Capitalism vs. Socialism
Panel Discussion

Christianity and Socialism
Some Basic Ideas

Free Enterprise
Is It Christian?

The Economic Issue
Theological Perspectives

Chinese Communism
And the Church

Letters
Reviews
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Address all editorial correspondence to Dr. Clarence Bouma, Editor THE CALVIN FORUM, Calvin College and Seminary, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. Address all subscription and circulation correspondence to: THE CALVIN FORUM, Calvin College and Seminary, Grand Rapids 6, Michigan.

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Capitalism or Socialism?

A SYMPOSIUM BY STANLEY HIGH, NORMAN THOMAS, AND WILLIAM HARRY JELLEMA

O N December 6, 1950, the Christian Fellowship Club of Paterson, N. J., sponsored a public symposium on the topic, "Which is More Compatible with Christianity: Capitalism or Socialism?" The committee responsible for arrangements (Dr. Peter G. Berkhout, Chairman), invited as participants in the debate the following men: Norman Thomas, veteran Socialist Party candidate for the Presidency; Stanley High, Roving Editor of the Reader's Digest, advocate of Capitalism; and Dr. W. Harry Jellema, Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, exponent of Christianity. A more qualified threesome it would have been hard to assemble. Moderator for the Symposium was Rev. Harold Dekker, one-time Navy Chaplain and Instructor at Calvin College, now a member of the nationwide "Back to God Hour" broadcast staff.

The plan for the Symposium was as follows. Each speaker was to give a 20-minute presentation of his specific viewpoint: Capitalism, Socialism, or Christianity. Following these statements, a period of discussion among the speakers themselves was planned, after which questions from the audience were to be directed to the Symposium's participants.

Stanley High Defends Capitalism

As first speaker, Stanley High appeared in defense of Capitalism. He began by saying that America is now in the throes of a spiritual crisis because it has lost "the sense of mission which once characterized (it)". Resolution of this crisis can be achieved only if this sense is regained. Said Mr. High: "If we could get a 'lift' toward the recovery of this lost sense by adopting Socialism, I'd have gone Socialist long ago." Disclaiming any interest in Capitalism as a "doctrinaire philosophy or system," High further averred that neither Capitalism nor Socialism is Christian in a perfect sense, since nothing which partakes of human frailty can be perfect.

Mr. High continued his statement by citing the Christian beliefs which played a large part in the founding of our nation. One of these, according to the speaker, was the belief in the "perfectability, the dignity, and the worth of the human individual." With this belief both he and Norman Thomas were in agreement, declared High; what each wanted on the basis of this belief was "more and more fulness for more and more people."

The rest of High's remarks were designed to show that Capitalism is the one system by which the high-sounding ideals about man's perfectability, dignity and worth can pass from abstraction into reality. The speaker even claimed that Norman Thomas, in an article appearing in Fortune (September 1950), had testified about the achievements of Capitalism in realizing such lofty ideals. Mr. High again disclaimed any belief in Capitalism as a perfect system today, but re-asserted his confidence in Capitalism's "perfectability", qualifying it as the one "institution by which our people can meet on a national scale the standards set in our Constitution." To support his point, the speaker for Capitalism cited improvements made in the steel industry's working conditions: from 12-hour days, seven days per week 31 years ago to better hours and company-paid pensions today. Concluding his statement in defense of Capitalism, Mr. High pointed to the manner in which this Capitalistic country had given practical proof of its belief in being its "brothers' keeper" by giving to foreign peoples $36,000,000,000 in non-military aid (plus over 100 private organizations' contributions) since the end of World War II.

Finally, Mr. High launched a bitter attack against Socialism's record, using data gleaned on his recent journeys in Great Britain, New Zealand, and Australia. Pointing out that the citizens of the latter two countries recently had repudiated their Socialist governments by overwhelming votes, High declared, "Wherever Socialism has been more than a speech it has turned sour!" He pointed to Socialist Great Britain, claiming that its admitted progress on the road to recovery was made possible only because of the $5,000,000,000 in aid from the Capitalist United States, because the "brains" behind recovery were pre-Socialist era stalwarts, and because the main industries are still free from government control. High stated further that those industries which presently are operated by the British government (notably coal and transportation) are now millions of pounds sterling in the red. High concluded his prepared statement by re-affirming his belief that only under Capitalism can the American people attain the goals and preserve the rights guaranteed to them by their Constitution.
Norman Thomas
Champions Socialism

The charges of Stanley High against Socialism brought Norman Thomas, the Socialist spokesman, to the lectern in fighting mood. Speaking without a manuscript, the country’s leading Socialist bluntly declared that social gains registered in the United States during past years have been eloquent testimony to Socialism’s influence upon the country, and no credit for them can be taken by Capitalists. Mr. Thomas admitted that Capitalism has come a long way, socially speaking, but he charged that it fought bitterly against reform every step of the way. He reminded his audience that Capitalism arose out of the theory that it is possible to find given rules of economics which have absolutely nothing to do with morals and ethics—for instance, the laws of supply and demand. Thomas declared that Capitalism for a long time renounced all shades of moral responsibility, fighting factory reform, condemning labor unions as illegal, and championing unfair competition and unrestricted greed. Only because Socialism, acting as America’s “conscience”, forcibly has compelled Capitalism to “clean house” have Capitalists today any record of social legislation of which they can boast. By way of illustration, Thomas cited the social welfare programs contained in the major political parties’ 1948 platform, identifying those programs with the platform on which he had run for President in the 1928 campaign.

In the positive part of his statement on behalf of Socialism, Mr. Thomas attempted to define Socialism. Like every other great word, said he, it has many interpretations. But for him, Socialism is closer than anything else to the Christian life as he understands it. It is “family life” on a large scale, life in which people learn to get along with one another. Only by adopting and practicing Socialism, therefore, will war and need be conquered upon earth. There still is room for individualism in the family, to be sure; but on the large issues there must be planning on a national scale. Natural resources (including coal, uranium, iron ore) must be owned and operated nationally. All banking must become public responsibility. However, civil liberties are still protected by the Socialist state, which ardently hates any “god state” and all Communism.

Like Mr. High, Mr. Thomas turned to the record of the past few years in support of his contentions. Denying that Great Britain has suffered under Socialism, the speaker said, “Which countries in Europe (including Scandinavia) are the strongest opponents of Communism today?” Thomas declared that the countries most firmly opposed to Communism were those in which Socialists either control or have an important voice in the control of the government.

Mr. Thomas ended his statement in defense of Socialism by saying, “I am not here to outline a program under political auspices. I have done that before.” But, he contended, we must pledge ourselves anew to carrying out the teachings of the prophets, Jesus, and the apostles, and thus live most conscientiously and amicably along with the program which Socialism provides as a means to that end.

Jellema Defines the Christian Tradition

The Moderator, Rev. Dekker, then introduced the third and final speaker, Dr. W. Harry Jellema. Since Dr. Jellema’s address will be published in The Calvin Forum, only the highlights of his statement will be mentioned here.

Dr. Jellema spoke as the representative of the Christian tradition. His approach was different from that of the two speakers who preceded him. Whereas High and Thomas each had dealt largely with Capitalism vs. Socialism, each claiming the backing of Christianity for his belief, Dr. Jellema gave little attention to either of the two systems. Instead, in scholarly fashion the learned philosopher carefully and comprehensively reviewed the classical Christian concepts of God, the created universe, and the significance and destiny of man, created in God’s Image. These cardinal fundamentals Jellema cited as indispensable to any satisfactory treatment of the question which the Symposium had been called to discuss.

Dr. Jellema pointed out that neither Capitalism nor Socialism in its present forms could claim adherence to such classically Christian fundamentals. Not the profit motive (Capitalism), not the ideal of living together as one family (Socialism), but fulfilling the calling to live to the glory of God constitutes the ruling concept of the Christian life. This is embodied imperfectly now in the Kingdom of God upon earth, but will be expressed perfectly in the life to come.

Fiery Intra-Panel Discussion

The speakers then were allowed fifteen minutes for an exchange of questions among themselves. The Moderator acquitted himself nobly, though sorely tried by the fiery repartee which blazed between High and Thomas when these men went off on a wild tangent about the editorial policy of the Reader’s Digest. Thomas indignantly accused the Reader’s Digest (by which High is employed) of refusing to publish his (Thomas’) critical letter anent the recent Digest condensation of John T. Flynn’s “The Road Ahead” (a book which has provoked interesting reaction among certain groups). Thomas was further incensed when High angrily declared that “the Digest is 100% anti-Communist, anti-Socialist, and anti-Norman Thomas!” Dr. Jellema, attempting to lead the discussion once again to the pertinent topic of the Symposium, managed to inject
a question directed to Thomas: “If I believe in government operation of the Post Office and in unemployment insurance, am I a Socialist or a Capitalist?” Still steaming, the quick-witted Socialist leader retorted, “I’d call you an intelligent man who was using his brains to benefit from the advantages of socialist teaching!”

Once again High and Thomas crossed swords—this time on an issue somewhat closer to the topic of the Symposium. Thomas delivered himself of a stinging tirade against the amoral “market economy” championed by Capitalism in the 19th Century.

Once again he declared that only under fierce popular pressure had Capitalism mended its ways and looked to anything outside of its own material profit. To the contrary, Thomas orated, Socialism had the proper creed all the time. Though still far from perfect, Socialism had no need to mend or amend under popular pressure—it was properly grounded from the very first.

When Mr. High finally asked Thomas, “What kind of Socialist are you—Communist, Marxist, or Christian?” Thomas replied, “I am a democratic Socialist, led to Socialist ideals by moral ideals developed from Christianity, believing in the Gospel according to Mark rather than Marx, following Luke rather than Lenin.” With this last testimony, the intrapanel discussion came to an end, and the Moderator called for questions from the audience.

**Questions From The Audience**

During the Question Period, approximately fifteen questions were addressed to the speakers. Briefly stated, they were as follows:

1. **To Mr. High** (Q) Do Capitalists practice the “brother’s keeper” principle out of conviction on Christian ideals, or with an eye to future profits?
   (A) We cannot fathom the minds of all Capitalists, of course. To say that profit has been the whole motive is erroneous in view of the large amounts given to relief causes in recent years by “Capitalist” America.

2. **To Mr. Thomas** (Q) Do you believe in the right of private property and to what extent?
   (A) Yes, I do, the extent to be determined by what is the greatest good for the greatest number.

3. **To Mr. High** (Q) How do you reconcile Christianity with Capitalism’s rejection of the excess profits tax in time of war?
   (A) It is by no means a common conviction that an excess profits tax would benefit our country.

4. **To Dr. Jellema** (Q) How can millions minus cash prepare for old age, contribute to the Church, educate their children?
   (A) It bothers me that Socialism would try to provide these things by using the “power of Caesar”, while the ideal of the City of God possesses a different kind of motivation.

5. **To Mr. Thomas** (Q) Why quote Christian principles for meeting present-day ills when many do not recognize their source (i.e., Christ)?
   (A) We must talk on matters about which all Christians agree, not on topics on which they clearly differ.

6. **To Mr. Thomas** (Q) While Capitalism depends upon the conscience of its leaders, is not Socialism the same?
   (A) You need systems in addition to leaders to carry on.

