Bhagwadgita, the Bhagvata Purana, the Koran, and of the values they express. It might be objected that to

study these texts is to 'worship other gods' etc. But this is contrary to our practice. Christians have read and studied about Greek gods for centuries without believing in them. Further Christians have read the old Testament with all the apparently approved sins and crimes that it contains without ever being influenced by them. Much the same approach should be taken to classical Indian literature, for it is the cultural heritage of all Indians, Christians included. Such a knowledge and appreciation would go a long way to closing one great intellectual and emotional gap separating Christians from their fellow Indians. It is only through knowledge that true respect can evolve and develop. One should keep in mind however, that as with other aspects of Indian culture, there are many levels and many kinds. Thus e.g. classical Indian music and dance forms are only one part of the Indian cultural tradition of music and dance. Those music and dance forms which will be most easily accepted and appreciated by the local Christian community, which are more closely related to their present tastes, should provide the starting point for the reform, and not those forms which are more 'foreign' to their present taste. This is but common sense, as also in full agreement with the dynamics of culture change mentioned in Par. II. It is good to realise, that according to Indian writers, there is a crisis going on within the majority community itself, with regard to classical music. Further, there has been, it seems, a tremendous revival of bhajan singing— i.e. music and song, closer to the folk tradition than the classical—within the majority community itself, in some parts of the country.

(v) Such education involves the *beginning* of much research and experimentation on the local and regional level, and its study and persistent dissemination on as wide a base as possible. This has to be done bravely and humbly with a full realisation of the risks involved—risks of mistakes that will be made, of damage that will be caused, for it is a divine- human enterprise. Yet it is only by such risking that the Church can become present in India. It is only by a relatively wide degree of freedom of discussion and experimentation, with mutual confidence in the openness and responsibility of the authorities and the people, their mutual loyalty to each other, that many minds can come together, share their insights, correct and modify their plans, and so permit the Spirit to work through all members of the Church, through His diverse gifts, so that the Church can become

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present in Indian life.

(vi) Finally Christian life involves a culture system and therefore a system of statuses and roles. There is therefore a system of statuses and accompanying expected role behaviours among the clergy and the laity, as well as between them. If the Church then is to renew herself, she has to undergo a major culture change, a major reorganisation of her system of statuses and roles. Now if it is admitted that the Church today is clergy dominated, that the clergy tend to treat the laity patronisingly and paternally, and that according to Vatican II this has to change, then our bishops, priests, seminarians have to be re-educated into a new status-role system. In this new system, the bishops, and priests become, in a certain sense, equals with all other Christians, but equals having different interdependent and complementary functions. This would seem to be the basic implication of the teaching of Paul on the Mystical Body. Now this problem seems to be one on which attention is rarely focussed. In the present state of the Church, the young seminarian and priest forms his idea of priest-laity-bishop status and role expectations from the older priests and bishops and people among whom he has grown up—e.g. from the behaviour of his own parents, his parish priest and bishop, the priests in school etc. His status and role ideas are therefore usually formulated from the example of the unrenewed Church with its dominant paternal clergy and its docile, childlike faithful. It would seem therefore that seminaries have to aim at correcting these ideas and at developing 'renewed' ideas in our young priestly aspirants, concerning their future priestly status and that of their future parishioners. The same need for re-education would seem to exist for older priests, parish priests and bishops. Only with such re-education will it be possible for renewal to come about and the laity assume their rightful place in the Church, without unnecessary conflict, stress and strain.

APPENDIX

Jawaharlal Nehru "Discovery of India" Meridian Editions 1956. quoted Myrdal G. (1968) p. 75-77.

"Yet the past is ever with us and all that we are and all that we have comes from the past. We are its products and we live immersed in it. Not to understand it and feel it as something living within us is not to understand the present. To combine it with the present and extend it to the future, to break from it where it cannot so be united, to make all this the pulsating and vibrating material for thought and action—that is life" pp. 6-7.

"The rising middle classes....wanted some cultural roots to cling on to, something that gave them assurance of their own worth, something that would reduce the sense of frustration and humiliation that foreign conquest and rule had produced.. The past of India, with all its cultural variety and greatness, was a common heritage of all the Indian people, Hindu, Muslim, Christian and others, and their ancestors had helped to build it" p.343.

"India must break with much of her past and not allow it to dominate the present. Our lives are encumbered with the dead wood of this past; all that is dead and has served its purpose has to go. But that does not mean a break with, or a forgetting of, the vital and life-giving in that past. We can never forget the ideals that have moved our race, the dreams of the Indian people through the ages, the wisdom of the ancients, the buoyant energy and love of life and nature of our forefathers, their spirit of curiosity and mental adventure, the daring of their thought, their splendid achievements in literature, art and culture, their love of truth and beauty and freedom....their toleration of ways other than theirs, their capacity to absorb other peoples and their cultural accomplishments, to synthesise them and develop a varied and mixed culture....If India forgets them she will no longer remain India and much that has made her our joy and pride will cease to be" p. 522.

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Nehru also quotes Aurobindo Ghose. "If an ancient Indian of the time of the Upanishads of the Buddha, of the later classical age were to set down in Modern India....he would see his race clinging to forms and shells and rags of the past and missing 9/10th of its nobler meaning....he would be amazed by the extent of the mental poverty, the immobility, the static repetition, the cessation of science, the long sterility of art, the comparative feebleness of the creative intuition" p. 85.

Cf also Interviews with J.P. Naik, Educational Advisor, Govt. of India, M. N. Srinivas, Dept. of Sociology, Delhi University, in Times of India Supplement, Jan. 12th, 1969, for similar views.

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Religious Forces Shaping India Today

There are many forces at work in India today. Although these various forces may be studied and analysed separately, it is important to realise that they do not act separately. The web of Indian life is made of many threads which cross one another in a seemingly haphazard manner. Some of those threads are strong, some are weak. Movements, ideas, parties claim, the allegiance of the people and seek popular support with various degrees of success. Recently, at least in the political field, the facility with which responsible people change their allegiances has highlighted the fluidity of the situation. We are trying, in this paper, to discern, in the midst of all the political, social, cultural and economic fluctuations of modern India, those religious forces which have a chance to make their impact felt. How is the Church to assess the religious spiritual potential whose action can orientate the future of India ? In what measure can the Church offer to India her own religious and spiritual vitality for the shaping of the nation ?

What should be the attitude of the Church towards religious forces which do not belong to her ?

Since the Church, "at once a visible assembly and a spiritual community, goes forward together with humanity, and experiences the same earthly lot which the world does", and since she is called to serve "as a leaven and a kind of soul for human society," (1) the above questions are momentous. In order to try to answer them, we shall first look at the Indian religious scene as

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(1) Gaudium et Spes, no. 40.

it appears today. Its most distinguishing trait is its pluralism. We shall analyse that religious pluralism on two different levels: the denominational and the spiritual levels. This twofold analysis will make the first part of this paper. Secondly we shall try to assess the relevance of the various religious approaches and the possibility for the Church to collaborate with other groups or individuals in the building up of the nation into a prosperous and God-oriented people.

Summary

I. RELIGIOUS PLURALISM
        DENOMINATIONAL
        SPIRITUAL
II. RELIGIOUS RESPONSES
        THE CHRISTIAN RESPONSE
        THE HINDU RESPONSE
        THE ADIVASI RESPONSE
        THE MUSLIM RESPONSE
        THE SIKH RESPONSE
        THE BUDDHIST AND JAIN RESPONSES
        THE MARXIST RESPONSE
III. CONCLUSION

I. RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

Unlike many other nations where religious unity exists, India presents a religious pattern of great variety. Leaving out the smaller groups like the Parsis and the Jews, the official census lists six major religious communities: Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains. *Lumen Gentium*, after reminding us that "it has pleased God to make men holy and save them not merely as individuals without any mutual bonds, but by making them into a single people, a people which acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness" (2), tells us that the Church, which is the People of God, "although it does not actually include all men, is nonetheless a lasting and sure seed of unity, hope and salvation for the whole human race." (3) Because

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(2) Lumen, Gentium, no. 9
(3) Ibid. no. 9.

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"all men are called to salvation by the grace of God,"(4) the whole of mankind is already related to the Church. Through their common origin and their common final goal, "all peoples comprise a single community," (5) at the heart of which the Church, through her dynamic presence, acts as a leaven of unity with the mission to arouse in all men a deeper consciousness of their supernatural unity in Christ and of their common theocentric destiny: to give honour and glory to the Father.

Now, the central position of the Church and her vital relation with all other religious communities can be viewed from two different angles. First, from the angle of doctrines and religious tenets: the Church and the other religious communities are then considered as religious systems with their respective faiths and theologies. We are then in the sphere of *denominational pluralism*. Second, from the angle of personal realisation and of personal spiritual attitude. We are then in the sphere of *spiritual pluralism*.

1. Denominational Pluralism

As the sacrament of unity, the Church has the sacred mission to be the soul of Indian society: she "prays and labours in order that the entire world (and here, specifically, the whole of India) may become the People of God, the Body of the Lord, and the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and that, in Christ, the Head of all, there may be rendered to the Creator and Father of the Universe all honour and glory." (6) Thus the Church is at the centre. Around that centre, disposed in concentric circles whose proximity to the centre is determined by their closeness in doctrine and practice, are the other religious groups. Closest to the Church are the other Christian Churches whose members "are consecrated by baptism, through which they are united with Christ." (7) Then come the Jews with whom the Church shares the rich spiritual patrimony of the Old Testament. Then, the Muslims, who "adore one God, living and enduring, merciful and all-powerful, Maker of heaven and earth and Speaker to

(4) Ibid. no. 13.
(5) Nostra Aetate, no. 1.
(6) Lumen Gentium, no. 17.
(7) Lumen Gentium, no. 15.

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men." (8) Then we have the Sikhs, the Hindus, the Buddhists and the Jains. One could, of course, elaborate the scheme more accurately, specially in what concerns Hinduism. Hinduism is not a monolithic block; it is diversified into different schools and sects, with differing attitudes towards the Absolute and towards human liberation. But we shall have occasion to discuss those aspects of Hinduism later on.

As the circle broadens, the Church meets the vast group of those who, without specific religious affiliation, cherish spiritual values and, more or less consciously, believe in the existence of a Supreme Being whom they revere. Close to them are those whose agnosticism borders on indifference, they are not opposed to religion, but they do not see the need of it. Finally there is the section of those who are opposed to religion, because, in their eyes, religion is an obstacle to progress, it undermines human energy in the building up of the earthly city, it preaches resignation where revolt is needed, it spreads superstition and hampers the development of science.

Regarding this pluralistic pattern at the centre of which the Church lives her life, a few remarks are necessary.

(a) It is impossible to evaluate it statistically. The figures of an official census do not represent the personal views and convictions of the people. No census will ever give the number of agnostics and atheists.

(b) There is something artificial about the denominational classification; it is a classification of creeds rather than of persons. Actually, the most important thing to investigate when we speak of religious forces shaping India today is this: what hold have the various creeds on the persons who are supposed to profess them; what influence have they on their concrete lives and on the society in which they live? For instance, how many Hindus are actuated in their behaviour and attitudes by the belief that the visible world is an illusion or by their belief in re-birth ? How many Christians reveal in their conduct their common belonging to the Body of Christ ?

(c) Hence, after looking at the Indian pattern from the point of

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(8) Nostra Aetate, no. 3.

view of doctrines and tenets, we must consider it from a more vital point of view: that of spirtual vitality. And that brings us to the study of spiritual pluralism.

2. Spiritual Pluralism

This kind of pluralism cuts through the various groupsmentioned above. In other words, it does not correspond to the divisions of denominational pluralism. It exists in each group and may establish, between members of different groups, spiritual affinities which may go deeper than mere group affiliation. In a certain sense, the Church remains at the centre of this spiritual pattern, for the simple reason that the one Mediator, Jesus Christ, acts mysteriously on all men through the Church. At the same time, however, the Church veils the face of Christ, because the Church is imperfect and always fails to respond fully to the Spirit animating her. That is the reason why "she exhorts her sons to purify and renew themselves so that the sign of Christ may shine more brightly over the face of the earth."(9) In other words, both in the individual consciousness of Christians and in the collective consciousness of the People of God, there is a deep sense of inadequacy, which is the voice of the Spirit calling the whole Church to a more perfect charity.

