Church and Labor Union

Church Labor Policies: A Comparative Study

Some Trends in Modern Penology

Book Reviews

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Editorial

Church and Labor Union

We wish to call the attention of our readers to an informative article on the policy of the Christian Reformed Church regarding the so-called neutral labor union, the first part of which appears in the present number of the Forum. In the course of a comparative study of the labor policies of various ecclesiastical bodies both here and abroad the author calls attention to the fact that the policy of the Christian Reformed Church and that of the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands are about the same, the only difference being that the official declarations of the former are much more detailed. Furthermore, the author points out that although many of the pronouncements of such bodies as the Catholic Church and the National Council of Churches of Christ in America coincide on the ethical level with those of the Christian Reformed Church, they are frequently based upon wholly different religious conceptions, and that in the case of the National Council these conceptions are at variance with those of the Catholic and the Reformed churches as to be definitely antithetical. This, naturally, raises an interesting question. If on the ethical and the practical level the objectives of the humanistic, the Catholic, and the Reformed groups are the same, to what extent can we of the Reformed faith cooperate with these other groups? The aim of the present editorial is that of providing a certain amount of background for the better appreciation of the article hereby introduced.

I

If we substitute the Protestant conception of the Word of God for the Catholic conception of the Church, we discover a striking resemblance between the language of Catholicism in its dealings with social and economic problems and that of orthodox Protestantism. For example—"By making proper use of his thought, his will, his skill, his desires, and his inventiveness man . . . imitates in the limited sphere of his own creative work the absolute creativeness of God . . ." Again, "the employer must realize his social responsibilities as a functionary and trustee of the common good, and the wage earner must be lifted from his proletarian status to a position which safeguards his human dignity and makes him a co-responsible agent or a copartner in management . . . While the right of ownership is a natural right, it is, like all human rights, subject to the rules and limitations of the natural and moral law. Hence, an absolute right of ownership is strictly denied by (Catholic) economic theory, and only a relative right of ownership is admitted. As God is the creator, giver, and absolute owner of all material goods, human ownership, whether private or public, is mere stewardship." What our present society badly needs, for the healing of the breach between capital and labor, for the elimination of internecine class warfare, and for the rehabilitation of both the laborer and his labor is . . . a changed state of mind, a mind ready to accept a philosophy . . . in which the rival claims of individuals and classes are harmonized in the co-operatively sought common good."

The Catholic Church looks upon economic problems in general and labor problems in particular as fundamentally moral problems and, therefore, matters subject to authoritative pronouncements on the part of the Church. A study of these pronouncements reveals that the Catholic attitude toward neutral labor unions is not essentially different from that of the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands and that of the Christian Reformed Church in America. The Catholic worker is expected—in fact, commanded—to seek membership in a Catholic labor organization if local conditions make for an effective Catholic organization. Where this is not the case the worker may seek membership either in an inter-confessional organization, if such exists, or in a neutral union, provided such membership does not involve compromising the religious teachings of the Church and "the moral demands of economic and social equity." Membership in unions dominated by the socialistic spirit of class warfare is prohibited. In America the policy of the Catholic Church is that of educating unionized Catholic workers with a view toward enabling them to assume positions of leadership within neutral unions, and of offering special training in labor problems to members of the priesthood with a view toward placing them in key positions on conciliation boards. The Catholic Church has, in other words, simply taken the neutral labor union for granted and settled down to the policy of trying to influence it for moral and, if possible, religious good.

Is this mere opportunism or is it the kind of thing we Calvinists would like to do if only we had the numbers, the organization, and the brains? For the intelligent Catholic will doubtless argue that this is the Church's way of upholding and applying its con-

1 St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Contra Gentiles, III, 21.

ception of the antithesis in accordance with the words of Jesus, “Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves.” (Matthew 10:16) Doing the best one can under the circumstances is not necessarily identical with a repudiation of principle; and choosing second best when one cannot possibly hope to achieve the best is hardly a denial of the antithesis. In other words, Godly action in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation is not incompatible with wise action. Of course, a strict constructionist Catholic might argue that the antithesis demands either Catholic unions or nothing, but whether this would be facing the realities or trying to escape them would be at least an open question. Labor unions are not, after all, ends in themselves but only means for getting along as best one can in an un-Christian situation. Is the act of joining an inter-confessional or a neutral union fundamentally a betrayal of Catholicism? Catholic leaders, at least, don’t seem to think so.

Unions exist for the purpose of actually achieving something like social justice, and any so-called labor organization the constitution of which virtually reduces it to ineffectiveness, whatever its value as a debating society or a Bible class, is at least not a labor union. And the notion that the antithesis demands either the ideal or nothing at all is, after all, sheer dogma. The Christian is nowhere forbidden to exercise prudence; and expediency, one supposes, is sinful only when, as the result of mere opportunism, one deliberately sacrifices an attainable higher value to a lower one. And when an intelligent Catholic joins an inter-confessional or a neutral labor union he doubtless feels that as a Christian he is at liberty to co-operate with non-Christians because the ultimate objective is an increment of social justice and civic righteousness. Naturally, as a Catholic he will be motivated by considerations and principles antithetical to those motivating non-Catholics; but if he is sufficiently intelligent it will probably occur to him that here he is virtually an agent in fulfilment of the Scriptural truth that even “the wrath of men shall praise Thee.” (Psalms, 76:10) That he is motivated by a principle which leads to results identical with those achieved as a consequence of the motives and actions of the unregenerate will doubtless appear to him as a marvel of God’s inscrutable providence. Anyway, it is an undeniable fact that the Catholic Church has a labor policy more practical, more systematic, and more effective than that of any other single religious group in the United States. And to any Protestant unable to see in this anything more than priestly ambition and low cunning one can only answer that, obviously, it is quite impossible to argue with an exclamation point and a blind animal feeling.

The membership of the Catholic Church in America includes a much larger percentage of the labor class than that of the larger indigenous Protestant churches. As a consequence the number of Catholic laborers and labor leaders within the ranks of organized labor is somewhat out of proportion to the total number of Catholics in the United States. And the reasons for that are purely historical. Unionism as we know it today had its beginnings in about the year 1880, when free or cheap land ceased to be an incentive to immigration, so that the vast majority of immigrants, instead of settling upon the land, flocked to our industrial centers. By 1920 our urban population amounted to almost fifty percent of the total as against about twenty-eight percent in 1880. Naturally, with the increased urbanization and industrialization of America, unionism steadily gained in political, social, and economic importance. Furthermore, since about 1880 more than seventy percent of our immigration has been from southern and eastern Europe, areas predominantly Roman Catholic, in consequence of which the moral and religious aspects of the labor problem as it concerns the urban industrial worker have almost literally been thrown into the lap of the Catholic Church. That the larger indigenous Protestant churches have consistently shown less interest in the labor problem is largely attributable to the fact that the non-Catholic urban industrial worker is, generally speaking, unchurched.

II

The official pronouncements of the Christian Reformed Church regarding unions and unionism coincide pretty well with those of the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands, except that the latter have confined themselves to formulating social and ethical principles derived from Scripture, leaving to the Christian labor and political organizations the task of elaborating their application to specific labor and political situations. In the Netherlands, therefore, official pronouncements as to the application of general principles have usually concerned the exceptional cases in which members of Reformed churches have for some reason or other become members of neutral unions or neutral political parties. In other words, the Reformed churches in the Netherlands have consistently remained aloof from the affairs of politics and labor on the presupposition that these are properly matters for the Christian laymen, whether individually or as organized voters and organized workers. The success of this policy is quite obviously the result of almost a hundred years of strenuous Christian educational, social, and political action in the Netherlands, action made possible by the concentration of the population within a very limited geographical area, and manda-
tory by a highly organized socialistic and anti-clerical movement there. The result has been a clearly drawn cleavage between organized religion and organized unbelief, anything like a buffer neutral area between the two being practically non-existent. In the Netherlands, therefore, unless one is definitely committed to a positively Christian labor or political program, one practically sides with the forces inimical to Christianity.

The Christian Reformed Church, on the other hand, has never been in a position to refer the details of labor policy to experienced and intrenched Christian social organizations, conditions in America being just about the reverse of those in the Netherlands. In America adherents to the Reformed faith are so few in number and, except for minor concentrations here and there, so thinly spread over millions of square miles of territory as to render their educational, social, and political ideals and practices relatively ineffective as forces in American social and political life. Consequently, whereas in the Netherlands the official pronouncements of the Gereformeerde Kerken regarding labor policy have been largely confined to the exceptional cases of membership in neutral unions, such cases are practically the rule in America. Most of our problems of labor policy concern questions regarding the proper restrictions under which a Christian may be a member of a neutral labor organization. Finally, of course, there is the fact that the typical American labor organization is neutral in the sense of being neither positively Christian nor, as usually in Europe, openly anti-religious and socialistic. Accordingly, the Christian who becomes a member of a neutral labor union in America thereby enters approximately the kind of association which he entered when he became a citizen of the United States.