7. **To Dr. Jellema** (Q) May a Christian ally himself with a system or whatever system is most in accord with Christianity at the time?
   (A) The latter, but remember Socialism appeals more to Caesar.

8. **To Mr. High** (Q) Which kind of Christianity is most compatible with Capitalism?
   (A) Welfare is not a system but the result of one. Capitalism has productive possibilities for greater good to more people.

9. **To Mr. Thomas** (Q) Which Socialist ideas now accepted have been put into law by other political parties?
   (A) Income tax, direct election of Senators, woman suffrage, social security, and much health-farming legislation. (Mr. High Objects: points out, with Mr. Thomas’ admission, that the Prohibition Party actually stumped for all of these too, but that does not automatically credit the Prohibition Party with their enactment!)

10. **To Dr. Jellema** (Q) What is a good Christian economy?
    (A) Will all of these problems, we must go in direction of more study. Let men of Christian conviction, particularly Calvinists, get together to study such problems. In this direction is the place of a Calvinistic University.

11. **To Mr. Thomas** (Q) If not profit, what motive is there to maintain efficiency?
    (A) Desire to create; common good must be dominant motive.

12. **To Dr. Jellema** (Q) If Socialism disturbs you with glorying in the temporal, does not Capitalism disturb you with glory of profit?
    (A) Yes, anything short of the glory of God.

13. **To Mr. Thomas** (Q) Will collective ownership expose us to dangers of tyranny, coercion, and corruption?
    (A) Democracy leaves us open to the same thing!

14. **To Mr. High** (Q) How can help to rid Capitalism of its faults?
    (A) A sharpened conscience will improve Capitalism. This again is in line with its perfectability.

15. **To Dr. Jellema** (Q) Is the “city of God” for Christians only? What about non-Christians?
    (A) Yes, but it contains concepts also operable in whole world though not in narrow sense.

**Reflection and Comment**

Thus the Symposium came to an end. Although audience reaction ranged all the way from enthusiastic approval to keen disappointment, the Symposium was successful in stimulating thought on a most timely topic. Although Thomas and High gave the attentive audience an excellent exhibition of forensic fireworks (which delighted many), they frequently strayed from the main question (which dismayed others). It remained for Dr. Jellema to
Christianity, Capitalism and Socialism

William Harry Jellema
Professor of Philosophy
Calvin College

Both capitalism and socialism, like many another movement and program in our day, have claimed Christianity as sanction. Each argues that it is a direct application of (especially Protestant) Christian ethics. Is it not basic to Christian ethics to hold to the dignity of the individual? Is not Protestantism the protagonist of freedom? Is not the heart of Christian ethics the Golden Rule? Am I not my brother’s keeper? Is not the earth the Lord’s and the fullness thereof?

One’s answer to the question whether capitalism or socialism is more compatible with Christianity and more specifically with Christian ethics, makes little sense, however, unless the terms be defined. It may at once be admitted that capitalism and socialism have undergone changes and that the definitions of these terms even a generation ago will not in every respect fit the situation today.

But the term Christianity is perhaps even more in need of definition; not because Christianity has changed but because men have become so accustomed to its loose use as to forget its real meaning. Christianity, too, like everything else, modern man needs to be reminded that Christianity is itself a perspective, and one that is from the very beginning in conflict with the perspective of modernity.

If we would know whether capitalism or socialism is more in accord with Christian ethics, we should first be clear on Christian ethics itself; we should first be clear as to what Christianity is and means. One may, conceivably, prefer either capitalism or socialism on economic grounds or on grounds of expediency or whatever, but if one is to prefer either as more compatible with Christianity, one must first define the latter. I shall want, then, to state briefly something of what I believe Christianity means and is.

What Is Christianity?

Let me begin with the statement that classic Christianity, Christianity that has not been tortured to fit the perspective of modernity, is Biblical and historical. I mean that essential to classic Christianity is belief that the Bible is the self-revelation of the true and living God; and, further, that its interpreter is the Holy Spirit resident in the church
throughout history. Hence classic Christianity attaches great significance, though not infallibility, to the historically articulated creeds and tradition and life of Christendom.

Both its Biblical and its historical character need underscoring in our day. A Christianity loose from either an infallible Bible or a divinely guided history is not Christianity in the classic sense. And the same applies to ethics that would call itself Christian; Christian ethics is Biblical and historical. And Christian ethics repudiates the contemporary notion that ethics can be divorced from religious faith.

So much is, indeed, in one sense only a formal definition of Christianity. Concretely, classic Christianity in its developing interpretation has come increasingly to realize that the concept of the kingdom or city of God is the central Biblical concept for ethics and social thinking.

However, in the perspective of modernity, this concept of the kingdom of God has also lost all classically definite outline. It has come to mean the realization in this life of any kind of presumably improved society.

On the contrary, the concept central to Christian ethics has lost its Christian meaning when equated with any given society of forward looking men. The concept city or kingdom of God means for classic Christianity something quite specific. What it means is inseparable from a whole framework of affirmations of Christian faith. Loose the concept from the framework, and you can no longer honestly call it Christian.

Let me suggest something of the nature of the framework of Christian faith, without which the kingdom of God is not the Christian kingdom.

Belief in Creation

A basic article of Christian faith is belief in creation.

Despite contemporary interpretations, the significance of this article is not exhausted in cosmosogy; at issue is not simply an account of what once happened at the remote beginning of time; the article is not simply a doctrine of origins in opposition, for example, to naturalistic evolution. Rather, behind and in the account of origins there is definition of God Himself and of finite beings; definition which determines the whole Christian perspective in opposition to the whole perspective of modernity as well as to that of classic paganism.

Thus, to affirm that we believe in God the Father, maker of heaven and earth, is, among other things, to affirm the primary reality of God. God is the only absolute being; His being is sovereign and intrinsic being; He is a being dependent on nothing, needing no justification. It is to affirm that God is, that God is God, and that God alone is God.

But to affirm the God of creation is also to affirm (and this is equally definitive of Christianity) that there is reality beside God; reality which is not of His substance, which is wholly dependent on Him, but which is nonetheless real. For modernity as well as for classic paganism, either God is absolute but then finite beings have no distinct reality, or finite beings are real but then limit God; there is not room for both an absolute God and real finite beings.

For Christian faith, that there exists such finite reality which is not God nor yet in any way detracts from God, is possible simply because God is so great a God; simply because the self-revealing eternal God is infinitely beyond the ultimate of Plato or the Absolute of modernity; simply because God defines Himself as creator.

Such created reality is the whole world of nature with its resident forces, powers, masses, laws; its plurality and its system; its solar universes and its electrons; its motions and its life; its actualities and its potentialities. Nature is real, but it is not ultimate; nor is it of the substance of God; nor does it begin to exhaust the power and glory of God; nor can any or all of it in any way limit God.

Such created reality also is mankind; but with a difference. Man was created in relation to nature; needing nature; but not as an animal needs nature, its life being circumscribed by nature. Mankind was created into the image of God.

The Image of God

That mankind bears the image of God means, first, that definitive of man is his capacity for apprehending system, laws, forms (mathematical system, for instance). Such capacity the animal, however highly developed its awareness, has not. Hence man is capable of science, for example, and has a knowledge of patterns and pure norms that transcend what is given in nature. Man knows an order of which the animal knows nothing.

That mankind bears the image of God means furthermore that definitive of man is his capacity for willing culture or civilization. Like the animal, he can of course use nature for the preservation of his immediate biological existence. Unlike the animal, he can will to use and to modify nature in order with it to create a world more in accord with the systems and norms and patterns of which he has intimation; to create a world more in accord with himself as knower of such system. It is as willer of culture that man digs canals and builds bridges, invents machinery, constructs the whole industrial and commercial edifice, creates science and poetry and social life and laws. Exercising his will to culture, man constructs a world into which no animal ever enters.

Modern mind, as well as ancient pagan, will also insist that man is set off from the rest of nature by
his capacity for knowing system and for willing a cultural world, and will agree that these two inseparable capacities are definitively human. And democratic or socialistic or capitalistic or communistic or other socio-ethical programs at their best will all of them presuppose some such statement as to what distinguishes man from nature and the animal. But absent in the perspective of modernity no less than in that of classic paganism is the doctrine of creation, is the belief that these distinguishing capacities are not divine but are functions of the image of God. Man's knowledge is not God's knowledge; and mankind's will is not ultimate and self-justifying will. God is eternal; it is of the essence of His image-bearer to be historical. Man's knowing and willing presuppose the possibility of history; to be created into the image of God means to be created as actor in the drama of history; history (not merely change or time) is of the essence of man. But history involves a third inseparable function of the image of God.

Glorifying God

This third distinguishing capacity of mankind is the capacity for glorifying God. Nor is the image of God merely a sum of three capacities. Indeed, herein are man's knowledge and his cultural activity, his very life and existence, justified; and herein lies the meaning of history; herein, that mankind glorify God.

All gods require glorification in one way or another. But the self-revealing Creator is beyond all gods also in this, that He is glorified in revealing His perfections to mankind. God glorifies Himself by sharing His perfections, so far as communicable, with mankind. For man to glorify God means that mankind constitute a temple of God, a city of God, a kingdom of God; a city which would throughout the whole range of life and culture express man's knowledge and love of God's perfections as of today, in order to receive further revelation and new challenges tomorrow; a city of cooperative effort, for which all of created nature would furnish inexhaustible material; where the dignity of each man would lie in being citizen of the city of God and unique object of the love of God, with a unique place and role; a city in which there would be progression without end in fellowship with God, which would be the essence of history; a city dedicated to the glory of that God who glories in revealing His glory to His creature; a city in which God Himself dwells with mankind.

Such a city, such a kingdom, was to justify man as creature; was to justify his life and very existence. Not, as modern mind has it, his knowledge and his creation of culture would justify man, but his glorifying God thereby.

Such was man as created; this was and is the good for man. And by God's grace, this remains his true destiny.

Sin, Redemption, and the Kingdom

But equally with creation and the nature of God and man and history therein revealed, Christianity affirms the reality of sin. Like the city or paradise man lost, so the losing of it is not simply a fact in the remote past, but is as well definitive of the actual nature of man and history today. And sin means that man turned and still turns away from the self-revealing God of all glory. It means that mankind prefers strange gods and strange cities. It means that he excludes himself from the kingdom of God and from justification of his life and existence.

Man is still man. He knows systems, though imperfectly; he wills and creates culture and the articulation of morality, though blindly; and, most significant of all, he still cannot live without justification; he still seeks some justifying city, though he has wilfully betrayed his true citizenship. He cannot escape God and has some definition of God's nature, and with whomever his fellow believers he builds at a city which will articulate that definition in life and culture. Classic paganism had its heavenly city; modernity has its heavenly city. But they are both cities of strange gods. Sin is real; sin is so real that all history is awry and perverse, and all mankind cannot set it straight.

However, not only the doctrines of creation and sin, but also the doctrine of redemption is essential to the framework of Christian ethics. The justification which mankind could no longer supply, God Himself provides in Christ Jesus, who being very God yet became flesh and dwelt among us, and was made sin that we might be justified. By His identification of Himself with history, He again set history straight.