This religious and spiritual phenomenon is not proper to the Church alone. The Spirit is also at work outside the Church and his promptings receive responses similar to those of the Church. It is the degree of generosity of these responses which determines the pattern of spiritual pluralism.

Both in and outside the Church, there are those for whom religion is based on a deep and personal realisation. Their faith is a real encounter with God and God is the unique living centre of their whole existence. Men and women of God, their prayer, adoration and dedication animate whatever they do. They are the true contemplatives who have found in their living faith the focal point which gives meaning to everything.

With a lesser degree of God-realisation, others live a life of dedication to their fellow-men. The reference to God in their life may be more or less explicit. Their opening to others may be

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(9) Lumen Gentium, no. 15.

accompanied by a life of regular prayer and of faithful religious observance. Or they may also be less 'pious' and attach less importance to religious practices. They have this trait in common: religious observance and practice are *not* the most important part of religion. Religion is first and foremost humble and selfless service. Explicitly or implicitly, they live the words of Christ: "In so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me." (10)

At a lower level of God-consciousness, religion becomes more self-centred. It is a quest for individual salvation or liberation. Its main element is observance. Everything is conceived under the angle of merit and demerit. Even the service of others becomes one means, among many others, of acquiring merits and of bettering one's chance to be saved.

Religion can step down lower still. It may be practised as a means to obtain temporal favours. Thus, the businessman who goes to the temple when an important bargain is to be concluded, or the pious man who makes a novena to gain at the races. God is the provider of favours; He hardly counts for Himself.

Finally, there is a religious indifference; without recourse to God one tries to live as comfortably as possible. Not much thought is given to the final outcome of life. A few traditional practices may be kept because it is a matter of good form in the society where one lives.

That the various attitudes described above are not 'denominational', is quite obvious. They can be found and are found in every denomination. It is important to emphasize the fact, because if we limit our study to a mere theological analysis of the religious doctrines embodied in the various faiths and try to define the role of the Church in the sole context of 'denominational pluralism', we run the risk of wasting a lot of time in mere abstractions. Our theological task is both important and urgent, but it is a task which must keep in close contact with living men.

If we use here, as in the case of denominational pluralism, the

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(10) Mt. 25: 40; see also James 1:27.

image of concentric circles, we shall realise immediately that the two figures do not coincide. The centre, which is the sphere where the Spirit's action is least hampered, is a community whose members belong to various groups. And the same must be said of the various concentric circles gravitating around that centre. A statistical account of spiritual pluralism is still more impossible than that of denominational pluralism.

This is the general background against which we shall try to assess the religious forces at work in India today. Placing ourselves in the supernatural perspective, i.e. the only real perspective, we should consider all forces and movements—even secular forces and movements—as responses to the historical call of God. The call of God takes the form of a challenge differently understood by different individuals and groups. No one can claim that he understands the challenge fully. In every response there is a necessary ambiguity, for the simple reason that, as long as the pilgrimage of mankind towards its consummation lasts, human weakness and the forces of Satan are at work, trying to blur the real issue and to contaminate the most genuine efforts towards man's true welfare. That ambiguity exists everywhere, both inside and outside the Church. To remember this will help us greatly in our assessment: we shall remain critical in our praises and balanced in our condemnations.

II. RELIGIOUS RESPONSES

The divine challenge is not an abstract challenge. It is modern India: an immense country with 500 million inhabitants. Twenty years ago the country won its political independence at the cost of a partition based on religious antagonism between Hinduism and Islam. The country suffers from poverty, social inequality, overpopulation, linguistic and social dissensions. It has embarked on a policy of secular socialism with a view to bringing about social equality and material prosperity for all. It is still far from having achieved its objective.

India is part of the world and means to play her role in modern civilisation, within the context of the technological age, as a developing country. At the present, it is in a state of confusion, torn between factions and without adequate leadership. Social inequality remains shocking and discontent has become articulate,

even vociferous. In general it can be said that the urgency of the temporal tasks has blurred the relevance of spiritual and eternal values. We are living in an India which is more and more secularized. Such is, in very short, the historical context in which God's Kingdom is to be established.

In our analysis, we shall keep in mind the three main characteristics of all religious responses : their *doctrinal aspects*; their *spiritual vitality* manifested in the concrete lives of the members of religious groups; their *necessary ambiguity* due to human limitations and weaknesses.

1. The Christian Response

The Church is called to serve "as a leaven and a kind of soul for human society". Let us consider, not what the Church should be in order to fulfil that mission, but what she is actually. What are the religious forces in the Church which command and direct her life and her activities? What are the motivations, implicit or explicit, which inspire ?

(a) **The Contemplative Ideal.** We speak of this 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; 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." (11) How far can we say this experience is lived in the Indian Church? Does not Christianity in India appear chiefly as a "way of works"? Is the Church at large, under the action of the Spirit, "turned towards God to adore and to love"? Does the eschatological consummation in which, Christ having handed over the Kingdom to God the Father, God will be all in all (1 Cor. 15: 24-21), constitute the inspiring vision of the Church's activities? Can the Indian Church recognize herself in these words of *Lumen Gentium*: "The Church becomes on earth the initial budding of that kingdom. While she slowly grows, the Church strains toward the consummation of the kingdom and, with all her strength, hopes and desires to be united in glory with her

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(11) Lumen Gentium, no. 4.

King.?" (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 theo-centric meaning of human life and of the transcendence of the consummation of human destiny.

(b) **Conversion Motivation.** This motivation has been and still is one of the most powerful stimuli in the Church in India. The proof of this is the frustration caused in many hearts by the frequent repetition in some quarters that conversion is not so important.   That the duty to preach and baptize remains quite relevant in our modern times is obvious and the Council has not failed to affirm it.   Yet, we know that modern India is not likely to become Christian in a 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 ? 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, replaced the Gospel by the Catechism ?   What is our reaction to the catechetical renewal ?

There has perhaps been a greater lack of vision in our approach to other religions. We have dreamt of conquest: the other religions have been considered fortresses to be besieged and conversion has, sometimes, been viewed as a mere passage from one group to another.   We have not sufficiently trusted the wisdom of the Father and have implicitly blamed Him for allowing other religions to exist. We have lost sight of the eschatological consummation which is beyond time and space and have been unable to perceive the providential contributions

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(12) Lumen Gentium, no. 5.

which other religions are called to offer. Dom Bede Griffiths has written :

"The goal of the Christian mission cannot be replaced in space and time. It would be quite wrong to think that we look forward to the establishment of a universal Church in which all other religions will be absorbed. The fulfilment of the mission of the Church will only come at the end of time, when the full meaning of the divine plan will be revealed. It is only then that we shall be able to see what is the relation of Hinduism or Buddhism or Islam or any other religion to this plan."(13)

It is the mission of the Church to make the Gospel penetrate all spheres of Indian life and the success of that mission will never be evaluated by means of statistics about baptisms. 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.

(c) Ecumenism. The atmosphere of growing mutual esteem and love among the Christian Churches in India is a religious force full of promise. Although the ecumenical spirit has not yet reached the mass of Christians, it is already bearing fruits in the brotherly relations established among clergy and leading laymen. There have been complaints among Catholics that the ecumenical movement has brought down the number of conversions from Protestantism to Catholicism. Such complaints are the result of a lack of vision and generosity. We must realize that the One Catholic Church to which all Christians are called by Christ is a Church purified, transformed and divested of much of its rigid institutionalism. "There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart. For it is from newness of attitudes (cfr. Eph. 4 : 23), from self-denial and unstinted love, that yearnings for unity take their rise and grow towards maturity. Let all Christ's faithful remember that the more purely they strive to live according to the Gospel, the more they are fostering and even practising Christian unity." (14) "This change of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private

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(13) Clergy Monthly, May 1968, p. 220.
(14) Unitatis Redintegratio, no. 7.

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prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the Soul of the whole ecumenical movement."(15) The scope for common prayer and common action is great: theological meetings, social work, witnessing to the spiritual destiny of mankind, so many spheres in which all Christians can begin to repair the immense harm done by division. (16)

(d) **Educational and Social Work.** It is for the service rendered to the nation by her various institutions of learning and by her social and charitable works that the Church is best known in India and has gained appreciation and praise. It is through such activities that the Church, through her priests, religious and laymen, can bring Christian influence to bear on the various aspects of Indian life. Unfortunately, the Church is not recognized yet as an integral part of Indian life. The missionary, whether he be a foreigner or an Indian, is still considered as a member of a foreign institution. Perhaps this is partly due to our eagerness to keep our institutions distinctly confessional. If we can read the signs of the present times, we should foresee and be prepared for a deeper integration in the life of the country and a closer collaboration with non-Christians. We may be one day face to face with a situation in which we shall have to give up our visible identity and, like the grain of wheat, die in order to bear fruit. Both clergy and laity may be called to live an anonymous Christian life without the support of our present institutional framework.

(e) **Authoritarianism and Clericalism.** Much is said and written

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(15) Ibid. no. 8.

(16) While Speaking of ecumenism, we must realize that the Church is in a privileged position, as her contact with both orthodox and Protestants is becoming closer. United in a common apostolic task, Catholics and Orthodox may, while respectfully studying the ancient upanishadic traditions of a spirituality centred upon the contemplation of the Paramatma, help one another to understand better their own Christian theology of the Holy Spirit. Catholics and Protestants may study together the many 'bhakti' movements that are still today the most vital expression of Hindu religion among the masses. While doing so, they will come to a deeper understanding of their Christian unity of Faith and also of their still existing differences in the approach to worship, communion in prayer, veneration of images and saints, popular liturgies. Christians have much to learn from one another; all may learn much from non-Christians.

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about the crisis of obedience. Much could be said and written about the crisis of authority. It is evident that the People of God in India begin to realise that it is a Body in which all the members have their active functions. For too long, the Church has been identified with the hierarchy, and the laity kept in a kind of infantile passivity. The awakening is taking place. The hierarchy should gladly welcome this awakening and foster it. "Let sacred pastors recognize and promote the dignity as well as the responsibility of the layman in the Church. Let them willingly make use of his prudent advice. Let them confidently assign duties to him in the service of the Church, allowing him freedom and room for action. Further, let them encourage the layman so that he may undertake tasks on his own initiative."(17) "Priests must sincerely acknowledge and promote the dignity of the laity and the role which is proper to them in the mission of the Church. They should scrupulously honour that just freedom which is due to everyone in this earthly city. They should listen to the laity willingly, consider their wishes in a fraternal spirit and recognize their experience and competence in the different areas of human activities, so that together with them they will be able to read the signs of the times."(18) In general, the People of God expect from the hierarchy a more positive attitude. Authority should be exercised not mainly to put people on guard against possible innovations, but to encourage initiative. There is in India a significant lack of confidence in the charismatic Church.

2. The Hindu Response

The great difficulty in describing the Hindu response is that it is varied and complex. Scholars who have tried to find the common basis of all Hindu sects and movements have reduced it to three tenets : the acceptance of the Vedas as revealed truth, the belief in the law of Karma and the belief in re-birth. It may be relevant here to wonder how much these three fundamental beliefs affect the lives of the majority of Hindus in modern India. The first one, i.e. the acceptance of the Vedas as revealed truth has no practical impact: the various sects have their Sacred Books, independently of the Vedas. The last two, belief in the law of Karma and in re-birth, are a clear indication of

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(17) Lumen Gentium, no. 37.
(18) Presbyterorum Ordinis, no. 9.

the Hindu conception of man. Man in Hinduism is a composite being in which the spirit is held in bondage by matter. Human existence is a punishment for sins committed in a previous life and the spiritual ideal is one of liberation of the spirit from the bondage of matter. The Christian conception of man is different : in man, spirit and matter form a unity, willed by God and it is the total man whom God calls to salvation, the final consummation of which is the resurrection of the body. In the present context of technological civilisation a Christian may wonder how a Hindu can logically devote himself wholeheartedly to the temporal tasks of economic and social uplift and cherish all the earthly values implied by these tasks.