III

Furthermore, the temper of the larger indigenous Protestant churches and the general calibre of religious education in America are of such a nature as hardly to encourage anything like specifically Christian social and political action. For example, the great majority of orthodox Protestants, however genuine their religious convictions, have almost no conception of what we call Christian education on the primary and high school levels; and they quite honestly regard parochial and other religiously affiliated schools as foreign importations. Americans generally regard religion and religious education as functions of the church and the home whereas they regard education in the sense of schooling, together with politics, labor, economics, science, and so on as properly functions of society and, perhaps, the government. Accordingly, they tend to surpass even the medieval theologians in distinguishing between the spiritual and the natural, regarding them as distinct and coequal realms. As a result they usually decide practical issues on the dual basis of ethical and religious principle and naive materialistic opportunism, any conflict between the two being resolved in terms of some compromise or other slanted either in the direction of spiritual values or worldly expedience, depending upon how well the church and the home have done their jobs. Most Americans never question the propriety of this, for they regard convenient compromise as of the essence of wisdom and, indeed, the very secret of the glorious history of this our fair country, the greatest and the richest democracy men have ever succeeded in creating. It never occurs to them that every compromise is at best a choice of the lesser of two evils, something justifiable only when circumstances beyond one's control permit of nothing else; that to elevate compromise to the status of a fundamental principle of action is deliberately to lower the spiritual level of human existence; and that the habit of compromising between religious principle and worldly advantage operates in accordance with the law of diminishing returns for the moral and cultural values of life, with the result that church, school, and society become essentially secularized long before men fully realize just what has happened. To choose the lesser of two evils is to tolerate something, to tolerate something, or to accept it as an ideal, are two entirely different things. Half a meal is better than no meal at all, but permanently to settle for half a meal as a matter of principle will hardly insure a robust existence, to say nothing of a reasonably long one. And in the United States this has come home to roost in the form of that peculiar practical materialism in which the most elevated moral and religious sentiments coexist in apparent co-ordination with the most obvious commercial objectives, and making for the entire gamut of self-deceptions and hypocracies of which only Americans seem capable.

Now this peculiar spirit, this compromising mentality, has for years been carried forward not only by the public schools but also by the larger indigenous Protestant churches of America, churches the membership of which is largely made up of the

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6) It should be noted that the absence of a significant neutral area in the Netherlands is not altogether the result of Socialist deviment and Calvinist piety. One gathers that some of it, at least, is traceable to the grim and ungracious Dutchness characteristic of the so-called amenities over there—especially in the lower echelons.

Incidentally, to assert that there is no such thing as real neutrality would in this connection amount to insisting upon something almost purely academic. There is, after all, a world of difference between an anti-clerical syndicalist labor union in Europe and the usual run of labor organizations in America. If, for example, we consider the moral and the humanitarian aspects of the ideals of the Calvinistic labor movement in the Netherlands, as they have from time to time been set forth by Mr. F. F. Fuykschoot we can confidently assert that there isn't a reputable labor leader in the United States, Catholic, Protestant, or Humanist, who would deny or in any way oppose them.

6) It is also a significant phenomenon that in the Netherlands, for example, it has occasionally happened that Calvinists locally organized in the society known as Patrimonium, upon finding themselves hopelessly outnumbered by the liberal and socialist elements, voted liberal in order to prevent the election of a socialist magistrate. In doing so they did not regard this as a permanent ideal, a settled principle of action, a good in itself.
decendents of the English, Welsh, Scotch, and Scotch-Irish who settled America before, say, 1880, and who today probably constitute the dominant Protestant elements in our country. Socially and economically the membership of these churches, although professing a high regard for pioneering simplicity, the homespun, and, above all, “the dignity of labor,” have usually displayed the middle class and the upper class outlook, so that in cases of industrial strife and disorder their sympathies have been largely with the employer class. Theologically these churches seek to accommodate both orthodoxy and the most radical type of modernism. They are, in short, the churches in which the American employer and his satellites, the ambitious white collar workers, feel most at home. Except in so far as they have permitted the National Council of the Churches of Christ in America to speak for them, these churches have never formulated anything like a definite labor policy for the guidance of their members. It is doubtful, therefore, that the National Council’s pronouncements on labor relations, excellent as many of them are, have any significant influence upon labor relations in our industrial centers, since these larger indigenous churches, the churches chiefly supporting the Council, rarely if ever handle labor problems at the grass roots. As previously noted, the non-Catholic laborer in our industrial centers, except for the efforts of such smaller bodies as the various Lutheran churches, the Nazarenes, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Adventists, and so on, is largely un-churched. And it seems apparent that the larger indigenous ecclesiastical bodies, bodies making for the possibility of so-called fashionable churches, will continue to have little appeal for the American worker, however humanitarian their official labor sentiments and however resounding and elevated their phrases.

IV

That the public schools in the United States reflect and carry forward the peculiar American genius for workable compromise the most cursory glance will reveal. The American people, including Christians whose sincerity and piety leave no room for doubt, believe that the public schools should confine themselves to secular subjects, and they refuse to believe that this will have a secularizing influence upon the pupil. They take for granted that the majority of public school teachers are either members of, or profess a preference for, this or that Protestant denomination and may, therefore, be regarded as essentially Christian in their faith and morals. Whether these teachers ever attend religious services, just what the religious calibre happens to be of the services they do attend, and whether they take them at all seriously, are questions with which Americans do not usually trouble themselves. Nor does it ever occur to them that so-called neutrality in education may possibly condition the pupil to religious indifference. They have generally insisted that religion and party politics be kept out of the class room, not because they disparage these things but because they feel that a person’s religion and his politics are matters so peculiarly his own business as to render intolerable any kind of interference or propaganda in these matters by persons charged with a public trust. Furthermore, so they point out, there is a sense in which the public school is religious rather than anti-religious: Prayer, the singing of a mildly religious hymn, and the reading of a portion of Scripture are not uncommon; and in communities overwhelmingly of one creed public instruction tends to be religiously slanted, something to which there has never been organized opposition. Finally, so they maintain, the American people, still more or less dominated by the Protestantism of the earlier settlers of the country, generally accept the Christian ethic and believe, however vaguely, in the reality of a supernatural order, so that in America the term “Christian” is generally regarded as a term of approbation.

Whereas in the Netherlands the atmosphere in the public schools tends to be socialistic and anti-clerical, in America the situation is definitely otherwise, as is indicated by the constituency of the average city board of education, which as a rule is made up of merchants, lawyers, physicians, and so on, men and women representative of the dominant type of American found in the United States prior to 1880. Rarely does one find a direct representative of “the masses.” Furthermore, the public schools themselves reflect one of the most characteristic features of the American conception of the good life, namely, the principle of individual success. Although the American people have never been noticeably fastidious about the nature of this success, they have insisted that the opportunity to achieve it shall be equalized as much as possible and that the conditions of competition shall be fair. They have usually assumed that material success arrival at by lawful means is about as reliable an index to a man’s worth and value to society as any other. Although they readily admit that differences in wealth and family make for differences in opportunity, they are nevertheless convinced that in America the public school has made the race for success as nearly fair as it is humanly possible to make it. Anyway, it is simply a fact that most Americans, however limited their means, do not feel doomed from birth to the frustrating limitations of this or that social and economic class. Rightly or wrongly, they still consider America to be the land of opportunity.

Although insisting upon equality of opportunity, the American people have not as a rule undertaken to attack the institution of private property. Nevertheless, they have always firmly believed in modifying the unfortunate results of some kinds of private property, first, by establishing free schools and, second, by taxing private property for the support of
these schools. As previously noted, they believe that education in the sense of schooling more or less equalizes opportunity, and that higher education can always be translated into monetary value. Parents frequently sacrifice in order that their children may escape the necessity of earning a livelihood by physical labor—in spite of the fact that we Americans profess to regard all forms of work as equally ennobling and like to speak of the “dignity of labor.” In other words, educational opportunities, although provided at public expense, are judged in terms of individual material success. Underlying this is the assumption that the general good is best served by encouraging the individual to pursue his self-interest. And although Americans deplore the excesses to which this has frequently led, they tend to justify it by pointing out that life itself is in a sense a competitive struggle and that the most significant accomplishments in American history have been the result, not of social impulses and social endeavor but of individual initiative. Isn’t America, after all, a lasting monument to individual enterprise? And so the political philosophy of perhaps most Americans may be summed up in the proposition that the chief function of government is that of insuring free and fair competition between individuals, groups, and institutions.