And they who by faith are united with Him are adopted as citizens of the city of God; they are saved not as loose aggregate of individuals, but are restored to citizenship; they are adopted as heirs of the kingdom which has been given to the Son; the kingdom of which He is Lord; the kingdom which shall have no end, and in which none of the purposes of creation will be lost; a kingdom, a city, which by doing His will grows infinitely in its appropriation of the revealed perfections of God; a kingdom to which even sin and its suffering bring tribute; a kingdom whose Lord is king over all that is.

Though not perfected till our Lord's return, this kingdom is real; is real here and now. It is real as God the creator is real; is real as the resurrected Christ is real; is real as the Holy Spirit, lifegiver and interpreter is real; is real as divine regenerating
love is real in human lives; is real as man and his sin and suffering are real; is real as nature which is used to express the kingdom albeit imperfectly is real. I suppose a reason why the kingdom or city of God is so often maligned as unreal, as utopian, as "pie in the sky", is that the Lord of this kingdom rules not with the sword or by force but by His regenerating love; and like the soldiers in Passion Week, we all tend to mock at and be skeptical of a king without a sceptre and an army. But His kingdom is not a fantasy; nor is it simply something in believers' heads; nor is the victory over sin to be won by the sword.

Let this brief account remind us of the classic Christian definition of God and of the classic Christian belief regarding man and his nature and destiny. This is historical Biblical Christian faith. Except as denoting the faith thus articulated, the term Christian is without content. And an ethics is not Christian if loosed from this content. One cannot speak of an ideal moral city or kingdom or commonwealth and call it Christian, if one has first divorced the concept from these affirmations regarding creation and sin and redemption.

**Some Social Implications**

And though it were a serious error to suppose that given the central concepts and framework of Christian ethics one has all the answers to immediate social and moral questions, it would be no less an error to suppose that one has nothing of determining relevance, also with reference to the questions which are of concern to capitalism and socialism. Let me instance a few implications of Christian ethics that are directly relevant; relevant to the very framing of the questions themselves.

Man is real; so are his economic needs; so is force in nature; so is human power; so is society; so is the cultural world. But man is not God; he has no absolute rights; even corporately, even as state, man has no absolute rights.

Nor is man's culture, what man makes out of given potentialities, what man accomplishes and creates and wills, self-justifying; it is not culture, but the use of culture to glorify God that is the good. But, on the other hand, the city of God is not contemptuous of matter or nature or body or economic needs or money. For by these it embodies and communicates and articulates its spirit. Even a cup of cold water or a widow's mite can take on infinite significance, both when given and when withheld.

Nor is all insistence on the worth or dignity of the individual Christian insistence. Most of the proclaming of the dignity of man in our day, whether by democracy or capitalism or socialism, presupposes the religious faith (it is no less), presupposes the perspective of modernity; and modernity forgets that the individual has rights because he has obligations. From the Christian standpoint, profoundly, I have, with reference to my fellow men, a right to what I need as citizen of the kingdom of God in order that God may be glorified.

Nor will the Christian mistake the basic trouble with human society and history. It lies not, for example, in power or ownership or differences or riches as such, but in sin; in sin and its results not only in this or that individual's motives, but as woven into the very structure of culture itself. But this realization will not make him indifferent. He knows that the world as it is, is not the world intended for man; he should be more sensitive than any other to the evils of poverty and injustice and oppression and unconcern, to the evil of seeking other things before the kingdom of God and His righteousness whether he live in mansion or hovel, to the evil of desiring either freedom or security as end in itself, to the evil of a culture we ourselves have constructed such that no good is unmixed.

**Salvation and Social Endeavor**

Nor in advising a remedy will he forget that there is no real remedy outside of divine salvation from sin. This does not mean that he will passively acquiesce in conditions as they are; so to do would be faithless to his citizenship. He will be grateful for the state and for the articulated moral conscience of mankind; he will be grateful for the authority of the state as a punisher of wrongdoers and as preserver of the right of aroused moral conscience to organized effort against evil, and to newly articulated definition of wrongdoing. But he will not make the mistake of trusting in force rather than in spirit; not even when tempted by the apparent desirability of the end.

Nor will the Christian be misled by the teachings of modernity. Our existing culture is the resultant of, among other factors, the activity of regenerated citizens of the city of God not only, but predominantly the citizens of the cities of strange gods. And in contemporary life, the city of modernity is largely responsible for the framing of the questions as well as for the immediately presented alternative answers. The Christian constantly finds himself unable wholeheartedly to accept any of the alternatives, yet under the necessity of choice (since not to choose is also choosing). In choosing, he will not forget that the real clash is between the city of God and the cities of strange gods, and that in the attempt to witness to his own citizenship he will, even aside from his own imperfection, have constantly to make use of a culture, a language, that is refractory, that makes his witnessing stumble and stammer.

And not less important is that the Christian by preaching and by example should present to men the message of salvation and of the kingdom of God.
He will preach and in his own life believe that things material and economic are not self-justifying, and that man is misled if he thinks the true city of God is first of all temporal. But in the name of God and the true dignity and worth of man he will also seek to arouse the conscience of men against extortion and greed and selfishness and poverty and all forms of injustice, himself constantly sharpening his own Christian sensitivity to evil.

The State

And as conscience is aroused and organized, and is ready to effect a measure which will cope with a given form of evil, he will also want the violator punishable at law. But he will insist, I think, that the essential business of the state is to punish wrong-doers; and that only when the general conscience on a given matter is such that the wrongdoer is, so to speak, the exception, can the state begin to act; in matters of this sort the social conscience must always be above the level of law, must already be beyond the level of the state. This is not to say that everything is to be left to individual initiative or that there is no room for corporate activity or corporate ownership; it is not to say that, for example, highways and railroads and electric plants cannot be owned or operated or controlled by society as a unit; it is simply to say that the Christian, I believe, does not favor recourse to the sword except to punish the wrongdoer.

Such implications of Christian ethics are so familiar as to seem banal. Familiar as they are, we tend to reduce them to abstractions. But our first answer to contemporary social and economic (and therefore ethical) problems should be our own use of nature, of culture, of knowledge and the will to culture; our own use of them so that it is obvious that for us they are materials to build, as co-workers with God, a city that may grow in the knowledge and love of God, a city that is set on a hill for all to see. It should be obvious, for example, that not only do we welcome the increased leisure that modern machinery brings, but that we also know what to do with the leisure. It should be obvious that we ourselves recognize that increased privileges mean increased responsibilities; that we read rights as derivative from obligations; that we keep our own conscience alive and sensitive; that among us love reigns.

Chief Difficulty with Socialism

And this brings me finally to what is perhaps my chief difficulty with socialism. Aside from all arguments as to practicability and efficiency, the heart of socialism it seems to me is an appeal to force; that is, to the state. There are two angles here.

Socialism, in my opinion, intends whether by revolution or by ballot to force the general conscience to do what it is not ready to do. Admitted that socialism itself has changed during the last fifty years, essential to socialism is this appeal to Caesar to produce by force what only spirit can achieve.

And, from the second angle, not only should the state not be substituted for what I have called the general conscience but it should not be incapacitated for performing its proper duty. The state as “bearing the sword” exists in order that men may be free to build at the city of God; free even to build at a city to a strange god. The Christian lives in a mixed culture; lives in a culture which is the product of the activity not only of the city of God; lives in a world in which nonetheless the dignity of man is inseparable from his obligation, his responsibility, and therefore his inviolable freedom, to make his religious decision; to choose between Jehovah and Baal; to build at a city dedicated to the glory of his God, and in the building to use all of the cultural product freely. The state is to insure this right; it is not to decide between the cities. True, this means that society will have to take its religious responsibility seriously. It means also that the Christian runs the risk, shall we say, that some city of the world makes impossible the building of the city of God; impossible in the eyes of man, that is to say. But the cause of our Lord is not advanced by striking off the ear of the servant of the high priest.

As constantly, so here. When immediate practical action by the Christian is called for; the very setting of the problem is for him distressing. And the alternatives which are presented by way of solution are none of them such as he would ideally wish. Both contemporary capitalism and contemporary socialism are tainted with the perspective of modernity, and with that perspective Christianity is at odds. But it seems to me clear that as intrinsic system socialism is very definitely the less compatible with Christianity, and that whatever the evils with which we have in our day to cope, socialism would mean attempting to cure them by what from the Christian standpoint is worse; namely, by first surrendering Christianity to modernity.
Is Free Enterprise Anti-Christian?

As reported in the Toronto Daily Star of September 26, 1947, the National Council of the Christian Student Movement in Canada at its annual meeting at Lake Couchiching passed the following resolution: "Because we believe the land and means of production are ultimately God-given and men should hold this property in stewardship for God, we feel free enterprise, with its emphasis on the complete right of the individual to do what he will with his property, is basically anti-Christian."

This declaration further states that it is inspired by the concern to "stress the idea of man's stewardship of the things God has given"; that the free enterprise system has "depersonalized men by its emphasis on technology and production above the essential Christian regard for the worth of the individual"; and that "a system of economic democracy in which the land and means of production are operated by the elected representatives of the people to meet the needs of all is potentially more Christian than the present one and is, therefore, a goal toward which Christians ought to work."

From this statement it is clear that the Canadian C.S.M. (at least its National Council) has seen fit to condemn as anti-Christian our present economic system, in which the private ownership of capital and the means of production is basic. It has seen fit in the name of Christianity to repudiate the profit motive and the entire system of free enterprise. In short, it has declared itself against capitalism and in favor of some form of socialism.

What shall we say of this attack, in the name of Christianity, upon our present economic system of free enterprise?

Before coming to grips with the argument, there is room for a few preliminary remarks to clear the ground and elucidate the issue.

For the purpose of this article we need not be too painstaking about the precise difference between Socialism and Communism. There is no agreement in the usage of these terms. Most authors distinguish Socialism from Communism in that the former is made to stand for collective ownership of the means of production only, whereas the latter is used for a collective set-up that extends also to distribution and consumption. Others use the terms interchangeably and, recognizing Karl Marx as the father of both, consider both synonyms for Marxism.

In this connection someone might raise the question whether there is such a thing as Communism. Is there a genuine Communism in existence anywhere, Russia included? A good case could be made out for the somewhat surprising statement made by Dean Inge that "Communism in Russia is a mere facade, behind which a very formidable nationalist, militarist, totalitarian State, based not on Communism but on State-capitalism, is being forged." But whether one accepts this statement, or whether one would prefer to subscribe to the view of Dr. D'Arcy, who in the same book says, "There is only one form of it [Communism] which is real for us; that, namely, which descends from Marx, was embodied by Lenin, and now has its seat at Moscow"), it is of no great importance for the present argument. Whether it be Socialism, Communism, Marxism, or Collectivism, all are the sworn enemies of the system of free enterprise with its insistence upon the right of private property and the legitimacy of the profit motive. And it is this system of free enterprise which is declared anti-Christian by the C.S.M. conference mentioned above.