Yet, the modern Hindu, especially in the cities, is fully engrossed in his temporal tasks. He believes in the value of matter, of human existence, of social uplift. This goes to show that the impact of reality is more powerful than that of doctrines. Christian spirituality, too, has been strongly influenced by modern life. There was a kind of Hindu flavour in some utterances of Christian asceticism regarding the body and the almost exclusive stress laid on the salvation of the *soul*. The necessity to remain in contact with the modern world and to show that Christianity was not indifferent to the betterment of this world led to the "revalorisation" of the body and of matter, thus restoring to the Christian outlook the plenitude it had partly lost. For Hinduism, the impact of modern civilisation poses a question which is more radical. Yet, on both sides, a similar danger is lurking: that of being so absorbed in the temporal as to forget the eternal. A closer contact between Christian and Hindu spirituality would certainly help towards a more integrated approach to the problem of economic and social development.

This being said about Hinduism in general, let us try to analyse the main religious attitudes of the modern Hindus.

(a) **The Vedantic Attitude.** It has been a tendency among scholars to reduce Hinduism to Vedanta. It is a pity, because Hinduism possesses many other riches than Vedanta. Vedantic theology, however, is of basic importance for any attempt at building up a Christian theology for India. The work done in that direction by Johanns, Dandoy, Bayart, Panikkar, Griffiths and

others is to be pursued if Christian truth has to find an expression which is relevant to the Indian context.

As to the impact which Vedantism has on the life of the people and on their vision of man and of this world, it must be admitted that it is slender. The pressure of economic necessity among the poor and the rush for wealth and comfort among the rich are hardly compatible with the Vedantic contempt for this 'illusory' world. Indians, in general, are not likely to find their inspiration in the esoteric mysticism of Vedanta. There have been, moreover, attempts at modernising traditional Vedanta and at making it less foreign to the aspirations of modern India. The most important re-interpretations of the traditional doctrine are those of Sri Aurobindo and of Swami Vivekananda.

(b) **Popular Hinduism.** As a religious force, popular Hinduism is the most powerful at work in India. Like all popular religions, it is a phenomenon with many facets. There are numerous sects, groups and cenacles ; there are numerous practices, numerous superstitions and numerous manifestations of genuine religious spirit. As in Christianity and Islam, so also in popular Hinduism, the whole range of what we have called spiritual pluralism is represented. Genuine prayer and devotion, self-dedication to God and the neighbour, delicate moral sense, a quasi-magical belief in practices, emotional manifestations of piety, belief in astrology and palmistry, superstitions and fatalism, everything is found in popular Hinduism. As a religious phenomenon, it is as rich and varied as popular Christianity. Between the two, there is a good amount of similarity in the field of practices and of mental and emotional attitudes.

If Vedanta can offer to Christian theology a fertile field of speculation, popular Hinduism is a rich mine for Christian liturgy. Hindu worship has elaborated a vast system of signs and symbols, a religious music of great beauty and a wealth of religious poetry from which we can draw abundantly. Everybody knows the accent of pure devotion to be found in the great Hindu Bhaktas, the spell exercised on people by kirtans and bhajans and the popularity of the great pilgrimages. In a certain sens, popular Hinduism has the vitality of medieval Christianity.

Hinduism is the religion of castes. Whatever may be said

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for the historical role played by caste, it remains undeniable that the caste system advocates a fragmentation of human society which is in direct opposition to the divinely established unity of mankind. The official attitude adopted by the Constitution has not been assimilated by Hinduism, especially in the countryside: as a negative religious force, caste is still alive. There are, however, within Hinduism, sects and movements which reject caste.

Hinduism with its fundamental tenet—the law of Karma—remains an individualistic religion. It usually fosters a very strong family spirit. Respect and love for parents are cherished virtues in Hinduism, and the sanctity of the home is still preserved with great care. Individual and social morality, as codified in the *Dharamashastra*, is usually sound. It has to face many problems in modern life: corruption and malpracticesas well as sexual laxity are a cause of frequent temptations. But that is not a specifically Hindu problem: it affects everybody.

(c) **Syncretism.** In the nineteenth century, the desire to adapt Hinduism to modern mentality and to defend it against the accusations of non-Hindus, inspired various reforms, several of which became the vehicle of syncretism. The most prominent and active of these movements is the Ramakrishna Mission. But, under some form or other, syncretism has spread far and wide, not only among the sophisticated, but also among the simple people. The usual expression of syncretism is well-known : all religions are equal, they all lead to the same goal, although they may use different ways. It is customary to hear that all religions are fundamentally identical and differ only by external and adventitious elements like creeds and rituals. The syncretist is in a comfortable position, because he can profess absolute tolerance and reject all forms of narrow sectarianism. He has a kind of superior sympathy for all religions which he considers as so many partial approximations of true and genuine religion. He is a universalist and wishes to see all religions to come to the final realisation that they are fundamentally one. The process of unification is not one of absorption by which all religions would eventually be converted to one particular religion, but a process of gradual purification leading all religions to shed all adventitious elements and to realise their unity in the pure

Religion of the Spirit.

It has often been said that syncretism is the greatest obstacle
to the mission of the Church, because it fosters religious indiffe-
rentism and upholds the meaninglessness of conversion from
one religion to another. On the other hand, there is in syncre-
tism a genuine desire for unity which cannot be ignored. There
is also in syncretism a strong reminder that religion is first of
all an internal attitude and cannot be reduced to a set of regu-
lations and practices. Syncretism is, in fact, a very ambiguous
religious force. It cannot be dismissed summarily, and it cannot
be admitted wholesale. An interesting exchange of views has
recently been published in the *Clergy Monthly* (May 1968) bet-
ween A.K. Saran and Bede Griffiths. Hindu syncretism tends to
consider history as a process which leads nowhere, since the
ultimate essence of religion is for ever present and has only to
be discovered. Once the timeless essence has been dis-
covered, history appears in its true nature: an illusory process
which has veiled the timeless essence and is now discarded.
The Christian view (which is also, at least partly, the view of
Sri Aurobindo) on the contrary, believes that history leads
somewhere and that the fulfilment is gradually built up and in-
tegrates in itself, giving it its true meaning, the whole historical
process. Yet, there is between syncretism and Christianity a
common element which is of great importance: it is the conviction
that fulfilment is beyond time. Thus syncretism can offer a very
salutary corrective to a historical view of Christianity which has
lost its eschatological perspective. In other words, an intelligent
dialogue with syncretism (and syncretism is always anxious to
dialogue) would dispel our dream of a universal religion in time.
It would considerably purify our approach to other religions and
confer on it a serenity and a sincerity which it often lacks. This
encounter with syncretism could also make the syncretist realise
that all religions have a true historical mission in God's plan,
and it would make us more conscious of the specific mission of
Christianity which, "as a leaven and soul of human society,"
must act, not as an absorbent, but as a leaven.

There is another message of syncretism which has a very
positive value. When the syncretist despises creeds and rituals as
mere adventitious elements, he is evidently off the track. On the
other hand, the tendency to consider formulae as immutable

and to give an absolute character to practices and rites which are purely relative (the extreme case of that tendency being: if the genuflexion goes, the Church goes), could find a welcome antidote in sharing with syncretism something of its relativism regarding creeds and rituals. Religion will not suffer from a deeper interiorisation and there is no doubt that internal purification will lead to an ever deeper realisation of the essentials and a concomitant conviction that whatever is mutable has a purely relative value. This has been brought out very clearly in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy : "The liturgy is made up of immutable elements divinely instituted, and of elements subject to change. These not only may but ought to be changed with the passage of time if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become unsuited to it." (19)

(d) **The Unattached Hindus.** In the urban, educated population of India, a good number of persons have no allegiance to any group or sect. They are the unattached Hindus. Deeply influenced by syncretism, they yet keep a genuine religious sense. They are mostly agnostics. They believe in some Supreme Being and in their conscience. They are, of course, under the influence of popularised modern philosophy, especially Freud and a touch of existentialism. They like to read anthologies of religious literature with extracts from all religious sacred books. Intellectually they are structureless. In a certain sense, they are so open that they allow everything to enter into their spiritual outlook. They are a puzzle and even a source of exasperation to many Christians who fail to understand how one can live in such a spiritual confusion.

Such spiritual confusion is a rather common phenomenon nowadays. Even in the Church, after the jolt given by the Second Vatican Council, a good number of persons are confused and upset. It goes to show that the security provided by rigidly defined norms and by neat formulae may not be the criterion of genuine religion. There is a sense of mystery and wonder which has to be safe-guarded, the feeling that man is unable to grasp the divine mystery and must worship it "in the cloud of unknowing". In the presence of unattached Hindus, we realise better

(19) Sacrosanctum Concilium, no. 21.

the necessity to strike a balance between inconsistent agnosticism and dogmatic cocksureness.

(e) **Political Hinduism.** The phenomenon of political Hinduism must be seen in its historical background. Muslim invasion and domination created among the Hindus a sense of frustration and hidden revolt. When British power put an end to Muslim rule, many Hindus, among whom no less a person than Raja Ram Mohan Roy, hailed the advent of the British as a providential liberation. Under the impact of Western ideas, the national movement was born. At the same time, faced with the menace of Christianity, Hinduism felt the need to reform itself and to show that it had nothing to gain from the 'foreign' religion. The bitter controversies of the nineteenth century between Hindus and Christian missionaries hardened the position. The secular approach to nationalism, represented chiefly by Surendranath Banerjee, was soon overtaken by the ideals of a Hindu revival. For some Indian nationalism became Hindu nationalism and this created, especially among the Muslims, a sense of suspicion and despair. Militant Hinduism became a force whose activities were greatly responsible for the partition of India. Opposition to and hatred for, Islam and Christianity have remained up to today the characteristics of that brand of Hinduism. On the part of Christianity, strictures against Hinduism and the triumphalism of the so called 'conquest' of India for Christ did not contribute towards a rapprochement. Historical parallels to militant Hinduism can be found in the antagonism between Islam and Christianity at the time of the Crusades and in the bitterness with which Catholics and Protestants fought each other at the time of the wars of religion. Those religious antagonisms are used as a favourite argument by syncretists to prove that religious competition as a divisive force is the result of superficial differences which hide the essential unity of all religions.

One may be allowed to wonder how a Catholic country would react to a strongly organised Hindu missionary movement. Not much imagination is needed to picture the programme and activities of a Catholic Mahasabha or Jan Sangh. This, of course, is not meant as a justification of militant Hinduism, but it may help us to understand how such movements are possible.

Christianity has undergone a profound change in its attitude

towards Hinduism. Militant Hinduism, unfortunately, remains very much what it was. It is a dynamic force which cannot be ignored. It is opposed to secularism and stands at the extreme right of the political pattern of India. It spreads communalism and hatred and constitutes a real danger to India's integrity.

To fight hatred with hatred is no answer. Disinterested service, in spite of the most malicious accusations, peaceful assertion of our rights, a clearer and sounder conception of the nature of the mission of the Church, are the main elements of our response. We must not ignore either that we are not absolutely blameless.

The great complexity of Hinduism in India today has been sketched. There would be much more to say. But this may be deemed sufficient as a basis for discussion.