V

Now this spirit of individualism, competition, practicality, and compromise characteristic of American life generally is reflected in American organized labor with, naturally, particular emphasis upon the self-interest of labor—just as it is reflected in any manufacturers association or chamber of commerce with, however, special emphasis upon the self-interest of employers. This state of affairs makes for various incongruities which, however strange they may appear to the European, seem wholly reasonable and normal to the American mind, whether conditioned by the self-interest of labor or that of the professional and commercial classes. For example, the immediate reaction of most Americans to the proposition that social and economic justice is a thing demanded by God in order that man, made in His image, may live to His glory, would generally be a favorable one. Deep down under the rubbish of their everyday thinking it would strike a responsive chord; and although they might not take it literally, they would nevertheless recognize it as a beautiful figure of speech. At the same time, however, they would be fully persuaded that God helps those who help themselves and that “them as has, gits.” Again, nobody in America would be particularly astounded if a meeting of this or that C.I.O. local for the purpose of planning either the dirty work in connection with a jurisdictional strike or the details of a picnic for the Sunday after next, were to be opened with prayer by, say, the Reverend Clancy Augustus Jones, lay pastor of the Church of God (colored, Rose Hill district).8

Well, it is in this unique spiritual and economic climate that the Christian Reformed Church has had to make its decisions regarding labor problems and membership in neutral unions. And although its labor policy is not a finished thing and, of course, by no means perfect, one must in fairness admit that its decisions to date have been about as sensible as anybody could reasonably expect under the circumstances. It is, after all, the duty of the Christian to oppose social and economic injustice, and it is not very sensible to attempt this by means of organizations initially doomed to ineffectiveness. Inasmuch as we cannot under present circumstances achieve the best, viz., an effective Christian labor organization, the only wise thing to do for the time being is to settle for the second best, namely, a policy whereby the Church strenuously urges Christian workers in America who have entered neutral labor organizations to become members of a Christian labor organization such as, e.g., the C.L.A., in which specific labor issues will be dealt with in the light of the Word of God. In some European countries in which only so-called neutral unions have anything like a chance of being effective, Catholic policy has been that of permitting Catholic workers to unite with these organizations provided they also unite with Catholic organizations for instruction in social and economic subjects with, of course, emphasis upon the application of Catholic doctrine to labor problems. This suggests the kind of policy which could profitably be adopted by the Christian Reformed Church.

The run-of-the-mill American labor union is, after all, a rather mild affair as compared with the atheistic syndicalism more or less characteristic of organized labor on the Continent. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that racketeering and violence have occurred and do occur in connection with union activity in America. This is not, however, the rule, and the incidence of violence and disorder depends largely upon local conditions, local racial groups, and the fortunate or unfortunate incidents of local labor history. As a rule the American labor union presents a rather reliable cross section of America’s common people, so that, as previously noted, by uniting with a neutral labor organization one does not enter an association of people essentially different from the association one has already entered as a citizen of the United States. It is no exaggera-
tion to say that one is much more obviously in ath­
eistic and anti-Christian company as a faculty mem­
ber in a state university than as a member of this or
that C.I.O. local. Of course, the Christian worker
is in duty bound to oppose union abuses, however
 incidental; and should racketeering, violence, and
the supression of minority opinion and conviction
within the union develop into something like fixed
union policy, the Christian worker must in con­
science wash his hands of it, not only by leaving
such an organization but also by working toward its
eventual abolition as a recognized union.
Finally, just what the character of this or that
American labor organization is in fact, must be de­
termined not only by a study of its statement of ob­
jectives and policy but also by a consideration of
what in the course of the years it has by its actions
shown itself to be. And here it should be empha­
sized that no organization, whether labor union or
employers association or literary club or association
for the promotion of mental hygiene, should ever be
judged in the light of the deductions that could con­ceivably be drawn from this or that statement in its
constitution. No human association ever is in fact
what the infinity of possible abstract logical deduc­tions from statements of professed purposes and
ideals could lead almost any biased person to sup­pose. One should remember too that Marxian
socialism has to date made almost no impression
upon the rank and file of American workers. Traditi­
onally the American labor union has functioned
as an economic instrument and, although union lead­ership has within the last twenty years become in­
creasingly conscious of its potential political power,
labor unions continue to operate as organizations
for collective bargaining, giving their political sup­port or, rather, making the threat of giving their
support, to whichever of the two major political
parties seems more sympathetic toward the kind of
legislation acceptable to labor. However, the latest
presidential election seems to have shown that the
individual unionized worker in America votes pretty
much as he pleases, and that he does not permit
union leadership to dictate his politics, to say noth­ing of his morals and his religion.
A postscript. We have been discussing the good
and evil of labor organizations. What about the
employer organizations in America, and their con­sistent opposition to the Christian social and ethical
demand of industrial democracy? Unless one is
gravely mistaken about the growing paganization
of the employer class, it seems safe to predict that it
will obstruct the Christian demand of a widening of
the base of ownership until communism or some­thing like it becomes so powerful in America, and its
threat to the free enterprise system so obvious, that,
as in the case of the French today, the employer
class will have its choice only between something
like industrial righteousness and the total annihi­lation of private property. The industrialists, like
the Hapsburgs, almost never learn.
C.D.B.

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97 Inasmuch as the American people customarily vote against something or somebody, perhaps it would be more accurate to say that American labor makes the threat to vote against whichever party is not against the kind of legislation which labor is against.
The Labor Policy of the Christian Reformed Church as Compared to that of Other Churches

Part I: Modernist and Catholic Teaching

The labor policy of the Christian Reformed Church, while not generally understood, has at least been set forth along general lines throughout the past half century. Questions arise when a comparison with the policies of other churches is attempted, for the definition and the understanding of these other policies are in many respects far more difficult than that of the Christian Reformed Church.

What, if any, policy a church may follow must be ascertained before any comparison is possible; here there are at least three difficulties blocking the path-way to a meaningful comparison. The amorphous nature of American modernistic liberalism, for example, leaves its stamp upon this church’s attitude toward labor; it is as difficult to grasp any definite principles here as it is to identify a certain, specific attitude toward labor. Another example is the fairly definite policy of the Roman Catholic Church: here, while the policy is quite definite, the varying applications of this policy in differing places and circumstances place an obstacle before a clear comparison. Finally, a third example is that of the Christian Reformed Church which, while having set forth a fairly clear policy, is at loggerheads with itself over the varying interpretations and general lack of clarity of its labor policy. This, too, makes comparison difficult.

The attempt of this paper is to cut through many peripheral matters and to set forth at least some of the basic aspects of the labor policies of religious groups that range across the whole spectrum of religious expression, from liberal to conservative. The following groups will be dealt with, in the order given: American liberalism, American orthodoxy, Catholicism, the “Gereformeerde Kerken” in the Netherlands, and finally the Christian Reformed Church. Treatment of each will naturally vary, inasmuch as there is a wide variation in the presence of worthwhile principles. The attempt is to make comparisons and evaluations from an orthodox, Reformed standpoint.

I

It is often said that the liberal churches have no labor policy; this is true if by it is meant that they have no hard and fast rule by which they evaluate labor problems. On the other hand, their attitude toward labor bears the same earmarks as does their religion generally. One of these marks is the fact that the approach and the end sought are definitely humanistic. This shows itself in an emphasis upon the “natural rights” of man to organize so that he, and civilization generally, may be “benefitted.” The following is a typical expression: “We recognize . . . that the organization of labor is not only the right of the laborers and conducive to their welfare but is incidentally of great benefit to society at large . . . Our primary interest in the industrial problem is with that great number who . . . cannot share adequately in the highest benefits of our civilization. Their efforts to improve their conditions should receive our heartiest cooperation.”

The conclusion that this and many similar expressions show a humanistic emphasis does not arise from these expressions in themselves, nor even from their collective weight, but rather from the fact that in nearly all—if not all—of these references the pivotal point of acceptance or rejection is man as man, a social being, and not man as a being created by and responsible to God. In a later source published by the same Federal Council of Churches this emphasis upon man as the sole reference point is highlighted in the discussion of the labor organization and collective bargaining. It is as much as admitted that union preferential hiring and the union shop present moral difficulties, but almost in defiance and challenge is added the thought until critics find a better method they will have to accept this. The question is not oriented to a divine standard of righteousness and justice but to that of a humanistic, pragmatic level. Such orientation comes more clearly to the fore in the more recent expressions of the Federal Council. In what two authors term “a courageous statement” this council later “. . . held that compulsory union membership of either the union shop or the closed shop variety should be neither required nor forbidden by law,” but rather left to agreement between management and labor . . . . Where either the closed or the union shop emerges, with proper safeguards as the result

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Sidney Newhouse
Middle Class, Calvin Seminary


of collective bargaining . . . we believe the agreement arrived at on this point should be approved and supported by church people." The committee also supported various appeals to protect individual members from arbitrary and undemocratic actions of their union, and held that jurisdictional strikes were "unjustifiable." 6 The question here is not whether the council's opinion is correct or not (nor is it a question of courageousness, though one might well wonder whom they had to fear with such a statement) but it is a question of orientation and criteria. In such statements there is only appeal to the judgment of the masses, to that which is "democratic."

A second mark that the liberal religionists display alike in their religion and their attitude toward labor is concerned with their conception of the church. As the church is for them not a spiritual organism but rather a social organization, so the function of the church is not restricted to the spiritual sphere but is cast full into the domain of social activity. Church thus becomes a problem which the liberal church as church accepts as its own problem. Consequently, the Federal Council advised that "... the churches should encourage all expressions of economic and industrial democracy, including labor unions, employer's associations, farm organizations, and consumers' cooperatives. The churches in every community should take the lead in calling informal conferences for acquaintance and friendly discussions of employers, labor leaders, farmers, consumers, and ministers, with a view to laying a basis for community cooperation." 7 With such advice it is not surprising to read of the Federal Council's support of the CIO, and at the same time it is not surprising to read that a representative of that union complained that the Federal Council was the only church group that had supported them. 8 With its loose, unscriptural conception of the church, the Federal Council seeks to project the function of the church into a realm where the church as church does not belong. Even so, one might hope for definite aid toward the solution of the problems of labor were it not for the fact that the aid which the church does bring is of little value. Because of the humanistic, empirical orientation of the message of the modernist church it can bring little if anything of the help that is peculiar to the true church. At best the liberal effort can only alleviate to a limited extent the ills of labor by only organizing the forces resident within labor as a social organization. The root of these troubles as imbedded in the spiritual nature of man remains untouched by the message and administrators of the social gospel.