We are now ready to state the thesis of this article. In the face of the claim of the Canadian C.S.M. that the system of free enterprise must be displaced by a socialistic order because it is anti-Christian, we submit the following: The economic system of free enterprise, far from being anti-Christian, is more in harmony with the high ethical demands of the Christian religion than any collectivistic alternative, whether it be Socialism or Communism.

We believe this claim can be substantiated along three distinct lines of thought, viz., first, with a view to the right of private property; secondly, with a view to the protection of human personality; and thirdly, with a view to the preservation of liberty.

Stated differently, every collectivistic system is an attack upon 1) the right of private property, 2) the sacredness of personality, and 3) the enjoyment of true liberty.

Over against this we maintain that the right of private property, the sacredness of personality, and the enjoyment of true liberty are safeguarded and
promoted by the economic system of free enterprise, and that on each of these scores the system of free enterprise is not anti-Christian but Christian.

I

On the score of the right of private property the system of free enterprise, far from being anti-Christian, is more in harmony with the high ethical demands of Christianity than any collectivistic alternative.

Basic to the free enterprise system is the right of private property. With the abolition of the right of private ownership of the means of production, a free economy becomes a collectivist economy.

This right of private ownership is, of course, not an absolute right. No right is absolute in human society. In the absolute sense of the word only God is the owner of all things. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." He has the absolute right to give and to take away. A human being is from this point of view only a relative owner. He owes it to God and to his fellowman to use his goods for a worthy end. In this sense he is, as over against God, a steward of his possessions and he will be called to render an account of his stewardship. But this in no wise conflicts with his right of private ownership. In fact, that right is precisely presupposed in the responsibility of stewardship. If over against man he were not owner, then over against God he could not be held accountable as a steward. "With respect to other men, man is an owner, he has plenary control over what belongs to him. With respect to God he is always a steward, a man with an account to render." This would appear to dispose of the argument contained in the C.S.M. statement that free enterprise is basically anti-Christian "because we believe the land and means of production are ultimately God-given and men should hold this property in stewardship for God."

But there is another legitimate restriction upon the exercise of this right of private ownership. It is the right and duty of the government to place certain restrictions upon the exercise of this right in case grave misuse to the detriment of human society is made of it. Government is divinely instituted in a sinful world not only to maintain order and punish evil, but also to curb injustice in human society. Much of our social legislation has this aim in view. The government has no power to nullify the right of any individual on this score, but that government may in given cases have to restrict the exercise of that right with a view to social justice. The imposition of such a restriction upon the exercise of the right of private ownership is not to be confused with the cancellation of that right. In this light for instance the imposition of taxation upon excessive incomes and inheritances is to be justified. But such restriction can be exercised only upon the assumption that the right of ownership belongs to each individual and that he cannot be deprived of it. Brunner, interpreting Calvin on this subject, says: "The state certainly has the right to limit private property, but not to expropriate it."

This disposes of the force of the C.S.M. statement that free enterprise, "with its emphasis on the complete right of the individual to do what he will with his property", is basically anti-Christian. The recognition of such a complete and absolute right would be anti-Christian indeed. It may well be questioned whether any intelligent person champions such a view of the right of private property. In fact, it is not unfair to say that such a view is unreal and a caricature of the right of private ownership and the system of free enterprise.

Scripture on the Right of Private Property

Recognizing these two proper restrictions upon its exercise, we now proceed to show that Scripture teaches and safeguards the right of private property.

As for the Old Testament, this right is grounded in creation and is either presupposed or explicitly recognized throughout the patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the prophetic period. Abraham's buying a parcel of ground for the burial of Sarah, Jacob's varied experiences in the matter of wages with Laban, even Joseph's gradual acquisition of all the property of the Egyptians which they offer him in payment for food in days of famine—these are only a few stories from the early period proving that the recognition of the right of private property was general. This continued throughout the Mosaic and the prophetic period. The story of the dealings of king Ahab and queen Jezebel with Naboth, the Jezreelite, whose patrimony they expropriated by having him executed unjustly, is a ringing vindication of the sacredness of the right of private property in the period of the kings. (I Kings 21.)

More eloquent than all these instances is the divine commandment to Israel through Moses: "Thou shalt not steal." (Exodus 20:15) Theft is viewed as a great sin. The sixth commandment protects human life, the seventh preserves the sex relation in human marriage, and the eighth, forbidding theft, "springs from the principle of the sanctity of human property." Flowers properly begins his discussion of the eighth commandment with the sentence: "If theft be wrong, then the institution of property must be right." This is the biblical repudiation of Proudhon's notorious statement, "La propriété c'est le vol." ("Property is theft.") One must take his choice between Proudhon and Scrip-

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ture, and the Christian will not hesitate long in doing so. 9

As for the New Testament teaching, it is even more explicit. Of course, our Lord's primary approach to questions of wealth and property is a spiritual, not an economic one. His outstanding teaching on the subject of material possessions stresses: that wealth is a snare; that there is a great danger in riches; that we must not place too high an estimate upon it; that we should not set our heart on earthly possessions; that we must be ready to surrender all earthly goods for the excellency of the riches of Christ; that a man is not profited if he should gain the whole world and would lose his soul in the bargain. But all such teaching in no way militates against the right of private property. In fact, it presupposes that very right. The outstanding commandments of the Decalogue, the one on property and theft specifically included, are reaffirmed by our Lord in Matthew 19:18 and Mark 10:19. Paul does the same once more in Romans 13:9. And the New Testament reaffirmation of the last commandment, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, reaffirms and reinforces this once more.

The teaching of our Lord, especially as found in the parables, is throughout based upon the assumption and at times the explicit recognition of the inviolability of private property. Note how fully this is taught in the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30. The parable of the unjust steward (Luke 16:1-12) presupposes it. So does the parable of the ten pounds (Luke 19:12-26). All these parables not only presuppose the right of private property but the right of investment. Even the parable of the rich fool condemned him for his folly in laying up treasure for himself and not being rich toward God, but it in no wise condemns him for considering his property his own (Luke 12:16-21). In the parable of Dives and Lazarus there is no justification of any form of collectivism. The rich man is condemned on two scores: first, that he only thinks of wealth and comfort and this life and fails to make provision for his future while in this life, and, second, that he fails to alleviate the want of the poor man at his door. Both were great sins, but in neither is there even a remote attack on the right of private property. In fact, the latter precisely assumes it. (Luke 16:19-31.)

The story of the rich young ruler, contrary to much thoughtless quoting, is no scriptural encouragement for a collectivist regime. When he is told to sell all that he had and give to the poor, he is charged to do so not because that was the only economy which our Lord approved, but because this was in his particular case the only radical cure for the evil of having set his heart upon riches. This is clear from the explanation which the Lord Him-

Community of Goods and the Jerusalem Church

It would not be difficult to multiply passages, both from the gospels and from the epistles confirming this point. 9 But how about the community of goods practiced in the early Jerusalem church? Was not property in this earliest of Christian communities communal rather than private? Is not this early Christian practice a severe blow to the right of private property? The answer is simple. It is nothing of the kind. Whatever form of community of goods may have obtained in the early Jerusalem church, it had nothing in common with economic communism, which is the denial of the right of private property and the compulsion for all to live in a collectivist set-up. That precisely these two elements are not found in the brotherhood of the early Jerusalem church is apparent from the following:

1. Those who sold their possessions and brought the proceeds to the treasury of the church did so voluntarily. It is done out of charity and generosity. At most it is a voluntary form of "community of goods" practised by a small group from charitable and, possibly, ascetic motives. This set-up has nothing in common with any form of Socialism or Communism as practiced or proposed in our modern day, with compulsion and expropriation as essential elements. That this was a voluntary affair in the Jerusalem church is clear, for one thing, from the fact that it was not practiced in the other early churches. It had at no time been made a requirement of following Christ, neither by Him nor by His apostles. Hence also one of the donors is mentioned by name (Acts 5:36), which would make no sense if it were a universal practice in the Jerusalem church.

2. That the right of private ownership was fully recognized even in the Jerusalem church is clear from the statement which Peter makes in rebuking Ananias and Sapphira. Said he: "While it remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power? How is it that thou has not performed this thing in thy heart? thou has not lied unto men, but unto God." (Acts 5:4) From this and from the context it is abundantly clear that Peter rebukes Ananias, and that the latter is punished, not for any failure to surrender property, but for the sin of lying. The very words of Peter affirm the right of Ananias to keep what was his own.

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8) On the extra-Biblical argument for the right of private property and some of its implications, see the article on "Property" by V. Cathrein in Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. XII, pp. 462-466.

What then do we have in this interesting account of the early Jerusalem church? A purely voluntary sharing on the part of the rich of their possessions with the poor, through the channel of the church treasury, so that their want might be alleviated. It was motivated partly by asceticism, partly by generosity, and as such it has been practiced again and again in later Christian communities. Usually it can succeed only, if it does succeed at all, in small communities of adherents of the same faith. When it is so practiced voluntarily by a group of believers, no one can register any objection against it on principle. And that for the simple reason that it does not do violence to the right of private property and does not in such cases impose itself upon human society, as a socialistic or communistic order in any nation must and does do. 10

In this light also the numerous religious communistic ventures throughout the ages must be viewed. Their prevalence proves nothing for the issue before us. If these ventures demonstrate anything at all for our subject, it would be their utter impracticality and the inevitability of their ultimate collapse. 11

In the face of this evidence the right of private property, which is the chief pillar supporting the system of free enterprise, must be held to be indisputably biblical and Christian, and the attack upon it as anti-Christian is wholly unwarranted.

II

On the score of the sacredness of human personality the system of free enterprise, far from being anti-Christian, is more in harmony with the high ethical demands of Christianity than any collectivist alternative.

Every collectivist order is an attack upon the sacredness of personality, the rights of the individual. A collectivist order does not consider society as made up of persons, with individual rights, abilities, and possibilities. Socialism, and especially Communism, uses the individual as a mere part of a larger whole, as a cog in a wheel.

With a strange confusion the previously mentioned Christian Student Movement statement says of the system of free enterprise: "We feel this system has depersonalized men by its emphasis upon technology and production above the essential Christian regard for the worth of the individual." If the statement means to ascribe this "depersonalizing" to the development of modern technology, it is, of course, entirely right. The machine age tends to make machines of us all and to kill individuality, originality, and distinctiveness. But it must be added at once that this evil mechanization of life and persons exists under Socialism and Communism just as well, and just as much, as under the system of free enterprise. It is caused not by free enterprise; it is caused by the machine. Modern man will have to fight this evil under any economic order. It can hence not be an indictment of the capitalistic order of economic society.

It is possible that the C.S.M. leaders meant that this "depersonalizing" is caused by a system of ruthless competition, in which the machine becomes the instrument in the hands of the owners of capital to crush out the life of the weak or to make human beings mere extensions of the tools of production. If this is intended, there is some real point to the statement. There can be no question that under some forms of open and "free" competition in modern industrial society, with the mass production made possible by the machine, the individuals in a trade or industry have at times been treated as tools rather than as persons. But, if this is the intent of the statement, it must at once be pointed out that these evils have to a large extent been neutralized by the social legislation that has been passed in the more enlightened countries in which the system of free enterprise obtains. If one thinks of the rights which labor has obtained in recent years in the United States, he must in all honesty greatly qualify any such accusation as is implied in this statement. Moreover, though these evils are attendant upon the free enterprise system, they are not inherent in it. The very fact that in our country—not to speak of others—they have been largely neutralized is proof of this fact. It is, of course, fully recognized here that for the introduction of such reforms the capitalists in most cases do not deserve much credit, and that the poor laboring classes had to struggle for their rights. But this in no wise invalidates the statement that these evils can be eliminated, and have been eliminated, without destroying the system of free enterprise.