3. The Muslim Response

Muslims form the strongest minority of India. Their religious history since the advent of the British power in India is intimately tied up with the political history of the country. Unlike the Hindus, who, at the beginning of the British rule, welcomed the colonial power as a liberating force, the Muslims were dumbfounded by the collapse of the Muslim political structure which sustained both their social and religious life. The orthodox reaction was one of resistance and isolation; it was impossible for Muslims to live under a non-Muslim power. The call was given for a stricter adherence to the spirit of the Koran and to the practice of Islam: prayer, fast, pilgrimage. The part played by Muslims in the 'Mutiny' was greatly inspired by their religious opposition to the 'Christian' rule of the British. After the 'Mutiny', the Muslims realised that they were lagging far behind the Hindus, because they had kept aloof and had tried to remain uncontaminated by the influence of the West. Their attempt to integrate themselves in the new order of things suffered very much from that handicap. The fluctuations of the Muslim attitude towards the independence movement, and especially towards the Congress are well known. They eventually culminated in the two-nation theory and in the partition. According to a Muslim historian, the partition made the situation of Indian

Muslims more critical: "They became a much smaller minority in India, physically, not less but more vulnerable by the creation of the separate state of Pakistan, with their loyalty open to suspicion and doubt, and their future nothing but the darkness of uncertainty."(20)

The sense of insecurity has strengthened the spirit of solidarity among Muslims. As a religious body they are already strongly structured: they have deep faith, they practise their religion without fear and they have a high standard of moral values. The Second Vatican Council has underlined the affinity between their beliefs and Christian beliefs and has called on both Christians and Muslims "to make common cause, on behalf of all mankind, to safeguard and foster social justice, moral values, peace and freedom."(21)

Usually Islam is considered as exclusive of all other religions and Muslims as impervious to any kind of dialogue. Yet, among Indian Muslims, there are a few great personalities who have a remarkably broad outlook. Analysing the religious writings of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, M. Mujeed, in the book quoted above, writes the following :

"The Qur'an does not ask followers of other religions to accept Islam as an altogether new faith. On the contrary, it asks them to return to the true form of their own religion.. The Qur'an says, if you do not deny that there is one Creator who has created the universe, with all that goes on in it, that there is one Providence which nurtures all alike, then why do you deny that there is only one Law, one spiritual truth, which has been revealed in the same way to all mankind? You have one Father (Rabb), you all repeat the name of the same God, all spiritual leaders have shown one and the same path. Is it not, then, the extremity of misguidedness, the murder of common sense, that every group is the enemy of every other group, and every man hates every other man, when there is one basic relationship, one purpose, one path ? In whose name and for whose sake is all this dissension and war? Is it not in the name of the

(20) **M. Mujeeb**, The Indian Muslims, London, Allen & Unwin, 1967, p. 440.
(21) Nostra Aetate, no. 3.

one God, and of the religions revealed by this one God, which have made all bow at the same threshold, and united all in the same bond of brotherhood ?

One cannot say whether Maulana Azad realized the full implications of this doctrine. If the one God whom all worship revealed all the religions that centre round belief in Him, His Providence, His graciousness, His mercy and His guidance, and the mission of Islam was to make believers in one God realize that there was a spiritual bond uniting them all, then the fact of the Muslims regarding themselves as a separate community must be considered a historical accident and not a doctrine of Islam. Maulana Azad emphasizes the difference between *din*, and *shari'ah* and holds that while the *din* is essentially one, there must be a variety of *shari'ahs* in view of the diversity of circumstances in which human groups have developed. The *shari'ahs* need not be exclusive or antagonistic; if they are, they need to be reformed in the light of the fundamental principle of the *din*. The *shari'ah* of Islam, however highly one may think of it, is also the result of a historical development. It ought not to be exclusive in spirit when the *din* is inclusive; and if, in any instance, we find that it divides when it should unite, the validity of the relevant injunctions should be examined. Perhaps some day it will be acknowledged by the Indian Muslim that Maulana Azad had in fact discovered a new world of religious thought to redress the balance of the old."(22)

Another Indian Muslim, S. Abid Hussain, thinks that, in the recent history of Islam in India, the Muslims have committed the mistake of remaining isolated from the cultural life of the Hindu majority. He seems to believe that, without compromise in the matter of religious faith, the Muslims, could have integrated themselves better in the pattern of India's national life. Instead of being concerned with the survival of their community, they should have looked further, even further than the nation: "What really exists is the outer circle comprehending the whole inhabited world and indicating that the whole human race is the 'clan of

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(22) **M. Mujeeb**, op. cit., pp. 462-463.

God', and all men are really brothers-in-God."(23)

There is much in common between Christianity and Islam in modern India. Besides the spiritual affinities between the two faiths, there is the fact that Muslims and Christians are minority groups in India and can unite their efforts for the safeguard of the secular character of the state. Theologically, too, a closer contact between the two groups would help towards the solution of common problems, among which the two most important appear to be the re-thinking of the meaning of conversion and the necessity of cultural integration.

4. The Adivasi Response

The response given to Christianity by the *Adivasis* and the the flourishing Churches that have grown out of that response are clear indications of their religious potential. Although we are not here directly concerned with the analysis of conversion work, it is interesting to note the affinity that exists between their religious outlook and that of Christians. As stated by one who has lived among them for many years, "from the religious point of view they are a special group. They believe in a personal God, omnipotent and good, and in some form of after-life, not in re-birth, but in some reward or punishment. Spiritually and morally they are equally remarkable. They can be said to possess the *anima naturaliter christiana*. Spiritually they form a more uniform pattern than most other religious groups". With the spread of education and their migration to the other parts of the country caused by modernisation and industrialisation the Adivasis may one day represent, in Indian society, a force to be reckoned with.

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(23) **S. Abid Hussain**, The Destiny of Indian Muslims, Bombay, Asian Publ. House, 1965, p. 216.

Yet, it must be borne in mind that the ideologies of people like Maulana Azad, Professor Mujeeb and even Dr. Zakir Hussain represent only one point of view of Islam in India. Their liberalism is not shared by the majority of Muslims. In fact, the Muslim in India today tends to be conformist in his attitudes. The position of Muslims in India, both before and after partition, has been shrewdly analysed by Dr. T. G. Percival Spear, in Philip Mason's book *Unity and Diversity.*

5. The Sikh Response

Although the original inspiration of Sikhism was to foster a kind of religious spirit independent of sectarian allegiance, Sikhism has become a kind of Church without specialized clergy. It rejected caste-distinctions and developed a simple ritual. Under Jahangir and Aurangzeb who looked with suspicion on the militant character of Sikhism and tried to suppress it through violent persecutions, a deep antagonism arose between Sikhism and Islam. It had a terrible climax at the time of partition.

The Sikhs form a well-knit community. Their deep veneration for the *Adi-granth*, which is the centre of their cult, their strong monotheism, their prayer centred on God's praise, their aversion for elaborate ritual and priesthood, their belief in karma and re-birth, their total dependence on God's will, their refusal to divide human society into castes, all this gives to Sikhism a kind of universality which is surprisingly limited by its close group-mentality. Yet, in practice, the open hospitality practised by the *gurudwaras* is a fine example of universal love.

6. The Buddhist and Jain Responses

Besides a number of beliefs common to Buddhists, Jains and Hindus, the two minorities under study have some specific contribution to offer to religious dialogue. Neither, however, has a very deep impact on Indian life in general.

Indian Buddhism is somehow amorphous. Buddhist monasticism is not very conspicuous. The deep feeling for human suffering which characterized Buddhism, and the universal friendliness and compassion it preaches are certainly very relevant in modern India, not only because misery and suffering are distinctive features of Indian life, but also because relief and social service, to fulfil their true purpose, should be inspired by a deep love for persons and not be reduced to the operation of impersonal agencies.

Jainism, even more than Buddhism, preaches 'ahimsa' and practises it to a degree that may appear exaggerated. An active section of the Jain community is characterized by its adherence to, and propaganda for, fundamental morality. They advocate

the practice of truthfulness and honesty with great conviction. There is no doubt that these two fundamental virtues could find a much broader scope in India's private and public life.

7. The Marxist Response

In spite of its connection with dialectical materialism and its declared opposition to religion, Marxism, in its various manifestations, constitutes a 'quasi-religion' which attracts many Indian intellectuals and large numbers of young people precisely because it gives them a cause to live for, a view of life and an answer to the basic questions of human existence, and because it calls for that absolute commitment which is generally associated with religious belief. It is important that we should, more positively, realize this 'religious' and positive aspect of Marxism. The Christian message must be presented to Indian youth and intelligentsia as a world-building force calling for an even greater commitment and giving answers of deeper and higher value than those offered by political ideologies. Here especially must be emphasised the 'personalistic' aspect of our faith: respect for human freedom, insistence upon personal responsibility, essential unity of all individuals with the social duties this implies. The Christian values which have gone astray in Marxism should make the subject of our dialogue with Marxists; and our approach to Marxism should go much further than a mere desire to refute it or to consider it as the greatest social evil of our times.

III. CONCLUSION

The mission of the Church is to be a spiritually leavening presence in the midst of the non-Christian world. Theologically speaking, the Church is at the centre of things. Is there not a cleavage between our theology and our practice? Is the Church in vital contact with those masses that must be 'leavened up'? In many parts of India, especially in large regions of Northern India, there may have been too much 'juxtaposition' without real 'penetration'. Local churches and Christian institutions have been established in many centres throughout the land. Often these have little or no contact with the more dynamic and influential sections of the non-Christian society in the same area. The intelligentsia, the world of industrial labour, the more

important centres where the future engineers and technicians are trained, who will assume an ever increasing role in the buildingup of the fast developing Indian society, the more vital centres of non-Christian religious activities, all these are, in many parts of India, without any deep contact with the Church. This seems to call for a certain re-orientation of our apostolic work.

In order to perceive those religious forces which offer a chance of collaboration and in order to assess their value, 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 many more men who know and respect the non-Christian traditions of India. Too many of our leading men, remarkable scholars in Canon Law, are ignorant of the spiritual values that make men live around them; too many of the leaders are 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 the spiritual understanding of the non-Christians.

Spiritual sensitivity is the way towards humble and apostolic 'incarnation'. In order to be truly a leavening force, the Church must sacrifice much of what has often, sincerely, been a 'prestige policy'. In many places the Christian community found itself despised. Much was done to gain for it esteem, appreciation, admiration. This has, in various instances, led to the building up of first class and impressive institutions and also inclined some to establish association with the more conservative, rich and socially high sections of the population. These institutions were not, and are not the natural expression of the local churches. They could not and cannot be supported by the Indian Christians themselves. The association with the higher classes is often due to non-Christian factors, e.g. the fact that many of our schools and colleges teach in a foreign medium and give a foreign culture considered as a sign of social distinction. This has led to some artificiality and untruth: for many the Christian Church is first and foremost that ensemble of costly and impressive institutions of education and charity which evidently depend upon foreign aid and personnel, which do not appear to them as the humble witness of the local Christian community. Even our Christians, especially in Northern India, do not feel that they are responsible

for these institutions, they rather look up to them as possible means to gain temporal help and protection. Without undoing what has been done, it seems that much greater emphasis must be placed upon smaller institutions and more modest works which shall be the direct products of the local churches' endeavour and devotion. Many small cells of true Christian life and witnessing, in close touch with the local people, will be doing more for the presence of Christ and the Church in the midst of Indian society than a few important and big institutions established by the side of Indian Society.

If the Church is to fulfil her mission, she must acquire a much greater mobility. The time may come when Christianity will have to lead a humble and hidden existence, without any kind of distinctive organisation of her own. Not only must we prepare for such an eventuality, but we must realize that even now, without external pressure, a wise dissemination of our witness is necessary. The Church in India has become strongly 'institutionalised', and this considerably limits its apostolic adaptibility and 'disponibility'. The witness must reach all the strata of Indian society, and, to that effect, one of our main concerns should be to prepare men and women to enter into close association with non-Christian institutions and movements as teachers and professors in non-Christian schools, colleges and universities, social workers in non-Christian associations, leaders and members of trade-unions, artists, writers, singers, technicians, scientists taking part in the multifarious cultural and industrial aspects of Indian life. This kind of dissemination demands a good amount of disinterestedness on the part of the Church. First, because it will not have the satisfaction of putting the label 'Catholic' on the activities of its disseminated members; second, because that work of slow penetration will not be evaluated in statistics. The greater stress laid on individual responsibility will increase the desire of all committed Christians to preach the Gospel and to establish the Kingdom in India. More deeply rooted in Indian soil, the Church will discover the language in which the message has to be transmitted, it will recognize the seeds of the Word outside its own limits and rejoice at the munificence of God's universal love. The Church will give and receive, it will welcome converts whose zeal and sincerity will add to the spiritual potential through which Christ wants to renew and sanctify human society. Yet, even where no conversions take place, it will not lose

heart because the living presence of Christ and the mystery of His redemption are not measured by conversion statistics.

After Vatican II, a new image of the Church seems gradually to emerge. The Church no longer looks at herself as the perfect and immutable centre to which all other religions and religious forces have to be converted. Rather, she sees herself as a pilgrim, "going forward together with humanity and experiencing the same earthly lot which the world does". She is on the move, together with mankind and with all human and religious forces at work in the world, trying to turn herself, together with them, towards the Lord. The call of God is universal and the responses to that call have not yet reached that harmony which will give them fulfilment.