The second religious group, that which has been designated as American orthodoxy, is not a sharply defined area of religious belief, but rather covers that broad general area between outright liberalism and reasonably conservative orthodoxy. In this group the orthodox conceptions of the message and nature of the church, an infallible word and a spiritual organism, are adhered to in a greater or lesser degree. As a result, it is from this group that some excellent, Scriptural utterances regarding the problems of labor have been forthcoming. Such utterances comprise one characteristic of this group, but it is not a characteristic of the entire group. Certain elements of this group are conspicuous by their silence, not giving this problem any official recognition or attention. 9

One mark of this entire group, however, is its failure to advance its noble expressions beyond the stage of resolutions. A Lutheran minister supplies this opinion as an example: "... little has been done in the Lutheran Church to interest our union members in becoming leaders in our great neutral unions in America or to interest our workmen in a distinctive Christian labor movement ... [A] second attitude expresses itself in lengthy resolutions on Labor and usually expresses itself in favor of the right of men to organize themselves with their fellow workers for collective bargaining through representatives of their own choice and urges management and labor to accept and support conciliation and arbitration in industrial disputes. Such resolutions will be found on pages 240 to 242 of the 1946 Minutes of the United Lutheran Church in America. A presentation of this kind is also found in a booklet entitled The Church and Social Action prepared by the Committee on Social Missions of the United Lutheran Synod of New York in the chapter entitled 'The Church and Industrial Relations,' by Pastor Rufus Cornelsen of New Brunswick, New Jersey. While these resolutions express beautiful Christian ideals they rarely have any influence upon Labor or Management." 10

This group of American orthodox churches then has this much in its favor, that it keeps the church in its proper sphere, at least as far as these problems of labor are concerned. Further, when it does face the problem, it faces it at least in a measure with a message oriented to the infallible criterion of the Word of God. But its glaring, and for practical purposes fatal, shortcoming is its failure to communicate effectively the message that it does have to its members in their actual circumstances in life.

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6 A. P. Stokes & R. H. Gabriel, Church and State in the United States, III, p. 94. Quoted from Christian Century, June 1, 1946.
8 "Church and Labor Conference Held," Christian Labor Herald, IV; August 1943, p. 3.
9 I hesitate to include the Reformed Church of America in this broad general category, but I am obliged to do so. Reason for such classification lies in the fact that labor policy is a matter that has not rated the attention of their General Synod for the last twenty-two years. If such a period of growth in the size and influence of labor unions could be passed through without official cognizance, such classification seems justified.
The resolutions of the leaders, beautiful as they are on paper, do not become the resolutions of the working man. The only hope for such churches to have a salutary effect upon the labor situation is through the members' personal application of a gospel message that is generally much sounder than that of the liberal churches. This is not an empty hope inasmuch as in such application is the basis for any conscious, consistent, virile Christian action in the field of labor. Here the liberal church has nothing to offer in the way of genuine, Scriptural principle for personal evaluation and action. The tragic weakness of American orthodoxy is this, that precisely at the point of contact of their gospel with the problems of the field of labor the church has not given guidance to the workingman. No doubt pietistic influence have had much to do with strengthening this avoidance of contact in many churches, but the sad fact remains that the end result is a nullification in large part of the effect of their gospel in the workingman's world.

III

As our attention is turned to the Catholic Church and its policy, it is immediately evident that the scope of interests becomes international. Here both European and American aspects of principle and application must be examined if a fair idea of Catholic policy is to be reached. Immediately apparent is a vastly different conception of the nature and the sphere of function of the church. The dominating medieval spirit and nature of the Catholic Church, with its all-inclusive claims, must of necessity include also certain aspects of the field of labor. Such inclusion is to be expected.

Grounds adduced for including labor within the sphere of the church's function are especially two. The first is the interest of the church in the physical welfare of her spiritual children. "Neither must it be supposed that the solicitude of the Church is so preoccupied with the spiritual concerns of her children as to neglect their interests, temporal and earthly. Her desire is that the poor, for example, should rise above poverty and wretchedness, and should better their condition in life; and for this she strives . . . . The Church intervenes directly in behalf of the poor . . . . Thus by degrees came into existence the partrimony which the Church has guarded with jealous care as the inheritance of the poor."8 The second ground given for such inclusion is the Church's right to deal authoritatively in all matters having a moral aspect. "We lay down the principle . . . . That it is Our right and Our duty to deal authoritatively with social and economic problems . . . . She [the Church] never can relinquish her God-given task of interposing her authority, not indeed in technical matters, for which she has neither the equipment nor the mission, but in all these that have a bearing on moral conduct. For the deposit of truth entrusted to Us by God, and by Our weighty office of declaring, interpreting, and urging in season and out of season the entire moral law, demand that both social and economic questions be brought within Our supreme jurisdiction, insofar as they refer to moral issues."9

Once having established the right and the duty of the church to intervene in moral matters, it is but a small step for the church to establish the problems of labor as affairs falling within the sphere of such matters. " . . . it is the opinion of some . . . . that the social question . . . . is merely economic. The precise opposite is the truth. It is first of all moral and religious, and for that reason its solution is to be expected mainly from the moral law and pronouncements of religion . . . ."10 If the problems of labor are moral and religious there is no choice for the Catholic but to view them as matters of the church. " . . . no practical solution of this question will ever be found without the assistance of religion and the Church. It is We who are the chief guardians of religion, and the chief dispenser of what belongs to the Church, and We must not by silence neglect the duty which lies upon Us . . . . We affirm without hesitation that the striving of men will be vain if they leave out the Church."11 Finally, if this question is an ecclesiastical matter, then the voice of the church is final and supremely authoritative: "Let it . . . be remembered that Catholic zeal for the relief and advancement of the masses must be absolutely in harmony with the mind of the Church, [and must] accurately correspond with the pattern she continuously sets before us . . . . It is of utmost consequence, in a matter of such moment, that the minds, the wills, the actions of Catholics should be one and the same . . . ."12

Reflection upon such argument reveals the immensity of the claims of the Catholic Church: if the church's authority extends to every facet of life which has a moral, religious significance, then this authority embraces all of life, for there is no noteworthy sphere of human operation without such significance. Such all-inclusive claims are entirely in keeping with the Catholic, hierarchical view of the church with its distinctions between the ecclesia docens and ecclesia audiens. Also, it is in keeping with the Catholic conception of the basis of the message of the church: inasmuch as that message finds its basis both in Scripture and in tradition, that message can never be interpreted and applied apart from the determining direction of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The office of the rank and file believer is fulfilled in carrying out the instruction of his spiritual superiors.

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10 Pope Leo XIII, idem, Husslein, I, pp. 204, 234.
11 Ibid., pp. 175, 176.
12 Ibid., p. 287.

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Thus, while the liberal conceives of his church as a social organization, the Catholic sees his church as a sort of super-social organization that stands with a permeating control over all organization.\textsuperscript{13} Whereas American orthodoxy (as described above) has allowed the individual member free rein in a great number of instances, so that the proper domain of the church is often intruded upon, Catholicism has placed such restriction upon the individual member that he is in principle little more than a puppet of priestly proclamation. Whereas American orthodoxy has limited the sphere of the function of the church, Catholicism actually sets no real bounds at all. As a result we see Liberalism and Catholicism do not actively engaged in the social fields of civilization, the realization of democratic ideals, as churches, though, of course, with widely differing methods and purposes. American orthodoxy is active here only insofar as the individual members take the initiative. Liberalism operates in the field of labor mostly by moral, ethical persuasion, working toward ends that are variously and vaguely described as the good of civilization, the realization of democratic ideals, etc. The specific methods of the Catholic Church will be discussed later, but it is clear that in principle the Catholic Church sees the field of labor not only as something in which it is to wield its influence, but also as a field whose control rightly belongs to the church. Consequently, the methods of liberalism are used; the ends sought are the good of the members of the church especially, and also the good of all men—but always with the thought in mind of the church as the dispenser of that good.

IV

The application of these Catholic principles in the labor field is a very interesting study. There are many variations: some of the aspects of Catholic action so revealed are commendable and some are not. These variations, within a church that acknowledges certain, definite authority and has made positive pronouncements in regard to the application of its principles, would be an impossibility without the distinctions recognized between the teaching and the listening church. A brief survey of the situation will bring this out.