And now, having recognized these facts, it must be pointed out that there is an unmistakable trend toward depersonalizing man precisely in every collectivist system. It is not merely an attendant evil accompanying such a system—it is inherent in the system itself. That is why an enlightened capitalist order, the system of free enterprise as such, is more in harmony with the ethical principles of Christianity than any collectivist system can be. In a collectivist system, the system is the thing—not the men who constitute the system. The deeper reason for this is that every collectivist system of the modern day is essentially materialistic and all materialism suppresses personality, individuality, the image of God in man. The deeper underground of the modern trend toward the depersonalizing of man is the theme of Leslie Paul's penetrating book,

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The Annihilation of Man, though his interest and approach are philosophical and religious rather than economic.

Also Walter Lippmann has spoken with real insight of the degradation of man that has been brought about by the spread of modern Materialism and Atheism, and the apparently inseparable concomitants of collectivist economies. Historically the battle line is drawn unmistakably between Materialism, Absolute Idealism, and Atheism, coupled with personality-destroying collectivisms on the one hand, and Christianity with its championship of free enterprise, grounded in the rights and duties of the individual man made in God's image, on the other. Says Lippmann: "Collectivist regimes are always profoundly irreligious. For religious experience entails the recognition of an inviolable essence in men; it cultivates a self-respect and a self-reliance, which tend at some point to resist the total subjection of the individual to any earthly power." He characterizes the leveling trend of all collectivism in these words: "Collectivists are profoundly monistic in their conception of life, because they regard variety and competition as evil. They look upon the state not as the dispenser of justice among the various interests of men,—for the idea of justice involves the recognition of variety,—but as the creator of a unity in which variety of interest will have disappeared." And Canon Barry, with his British background, characterizes the same evil in speaking of the ideal of Bolshevism as "the organization of man-in-the-mass, the New Man, regimented and mechanized, which is to supplant the Christian tradition of men and women as individuals, with souls to save and a destiny to realize."

Individual Initiative, Thrift, Industry

A valuable implication of this recognition of personality on the part of the system of free enterprise and its suppression in every collectivist setup, is the place assigned by each to individual initiative, thrift, industry, and the principle of rewarding each individual in accordance with his effort.

The system of free enterprise champions and cultivates self-reliance and initiative, personal industry and thrift, individual responsibility and accountability, the readiness to take a risk. This is partly grounded in the recognition and esteem of the individual as a human being, and it comes to expression by the application of the sound principle that each individual is rewarded in accordance with his effort and industry. But Socialism by its collective ownership of the means of production, and Communism, which extends the collectivism also to distribution and consumption, undermine all these fine qualities. Those Utopian idealists who in the name of Christianity claim that man in the economic struggle ought to be unselfish enough to live not for his own advantage or that of his family, but for that of the whole community, neither know human nature as created by God nor as it has been influenced by sin. The system of free enterprise, on the other hand, is both sound idealism and sound realism.

The principle of reward according to effort is a sound principle and it is sound both economically and on the basis of Christian ethics. In the Seligman-Nearing Debate on Capitalism versus Socialism held in New York City in 1921 Dr. Seligman stated (and what he said about Russia in his day would apply equally to the subject before us today): "As regards the remuneration for labor, Socialism [read: Communism] preaches equal pay. A bonus, Lenin told us, was something only for bourgeois society. Equal pay means payment according to need. But unfortunately it is not payment according to need but rather according to efficient work that is really productive. Even in Russia today, they have been compelled to give up their original plans of payment according to need and they now have developed the bonus system to a point even unheard of in the United States."}

The Scriptural Principle of Reward

That this is also a sound principle in the light of Christian ethics is clear to every student of the Bible. Every Bible student is familiar with the numerous passages which enjoin industry, thrift, faithful application to one's task, and which stress the principle of reward for one's labor proportionate to the effort put forth. Though as over against God no sinful human being (and who is not a sinner?) has any real claim to make, nevertheless God has laid down the law of remuneration for industry, of reward for faithful application to one's task.

Perhaps the finest and most impressive teaching on this subject anywhere in Scripture is found in our Lord's parable of the pounds (Luke 19:12-26). The entire parable deserves careful study in this connection and we so commend it to the thoughtful student. Each servant is rewarded in accordance with the measure of his application, the "production" achieved, the degree of successful utilization of the "capital" entrusted to him. He who produced nothing is punished after the pound of his original "capital" is taken away from him. And when the Lord directs that this pound shall be given to the man who has been successful in making ten pounds, the objection is raised (whether in the parable or by some bystanders listening to Jesus' discourse is immaterial): "Lord, he hath ten pounds."

14) F. R. Barry, Christianity and the New World, p. 251.
To which the Lord replies: “I say unto you, that unto everyone that hath shall be given; but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him.” (Luke 19:25, 26). These words do not mean that the poor ought to be made poorer and the rich richer, but they clearly mean that those who by thrift and industry apply themselves to their task should be and will be rewarded accordingly, and that those who refuse so to do will even lose that which they had to begin with. This teaching is doubly impressive as coming from the lips of our Lord, who in the oft unequal struggle between the rich and the poor was almost invariably on the side of the latter. 16

The principle of the value and inviolability of the individual and its concomitant of the reward to which each individual is entitled according to the measure of his industry and application lies deeply imbedded in the Scriptures and in all Christian ethics. On this score the system of free enterprise is much nearer to the spirit of Christianity than any collectivist system can be.

III

On the score of the preservation and enjoyment of true liberty the system of free enterprise, far from being anti-Christian, is more in harmony with the high ethical demands of Christianity than any collectivist alternative.

Let us finally focus this argument on the subject of freedom. Proponents of collectivism are wont to ridicule the freedom which the system of free enterprise claims to offer. At least this ridicule was common a few decades ago. And it must be granted that they could furnish much evidence of the prevalence of economic slavery and suffering on the part of the lower classes under the traditional capitalism existing in many countries. Professor Scott Nearing in the debate mentioned above depicted the condition of the workingman under capitalism as one of intermittent starvation and slavery. He linked the intermittent starvation with the periodic panics producing unemployment. And he told his audience that as long as an economic order obtained in which the non-workers in effect said to the workers: “You go work and earn bread and I will eat it”, this necessarily involved a condition of economic slavery for the workingman. 17

Now I have not the least desire to deny that bad conditions for workingmen have existed in the past in many countries and that these still exist in some today. Under a system of unrestrained competition and an industrial order with little or no social legislation to protect the weak from the strong, conditions have existed for a long time and in many cases still exist, which are a grave indictment of the community in which they are found. But before anyone concludes that this is an indictment of the system of free enterprise as such and that some collectivist setup will remedy the situation, he may well stop and think and look at some hard facts. As such I would submit the following:

1. The evils against which many sincere Socialists have justifiably protested and which they would eliminate by a change of economic organization, are deep-seated evils in human nature rather than environmental evils inherent in a system. There is no reason to believe that under Socialism these evils would not reappear, though in a different form and setting. “The Socialist naively argues”, says Walter Lippmann, “that if all property were held in trust for all the people, all property would as a matter of course be administered in their highest interest.” “But,” he points out, “there is nothing in the act of transferring the ownership of productive capital to the community which offers any guarantee whatever that the official managers will not enrich themselves and exploit the community.” 18

To say that these evils cannot be eradicated by changing the economic order is not in any way to palliate them. From the Christian point of view these evils must be exposed and fought. Smugly complacent capitalists who, possibly with pious phrases on their lips, would ignore, minimize, or justify such evils, are an abomination to the Lord. To them sermons should be preached on the blistering passages in Amos and other Old Testament books and on the opening words of the fifth chapter of the Epistle of James. These evils must be recognized and must be fought along two distinct lines, viz., by direct action in their own economic community on the part of Christians in positions of influence, and by enlightened social legislation on the part of the government.

2. The curbing of the evils of an unbridled competitive system and of an industrial setup controlled by the machine and large scale production, has gone forward in recent decades in most countries where free enterprise obtains today. Social legislation, first in many European countries, then also in our own country, has effected a tremendous improvement in the condition of the workingman. Although wages in many industries and trades are not yet what they ought to be and could be, and in such cases the fight for better terms and conditions must go forward, in the main we may say that the standard of living of the workingman, especially in our country, is unusually high. And all that was effectuated under an economy of free enterprise, though it

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16 The thrust of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16), each of whom receives the same reward though some of them have labored all day and others only one hour, is not in conflict with the teaching of the parable of the pounds. That parable teaches that one is rewarded according to the effort and that each one must put his talents to use. This parable, however, teaches that all the saved will receive the same blessing of salvation, even though some are converted at the eleventh hour and others spend all their life in God’s service. “All alike will receive the reward of eternal life, whether they become disciples of the Kingdom at an earlier or at a later period.” (W. C. Allen in International Critical Commentary, Matthew, p. 215. See also Meyer’s Commentary, Matthew, p. 362.)


must be fully recognized that many—altogether too many—of the capitalists (whom the late President Roosevelt characterized as "economic royalists") do not deserve much credit for its achievement. Yet it was achieved under the system of free enterprise.

3. And over against this, what is the record of Collectivism? The vaunted liberty which the workingman was to enjoy under socialism and communism has not materialized in the countries which have abolished the economy of free enterprise. In the debate mentioned above it was not hard for Dr. Seligman to read official statements of the Russian regime which were most devastating for the claims made on this score by his socialist opponent. Not only did he signalize intolerable conditions as far as working hours and the like are concerned, but he quoted Russian government orders which betrayed the tyranny and slavery which existed in this country that was supposed to be a paradise for the proletariat. This is significant. The more so, because the world has learned much firsthand in recent decades about totalitarian tyranny. It is a fair question to ask, how many laboringmen in countries where the system of free enterprise exists today would care to exchange places with the workingmen in Russia.

The boasted liberties of Socialist and Communist

The ideas here presented are not necessarily or even probably original (what is an original idea?). The only connection that I will claim between these ideas and myself is that they appeal to me; I expect to hold to these ideas until they are superseded by others which seem better.

Would you be so kind as to publish these propositions in The Calvin Forum and open the columns of the magazine to the replies and comments which your readers may wish to submit?

I. Theology has implications for political, economic, and social life. This is somewhat truer than to say that politics, economics, and sociology have theological implications. True theology is more positive and final, and therefore more basic, than the other sciences. Theology must therefore take the lead in solving problems; but must at the same time stand above all other economic, political, and social systems.