It is in the perspective of our common pilgrimage towards our common destiny that men of different religious traditions can enter into a fruitful dialogue. After analysing the religious forces at work in India today, it is our task to enter into contact with them in a spirit of collaboration and mutual understanding. Genuine dialogue and collaboration is possible. The conditions on which such a dialogue can take place can be summed up as follows :

1. There is not and cannot be dialogue between religions but only between religious persons.

2. Religious persons meeting with the purpose of dialoguing must be able to trust one another. That is why the purpose of the dialogue should be clearly defined. If the Christian enters the dialogue with a secret view to conversion, he should state it without ambiguity. Otherwise, his attitude is, from the start, ambiguous and dishonest. Dialogue is then a mere pretense.

3. If the dialogue is conceived as a means for mutual enrichment and sincerely practised in that spirit, then its fruit will be a 'conversion', i.e. a deeper turning towards God for all the members of the dialogue, including the Christian.

4. Genuine dialogue implies, on the part of all members, the conviction that we all are under the guidance of the Spirit

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and that we all are engaged on a common quest, *homines viatores*. Even the Christian revelation does not terminate the quest. It gives it an authentic orientation.

5. Hence, if a Christian realises that the divine Truth transcends all possible formulation and that Christ has sent the Spirit "to lead us into the plenitude of truth", and that the same Spirit has been and is at work in the hearts of other religious persons, there is a very positive possibility to enter into dialogue, with the genuine desire to help one another to be more faithful to the Spirit and, eventually, to reach a deeper unity.

In the process, both the Christian and the others will be transformed. What we need is a dynamic conception of the Church, i.e. a Church which, particularly through her open contact with other religious traditions, gradually discovers herself. Not a static Church which thinks that she has reached perfection and has nothing to receive, but all to give. In other words, we must realise that the haven of unity to which Christ calls all men is not the Church of 1969. The Church has still to go through a long process of purification and renewal before it can offer to mankind the image of unity. And similarly mankind has still to go through a long process of internal conversion before it realises where true unity lies. This is the basic condition of the dialogue, namely, the awareness of our common status as pilgrims striving under the impulse of the same Spirit towards spiritual maturity. The mistake would be to think that the long development of the Church, which has not been uniformly progressive, has come to an end. In that long development, there have been, there are and there will be features which betray the divine purpose of Christ. The process of purification will go on till the end of time, just as the pilgrimage will not reach its destination until it enters into the Heavenly Jerusalem. Hence, the only perspective which can make our dialogue genuine is the eschatological perspective.

Responsibility of the Church In India Today

This paper deals with the responsibility of the Church in India today. It is meant to serve as a passage from Orientation Papers to Workshops. Here we seek to blend the theological perspective of the paper on the Church and her mission with the realistic perspective of the four papers concerning the main forces at work in modern India. We shall focus the light of theology on India's face, and place, in the glow of God's Word, the problems of modern India pointed out by the factual survey of papers B, C, D and E.

Unlike the others, this Orientation Paper contains, in substance, a self-examination of the Church in India, in the light of the Decrees of Vatican II. It would, therefore, be natural to expect a greater emphasis on the defects and weaknesses of the Church, rather than on its strengths and achievements which could be taken for granted.

The tenor of the style used in this paper particularly in its conscious attempt to provoke serious thinking, may, if not seen in this perspective, lead to misconceptions. Deeply concerned to bring about the necessary change of heart the author tends to use a language which at times speaks directly to the heart.

CONTENTS

I. THE BACKGROUND : INDIA TODAY

2. India finds herself today in a crisis within a complex of tensions. Her social system is on the whole traditional, stagnant and resistant to change; her psychology is deeply marked with fatalistic passivity; inequality and caste have not disappeared, exploitation and oppression are still there, and corruption has been growing. Forces of division and disintegration are everywhere operative. Religious revivalism, communalism and totalitarian ideologies command considerable influence. The fear of change and adventure and an anxious search for security are characteristic of Indian society. (1)

3. These elements come into conflict with forces of change which are seeking to effect a rapid transformation of the mind and face of the country. India is going through a revolution of values, the old value system shaken to its roots and a new relationship of values beginning to grow on the foundations of science and technology. (2) The nation is xperiencing a revolution of rising expectations: there is revol against poverty, inequality and oppression; "social justice" is a phrase charged with dynamism, ther: is rejection of traditions about caste systems, clan, family and village; freedom of non-conformity is asserted, and freedom is a dynamic of socia change. With the break-up of traditional notions is emerging the idea of the concrete individual, the person, history, equality, independence, community. There is a mounting sense of human creativity, released by science and technology from long suppression under religious authority and social stratification. And there is a heightened sense of mobility

(1) SARAL K. CHATTERJI, Towards a Revolutionary Transformation of Society in Religion and Society (henceforth referred to as RS), XIV (1967), 4, p. 15-18.

(2) RAM SINGH, Assimilation of Scientific Secular Values, in RS, IX (1962), I, p. 44; K. KLOSTERMAIER, Some Aspects of the Social Philosophy of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, in RS, XIV (1967), 3, p. 32-33.

and dynamism. (3) A litter of political parties has appeared, and a welter of ideologies, and a babel of economic policies, all conspiring to reveal a general inability to make headway in renewing social structures. Tension is keenly felt between individual freedom and the socialistic pattern of society, between traditional village community and the new developmental areas, between official national programmes and voluntary agencies, between planning and population increase, agriculture and industry, army and *ahimsa*, communalism and national unity, corruption and national purity, religious revivalism and the ideal of secularism, between the slowness of democratic processes and the promises of totalitarian ideologies. (4) Such is India today.

II. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH IN INDIA TODAY

4. The following seems to be the image of the Church in India today as reflected in the experience and consciousness of various groups. To everybody within the fold the Church is a necessary means of salvation, a way that leads the individual christian to heaven. It is also an authority that makes its burden felt in every sphere of life. It is an efficient system of laws and controls, under which subjects can remain infantile and dependent, reduced in stature, incapable of responsibility and creative thought. In practice the Church means worship and certain moral obligations. (5) To the average Indian Christian, Church and religion mean piety and chastity rather than a whole way of life and total charity issuing in service. In the public eye the Church is a proselytising agent and a huge undertaking of schools, colleges and hospitals. The image of the Church with which many people are familiar is not so much that of a spiritual movement as of a power-structure, wealthy and influential, exclusive and sectarian, proudly self assertive and possessed of an arrogant theology which has

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(3) M.M. THOMAS, Patterns of Modern Man's Search for Salvation, in RS, XI (1964), 2, p. 8-10.

(4) D.A. THANGASAMY, The Theology of Chenchiah, Bangalore, 1967, p. 317 (NIRMAL MINZ, Theologies of Dialogue, a Critique, in RS. XIV (1967), 2, p. 17; D.A. Thangasamy, The Church's Diakonia in Contemporary India, in RS XIV (1967), 4, p. 7-9; S.N. BALASUNDARAM, The Contemporary Indian Political Situation, in India Today, Bangalore, 1967, p.11-12.

(5) Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (henceforth referred to as Pastoral) no. 43.

all the answers. Its offices are centres of social and political power, symbols of prestige and high-roads to privilege and preference. It is therefore understandably conservative, and is felt to be an ally of forces that support the status quo.

5. How much of this picture is true and how much of it is untrue will have to be decided by an examination of facts. We will have to find out how general has been our emphasis on individual salvation as against the social dimensions of the faith; on law and blind obedience as distinct from the adult Christian's own responsibility for the Gospel and the guidance of the Spirit; on a negative morality in which the very word has come to acquire a narrow sex reference; on a spiritual life that consists of devotional practices rather than personal commitment to God in Christ; on 'conquest' and 'rule' above service and witness; on rubric and buildings as against contemplation and presence; on statistics of parish and mission to the neglect of the Gospel spirit and the quality of our life. It will be for the workshops to indicate with exactness the misplaced emphasis which may have led to this obscuring of the face of the Church, this misconception of her nature and misinterpretation of her mission.

i. change...

6. But today, however, the call has come to the Church to change, and to lead the changes that are reshaping the nation. The will to change and the courage to change are the Church's first and fundamental responsibility in India today. The Church can and must change, and change fast enough. This is demanded first of all by the nature of the Church as a reality of history. History speeds along on a rapid course, and "the human race has passed from a rather static concept of reality to a more dynamic, evolutionary one". (6) It is to this flux of history that the Church belongs, though, in its very movement, God's eternity and fidelity are present to it. Therefore along with history it will move and change, though in God it will possess an unalterable kernel. Secondly, the Church's readiness to change is an act of 'obedience to the Lord of history'; history is not subject to the control of

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(6) Pastoral no. 5; see also nos. 4 and 44; Decree on the Missions (henceforth called Missions) no. 11.

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the Church but of the Lord. (7)   Thirdly the readiness to change where change is required for the service of men is part of the Church's mission. The Church has to mediate   God's grace and truth to a world of which the tempo of change is tremendous. Like its insertion into history, so also its vocation to serve history imposes upon the Church the obligation of incessant adaptation and rapid change, for "the danger of too slow an advance is greater than the danger to courageous involvement in   change." (8)   In the fourth place, the Church is bound to deny itself and die daily with Christ.

7. What Jesus said of the grain of wheat is true not only of himself but of his Church as well. It too has to fall and die in order to release the forces of life divinely lodged within it and to blossom into a rich harvest. (9)   It has no permanent city here, it may not remain at home in any of its achievements, but must always be leaving behind formulations of doctrine, human structures and traditions of piety, and must always be going out into the desert to meet its Lord, and pilgrimaging towards deeper life, profounder insights and newer patterns of existence. Lastly, the Church in India has additional reasons for re-evaluating its position and initiating change.

(*a*) Today for the first time in history Christians throughout Asia find themselves without the patronage of ruling powers. The Church in India has to adjust itself to the new situation, find its place within the national community, and discover and define its relationships and its tasks.

(*b*) The Church has now to face, not some decadent civilization and superstitious worship as perhaps in the past,   but ancient cultures and religions come to life again, relevant, reinterpreted and posing a challenge to the Gospel. The Church must now learn to listen to them and dialogue with them in the language of their own philosophy and culture.

(*c*) The Church finds itself progressively relieved, by the secular state, of responsibilities it had held for centuries. It has

(7) KARL RAHNER, The Christian of the Future, New York, 1967 p. 17-20.
(8) KARL RAHNER, op. cit. p. 11, 35-36.
(9) Mark 8. 34-35; John 12. 24-25.

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now to prove itself relevant in new ways, and resume its pioneering role. It is a testing time for the resourcefulness of its love.

(*d*) Finally, the critical, crucial character of the hour in which we are living is a call to the Church to hold itself ready for any eventuality, to live under a hostile regime, and carry on its essential task of witnessing even in straightened circumstances. Already now therefore the Church should make its life, laws and structures simple, mobile and flexible.

8. Here therefore is a new situation by no means to be regretted. We can discern in it the pressure of the Spirit urging the Church to move out of the trenches and march. This Seminar must have, and must create in the Church, the conviction that the Church can and has to change by rethinking the abiding Gospel, and enshrining its insights in fresh formulations of its own; by altering its human laws within the framework of unchangeable divine laws in order to suit new conditions of existence; by asking new questions and seeking new answers; by asking the questions India is asking and instituting a common search for solutions; by entering into dialogue with all who challenge its witness and its love; by consenting to live in tension, in the obscurity of faith and the humility of partial knowledge; abandoning all arrogance and self-assertion, and leaving open matters that are still in process of development; by insisting on unity only in what is necessary and practising de-control in favour of a larger freedom and the guidance of the Spirit and the greater responsibility and loyalty of the individual Christian; and by adapting itself continually to situations as they evolve from day to day. (10) The Seminar must endeavour to create a climate of change and the will to change and to break away from the past and its complacency, from backward-looking ineptitude and undue dependence on foreign resources, human and material. The Seminar must strive to create a climate for necessary changes in Church structure and administration, and prepare the way for lay initiative and original, responsible experimentation in various spheres of the Church's life and ministry.

ii. ...and help change

9. The Church reforms itself in view of the service of men.

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(10) KARL RAHNER, op. cit, p. 34-38; Pastoral no. 92.