Pope Leo XIII recognized on the one hand the need and desirability of organization among working men, and on the other hand that many such organizations were “... managed on principles far from compatible with Christianity ...”. In the face of the dangers involved in such affiliation, the Pope strongly advised the formation of Catholic labor unions.\textsuperscript{14} In a footnote Husslein adds this comment: “The fact that European labor unions were usually socialistically dominated made it imperative to establish either Catholic or at least Christian labor unions in which Christian principles could be main-

tained and applied.” This, no doubt, had much to do with Leo's strong emphasis upon the moral and religious function of the labor union. “It is clear that they must pay special and chief attention to piety and morality, and their social discipline must be directed throughout by these considerations. Otherwise they entirely lose their specific character, and come to be very little better than societies which take no account of religion at all ... Let our associations, then, look first of all to God; let religious instruction have therein a foremost place, each one being carefully taught what is his duty to God, what his to believe, what he is to hope for, and how he is to work out his salvation ... Let the working man be urged and led to the worship of God ... to the sanctification of Sundays and festivals. Let him learn to reverence and love the Holy Church ...”\textsuperscript{15}

This quotation shows on the one hand a desirable emphasis upon the fact that all social considerations fall within the realm of the moral and ethical and, hence, are to be weighed in the light of man’s relation to his God. On the other hand, this shows also a confusion of the functions proper to the respective spheres of church and society. Religious instruction as such belongs in the home and church; it is the application of this instruction that is proper to the union.

These high ideals for Catholic unions met with varied success in their realization. In certain sectors of Europe strong Catholic unions were formed without difficulty, but, especially in Germany, there was strong opposition. There the labor movement was dominated by Socialistic and Communist unions which were at best anti-ecclesiastical and at worst atheistic. “Catholics were thus obliged to form their own labor unions, whether in conjunction with members of other Christian denominations, or exclusively among themselves. Thus two classes of labor unions arose with Catholic membership, the one known as the Christian syndicates (Christliche Gewerkschaften), including Protestants who subscribed to their economic program, and the other retaining the name Catholic.”\textsuperscript{16}

Such developments were met by an encyclical of Pope Pius X to the German hierarchy in September, 1912. This letter, if not a modification of the high position of Leo XIII, was at least a clarification of the attitude of the church toward her workingmen members. In the letter Pius recognized that Catholic unions were the obvious ideal, but that under existing conditions Catholic membership in Christian, i.e., interdenominational, unions was not to be condemned. As a safeguard to insure proper religious and social instruction, the Pope ruled that every Catholic member of such Christian unions should also become a member of a Catholic Workingmen’s Association (Arbëttverereine) in which

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p. 200, 201.

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such instruction is regularly given. It was emphasized that in such countries where not even Christian but only neutral trade unions exist it is so much more necessary that the Catholic working man receive this social instruction. However, if Socialism should absorb a trade union movement, the Catholic would have no choice but to withdraw, forming either a Catholic or a Christian union. Pope Pius XI reasserted this policy and with it two qualifications: first, that any non-Catholic union one might join "... must always respect justice and equity, and leave to their Catholic members full freedom to follow the dictates of their conscience and to obey the precepts of the Church." In the second place, "It belongs to the bishops to approve of Catholic workingmen joining unions, where they judge that circumstances render it necessary and there appears no danger for religion, observing ... the rules and precautions recommended by ... Pius X."18

V

The picture presented thus far of the application of Catholic principles in labor has been against a European background; turning to the United States for a more proximate and recent setting one finds even further variation and development of Catholic policy. Here there has been no attempt to form strictly Catholic unions, but the policy has been rather to seek to educate Catholics to take positions of leadership and influence within the ranks of the so-called neutral unions. This has taken shape in an ambitious program of considerable proportions. Already in 1922 the Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems was organized to study such matters according to Catholic principles. 1937 saw the formation of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists whose business it is to foster trade unionism along Catholic Christian lines. This association conducts about one hundred schools across the country for Catholic workers. The approach in these schools is not merely anti-communist but definitely Roman Catholic, and courses covering almost every imaginable phase of labor relations are offered in these schools, whose attendance averages about fifty students. There is also a Catholic Institute on Industry that is slanted for wage-earning women and is designed to make these women more effective in the groups in which they move, whether at work or in the study room. Last, and certainly not least in this program, is the fact that the Roman Catholic Church is training a large number of its priests in social-economic teachings and in social analysis. The weight and influence of such leadership is being felt increasingly by both management and labor.19 Such is the labor program of the Catholic Church in the United States, and it is a factor to be reckoned with.

There are thus three possible positions for the Catholic working man in relation to labor organiza-

177 Ibid., p. 126.
178 Husslein, II, 188, 189.
179 J. G. Beer, op. cit., p. 5.
180 Quote from a strongly condemnatory publication by six German bishops published shortly after World War I. Ryan and Husslein, p. 251.

Evidences suggesting opportunism are these: first, the differing decisions of the hierarchies of United States and Canada respectively in the 1880's in regard to the labor organization known as the Knights of Labor. This organization was approved by the bishops of United States and condemned by the Canadian Bishops. Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore in a memorial to the Holy See in 1887 lists eight reasons in the summary of his argument for not condemning the Knights of Labor. What is striking about these eight reasons is the fact that only the first deals with the worthiness of the organization under discussion. The other seven arguments deal with such attendant factors as the transient nature of this organization, the prudence of shocking the working classes, the reputation of the church, the efficacy of condemnation against the tide of public opinion, the possibility of so inciting disobedience and suspicion of the Holy See, and the reflection that condemnation would be upon the opinions of the United States' bishops. Statements such as these are typical of the Cardinal's argument: "...
would be the evident danger of the Church’s losing in popular estimation, her right to be considered the friend of the people. . . . There would be a great danger of rendering hostile to the Church the political power of the country . . . . It is well to recognize that, in our age and in our country, obedience cannot be blind . . . . A condemnation would be considered both false and unjust and, therefore, not binding.” When dealing directly with the fact of Canadian rejection of this union Gibbons passes it off with “. . . we believe that the circumstances of a people almost entirely Catholic, as in lower Canada, must be very different from those of a mixed population like ours. . . .” Especially noteworthy is the fact that no mention is made in this connection of any Socialist opposition to the formation of Catholic unions in Canada; in fact, the Cardinal rather mentions the presence of a largely Catholic populace as a determining factor in the establishment of these unions. It does seem more than strange when, sixty years later, Husslein writes that “. . . strictly Catholic unions were formed in Canada to offset the Socialistic danger existing there. . . .” One would wonder if, in another sixty years, the cause may not have developed into full edged communism! The importance of this memorial does not lie in the fact of its authorship by a Catholic bishop; it lies rather in the fact that Cardinal Gibbons spoke as the representative of the hierarchy of his day and in the fact that this document is still highly regarded in the Catholic Church. Also, it is important because it represents the attitude and tenor of the American Catholicism one may expect to meet. It represents an agility to adapt that bends strongly toward expediency.

A second evidence suggesting opportunism is the withdrawal of the Catholic segment of the Christian Trade Union Federation (Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond) in Holland. Soon after the organization of this federation as an inter-confessional body, the Roman Catholic members received episcopal charge to withdraw and to form their own Catholic Trade Union movement. This they reluctantly did. This took place at the same time that Catholic membership in such inter-confessional bodies in Germany was receiving episcopal toleration and cooperation. Reasons do not lie far from the surface. The Socialist tide was stronger in Germany than in Holland; therefore it was more difficult to stand alone in Germany, easier in Holland. One of the reasons for a lower tide of Socialism in the Netherlands was the presence there of a sizable element—the Reformed element—that was more acutely aware of the socio-political implications of its religion than was most of the rest of Europe. Because of the presence of this element, the Catholics could not hope to gain control of this federation. This appears doubly cer-

22 J. 201. Underlining is mine.

A third factor suggesting opportunism is the absence of strong papal assertion in the field of labor movements in the past twenty years. This is indeed only a suggestion, but it is not without factual background. It seems significant that Catholic pronouncements in the field of labor become increasingly general with the increasing pressure of socialism. The guides to papal utterance and other Catholic publications during the last twenty years are not without reference to labor, but applications made in these references are all of a broad nature, applying the most well known Christian truths to the most general situations. The pointed, specific instructions of earlier encyclicals are not to be found here. Is this to be regarded as just another historical phenomenon without any particular significance? It is difficult to come to such a conclusion when one considers that it was during this period that labor problems reached a new high of complexity and international importance. Once more the situation speaks of adaptability to the point of expediency.

It is easier to speak of what the Catholic labor policy has been in time past than of what it is at the present. The convulsive destruction of war, followed by the grinding, leveling movement of Russian Communism have obliterated many of the distinctive marks of the papal policy of bygone days. But in the United States, where the Roman Catholic labor movement was not so distinctive in the first place, it has been able to continue undisturbed. Because of the presence of the various Catholic organizations which are influencing the American labor scene, we may well hope for the continued suppression of the more Socialist elements in labor. But at the same time the Catholic influence is not a support to be leaned on too strongly. It is clearly evident that the present policy of the Catholic Church in the United States is one of getting along as well as possible within the existing labor organizations, gradually expanding an influence there that is decidedly Roman Catholic. Where such a policy will ultimately lead or how soon anything definitely Roman Catholic will crystalize from this policy is difficult to determine. An element of uncertainty is bound to remain with the Roman Catholic movement as long as this church continues to hold to its

Catholic Mind, XLII, July, 1943, pp. 1-9; Tablet, CLXXXV, XXX, August, 1949, pp. 357-359.
twin rooted authority and to its divided conception of the church. A hierarchy not closely one with the "listening church" and not absolutely bound to the infallible anchor of God's Word can well in the present and in the future do as has been done in the past, namely, lead the Catholic working man down a pathway dictated by expedience rather than by the truth.