II. As problems and systems become more particular, the involvement of the Church in them becomes less direct.

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Theology and the Economic Question

INVITATION TO DISCUSSION

Dear Dr. Bouma:

It has been my desire for some time to submit a few ideas on the economic question to The Calvin Forum. This question is, deservingly, I believe, one of the principal issues of our time. Recent tragic events on the world’s battlefronts have changed some aspects of the question and eliminated others, but, if anything, they have accentuated the importance of the problem as a whole. The question is fully as important for the Church as for any other institution. Christians must stand together—without regimentation, of course, but with unity of spirit. Divergence regarding details, specific programs, and methods is not only permissible, but inevitable. But unity in principles and goals is essential.

To contribute to the discussion which is necessary if we are to achieve this unity, I should like humbly to present some thoughts on the general question of the Church and economics. Some of these are matters on which I think we can all agree. Others require some clarification and discussion. I will be glad to be instructed or corrected on any or all.

The Calvin Forum * * * January, 1951

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19 Opp. cit., p. 36f.
A. The proper task of the Church is to proclaim the Gospel.
B. Theologians think out the implications of the Gospel for contemporary needs.
C. Christian citizens apply these implications in actual programs. There is room for wide divergence in this application.

III. The Scriptural understanding of man and the world is never out of date. But our traditional formulation of this understanding is out of date and in many respects inadequate. The situation demands that we exhibit genuine humility, earnest study, and a high grade of courage.

IV. Christianity is not bound to any one system of politics or economics. When in the pulpit, the minister must not give that impression. Even when out of the pulpit, he must be careful lest people fail to make the proper distinction between what he says as a man, a citizen, or a thinker, and what he says by virtue of his office. This is true on principle; it may also become a matter of the self-preservation of the Church.

V. Both optimism and pessimism are tempered by the Christian position. We may speak of the "redemption of society" in the sense of correcting injustices. But a "redemption of society" in the sense of a well-ordered, self-perpetuating world is not to be expected in view of man's sin. Adam's sin has been, and is today, working out its consequences. Nevertheless, the Church has always the unequivocal responsibility to work for better conditions because the Word clearly links social justice with the Christian's responsibility toward God.

VI. The sinfulness of the human heart is a matter which the Church may never fail to emphasize. Augustine introduced this as a radically new element which fundamentally altered classical thought. The importance of the fact of sin has not diminished, although it is as much denied today as it ever was. This fact has much to say about what kind of world we may expect, what kind we may work for, and with what hopes we may labor for it.

VII. The sovereignty and transcendence of God also require undiminished emphasis today. The concept of "success" is conditioned by the Christian position. "Failure" in terms of God's revealed will may mean "success" in terms of His secret will. Our responsibility to obey the revealed will is unalterable and inescapable. Success of the secret will is inevitable. But neither of these facts insures invariable success in the current efforts of the Christian community. We must, for example, never lose sight of the idea of God's being glorified in the punishment of evil and evil-doers.

VIII. The Church's judgments on lay society must often, we may say usually, take a negative form. But this does not decrease their importance.

IX. Apart from the intervention of divine grace, there is no panacea for the world's ills. Intelligent governmental interference may lead to the solution of some of our problems, and the situation calls for a sincere effort of this sort in some respects. Governmental assumption of production or of complete control of life will, on the other hand, only shift the ground at best, and may well multiply and complicate the problems.

X. As there is error in the best human planning, so there is some truth even in the worst. It is always the part of wisdom to strive to see the error in our position and the truth in the other man's. Christian charity and humility also contribute to the necessity for doing this. This applies even to such radically opposed concepts as communism and capitalism, individual and social responsibility, fundamentalism and modernism. Among the errors which we must avoid, bigotry, complacency, and stagnation are not the least.

XI. We are compelled to accept the testimony of "experts" on economic matters. But we dare not accept them as authorities on the spiritual destiny of man. A living theology must provide the leadership here. Enlightened, educated Christians must be the experts.

I crave the intelligent comment which will correct and perfect the thoughts here expressed.

Sincerely yours,

John H. Kromminga.
I SHALL not sing of our sunny warmth or blooming roses. Of this you yourself can know by way of that time-honored, although now somewhat discredited, *via negationis*.

The year that draws to a close has seen more revival activity in Southern California than any of its predecessors. One would have to be a religious statistician to keep the count. Even Hollywood—never particularly renowned as a spiritual center—supplied sufficient religious response to nourish a revival of many weeks' duration. Firstwhile Catholic Dr. Jose Morales, of high Mexican family, conducted a month-long all-Spanish revival in the Greater Los Angeles area. But greatest and most spectacular of them all was the appearance of William Frank Graham, better known as Billy Graham, at the Pasadena Rose Bowl—to which, I suspect, many Michiganders would like to wend their way come January first.

The Rose Bowl appearance of Graham was promoted by Fuller Theological Seminary and by many another agency, spearheaded and organized by the genius which is Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, and sponsored by 1,800 churches. A large attendance was assured by the promised personal appearances of mellow-voiced Dr. Charles E. Fuller, of dynamic Dr. Harold Ockenga,—who delivered an excellent, high caliber speech—and by the attraction of a Choir Cross comprised of ten thousand singers. Fifty thousand people were drawn into this "massive cathedral under the stars" to hear Billy Graham warmly and sincerely enjoin sinners to flee to Christ to escape imminent judgment.

Needless to say, such a broad hearing for the gospel is not obtained by a few church bulletin announcements or by little ads in little religious periodicals. Mass attendance, such as this revival enjoyed, is only achieved by expert promotion, broad radio and press publicity, and wide, costly, well-timed advertising, in the best American business tradition. According to a press release, this revival was staged through the cooperation of eighteen thousand five hundred persons. Fifteen hundred people left the stadium for the track surrounding the football field to accept Christ in the greatest mass conversion of the West Coast. It was indicative of its promotional success that the large Los Angeles Examiner printed, and sold at the Bowl, an extra edition whose first three pages were devoted to coverage of the revival. The first three pages for write-ups, pictures, printed hymns, and publication of the official program for the evening!

If the revival movement now sweeping the country continues, it will likely find mention in the Church History books of the future. And if such sweeping revivalism is indicative of the spiritual vitality of the Churches, then the Churches of Southern California are enjoying robust health.

While we should indeed thank God for the good this revivalism does in fact accomplish, and while we should remember that they who are not against us, are for us, nonetheless, we should not view current revivalism exclusively in terms of blessing. On the contrary, the very need of revivals, and the revival itself as a satisfaction of this need, ought also to be regarded as a judgment of God upon the Churches for their failure to perform their task. The very fact that God uses and blesses independent, free-lance revivalistic movements may well be an indication that God is removing the candlestick from many a church for its failure to preach the gospel of Christ. The Churches, therefore, ought to regard the revivalistic fires that sweep the country both as a divine judgment and a divine blessing, but in the order given. Only when the blessing is seen through the initial perception of judgment, will the eye turn to the correction of that in the Churches which makes revivalism necessary. This is not understood by those who unthinkingly plead for revival in Churches where the gospel is purely preached. The welfare of those Churches is ill served where the term revival is emptied of the only meaning it has for people nowadays, and having been refiled with a biblical content, is then used in a plea for a "revival" in the Churches. Revivalism—in the only meaning the term has ever had on the American religious scene—should in the first instance call the Churches to self-examination and confession for failure of duty. Only from within confession of failure can the Churches rightly thank God that the task she failed to perform, has in some fashion been done by another.

In the face of sweeping revivalism, the Churches should first of all become embarrassed that they now sponsor the preaching of the Gospel, instead of assuming the task themselves. Secondly, in view of the admitted thousands of "repeat decisions" for Christ, the Churches should consider whether their Arminian construction of the Gospel, with its inherent uncertainty of personal salvation, is not creating the very conditions that call for endless revival of assurance of faith through repeated recommittments to Christ. I saw, for example, some people come to the Rose Bowl with a well-worn Bible under their arm, and at the altar call go forward to confess Christ. Many of these people are Christian people seeking the personal assurance of salvation that a non-Reformed type of preaching denies them. Thirdly, the Churches should become deeply concerned over the fact that many people who live far on the other side of the tracks will attend a revival meeting but not a church.

Yes, California too loves and conducts many a Bible Conference. Some, indeed, are excellent. Now a Christian in his right faith is no more opposed to conferring in open fields or on mountain tops, far from the big hot city, for Bible study, than he is to genuine revival of spiritual intensity. Yet frequently Bible Conferences, like revivals, are expressions not of the literal but of the historical meaning of the terms. Historically, the Bible Conference is a twin sister to revivalism. In view of the fact that many Bible Conferences, like tyke revivals, are non-ecclesiastical, free-lance religious projects which in all their essentials are much like a regular Church service, and in which Bible study is exactly synonymous with listening to a sermon, the Churches might well be moved to some critical self-reflection. In view of the tremendous enthusiasm with which such conferences are greeted, the Churches may well ask themselves whether their own services lack the flexibility that allows for the religious expression that devotees of Bible Conferences need, and what there is about their own Bible study facilities, Men Societies, et cetera, which go a-begging for members. In short, the Churches may give thanks for all and any genuine religious expression of their laymen, whether in revivalism or conference activity, but it should in the first instance compel them to self-examination. For though it be an unpleasant fact, the history of the Church sustains the judgment that independent and ecclesiastically uncontrolled attempts to heighten spirituality and induce conversions have never been an unmixed blessing for the Church.

As American Reformed Churches we are increasingly taking over the religious institutions and modes of expression
fathed and watered by those religious streams which long ago left the river-bed of the Reformed Calvinistic tradition. If our Reformed Calvinistic spirituality is bursting the old wine skins, let us create new bottles, rather than mend borrowed bottles with new patches. It is my firm conviction that we cannot take over “revivals” and “tent meetings” without taking over the type of spirituality with which they have been associated for many long years. If our spirituality is so intense that it is threatening to burst our long accepted modes of religious expression, then it also possesses the required spiritual creativity to create forms appropriate to its spirit.

Next time, Dr. Bouma, I shall inform you of the organization of a new Biblical Exegetical Club. For now, I shall only mention the passing of one of our members, Dr. Lawrence Gilmore, graduate of Princeton Seminary, one time teacher of the San Diego Christian School, and, at the time of his passing, affiliated with the Fuller Theological Seminary of Pasadena. The cause of Jesus Christ has lost a consecrated and able scholar; we a Christ-like friend in whom the spirit of Jesus shone in beauty.

Sincerely,
JAMES DAANE

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Belfast, Ireland, Dec. 4th, 1950

Dear Dr. Bouma:

As I write 1950 has almost expired. Our Irish winter has come early, reminding us that there is much coldness in the world today. The serious international situation is causing considerable concern over here, and many expect a higher cost of living in 1951. However there have been some important events in the British Isles recently, and these I would like to list.

R.C. Hierarchy Congress

Last September, the R. C. hierarchy in England and Wales celebrated 100 years of restoration. At least six cardinals were present, including M' Guilan of Toronto, and Spellman of New York. A “high altar” was hurriedly erected at Wembley Stadium, London, after the Saturday greyhound racing was over! The Pope, in his broadcast, said that the British King and Queen were held in esteem at the Vatican, and he wished them “a long, prosperous and peaceful reign.” Yet in the same speech, Pius XII referred to the Reformation as “the blackness of night”! We wonder if he has ever heard of our King’s Protestant Declaration. We also wonder if Pius is so very different from his predecessors who plotted against Britain and her empire over and over again. It is noteworthy that this so-called hierarchy—it is really illegal in Britain—was forbidden to send an address of loyalty and homage to the King. The Vatican deplored this; but it is a fact that not only does the R. C. hierarchy challenge that of the English State Church, but that the individual Romanist cannot give undivided allegiance to a Protestant ruler or state. The same holds good in U.S.A.