If the Indian Church changes, it is in order to help India change. This is the second responsibility of the Church and of the Seminar which deserves emphasis. God's activity in human history gives to Christianity a concern not found in other religions to change the world. (11)

"The calling of the Church to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ definitely involves it in the task of bringing about rapid and radical social changes in the country, so that the masses of the people living in poverty and misery may come to participate equitably in the life of the country". (12)

While traditional forms of service are still relevant, there is a new service our times call for, the diakonia for social change. (13) Analysis of change in India seems to show that, while there are powerful factors of reform and revolution at work in Indian society,

"the vicious circle of traditionalism and social, political and economic exploitation cannot be broken by the mechanical application of democratic norms; nor will the concepts of social justice, the rule of law, equality, etc., take root on their own accord, in a surface under which there are layers of exploitation accumulated through the centuries". (14)

And yet "the process of change has to be initiated at all costs". The only hope then for the transformation of society is "the creation of a revolutionary will among a somnolent people", (15) that is, the will for rapid and radical change and the effective desire and the readiness to work for its realisation. Change has to be brought about in our attitudes and sense of values; our

(11) see LESLIE NEWBIGIN, Honest Religon for Secular Man, London, 1966, reviewed by A.H. Nugent, in RS XIII (1966), 3, p. 63.

(12) Findings of the CONSULTATION AT THE BIENNIAL COUNCIL of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, in RS XIV (1967), 4, p. 76.

(13) see D.A. THANGASAMY, The Church's Diakonia in Contemporary India, in RS XIV (1967), 4, p. 8.

(14) SARAL K. CHATTERJI, art. cit., ibid, p. 22 See the whole article.

(15) SARAL K. CHATTERJI, art. cit., ibid, p. 22-23.

"mind must be renewed by a spiritual revolution". (16)   And it must simultaneously be expressed in the will and the   endeavour to change existing structures and build new ones which will respond better to the nature and dignity of man, and to God's designs in his regard.

10. But how far is the creation of a will for revolution and the initiation and direction of social change the responsibility of the Church ?   To what extent is the Church to be involved in the struggle against traditionalism and stagnation and every form of exploitation, old and new ? What indeed is the relevance of religious and Gospel values for social change?   In seeking for an answer one recalls the intervention of Moses in a labour dispute followed by God's choice of the angry man.   One remembers God's own intervention in a burning socio-economico-political situation, and his insistence of freedom for a group of slaves. And one naturally thinks of Joan of Arc.   And one hears through Amos and Micah God's violent denunciation of every form of injustice.   In the Gospels we see Jesus violating the Sabbath time and again in favour of man in need, for the Sabbath and all the rest of it was made for man and not the other way round. We see him breaking the traditions of the fathers in favour of freedom of spirit.   And we read that it was for his revolutionary words and deeds that he was put to death.   He surely meant his Church to be a world-transforming force comparable to light, to salt, to leaven; or to new wine which causes old skins, old attitudes, old patterns of thought, old social structures to explode. In the 'communist' experiment of the Apostles, in Paul's letter to Philemon, in Jesus' miracles, and above all in his service of dying and rising, his Church has the programmes of a new humanity and the mandate to work for its realization.

11. May we not therefore conclude that:

> "inasmuch as the Church is guided by the prophetic biblical faith which demolishes all barriers between man and man and frees man from all bondage, it is called upon to guide and initiate the process of economic and political revolution which is necessary in India today"?   "The prophetic ministry of the Christian Church in India is required not only to create

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(16) Ephesians, 4.23,

and mould the will of the people to overcome the crippling and debasing consequences of the prevailing social, political and economic structure, but also to guide, in obedience to the will of the Lord of all history, the consequent upsurge of the people for better life".(17)

The Church has a fundamental role to play in creating the revolutionary will and initiating and sustaining the struggle in obedience to the Lord's command to love those whom he has liberated. (18)   No believer in God or the Gospel can hold that conditions of life actually obtaining are the last or the best.   Our striving therefore after fresher and fuller realisations of God's reign on earth can never come to an end.   Equally fundamental is the Church's task to see to it that the change she fosters keeps close to God all the while so that men may be free to live as God's sons and daughters.   In what concrete ways this service of change is to be offered is the job of the Workshops to explore.

iii. the central and the peripheral

12. A third responsibility of the Church, corollary to those already discussed, would be the achievement and maintenance of a clear distinction between the essential, unalterable core of the Gospel and of the Church on the one hand and their accidental historical expression on the other.   We have to be firm about the centre and flexible about the rest.   This is particularly important in a mission—situation like ours where the pure Word must be sown, without encumbrance of foliage it has developed in other times and climes, and allowed directly to strike root in the indigenous cultural and psychological soil and develop for itself a body of customs, practices and devotions. Not only should every Christian be able to tell the kernel from the shell, but the distinction must be socially visible so that all may spontaneously sense the areas that bind and those beyond.   Only the firmness about the ground that binds and the enlargement of the area of ultimate indifference about the rest can enable us to speak with ease and profit of indigenisation, secularism, synthesis of cultures, or faith without religion.   The discovery therefore of the heart of the Gospel is of "tremendous importance to the life and mission

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(17) Findings of the CONSULTATION, in RS XIV (1967), 4, p. 76.
(18) cf Galatians 5; John 13.

of the Church within the new spiritual quest of India." (19)

iv. indigenisation

13. The fourth in our list of the Church's responsibilities is
what has been called adaptation, accommodation, indigenisation
or incarnation of the Church. Today the Church appears for-
eign in organisation, worship and thinking. Foreignness is
seen in our architectural style, clerical life, administration of
sacraments, devotions. Admittedly this is a hindrance to spon-
taneity and deeper spiritual experience, and a stumbling block to
men of other faiths. The Church is under obligation to shed as
soon and as thoroughly as possible this alienation from India's
life, and to become salt and leaven to Indian society. We Chris-
tians should not be marked off from other Indians by language,
dress or customs but only by our faith and charity. We should
be one with them in our way of life and follow the honourable
customs of the country. That the Church may become rooted
in India's traditions and endowed with the riches of our national
heritage, it is incumbent on us to study India's sacred scriptures,
be familiar with the history of the nation, be acquainted with
our cultural language, share modern India's problems and enter
into her efforts at development. (20) For,

"Christian life.... must be accomplished in the concrete
details of earthly life which is determined by earthly forces
of science, of politics, of power and also of guilt. Certainly
the Christian life which the Church has to mediate is not a
ghetto-like idyll carefully guarded and cultivated on the
margin of the rest of life......the secular world itself is the
stage and the material and the genuine objectivation of
Christian existence and life." (21)

It is the vocation of the Indian Church to be present in the entire
reality that is India today, and discover with thanksgiving the trea-
sures of truth and grace which from the beginning God has show-
ered on this land, and which today form his gift to his Son's
Bride in this country. The Church is under obligation to seek

(19) M.M. THOMAS, Gospel and History in India, in RS XII (1965), 4 p.
38.
(20) MISSIONS, nos. 15, 19, 21.
(21) KARL RAHNER, op. cit. p. 72.

and find her Lord as he stands awaiting her in the heart of India's religion and culture. (22) It is thus the Church in India will come to realize the logic of the Incarnation according to which God spoke in different ages in terms of the culture proper to each, and Christ bound himself to the social conditions of the men among whom he lived in the flesh. (23)

14. The first requirement in order to achieve this 'enfleshing' of the Church in India will be the removal of prohibitions and the lifting of foreign impositions which have little or nothing to do with the Gospel kernel of Christian faith and life. It is equally imperative to invite and encourage large-scale responsible experimentation the result of which should be exchanged, compared, complemented, pooled and built up in order to aid the emergence of an Indian liturgy and theology and a living Indian Christianity. What are the foreign do's and dont's that must go, what the areas of experimentation which must be opened up, belongs to the Workshops to indicate.

v. witness

15. The Church has been sent to bear witness to Christ and to all that he stands for. He stands for the Father and for the world which the Father loved. The witness of the Church to India is that India is God's beloved; that God has so loved her as to give his Son for her salvation and send the Son's Bride for her consolation; and that therefore in Christ she has forgiveness and immortality. The Church's task then is to love this country as God has loved her, in Christ, and to suffer for her and give its life for her. This is a witness India will understand, her religious culture has made her sensitive to it. The witness of love is given in the Church's concern for India's welfare both material and spiritual, in its health services and educational works, its care of India's poor, its devotion to India's philosophy and art, its respect for her religious faith and her worship; and its presence in every zone of India's life and work and hope. Since the witness of the Church consists in love expressed in service, it is also its responsibility to make sure that the work springs indeed from an authentic concern. To this style of witnessing belongs in parti-

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(22) MISSIONS, nos. 11 and 15.
(23) PASTORAL, nos. 44 and 58; MISSIONS nos. 10, 22.

cular the arresting example of a Christian life marked by sincerity and brotherhood, renunciation, prayer and peace.

16. In this context may be raised the delicate question how the association of money with worship in the shape of taxes and stipends affects the quality of Christian witness. How much is the Christian and the Hindu edified and spiritually helped by a system of linking religious service with money, so much for so much ? The Seminar is in duty bound to face this question squarely, specially the question of mass stipends, and help preclude whatever might tarnish the clarity of our religious witness, and suggest more authentic ways for each congregation to follow in supporting their pastors.

17. But presence and example are not enough. These are signs which need to be interpreted, or miracles the meaning of which has to be revealed. The good life is the Flesh in which the Word must finally be encountered. Proclamation of the Word is part of the Church's responsibility as witness. Proclamation does not necessarily mean the kind of preaching we are familiar with. The basic idea is that we keep quietly discovering and telling ourselves and those with whom we live and work the Christian meaning of things and events, however ordinary and insignificant they may appear in themselves. A historical religion has to be proclaimed in and through actual history. Christ and the saving activity of God must be disclosed in the course of daily life and the simple sorrows and joys of men and women. In so doing the Church exercises its prophetic ministry ; it reflects and declares how at a particular place and time, in specific events and developments, God is at work; and thus indicates to itself and to others where and when and in what manner to act and collaborate with God. (24) A vaster, profounder and more comprehensive proclamation of the Word is envisaged here than has been possible in the classical way of preaching.

18. It is in this quiet way that effective witness can be borne and the Gospel carried into all the arteries of life. But while reflecting on this we should also bestow thought on the quality of life Christian men and women should possess in order to engage

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(24) see Official Report of World Conference on Church and Society, in RS. XIV (1967), 4, p. 2.

in such apostolate and convey to every cell of society, in the home, factory and parliament, the light and power of Christ's dying and rising; what intellectual and spiritual formation they should have, at what depth in Christ they should be leading their normal life, and how they could be helped to come by this fuller existence.

vi. mission and evangelism

19. Closely related to witness is mission and evangelism. What is the Church's responsibility here? Let us first be clear about the meaning of the Church's mission.

"Missionary activity is nothing else and nothing less than a manifestation or epiphany of God's will and the fulfilment of that will in the world and in world history". (25)

Note that the vision is as large as world history and as deep. The Church is here in India to manifest the will of God as already contained and (always partially) realised in the history of India's religion and culture, and as yet to be inserted into that history and brought to fulfilment through new encounters and spiritual developments. It was through innumerable encounters and endless dialogue that the religious culture of this land grew; of all these, the meeting with the Church has been, and will always be, the most disturbing and challenging. The responsibility therefore of the Church in the field of mission and evangelism may be defined as follows :

(a) The Church itself is, and must be, the epiphany in India of God's will, the pattern and beginning of the fraternal city he wants to see blossoming on earth. It is to serve as an opportunity for India to meet her God and as a medium of that encounter. Preaching is more than words; mere sounds would mean nothing; if sounds should have meaning, the reality they convey must be personally encountered and experienced in some measure. To preach the Gospel then is to present a person or a people with the reality of the Gospel and not merely with a complex of sounds. Now the Gospel reality is the Christian life in the Christian Church. Our preaching will have meaning and will

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(25) MISSIONS, no. 9.

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be understood only in relation to and in proportion to the presence of Christian life in this country.

(*b*) And the Church will express its mission and its inner truth by confident proclamation of the Gospel wherever this is possible and meaningful.