"Ye Have Heard That It Hath Been Said"

This quotation from the words of Christ indicates one type of approach to the offender. It reads, you will recall, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth..."—a description of the Lex Talionis.

We have moved away from this approach, at least in part and in some jurisdictions. And there are other trends which are apparent at this stage in the development of penology. My purpose is to discuss some of these. And thus the sub-title of this paper becomes "Some Trends in Modern Penology."

I

The first of these is the movement away from punishment and retaliation, toward individual treatment for the person convicted of violating the law. There has, it would seem, always been a program for dealing with the offender. For a weary time the cardinal principle was: treat him harshly and then you will bring the culprit to see the error of his ways, and you will deter others from following in his footsteps; then you will protect society, particularly that segment which has property.

There is no need of going back to the ancients. In England where much of our law and penal tradition developed, the spirit of "sock it to 'em" extended well into the modern era. At the beginning of the 19th Century there still were listed on the statute books approximately 200 offenses for which the culprit might be executed. It is true that many of these laws had become dead letters, but they had not been dequeased for long. It was in 1823, for instance, that deportation was mercifully substituted for death as the penalty for making false entries on a marriage license—one wonders what the perpetually-young Hollywood folk would have done in those days. Imprisonment played no part in the punishment of offenders, for the modern penitentiary is but 150 years old. There were, of course, prisons long before that date, but these served as places of detention until a trial was had, and then justice was summary. Frequently the prisoner met his end at the cross roads, or he was maimed or suffered other forms of corporal punishment. But he was not sentenced to a term in prison as punishment or for correction.

As a deterrent the system was not particularly effective. It is a matter of record that the first counterfeit note on the bank of England was presented a few days after forgery was made a capital offense. In spite of the fact that poachers were liable to being hanged, the King and the nobility did not kill all of the game that was taken from the King's preserves. As long as there were rabbits to be snared men took their chances, and rabbits were skilled at multiplication even in those days. The hangman plied his trade boldly so that all might see, and the criminal his, hoping that none would see. The general effect is illustrated in a story of one of these executions. The offender was a pickpocket; the scene the cross roads; the audience all the people of the countryside, for the public was invited to the festivities in order that all might learn that crime does not pay. (Today we are much more genteel about such goings on). And among the thousands who were watching this Danny Deever being hanged for picking pockets there were several hundreds who had their pockets picked. Of course, one objective was reached: this particular miscreant did not repeat; he learned his lesson. The other light-fingered gentry in the crowd were probably grateful to the state for removing a bit of competition. Anyway if you adopt a profession you must accept its hazards—like men who follow the sea. That, and the fact that the audience received a thrill, seems to have been all that was accomplished.

Gradually those who preached against extreme cruel and inhuman treatment gained the ear of the authorities. There resulted a suscease of bloodletting, and men began to seek a substitute for capital and corporal punishment.

As is happened, the substitute was right at hand. In 1557 England began the establishment of bridewells and workhouses to house vagabonds, beggars, debtors, prostitutes, wife deserters and misdemeanants. With the rise of agitation against summary justice, authorities began committing more serious
offenders to these workhouses. However, the security devices of the average workhouse were not effective enough to restrain the felon, and therefore more formidable bastilles were built.

The emphasis was still on punishment and retribution—the criminal must suffer for his misdeeds and society must get even. There was, of course, some thought of reform but that was to be effected through punishment. And so to make the going tougher, prisons were dungeons, often unutterably vile, with no segregation as to age or criminal pattern, and at times very little as to sex. Food was bad; there was no work program, no sanitation. That policy, it seemed, was logical. If imprisonment were made sufficiently unpleasant, no one would want to come back; there was magic for correction in mere imprisonment. Therefore, the first offender and the recidivist, the adolescent and the grown up, the woman in debt and the prostitute sat side by side in idleness and learned all there was to know of evil and very little of that which is good.

The vilest deeds like poison weeds
Bloom well in prison air:
It is only what is good in Man
That wastes and withers there:
Pale Anguish keeps the heavy gate
And the Warden is Despair

This program was no more effective toward reform and deterrence than summary justice had been. Men did not learn to love prison, to be sure; how could they? But in spite of the utter lack of attraction these dungeons had, offenders did come back in large numbers. Offenders repeated and recruits were made daily.

II

Meanwhile some men and women—religious leaders, philosophers, students of social problems, humanitarians—were doing a bit of thinking on these matters. They reached certain conclusions and dined them into the ears of the authorities—an offensive habit that reformers have—conclusions such as these:

1. That you cannot use the mass approach in a program for remaking the criminal. The old idea of the definite sentence was based upon the mass approach, or else it was purely punitive in its aim. It is folly to suppose that all robbers will be corrected in so many years, all forgers in so many. It is not true that all offenders are alike, or that they can be helped in the same fashion; or even that you can measure punishment in terms of time. Therefore, if a sane approach is to be made, the offender must be treated as an individual.

2. That punishment, per se, does not cure, nor the fear of it, deter.

3. That a rigid and utterly distasteful regimen will not keep a man from coming back to prison. It is not sufficient to make him sick of the place; it must be made possible for him to carry on on the outside. That objective implies the formulation of a well planned program to help him rebuild his life. Surely prison is concerned with the protection of society, but then only is society protected from him, if the offender changes his ways and his thinking.

4. That penal institutions are not concerned with punishment. Retain some of the thought of punishment, if you will; I don't quarrel with that. But a man is not sent to prison for punishment. He is sent there as punishment; being arrested, tried, deprived of his liberty—that is punishment. But it is not the function of the institution to make the going tougher. It is its task to help him with his problems, so that he may eventually leave as a man better equipped mentally, morally, spiritually, industrially to be a good citizen—or to keep him indefinitely if he shows no signs of such change.

And so we have the new penology.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said: An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, love your enemies . . ." Well, we have not come quite that far—loving—but we are realizing, even from the selfish point of view of self protection, that it is the job of the corrections system to help prisoners toward restoration to society as respectable, useful and law abiding citizens, and incidentally toward greater happiness.

Not easily were we brought to this, if indeed we are there now. It took the time and thought of many individuals. Naturally a clearer insight into the implications of Christianity had its influence. In this field the Quakers were particularly active. True, the Lex Talionis approach lasted well into the Christian era. It happens, however, that the ways in which the offenders were being dealt with were not a matter of wide-spread public knowledge. The public may not have visited the school, but it did not visit the pen either. I presume righteous citizens had no desire to behold the blots on their own escutcheons; going to the theatre and the circus was less disturbing. On the other hand prison administrators were not interested in publicity. There was, therefore, need of men to focus attention on the problem. Such were leaders of the Enlightenment—men like Beccaria, Voltaire, Jeremy Bentham, Romilly and John Howard. There was Hippolyte Vilan, who more than 200 years ago established an institution in Ghent in which he introduced classification of inmates and vocational training.

Even now we do not have too general an acceptance of the newer penology; not too much clarity in our thinking nor too much uniformity in our approach to the program of rehabilitation. It is scarcely fair, however, to lay this state of affairs solely at the door of the prison administrator. The law and the courts still frequently think in terms of punishment. Listen to the tone of satisfaction in which
some judges say “solitary confinement and hard labor.” Incidentally, I doubt if there is a prison in the country equipped to carry out such sentences. Again, our citizens are generally too poorly informed to have sound views with regard to the purpose and function of corrections. One finds sentiment ranging all the way from that of the righteous chappies who want every offender thrown in the jug and the key lost, to that held by old ladies of both sexes who will sign a petition to have any inmate released. Nor are pedagogues, psychologists and psychiatrists agreed on methods to be followed in the attempt to foster rehabilitation. They do not even agree on how we learn or how we motivate people. So why should not a mere penologist be confused?

While I am in the confessional, let me add that there is in my profession—as in one or two others—quite a bit of pretense. To get a hearing at all we often claim to do more than we really do accomplish. Wardens of some institutions will talk loudly of rehabilitation, classification, counselling, professional staff—wardens whose institutions are in fact custodial, and nothing but. Thank God that that situation is found less frequently, and that there are in our institutions a growing number of men and women who are working assiduously and enthusiastically at the task of helping to rebuild lives.

III

Let us on with the story. We have come then, in the evolution of penology, to a program of giving attention to the individual inmate and his problems, so that he may be enabled to change his sights, increase his skills, in short, rebuild his life. This program is being followed in full acceptance of the fact that the first duty of the penal institution is to protect society, to keep the prisoners safe. But our contention is that society is best protected if he who threatens its safety and property has decided to mend his ways and has been enabled to do so. For remember that about 95 per cent of those now in prison will eventually be released.

What happens to a man who has been convicted of a crime and is subsequently sent to a modern prison? More particularly, what happens to a young man who has made his way through the receiving station at the State Prison to the Reformatory? Of what does this vaunted individual treatment consist?