The Gambling Menace

The gambling craze has gripped Britain. It is a stranglehold. And now, to make matters worse, the Church of England in its Report on Gambling issued by the Social and Industrial Commission of the Church Assembly, has stated that “the gambling contract is in itself permissible.” It is the opinion of this commission that “gambling is permissible as an amusement.” Parish football pools, whist drives and raffles are approved in the report. Of course the Church Assembly states carefully that the report is not fully representative of “the mind and conscience of the Church of England as a whole.” But the sad fact remains that Church of England leaders have now joined hands with Romanists who recently defended gambling. When the Church Assembly speaks of “the mind and conscience of the Church of England,” one feels that this is indicative of the Church’s views on authority. There is no appeal to Scripture. In fact one man who resigned from the Commission said, “I discovered that there appeared to be little inclination to seek an answer to the problem from Holy Scripture.” Many Free Church leaders in Britain would side with the Commission on the question of betting, and one need not be surprised if the gambling craze reaches even more serious proportions in the near future.

A Remarkable Campaign

Miss Monica Farrell is a converted Irish Roman Catholic from the city of Dublin. For the past thirteen years she has lectured in Australia on the controversy with Rome. Now she has returned to the Emerald Isle, and is lecturing all over the country. She even visited Dublin and Cork, two strongholds of the Papacy. In Ulster her campaign has been spectacular. Everywhere hundreds of the ordinary people have flocked to hear her, and hundreds more have failed to gain admission. One night in particular Miss Farrell was delighted to find that in spite of snow and a biting wind, the church in which she was to speak was packed—and this happened in a small country town. Miss Farrell’s message is clear, simple and appealing. She speaks with conviction and from long experience. She has studied her subject. To her, Romanism and Communism are two totalitarianisms which must be resolutely opposed, and to join hands with one to combat the other would be fatal. Calvinism alone can afford to be independent in the world. She strongly opposes dispensationalism, which she regards as a “weaker” of Protestantism. She recognizes that Romanism is rigid Arminianism. Ulster is a stronghold of Futurism, yet Miss Farrell has not been afraid to attack it, and her popularity has not diminished. She will probably visit Canada soon.

Greetings—
Yours in His Service,
FRID S. LEAHY.

THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Edinburgh, 6th December, 1950.

Dear Professor Bouma,

On the last day of October past the Free Church of Scotland completed half a century of history following the episcopal Union of a majority with the United Presbyterian Church in 1900. The majority, who had already made considerable accommodations to facilitate the Union, denied the minority entrance to their Assembly Hall and called in the police to enforce their wishes. “Without further parley,” wrote John Boyd Orr, (now Lord Boyd Orr) “they (the minority) constituted the Assembly with Mr. Bannatyne as Moderator...” There is something ludicrous as well as pathetic about the sight of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, composed of a handful of men, being constituted on the street on a wet, wintry morning, amid hostile shouts. They had received a sample of the treatment which was to be meted out to them for the next four years by a mean-time powerful and intolerant majority.” According to many in the new United Free Church the Constitutional Free Church was to last but a year or two. The United Free Church, except for a minority, was merged in the Church of Scotland in 1929.

The majority in 1900 took steps to carry all the property into the new Church and litigation followed until in 1904 when the Supreme Court—the House of Lords—gave judgment that “the United Free Church of Scotland has no right, title, or interest in any part of the whole land, property... and that the said appellants... conform to the constitution of the Free Church of Scotland, are, and lawfully represent, the Free Church of Scotland...” So it happened that the present Free Church of Scotland, which serves herself heir to the Disruption and to the First and Second Reformations, was acknowledged by the law of the land.
Dear Dr. Bouma,

I have a new interpretation to Spiritual Independence. The Free Church had convinced men like Dr. Abraham Kuyper of the urgent need for greater liberty in signing the creed; Calvinism was too rigid for them; they were in the toils of Higher Criticism: and they gave a new interpretation to Spiritual Independence. The Free Church was accused of obscurantism. It is noteworthy that though they demurred to enter the Union, their width of outlook and charity may be seen in the terms of the motion they made to counter it. The motion began: "That this General Assembly while fully recognizing the duty of... all such closer union with other branches of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland... while recognizing further the duty of, and asserting its determination to engage in such hearty and cordial co-operation as does not involve sacrifice of any vital principle with all other branches of the Christian Church..."

The Lord has blessed the witness of 1900 and the Free Church has increased at home and abroad. Without a missionary in that fateful year she is now privileged with mission stations in South Africa, India and Peru. She labors for Israel through the British Society for the Jews. Possessing a fully equipped College she trains her own students and welcomes others who wish to have their education within her walls. The Westminster Confession of Faith contains the creed to which every office-bearer must testify his personal adherence; the Catechisms are directories of catechising; the Directory of Public Worship, Form of Church Government and the Directory for Family Worship are of the nature of regulations rather than of tests.

The General Assembly meets annually on a Tuesday not earlier than the 18th and not later than the 24th of May. In this short account much has been omitted but possibly future letters may help to supply more.

Yours very sincerely,

D. McKENZIE

DUTCH CALVINISTS TO AUSTRALIA

Sydney, N.S.W., Australia, December 6, 1960

Dear Dr. Bouma,

In the year 1879 Dr. Hoedemaker of the Netherlands addressed the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland. During the course of his address he outlined a scheme for the erection of a Christian University in Amsterdam. The advancing tide of Rationalism in the Reformed Church of Holland had convinced men like Dr. Abraham Kuyper of the urgent need of such an institution. "Does it not bother you," he wrote, "that all the sciences are being developed in the modernistic spirit, breaking down in the life of society what you have built up in your seminary? Do you then surrender the world?"

Dr. Hoedemaker's visit to Scotland was not in vain. He found this Scottish Calvinistic brethren ready to render whatever encouragement and support that could be given. Our fathers have taught us by precept and example that Calvinism is not bound by nationalism; animated by the love of truth, they recognized their unity in that higher oneness of purpose: "Soli Deo Gloria." Dr. H. H. Kuyper, in his address on the occasion of the Quinquagenary of the Free Denomination, said that the Free Church of Scotland "showed its sympathy not only in words, but in deeds." The Free Church committee promised to raise a fund to support the venture and offered the use of her church in Amsterdam to the Free University.

On the 20th day of October, 1880, the Free University was opened, and for the first five years was housed in the Scottish Mission Church at Amsterdam. Our fathers were one in faith and purpose, and we are the children of our fathers.

The Free Presbyterian Church of Australia, consists, mainly, of the descendants of loyal Free-Churchmen, who carried their Calvinistic convictions to the land of their adoption. And today, we are extending the hand of welcome to the spiritual sons of De Cock, Kuyper and Hoedemaker. We are still one in faith and purpose.

The present movement of migrants from Holland to Australia must stimulate the interest of Calvinists throughout the world. It is true that the Calvinistic group in Australia is only small. Australian Presbyterianism has not escaped the infectious disease of Modernism, which at present is being expresscribed in Barthianism, but the faith destroying symptoms of Liberalism have not been able to eradicate the 'still small voice' from this continent, and we are about to witness a new phase of Calvinistic unity. A new facet of the most precious jewel in the world is about to flash its witness of Christian unity.

The Dutch migrants of today will be the Australians of tomorrow, and they with us are units in the building of a new nation under the Southern Cross, and as far as the Calvinistic section of the Dutch migrants are concerned, our common heritage enables us to say to each other: "They shall be my people, and thy God my God!" The Reformed world must recognize that Australia has become the 'testing ground' of Calvinism in Action. Does not this movement open up a new field for the "Calvinistic Action Committee"? We believe it does, and we have suggestions to make, but they will constitute part of another letter.

Perhaps I should tell you of the events that have led up to the present position. Some time ago we received a request from our mutual friend, Mr. Warnaar, regarding the spiritual atmosphere and ecclesiastical setup in Australia. This led to correspondence with the Deputies for Emigration of the Gereformeerde Kerken, and we were greatly concerned for the spiritual welfare of members of the Gereformeerde Kerken, who had decided to come to Australia, and lay again the foundations for their material security. Would the desire for living space and economic security result in spiritual poverty? The concern of the Deputies for Emigration was evidenced by the fact that they sent Drs. Jan Kremers of Utrecht to Australia to investigate the spiritual tone and religious life of this country, in order to formulate a policy for the future activities of the Committee and organize for the ever increasing flow of migrants from the Netherlands.

The solution of the problem has drawn the Gereformeerde Kerken and the Free Presbyterian Church of Australia closer together in visible unity. The Rev. S. Hoekstra of Rotterdam and the Rev. J. van de Bom of Groningen, have accepted calls from the Free Presbyterian Church of Australia. Is not this a practical demonstration of the ecumenical nature of Calvinism?

The movement is only in its beginnings. Apart from unassisted migrants, the Commonwealth government, after discussions with a delegation from the Netherlands, has offered assisted passages for 76,000 Dutchmen. At a conservative estimate there should be approximately 100,000 Dutchmen in Australia by 1963. The Calvinistic convictions, both in heart and mind, that our Reformed brethren carry with them, is the greatest gift that Holland can give to Australia, and by God's grace will contribute to the enrichment of the religious, social, and political life of this infant nation.

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It is true that we are, and shall be, faced with many problems, and we may yet have to call for encouragement and aid from our Calvinistic brethren. But we do not fear the future: our fathers have demonstrated to us the unity of faith. We have but one journal for international Calvinism, The Calvin Forum, and we use it to appeal to you; as Paul appealed to the Thessalonians. "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified."

Warmest regards,

Yours very sincerely,

ARTHUR ALLEN.

Book Reviews

COMMUNISM AND CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA


The Church at large has been greatly concerned about the life of the Church in China under the Communist regime. For this concern there is good reason. The basic philosophy of Marxist Socialism leaves no room for an independent Church and for the supernatural Gospel for which it stands. We have seen the fate of the Church in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Poland and in Russia itself. These experiences, unless all signs fail, are only the beginning of sorrows. How is it with the Church in China?

The book under review gives a no less than startling answer to the question. The Church is not being coerced to adapt itself to the new situation; she has apparently not made this necessary for the simple reason that she "leans to our side." Mr. Samuel E. Boyle, minister of the Reformed Presbyterian (Covenanter) Church of North America, missionary to China since 1934, is editor of the book. It is a documented presentation and we are therefore not presented with his opinions, but by the documented facts themselves.

The evidence presented occasions the conclusion that the leadership of the Church of Christ in China and the National Christian Council of China are quite ready to work along with the new regime, not reluctantly, but sympathetically. The object seems to be to renounce as far as possible connection with the imperialistic West, which has supposedly been supported by missionary agencies; to deemphasize doctrinal distinctiveness; and to emphasize the Church as an agency for community improvement. Outstanding in this whole movement looms the figure of Professor T. C. Chao, Dean of Yenching University School of Religion, Peking, and one of the six vice-presidents of the World Council of Churches.