(*c*) To make this message meaningful and relate it to our world, the Church has to study, understand and reveal the working of God's will and grace in the history of this country, in the successive influx into it of peoples and cultures, in its ceaseless quest for the Absolute, its daring speculations, mystical insights and touching piety and peace, its catholicity and sacraments, no less than in its failures, weaknesses and violence. The task of the Church is to find and disclose the hidden presence of God and of his Word, the Christ, in the heart of India's religion and culture, so that a fuller and more conscious acceptance of them by this land may become possible. (26)

(*d*) The Church has the vocation to reveal to India the truth about herself, the truth about her condition and her total destiny: the truth that India is loved by God, that her sufferings are a meaningful baptism in the Blood of Christ, and that through her striving for the uplift of her people she is moving in the direction of the Resurrection of Christ into which she has an invitation to enter. (27)

(*e*) The idea must be underscored that the evangelical responsibility of the Church in India is not proselytism, namely the winning of individual converts by such ungospel means as worldly prospects, religious fear, psychological and social pressures etc., and the wrenching of them from their cultural background and natural community to enclose them in some artificial ghetto and sectarian attitude. While the appeal to the individual is important, the Church's responsibility rather is the growth and transformation of India as a whole and the salvation of that 'distinct type of religious thought and life which God has been evolving here for centuries' into the fulness of Christ. In this context two quotes worth our study and discussion may be given

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(26) MISSIONS, nos. 9. 11, 15.
(27) MISSIONS, no. 8.

from a book written more than fifty years ago :

"The standpoint of Evangelism, unlike that of Prosely-
tism, recognises the value of the law of heredity in the
religious development of the race. From that standpoint
we are able to perceive that the evangelisation of India
is a far greater and grander task than the mere prose-
lytising of Hindus. There is a distinct type of religious
thought and life in India which God has been
evolving through the centuries, and this must be saved
both for India and for the world. It is even possible to
conceive of a salvation of the souls of individual Hindus
and a losing of the soul of India, which would be an
irretrievable and incalculable loss to the world. In
the light of this fact, for fact it undoubtedly is, the
statistical tables of Missions are utterly irrelevant for
gauging the true success or failure of the real enterprise
of the Church of Christ. What is called the success of
Indian Missions may be the failure of the missionary
enterprise in India as viewed from this truer standpoint,
and what is called the failure of Missions, with which
the Church is sometime taunted, may be its truest
success." (28)

"The activities of the Brahmo and Arya Samajes, the
Ramakrishna Missions, the Theosophical Society, and
of all the other movements which gather round the cry
for a Reformed Hinduism, are all the outcome of that
Christian ministry which is here regarded as the true
mission of Christianity of India. It is only the narrow-
ness of our theological and ecclesiastical outlook
which prevents us from seeing and joyfully acknowled-
ging the activity and presence of the divine Spirit in all
this travail and birth-throes. There is not one of these
movements which does not reveal, to the eye that can
see, the influence of this wider Christian ministry. These
movements may repudiate their indebtedness to anything
savoring of the dogmatic Christianity with which alone
they are acquainted; but it is none the less true that

(28) BARNARD LUCAS, Our Task in India, MacMillan and Co., 1914, p.
26-27, quoted by T.K. Thomas in RS XIV (1967), 4, p. 39-40.

they owe their origin and inspiration to the ministry of Christ." (29)

(*f*) It is an urgent task of the Church in India to make sure that her missions remain truly Indian. They should no longer result or seem to result in any sort of alienation from local cultural traditions. No new mission should bring in anything but the essential Gospel of Jesus, which then should be helped to grow and express itself in the local Indian culture, in the language. customs, symbols, art—forms etc. which are familiar to the people. And, established Christian communities should, if need, be steadily "deforeignise" themselves in order to become genuinely Indian and Christian. Offering to Indian congregations western traditions, rites, worship-forms etc. whether the West in question be the near West or the far West, should definitively cease. This is demanded of us by the loyalty we owe to the mystery of the Incarnation, to the catholicity of the Gospel, to divine Providence preparing this land for Christ, and to our own country; it is also demanded by the actual socio-political situation shaping around us.

(*g*) Finally we must remember that "missionary activity is closely bound up with human nature and its aspirations." (30) Men in India today aspire after the fullness of life. They are concerned with the responsibilities and anxieties of freedom, and with its purpose and its tragedy. The meaning of existence, the problem of sin, of law and grace, of guilt and salvation, and the relation between love and justice are the problems raised. It will not do for the Church to offer answers given to questions posed in other cultural contexts. The Church's evangelical responsibility requires that it help India articulate its heart's questionings, and invite her to pose more existential problems ; and then seek for the answers together with India, and then spell them out so as to reveal the depth of Jesus' relevance for this country today. (31)

It is obvious that the definition of our evangelical responsibility

(29) ibid. p. 56-57, quoted ibid, p. 40.
(30) MISSIONS no. 8.
(31) M.M.THOMAS, Patterns of Modern Man's Search for Salvation, in RS XI (1964), 2, p. 14-15.

given above calls for a thorough rethinking of our missionary approach, and for a new evangelical education for all of us.

vii. Indian theology

20. Discussion of witnessing in confrontation with India's existential questions precipitates the problem of an Indian theology. It is clear that there is need always and everywhere of making revelation interact with man's ideological understanding of his own conditions and desires. (32)   It is of this willed interaction that theology is born.   Though Revelation is constant (God is faithful and has in Christ said his final Yes to all his promises, once for all), it is given to man within evolving historical situations and is apprehended dynamically.   This means there can and should be many Christian theologies of the one divine revelation, and that each will have a history of development and growth.   Every distinct concrete cultural realisation of the Christian Church will have its own adventures of the mind, its own interpretations of the faith, its own insights into revelation.   Pure-subjectivity is obviated by the double loyalty to revelation and to the historical situation.   Lacking such indigenous theology and its ceaseless growth and renewal, the Church remains   unproductive—as   seems to have happened to the Indian Church.

21. It is heartening to see the encouragement the Council gives to indigenous theologies and to sense the high hope it reposes in them.   Theology is a responsibility of every Church.

> "....theological investigation must be stirred up in each major socio-cultural area, as it is called.   In this way, under the light of the tradition of the universal Church, a fresh scrutiny will be brought to bear on the deeds and words which God has made known, which have been consigned to sacred Scripture, and which have unfolded by the Church Fathers and the teaching authority of the Church.   Thus it will be more clearly seen in what ways faith can seek for understanding in the philosophy and wisdom of these people". (33)

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(32) see Editorial, RS XIV (1967), 4, p. 1-3.
(33) MISSIONS no. 22.

The Council is calling for a fresh scrutiny of Sacred Scripture in the context of India's religious and cultural traditions, and hopes for new insights and interpretations to emerge. This is delightfully surprising and challenging.

22. We are also challenged by the new ideological situation in the country to develop a new ideological creativity and work out a new theology. India today needs a theology of modernisation, a theology of science and research, of technology and industrialisation, of development and progress. There is need of a theology of society, of social action and social change, of revolution and violence, of love, equality and freedom, of authority and community. A theology of secularism and of the temporal, of pluralism and of dialogue, as well as a theology of anguish and death and the undying hope in the heart of man, are positive requirements of Indian society and the Indian Church today. It is the responsibility of the Church to stir up original theological thinking all over India. And it is the task of intellectuals to accept the burden of canvassing, criticising, and pondering ideas, of utilising, with keen and sympathetic discernment, Indian words, symbols and thought categories in boldly rethinking and reformulating the essentials of the faith; and of multiplying dialogue to generate new ideas from a cross-fertilisation of thought.

viii. unity

23. Unity is perhaps India's basic need; unity and a sense of community. Cleavages in India today are many, and divisive forces innumerable. There is conflict between classes, communal groups, linguistic states, political parties, and between the centre and the states. There is a trend to precipitate violent clashes, ruthless oppression and chaos. (34) Our nation is engaged in a search for unity, integration and collaboration. On the basis of unity alone can it attempt the solution of all the other problems that beset it.

24. In this context unity becomes for the Church an urgent

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(34) K. KLOSTERMAIER, art. cit., in RS XIV (1967) 3, p. 33.
    D.A. THANGASAMY, The Church's Diakonia in Contemporary India, in RS XIV (1967), 4, p. 10-11.

responsibility. The Church is the sacrament of world unity, a community of love modelled on the Trinity, with a common worship in which it experiences itself daily as the Body of the Lord. The Church therefore can and should act on Indian society as a prototype of the brotherly city which God wants India and the world to become. Because of its deep respect for the dignity of the human person rooted in God's love for him, its experience of fellowship and communion, and its view of material things and human functions as seams of social togetherness and as media of fraternity, the Church not only can offer the best basis, model, and incentive for the build-up of a national community, but is bound to become a service of unity in civil society. (35)

25. The Church's task is in the first place to become united in itself. Every sort of factionalism in the Church must be eradicated. An all out effort must be made to rid the Church of casteism which infects it still. A theology of the Church, of baptism, of the eucharist, a theology of our new birth in the Spirit, our new relationship in the Blood of Christ and our new standing before the Father, should, through a five-year plan of ceaseless emphasis in teaching, instruction and prayer, be able to exorcise this ancient demon from our blood. A similar endeavour is to be made to keep from Church life whatever class or status distinctions may exist among men in civil society: special Church services for the rich and the influential which the rest cannot afford must come in for judgement before the Seminar. The rivalry, jealousy and bickering among rites must become a matter of concern for all. Diversity of rites should be welcome where it is the expression of a people's native genius and where it does not endanger unity and love. Neither of these conditions obtains in India. All legislation therefore which seeks to keep the rites severely separate must be cancelled out as ungracious, and every sort of interservice actively promoted. Serious study and experimentation for the evolution of an Indian rite and liturgy, flexible to allow local variations, deserve every encouragement and assistance.

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(35) Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, no. 1 and 4.
    BENGT R. HOFFMAN, Christian Social Thought in India, Bangalore, 1967, p. 156; R. LOMBARDI, Vatican II and Now, Salem, 1967, ch. 1 and 2.

26. More positively, a warmer love and larger understanding must be fostered in the home and in the parish congregation. The congregation must become an education in ecclesial awareness and catholicity of spirit, as well as an experience of fellowship and fraternity. The spiritual horizon of the assembly should be widened to include all Christian congregations, all dioceses and Christian Churches, the entire nation and all mankind. It is necessary today to coordinate and organise on a regional or national level the entire social service of the Church in India, and pool the material and personnel resources available for this, and deploy aid according to priority of need registered by national surveys. This would eliminate rivalry, give a concrete example of collaboration, and make for efficiency and greater social impact. Similarly we should cooperate with all agencies, public and private, which are active for the good of the people in the field of socio-economic development, culture, education etc. (36)

27. Christians, lay and clerical, should no longer confine themselves to the Church's own institutions but fan out and seek work with government and other churches and religions in view of wider witness, contact and charity. The Church should strive to efface the false image that has been projected of it of a closed group, a private club, a ghetto or a sect. We should pass from preoccupation with communal problems and our own wounds to larger and higher stages of involvement in national and international problems. The task of Christian leaders and associations is not only to watch over Christian interests, but to be sensitive to every large problem as it arises to study them, provide guidance and orientation, and launch programmes. Our aid must go not only to Christians but to all who are in need. How much do we spend for others? How much do we contribute to relief work in flood and famine areas ? Perhaps less than we give for building projects: to do more would be a fine education in Christian thinking and feeling.

28. When the Church becomes thus united within itself and lives no longer as a sect but as truly catholic, when it goes out to all in the glad awareness of being the historical sign of the saving grace which is powerful everywhere, then it will by its very presence undergird India's unity and forge it into a community.

(36) PASTORAL, nos. 31, 32.

It has been commissioned by the Lord to do this.

ix. socio-economic development

29. The Church cannot wholly identify itself with any culture nor make the development of a country its main concern. But neither may it alienate itself from the essential life of the people. It has to be present in their life, thus manifesting its ultimate significance. In a developing country like India it is part of the Church's responsibility to provide a *diakonia* for social change, and for the reordering of socio-economic structures. It must sustain hope which is required for development; it must give meaning to man's work and generate love which will energise the community's efforts. It is, the moral dynamic, the spirit, motivation and orientation, that is to come from the Church.

30. More specifically, the Church will engage in social action, which means critical study and laboratory work on patterns of action and development. It is directed towards understanding society and reshaping participation in action. It helps the country define social values and goals, engages in criticism of the private as well as of the public sector, as also of its own contribution to development. The Church will also make social services its concern, which are directed towards alleviation of suffering and development of personal abilities. Such are its educational, medical, relief and reconstruction works. There is widespread distress, ignorance and misery, and we have barely touched the fringe of it. The poor and the needy, especially those for whom nobody cares are the Church's first concern. It is in terms of such service Christ described and proved his mission. Should not at least ten per cent of the membership of every religious group be trained and exclusively devoted to service of this kind ?