There are four steps in the process, of which the first is ANALYSIS, that is, the study of the individual and his needs. Most citizens seem to think that the offender is usually an ordinary normal person who more or less deliberately violates the law. That appraisal is, in the majority of cases, not correct. The average young man who comes to a Reformatory is a boy with a problem. It is the task of the institution staff to understand the man and his problem and then to see what can be done about it. This process entails securing all manner of information about the inmate. This is obtained from the pre-sentence study of the probation officer, from the police, and from the questionnaires sent to the parents, ministers, school authorities, employers and any other sources of information of which we may learn, through psychometric tests, etc., and finally from personal interviews with the young man. We are in quest of causal factors, and we want to know the man’s social history: what kind of parents has he; how did they treat him; were they affectionate, brutal and neglectful or over-protective; did he have to feel apologetic for them because of their own misconduct? How did he get along with his siblings? How did he get along at school; how did he play; what was he interested in; what of his religious training? We must know of his ills and his physical condition; is there anything about his physical condition which might account for his antisocial behavior? What are his mental capacities, abnormalities, limitations, aptitudes? How does the young fellow regard his own experiences and his relationship to others? What is his attitude toward adults, and those in authority over him? What does he think of his own conduct? And after he is with us, we want to observe him in action, at play, at work and in the schools; we want to learn if he is cooperative, aggressive, shy, submissive.

Doing a good job at analysis demands a competent staff—psychologists, psychiatrists, counsellors, chaplains, psychometrists, medical men. And, the present outcry against the ever mounting number of state employees to the contrary, our prisons are still woefully understaffed with respect to these professional people.

DECIDING UPON A PROGRAM for the individual is the next step. Decisions on this score are made by a group generally and inappropriately called the classification committee. The committee is made up of members of the professional staff. After all possible information has been obtained and the records have been studied, the newly-arrived inmate is called before this committee and an initial program is worked out.

To function well at meeting the needs of the inmate, the institution must be flexible. It must be able to place the man in the appropriate custodial situation by providing for maximum, medium and minimum custody. There must be facilities for providing for a variety of activities; academic and vocational schools, maintenance assignments for on-the-job training, factories for those whose needs are best advanced in pure work situations. There must be provision for those who have special needs: for example, medical and psychiatric and dental. All of these situations must be very real, not so much front or make-believe. The regimen, the tools and machinery, the working hours, must be comparable to schools and industry on the outside. Two men at one man’s work, a four hour day, working with outmoded machinery furnish but poor preparation for life on the outside.
The third step is that of PUTTING THE PLAN INTO EXECUTION. Comes now the test of the pudding, the situation which determines whether or not all that has gone before is so much window dressing. After a program has been agreed upon, the man is put on the job. Obviously, if this program is going to have any significance as far as the rehabilitation of the man is concerned, it is necessary that all of the training activities in the institution be under the supervision of trained staff members; trained career people are vital to the success of the entire modus operandi. They must be people of patience, of understanding, of broad human sympathies, people who are good teachers and observers. They must be able to measure progress, must know when the assistance of other staff members must be called in to help solve personal problems, for there is a great deal of referral in this business—back to the classification committee because events have shown (either through the success or the failure of the individual on the assignment) that the program needs revision; referral to another staff member, such as the psychologist, the medical man, the counsellor, the chaplain. Obviously, one does not have guards or foremen in maintenance or shops with a degree of specialization in sociology or psychology. So there must be instituted a slow program of training.

Of course, as I indicated, there is more to this business of rehabilitation than academic or vocational training. However, I do want to emphasize that putting square pegs in square holes is of great importance. But there is more than that to be done. Those who come to us, I repeat, are not as a rule stable young men who got into trouble by accident, or because of a dare, or from economic need. They are generally an unstable lot—people with very definite personal needs. Some years ago, on the basis of 1807 cases, we drew a picture of the median inmate at the Michigan Reformatory. The picture is still substantially the same. Here are the significant details:

“He has a record of juvenile delinquency, has never previously been incarcerated (by sentence) in a penal institution for adults, but has been at least once previously convicted (i.e. placed on probation, fined, or given a suspended sentence) in a court for adults. He is here for a Crime Against Property, Gainful, and has a minimum sentence of two years and a maximum of ten years.

“He is white, 20 years of age, a citizen of the United States, single, a native of Michigan, and the son of American parents. He is a legal resident of a city of 65,000 population, is a Protestant by affirmation, one of four children, and has completed the eighth grade. He tests a dull average in general intelligence, and is rated occupationally as an unskilled laborer.

“He, his parents, or his wife, have at some time been recipients of public aid, and he or member of his family have been known to at least two social agencies in the community. Socially, he is the product of a broken home and at least two abnormal hereditary and environmental factors. His personal history reveals that he has a history either of alcoholism, drug addiction, or venereal infection—but none of these factors alone characterizes the median inmate.”

One finds young men lacking any kind of ethical or religious code to govern their actions, lacking any ability or tendency to plan their lives, or intestinal fortitude to do the disagreeable thing. They are often creatures of impulse, with no sense of responsibility, no capacity for getting along with others. Often there are physical handicaps which are factors in their criminality. In many cases there is a history of brain injury. There are psychopathic personalities and borderline psychotics. Sometimes there is a history of parental, or community rejection.

About these things too something must be done. The mere process of growing up will sometimes take care of the difficulty, but there is grave need for wise counselling. At our institution each man has an appointed counsellor. As usual our counsellors have too large a caseload, but at least we are doing something toward the problem’s solution. The idea is to gain the inmate’s confidence, and then to do some probing to learn of his difficulties, and finally to help change his thinking, revise his sights, and seek to instill in him positive motivation for walking in socially acceptable ways.

The fourth step is that of restoring the inmate to life on the outside—PAROLE—which constitutes the test of the efficacy of the whole program. I will make some comments on parole a bit later in this discussion.

I have been discussing the rehabilitation program within the institution. To make a personal treatment program possible on a state-wide basis the law must provide for certain devices and agencies. I will mention them, with some comment:

IV

1. Presentence Investigation. This is provided for by law in case of felony convictions. It constitutes one of the institution’s most valuable sources of information—valuable because the information is collected on the spot with direct access to the sources, and when written by a trained observer furnishes data which can be secured only with difficulty by the prison staff. Unfortunately, not all of our judges are consistent on a good report, and not all of our probation people are trained workers.

2. Probation. Probation is, in indicated cases, by all odds the most sensible device for treatment of the offender. It enables a convicted person, under the guidance of competent officers, to adjust in the environment in which we want him to do so, and not in the unnatural environment of the institution.
It enables him to keep his place in the industrial world, and to assume his obligation to his dependents, and saves him from the stigma which attaches to imprisonment. Society is benefited because it does not have to pay the cost of his maintenance or that of his dependents. The aggrieved person is often helped because provision may be made for restitution. Probation, therefore, is one of the phases of the individual treatment program.

3. The Indeterminate Sentence. The idea back of the old definite sentence was that of punishment. For this crime society demands so much flesh, for that one, so much. It was not concerned with treatment; how can one foresee how much time will be required to effect the desired changes?

To us the indeterminate sentence means that we have time for a treatment program. Let's bend every effort to have the man in shape when the minimum has expired. If he is not ready we will keep him until he is. The theory is that some time between the minimum and the maximum the man will be ready for parole.

4. Provision for Segregation. Before 1937 Michigan Law made no such provision. The consequence was that each of our institutions was a duplicate of the others. Today we have receiving stations at Jackson and Marquette, and from these, inmates are sent to the places which best meet their needs.

To do a good job at segregation a state system needs many institutions so that like can be placed with like. Michigan is making some progress toward more facilities. We now have the minimum security institution at Chelsea, established in 1945 and called the Cassidy Lake Technical School. This houses about 200 inmates and is a branch of the Reformatory. Then we also have the so-called forestry camps, a program begun in 1946.

5. Parole and Parole Supervision. Parole is the agency for evaluating the treatment program and putting it to the test. It is the sensible release procedure. Keeping a man for a term of years in an unnatural environment and then turning him loose without supervision because he has adjusted well to that environment is stupid. Few people realize how many of the capacities which we must have for successful living on the outside are unlearned during incarceration, particularly in institutions of the old type. Parole calls for release under supervision of officers who know of the spiritual and mental trauma involved in having been in prison; their function is to guide the man until he has learned to adjust to free life, and to return him if it appears he is not going to get along. Parole is essential to a sound personal treatment program.

This then is one of the trends of modern penology —away from punishment and mass treatment and toward individual treatment and a program of rebuilding lives.

Secondly (though the order of presentation of these trends is of no significance) there is the tendency toward centralization and coordination of all of the agencies concerned in the treatment of the adult offender, i.e., probation, prisons, and parole.

Time was when each of these agencies was on its own, operating independently of the others. Probation was under the control of the local court; prisons each had their own board of control, with little tie between institutions of the same state, thus making a program of classification and segregation impossible. Parole was the function of the governor, which he discharged through a parole commissioner who was usually a political appointee with no knowledge of parole or its principles.