Although Mao Tse Tung has left no doubt where Chinese Communism stands, Professor Chao feels we must not take too pessimistic a view of the situation. In 1949 Mao stated on the 28th anniversary of the Communist Party in China, "The Communist Party in the USSR is our best teacher...the following are our three main experiences: a party armed with discipline, armed with the theories of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, employing the methods of self-criticism and linked up closely with the masses; an army led by such a party: a united front of revolutionary strata and groups led by such a party." Mao has defined religious liberty for the "people" as a right to be enjoyed by all who are not "reactionary." "For the people who are with us, democracy; for the reactionaries, dictatorship—in the combination of these aspects of government we have what is called the People's Democratic Dictatorship."

In the light of such statements Chao's words sent to American Christians can only occasion surprise and misgiving, "Nor is it for the Chinese Christians to suggest that the revolution in China should not be looked upon merely as a replica of the Russian or the eastern European phenomenon. It is the line of least resistance to think of different historical happenings under the same unmodified category or name...It seems that Christians all over the world need a careful examination of the spectacles they wear." (Christian Century, Sept. 14, 1949.)

This reference was alluded to because, perhaps more than any other part of the documentation, it sets the tone of uncritical optimism with which liberal Christianity in China viewed the Communist victory and the future of the Church under the Communist "Democratic Dictatorship."

The book gives pause for thought. A large segment of Chinese Christianity has been moving in the direction of liberalism under the influence of liberal missions. Recall Dr. Machen's attack on Modernism in the missionary enterprise of Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., in which the outstanding symbol of this trend in missions was Mrs. Pearl Buck, missionary for the Presbyterian Board in China. Are we now being confronted with what the Dutch call de doorwerking (working out) of the Modernist leaven? The reaction to Communism on the part of a segment of the Church in China also calls to mind the attitude to Communism taken by Dr. Karl Barth, namely, that it does not constitute a "temptation," an attitude that has elicited strong reaction on the part of many. Experience has shown all too plainly that the Devil has not committed himself exclusively to the Nazis as an angel of light or to the Communist as a roaring lion. The enemies of the Church have a keen sense for the attitude that will at a given moment be most calculated to attain their end and therefore the spirit of wise and courageous opposition is called for at every stage of the battle.

A few strictures on Mr. Boyle's book are in order. The title of his book would seem to cover too much ground. He is not dealing with the entire Church in China, but with a part, albeit a significant part, of it. There are, as the editor himself indicates, substantial elements in Chinese Christianity that are far from endorsing the attitudes revealed in the material here presented. Nor do the thirty out of the book's one hundred fifty pages that are devoted to showing the Communist sympathies of the Lutheran publication Hsin I Pao convince the reader that this one paper fairly represents the Christian sympathies of the Communist in the missionary enterprise of China.

About the quiet unobservable Christian resistance to the impact of Communism on the Church the book hardly speaks. Yet, undoubtedly it is there. God will not forsake the work of his hands. The future is dark, but care should be taken not to make it appear darker or less hopeful than it is.

In closing it may not be amiss to point out that Communism in its attacks upon the Church as well as upon political opponents seems to have developed a technique of breaking the will to resist that is more efficient and diabolic than anything the Nazis perfected. This consideration neither excuses nor explains the voluntary collaboration which the book undertakes. It should profoundly deepen our sympathies for the struggle and ordeal that confronts our brethren in the faith.

HARRY R. BORR.

HUNGARIAN FREEDOM AND RUSSIAN ABSOLUTISM


The author of this study is a Hungarian by birth. For several decades he has now been an American citizen. His Magyar origin is evident from his name, from the nature of the source material which he has used, and from the
ludatory and passionate tone in which he speaks of this Hun-
garian leader.

Lajos (Louis) Kossuth was, during his lifetime, by no means
an unknown figure in this country. Rhodes, in his monumental
history of this period, devotes fourteen pages to this distin-
guished foreigner, which is more than he devotes to some con-
temporary Americans. Yet, as is known, this is the first
biographical study on Kossuth to appear in this country since
the popular study by Headley in 1852. Kossuth has fared some-
what better at the hands of English historians.

This study is a worthwhile reappraisal of Kossuth's role
as leader in Hungary's revolt of 1848-49 against Austrian mis-
rule. When this revolt was crushed, with the aid of Russia's
mighty army, Kossuth became an exile in Turkey; and when
his life there was no longer safe, the American government
sent a naval vessel to carry him to America. From the mom-
ent he landed at New York, he was acclaimed as a conquering
hero, and was everywhere given an ovation such as was
accorded to no other foreigner save Lafayette.

Kossuth belongs to the truly great of the nineteenth century.
He was a singularly modest, unselfish, and devoted patriot.
He was a true democratic leader, and the author's penetrating
analysis of the significance of democracy justifies the sub-title
of this work: A Magyar Apostle of Democracy. As an orator
he was a match for the best that England and America could
produce, and he was able to address his audiences in masterly
English, with language of his own. "I was a man," he had
learned while in prison. Unlike many of his fellow-Magyars
Kossuth was not a Calvinist, but was a member of the Wal-
densian church. Yet he deserves to be included among the
Christian statesmen of his country. He humbly bowed before
his Maker and ever insisted on the application of God's moral
law also in the relation of state to state.

Part II contains Kossuth's Breviary. This occupies about a
third of the book. Here the author gives some 300 excerpts
from Kossuth's addresses in English. These range from a sen-
tence to a paragraph. Opinion may differ as to the wisdom
of this arrangement. Would it not have been of greater his-
torical value to have reproduced in its entirety the famous
March 4 address, which set off the revolution in Vienna as well
as in Hungary; or to have given in full the speech of April 14,
1849, on Hungarian independence, delivered in the "Big Church"
of the Magyar Calvinists at Debrecen?

The principles for which Kossuth contended are still worth-
while principles and it is this which gives to this volume a
lasting interest. The following statements from his speeches in 1849,
which later formed the text of his "History of the Magyar
Church," illustrate much sound pastoral psychology. These
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“EVANGELICAL” HUMANISM


In this small book, Dr. Hough, well known Methodist preacher, educator, and writer, explores human nature and arrays a goodly number of considerations warranting man to have a lofty opinion of himself. And, indeed, much can be adduced to the fact of human dignity? Does not Jesus say that one soul is worth more than the whole world? But Dr. Hough does not remember that man's dignity is a fallen dignity. He does not do justice to the fact of sin and its devastating results in the life of man. He regards man's power to choose and to choose the right man's crowning glory. At the center of his life man is a king, and especially so when he exercises his power of choice. As a result, the reader finds in this book a presentation of human nature, of sin and grace, that is wholly inadequate. Even of what Calvinists call common grace man has no need.

In a book published some years ago, Dr. Hough describes his position as Evangelical Humanism. Humanist he certainly is. Of what is true evangelically there is not a trace.

J. G. VANDEN BOSCH

HYMNS IN HISTORY


This book is the eleventh to issue from the pen of Albert Edward Bailey. Over half of these have been devoted to a study of the place of the Arts in the Christian religion. The present volume represents the culmination of a lifelong interest and study by an authority in the field of hymnology. The resulting publication might justifiably be expected to provide not only fascinating reading and accurate, valuable information, but also a well-organized, comprehensive coverage of the subject prescribed. In these respects, the book ranks first-class; the reader will not be disappointed.

The Gospel in Hymns surveys the currently used hymns of the Protestant Church from their beginning in the second century to 1929. The author traveled extensively both in America and abroad to gather data for his book. In fact, the book has been in active preparation for many years. The author's thesis is this: "that hymns embody more than a personal expression of religion; they reflect also the religious and social beliefs of the ages that produced them." Accordingly, he treats each hymn and its author in terms of their historical, religious, and social background.

The 313 hymns discussed were selected by ten different hymnal committees of ten different denominations. With the exception of a few, the hymns chosen for special study are found in at least six of the ten selected hymnals. (A check showed that the Psalter-Hymnal, official hymnal of the Christian Reformed Church, contains 75 of the 313 hymns and Psalms which Bailey used.) This current usage seems to have been the basis for his selection. Not many worthwhile hymns could have been omitted upon this basis, in the reviewer's opinion. The really good hymns have a staying power that defies time and tide, just like folk songs. It is a matter of both interest and significance that of the thousands, yes, hundreds of thousands of hymns that have been written since the days of our early church fathers, less than 400 are commonly used by the Christian church today.

As the author unfolds his fascinating story and study, there passes in review a series of pictures of the heroes of the Christian faith, who have become so by virtue of their contributions to hymnology. A study of the hymns that man has written and sung since the dawn of the Christian era is principally a study of man's faith in God. As a man believes and lives, so he writes. As a man believes, so he selects and sings the hymns which best express his thoughts and feelings. One is not surprised, of course, to find a goodly number of the hymns sung by the adherents of the social gospel included in the 313.

It may interest our readers to know that lines, even whole stanzas, have been deleted or modified from many well known and long used hymns, in order to suit the taste of those who can no longer sing of Christ and His sufferings and His shed blood! This book is not the typical sort that has flooded the market in recent years. Human interest stories and anecdotes do not form the basis of its appeal. It is indeed a history of hymnology. Since it omits those hymns which have been written during the last twenty years, it naturally passes over a vast number that are heard and sung today in Fundamentalist circles, which shall probably not be numbered among the hymns of the ages.

The author introduces his readers to the hymns in the order in which they appear in English. By this means we are able to understand, according to Bailey, why Milton paraphrased the Psalms, and what particular ones; out of what intolerance and persecution sprang Bunyan's He Who Would Valiant Be; why the Wesleys needed to stress personal salvation from sin, and cultivate the religious life so strenuously through hymns; who devised prayer-meeting hymns in Germany and England and why; when, where, and why Gospel songs sprung into being; and finally, why hymns of the Social Gospel did not arise in Watts' day in England, but in our own lifetime.

At the beginning of each chapter, the author has placed an historical summary, by topics and dates, of political, social, and religious events pertinent for that chapter. At the back of the book is a lengthy bibliography, arranged in groups for each chapter. An index of the first lines of the hymns used, and hymnal references, as well as one of authors and translators is also included.

Mention should be made that nothing is said specifically concerning the hymn tunes that have been used through the ages. This, we must assure our readers, is a special field in itself, and one which author Bailey undoubtedly felt too vast to incorporate into his present 600-page volume.

Bailey has done a superior job in writing this book. He has rendered the field of hymnology a scholarly, interpretative contribution. It must be added, however, that Bailey is not at all Reformed in his beliefs, and hence, in many of his hymn interpretations. This need not bar one from gaining great pleasure from its reading, from learning much about the origin, content, and meaning of many of our hymns, or from using it as a source of information. It could be used profitably by our young people's groups for their after-recess programs. It should be in our church libraries. Pastors and leaders alike should consult it. One who is active in religious work surely cannot afford to ignore the powerful agency of song. Music has always been the handmaid of the Christian religion.

JAMES DE JONGE

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