31. The Church itself is expected to be a model of economic justice and administrative integrity in all its houses and institutions. Church property should never lie idle but be put to productive use. The Church could participate in movements like Bhoodan and Sarvodaya, take the lead in village projects, agricultural industries, vocational counselling etc. Since the apostolic value of large colleges and hospitals not run on a strictly

charitable basis has been questioned and the suggestion made to spend the money in propagating the Bible and Christian literature, the following quote could start a discussion as to where to direct the money of the Church.

"We construct cathedrals, which, if we used our intelligence, we would know we do not need and which sometimes scandalize the people. And we do not give money for roads, which would make it possible for men to communicate and to serve each other. We might produce a significant film with a great human message which would reach five-hundred million people. We could reach with one film as many people in the world as there are Catholics: five hundred million". (37)

32. Work which is fundamental for development is not properly understood or appreciated in India. It has not only an economic aspect, but deeper human and cultural dimensions. The Church can bring home to the Christian and through him to the whole of India the dignity of human activity and the paschal dimensions of work : how things are transformed through a kind of death and share in human existence, and so reach out towards the Risen Christ, Remembering the near absence of the Church in the world of labour, we should seriously consider the possibility and the necessity of having a number of trained worker-religious and worker-priests. Their existence will be tangible proof of the concern the Church's documents evince for the poor. Some radical movement like this is required to usher in the substantial transformation in society the Church is waiting for.

33. To labour are related trade unions. In this vital area of national life the Church is conspicuously absent. Beginning with this Seminar the Church will have to take thought for ways and means of involvement in this field. Christians who are already there and are recognised leaders must be respected by the Church, heard, consulted, and followed in the things in which they have competence.

34. What is called industrial apostolate will be one way of presence and involvement in the realm of labour. The problems

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(37) R. LOMBARDI, op. cit. p. 116.

and possibilities of this apostolate are yet to be explored. But we may surmise this is a sphere full of promise and it is only from our lack of mobility and imagination that we happened to overlook it. All the heavier is the responsibility of the Church now for this vital zone of modern life.

35. Finally there is the obvious problem of population growth. Is or is not the Church concerned over the fact that each year adds twelve million plus to the population of this country while with all our development efforts the daily earning of half the population is still less than a rupee and over a 100 million can claim only less than 50 paise ? It is a pressing responsibility of the Church to face this question of population control with clear loyalty to God and to the Gospel and loyalty to conscience, to India and its concrete situation. The Seminar should in its workshops come to grips with this problem.

x. political life

36. Politics are the 'power-centre for the reconstruction of society'; it is the 'stuff of the struggle for the future'. (38) It is natural, then, that the Church should have a *diakonia* to offer in this important sphere of life. While the Church is not to be confused with the political community, nor bound to any political system, nor committed to any political party, and will not inject itself into the government of the earthly city, it nevertheless remains involved in the life of the nation as a whole, and claims the privilege of ministering to men in a spirit of love. (39) The ministry consists in educating the people to play their own responsible and meaningful role in the life of the nation. Elements of this education will be concern for man as a person, freedom of expression, criticism of self and of government, breadth and purity of vision such as will always put the nation above party interests. (40) The Church can give insight and inspiration and help produce the climate in which the values of freedom and equality and unity in diversity will be favourably accepted by the masses. The Church can help the public to appreciate the idea

(38) D.A. THANGASAMY, The Church's Diakonia in Contemporary India, RS XIV (1967), 4, p. 13.
(39) MISSIONS no. 12, PASTORAL no. 76.
(40) BENGT R. HOFFMAN, op. cit., p. 6-7.

of the secular state, not so much as a minority need, but as a valid Christian point of view. It can study and analyse in the light of the Gospel the changing political scene with all its pressures and undercurrents and orient public opinion and keep in touch with legislators to advise them of the Christian standpoint on specific issues. As the Church consists of persons who are responsible to one another because they are responsible to God, and is a brotherhood in which life is common, action is collegial, and authority is definable only in terms of service, it is in a position to provide a pattern for unity in diversity and for responsible freedom collaborating in a common concern. Such is the role of the Church as a whole. What will be the specific part of the laity and of lay organisations ? They will manifestly live by the Gospel even when involved in party and power politics and help heal and ennoble this section of life, in the conviction that they are sent out by Christ without defences and guarantees except those of his Spirit, to build a better world destined to be the Realm of God.

xi. education

37. The educational service of the Church has been enormous; and through it the Church's contribution to literacy, democracy, development and culture has been considerable. But the Church has been merely functioning within a given system. Lacking in adventure, imagination and challenge, it has made little contribution to a pnilosophy of education in India. The immediate task of the Church would seem to be to fill this vacuum by seriously and systematically working out a philosophy, even a theology, of education, that is, of the young person and of cultural heredity or the transmission of acquired spiritual characters to a new generation. This is to be done in relation to the nation, against its cultural and educational background, in vital link with its present planned development and the exigencies of industrialisation. The Church's service, to be significant, will have to include various new experiments in education. Surveying the entire field of education and remembering that the Church's vocation is to serve, we should ask ourselves if the Church should not come out with a crash programme for the abolition of illiteracy especially in areas where the percentage of literacy is lowest, and put into the field and at the disposal of the government thousands of service minded Christians, lay and

religious, for this purpose. We should perhaps also think of another programme of teacher-training on our own and in collaboration with government and other agencies.

38. Complementary to this responsibility of the Church to God's unlettered children is its responsibility to God's sons and daughters in the university. Something effective should immediately be done to remove the general impression that the Church is distrustful and afraid of science and its method, of free investigation and verification. The Church should come out to promote among youth the scientific spirit, the spirit of inquiry and criticism and an enthusiasm for intellectual excellence as part of their Christian faith and life. These will enable them "to distinguish religion from the magical view of the world and from superstitions which still circulate" in the Church in India. A more critical ability will help purify religion and exact 'a more personal and explicit adherence to the faith' and a 'more vivid sense of God'. (41)

39. The Church should go farther and serve India more significantly than ever by engaging in high level research in the flora of the land, in physics and chemistry, economics and sociology, in India's religion, philosophy and history. Given courage and imagination and a devotion to the development of the country, the Church will be able, even at the cost of substantial withdrawal from the usual fields of education, to establish and run, alone or in collaboration with universities, top research centres that are absolutely vital for development.

40. This then seems to be the picture of the Church's educational responsibility that emerges today : at the bottom, a large measure of the Church's resources is deployed for the promotion of literacy and primary education ; to feed which a substantial portion of the Church's means are dedicated to the training of teachers ; at the top, our best men and money are employed in deepening and expanding research. In between the teachers and lecturers are taken out of our old ghettos and sent out into every sort of educational institutions there to serve men, bear witness to Christ and be the leaven of social and spiritual transformation.

(41) PASTORAL, no. 7.

41. Closely related to education is the question of India's youth. The Church should reach out to the entire youth of the country, and project such an image of itself as to become its hope and a promise of the future; this the Church can become on condition that it remains faithful to its revolutionary vocation as life's ferment and an explosive wine. As a means of reaching India's youth the Church has the organised Movement of its own students and intellectuals, the All India Catholic University Federation. This Movement must be strengthened with many more capable chaplains, more explicit support and encouragement as well as liberal financial aid with which to improve its publications, to organize scientific surveys, studies and seminars on problems of youth, on student psychology, student aspirations, needs and services ; and to evolve programmes that will open out the AICUF on national movements of students and youth, and bring its impact to bear upon the country as a whole.

xiii. dialogue with Hinduism

42. At this point the basic task of the Church is to understand in depth the implications of its own faith. Our faith is that the universe and all men are fundamentally rooted in Christ and oriented towards him and the Father ; that therefore

"those also can attain to everlasting salvation who... sincerely seek God and strive to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience. Nor does divine providence deny the help necessary for salvation to those who, without blame on their part, have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God, but who strive to live a good life, thanks to his grace". (42)

Revelation and grace are offered to all, and all who accept it are saved; and there are some or many who accept it without explicitly realizing the fact. Grace basically is the dynamism of human history created *for* Christ ; and this dynamism is revelation, this divine determination of the perspective in which man interprets

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(42) Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, no. 16.

his existence. Implicitly, existentially, men accept this revelation-grace when they accept their conscience and submit to it, when they accept the transcendence of their mind and its endless yearning for truth, and when they accept their suffering and death, which acceptance amounts to a cry to the Lord to be remembered. (43)   Therefore the Christian reality is all around us.

43. This universal grace and saving action of God tends by an inner urge to express itself visibly and socially.   Its full social expression is the Church, the 'sacrament' of the kingdom of God.   But the Church is not the only visible form God's grace assumes in history.   The various religions are such by God's will ; which however does not mean that all their beliefs and practices are intended by God.   Religions are ambiguous, as 'the goods of this world bear the mark both of man's sin and of God's blessing'. (44)   They are the expression of the religious life of mankind,   "on the one hand embraced, upheld and penetrated by God's grace ; on the other hand held in the bonds of man's weakness and sinfulness". (45)   But on that very account they tend by an inner urge towards the Church, even towards becoming the sign of the hidden rule of God.   No one can force the maturation of this grace. Ours is to aid it by patient, quiet, serene witnessing.   Forebearance and patience are to the Hindu a sign of the presence of God's Spirit.   Our forebearance like God's can have saving significance.   We need not be anxious. Our part is to live the Gospel humbly and clearly in the midst of our people.

44. Such an understanding of our Faith and of Hinduism is the basis of a dialogue between the two.   Dialogue is a spiritual activity distinct from evangelisation.   It is the sincere and respectful effort of two believers to enter into the religious life of each other and share each other's spiritual experience, an effort which will result naturally in mutual enrichment.   It is not a step to something else, but a religious act valid in itself.   Basically it is concern for God and his truth and for worship of him wherever his presence is indicated.   For the Christian it is an act of

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(43) KARL RAHNER, op. cit., p. 81-91. We have drawn heavily from this section of Rahner's article.
(44) Mission no. 8.
(45) Bombay Seminar.

tive love into the poverty, sickness and sorrow of this land, into its darkness and its death, into its surging life of thought and prayer, the wealth of its philosophy, art and literature, and into its plans, efforts and hopes. If will seek no worldly or political protection, privilege or guarantee, knowing that the Lord is its staff and stay, and that the Lord is in its heart. It will not insist on its rights but only seek to serve God's sons and daughters gathered here into a national community of which it is part as well as goal. No ungracious reference therefore will be made to its renunciation of reservations, in a secret attempt to make the very renunciation a new sort of fortress around itself and new grounds for privileged treatment. For the reservations were given up not as a political pose but as Christian incarnational living, an act of faith and of self-commitment into the poverty and defencelessness of Christ. In its new life the Church's claim to recognition will not be largeness of its numbers, nor the power and prestige it commands, but only the quality of its life and thought.

47. The new Church will be one that takes up its cross and dies daily, desiring to rise daily to newness of life. Where and at what point is the Church to die daily ? To what attitudes, what possessions, traditions, empty honours and prestige concerns ? To what wordly confidence, to what trust in embassies and concordats, and to what preoccupations and arrangements calculated to keep the cross away ? To what narrow theologies, and petty insurance practices, and spiritual shrinkage and lack of love will the Church in every place have to die daily ?

48. The new Church will be a sacred order 'grounded in the spirit,' a sacred unworldly community of men and women who, not by birth and custom, but by their own deliberate decision, have staked their heart and life on Christ ; a community 'dependent in everything on faith and on the holy power of the heart' ; no longer able to draw strength from what is purely institutional, for then "the basis of all that is institutional will be men's own hearts." There will then be a minimum of institution, and a dynamism of life making for the maximum possible. Then dogma will not be more important than Jesus' words, nor laws more binding than Jesus' demands, nor organisation more precious than the Spirit of Jesus. Then all will be and feel themselves to be brothers, and those in office will reverently receive

obedience from the rest as a free loving gift. (46) A renewal
and deepening of faith and hope and love in this Gospel shape
and measure is the Church's responsibility today.

(46) KARL RAHNER, op. cit., p. 86-97.

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