Today the tendency is to bring all of the agencies concerned with adult corrections into one department. We recognize the fact that all of these agencies—probation, institutions and parole—are parts of the correctional process, through all of which the same individual may successively pass. It is wiser—and more effective—that during the process the same central administration attend to his needs and treatment, than that he pass through the hands of a series of agencies which are independent of one another and generally pay no attention to what the other has done or will do. In each stage of the process the same data are important; the same techniques are frequently used. What is done in one stage does have bearing upon what should be done at a later stage. So it seems logical to conclude that one department should have the task and responsibility of determining the care and treatment of the individual offender whether he be on probation, in an institution or on parole.

This principle is meeting with general acceptance. In recent years many states have organized departments of Corrections. The thought is to make of the corrections process a carefully integrated program; to leave the management of the process in the hands of those who are trained in this field; to guard it from adverse influences, political or otherwise.

The prevailing opinion among corrections authorities is that this department should function under a commission of laymen, appointed by the governor for a term of years (that is, for staggered terms). The commission should be chiefly concerned with policy determination, and should appoint as its chief executive officer a director. He should qualify through knowledge and experience, and should be selected from a civil service roster or through some similar process. There should be established in the department, three or four divisions, each under an assistant to the director, and concerned with probation supervision, prisons and prison industries, parole and parole supervision.

It is the thinking of some students of government that all state departments should function directly
under the governor, that is, under a commissioner appointed by him and serving at his pleasure. Others contend—and I agree—that this type of administration may be satisfactory in departments which are concerned solely with services; however, in departments which are concerned with persons—those in which the public has a special interest, such as the departments of Conservation, Mental Health, Correction—it is wisest to have affairs administered under a lay policy-making commission consisting of several informed citizens appointed for staggered terms. Such an arrangement makes for continuity of policy, and rules out the possibility of potential interference. It is a more democratic form in that it permits of participation in government by well-informed and interested citizens. It makes possible having career people in top administrative positions; no career man is likely to accept an appointive position which he will lose as soon as a new governor is elected.

It is contended that having the department function directly under the governor permits the citizen to pinpoint responsibility if things should go wrong. That, in my opinion, is pure ivory palace rationalization. Apropos are James Forrestal's remarks made in connection with the unification of the War and Navy Departments: "My chief misgiving about unification derived from my fear that there would be a tendency toward too much central control—which is one of the troubles of the world today. A lot of admittedly brainy men believe that governments, history, science and business can be rationalized into a state of perfection."

VI

Third is the trend toward professionalizing the service in the field of corrections.

Obviously, if the program I have outlined is to meet with a degree of success, the men and women working with it must have knowledge of human beings and their problems—which means trained personnel. Time was when it was thought—and those in control acted on that principle—that any one could be a prison guard, a parole officer, a warden. That might have been done in the old prisons; it will not work today. We need trained people, who are thoroughly indoctrinated, who can be sure of their jobs on the basis of good performance. We are getting there. Gradually state corrections systems are being placed under the merit system. Changeover of top executives is becoming less frequent.

We should have such career people, and what is more, the administration of corrections should be left in their hands. There are two groups that have an unhallowed interest in persons and paroles.

The first of these—and their interest is of long standing—are the politicians—not all, but some. They want control over the jobs these fields furnish, and they like to be able to secure for their constituents an easy go in prison and speedy release on parole—parole with no tiresome restrictions.

The second of these is the gangster and racketeer. Their interest is of more recent origin and is growing in intensity. They do not anticipate going to prison, but if some of their members should be so unfortunate, it would be convenient to have an easy-going administration in charge, one which would give the members preferred treatment and assignment to conveniently located and equipped institutions. And the reason for controlling parole is obvious.

Political appointment of top officials in corrections opens the door to such controls. Much more can be said about this but it would lead us into the unholy story of modern gangster operations and influence. However, the danger of such control over corrections is actual, particularly when the head of the department is a political appointee.

VII

The last trend I shall discuss is that toward the establishment of functional institutions—institions erected to meet specific needs of the inmates.

Time was when the builders of penal institutions gave little thought to functional arrangement. That's not strictly true, because they were very much given to the use of high walls and tool-proof steel. But any old prison will tell you the story. Planning—there wasn't any. Everything had to go within the walls, even the storeroom and the power plant. Moreover, since high walls were expensive, the enclosure was made as small as possible. Whenever a new building became necessary, one was built, anywhere, wherever there was room, without regard to the function it was to play. And since the enclosure was small, each new building cluttered up the yard some more. Today we are saddled with them and are consequently handicapped in the job of trying to carry on a modern program with ancient facilities. Monuments they built! And the trouble is that they are indestructible. I would like to suggest to architects and builders that they cease trying to discover indestructible building materials and seek to develop one which will automatically disintegrate at 11 A.M. on the seventy-fifth anniversary of construction. Then the dates on the corner stones will really have significance!

If we are to carry on an intelligent program of classification and segregation, it follows that we must have facilities to meet the needs of various types of inmates. The trend today is to provide such institutions, for instance, for the young offender, for the reformable repeater, for the hardened dangerous type, for women, for the criminally insane, for the drug addict, for the alcoholic. There are being developed institutions providing maximum, medium and minimum custody, for it is recognized that not
all inmates need bars and stone walls, that building open institutions is less expensive than erecting 30 foot concrete walls. There are industrial prisons, agricultural and forestry camps. Trend is also toward small institutions, caring for not more than a thousand inmates, so that an individual treatment program may become an actuality.

Some day, I hope, we will have a half-way station type of institution—for men who give every indication that they are ready shortly for release. This institution will have no walls. There will be industries and men will be paid the going wage for their work. They will be paid in cash and in turn will pay the state for their keep. All of the usual prison restrictions will be removed. They will be allowed to make contracts for employment so that they can go out on a job of their own finding when they are released. Few people realize how many things a long timer must learn when he returns to free life. Let us begin to teach him before he leaves.

I have described for you some phases of a program for a more effective treatment of the offender. I think we are making progress, and some day, with better facilities, more adequate and better trained staff, and a better knowledge of human beings and of the methods of meeting their needs, and less political influence, we will be doing a better job—even within the framework of the principles we have now adopted.

The folk in the corrections field are trying to help those who have already run foul of the law. But that program alone, no matter how successful it may be, is not going to solve our crime problem. We cannot wait with the rebuilding process until people reach the institution. More and more attention must be paid young people with problems before they get into trouble.

Each month, with a great deal of satisfaction, I bid farewell and God-speed to from 80 to 100 boys who leave the Reformatory on parole. I know that, generally speaking, 80 to 85 per cent of them will make good, within the range of their capacities. But each month I see, with much sorrow and some despair, the side door open to receive an equal number of new comers. We will assume some responsibility for those who leave, but we have had nothing to do with those who come; we have had no chance at them nor any part in their coming. But the local community has had.

We are always looking to institutions for a solution of these problems. The church should do this, and the schools that, and the law enforcement officials the other thing. We rarely take the Christian approach and ask what we can do as individuals.

Now it happens that every one of you, as a Christian, is a successful man, successful beyond the average. You could be a hero to some boy who has none, only phonies. If you will, as an individual, take under your wing some boy you know, who but for your interest will get into trouble, you will save a soul from hell, and cover a multitude of your own sins. “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”
Groen Van Prinsterer

Groen’s magnum opus** is here presented in attractive form. H. Smitskamp of the Free University has added explanatory footnotes, modernized the spelling and grammar and added an introduction. Those who can read Dutch should have this book. And, since Groen is such an important figure in our own cultural background, it will not be amiss to give here some comment on the ideas he expresses in Ongeloof en Revolutie.

Groen wrote this book in 1847, a year before the Revolution of 1848 in France and a year before the Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx. He wrote it thus in an era when Liberalism had triumphed in most West-European countries and the middle class had become the ruling class. The book is an attack on the Liberal ideology of the mid-nineteenth century and a warning that it can lead only to disaster for Europe.

What is the “Revolutie” which the Christian must oppose? For Groen it is not simply the French Revolution, but rather the whole Liberal and rationalistic outlook which emerged in Europe after 1650, and which reached its logical working out in the French Revolution. Its key thesis was that Reason rather than Revelation should be the guide to the construction of a new society, that Man rather than God should determine how society should be organized. This is “revolutie” for Groen, and this he fights bitterly.

In economic life Liberalism expressed itself in the dissolving of the old organic bonds between employer and employee, and their replacement by a relationship based on contract. The old restraints which the guilds placed on the employer have been swept away, and in the name of free enterprise and laissez-faire the worker becomes a mere commodity. Unrestricted capitalism has meant the end of the old idea of cooperation between social classes.¹

Groen also made the point, stressed later by Kuyper, that Socialism and Liberalism were both children of the revolution, and that, if anything, the Socialists were the more logical of the two groups. Once accept the Revolution, and you as a Lower have no defense against the Socialist. Groen would thus say, to make the point meaningful, that the economic and political ideas of a Liberal like John D. Rockefeller could not be logically defended against Socialism. No, said Groen, the only answer to Revolution is an Anti-Revolutionary social philosophy based on Christianity. Once God is dethroned, the deified State will take His place.

It was as a historian that Groen gained his fame; he felt that “history, too, is the flaming revelation of God.”² A good part of his book is devoted to an able historical analysis of the 18th century, in which he tries to prove that it was not social conditions (while bad, they have been distorted by Liberal historians) nor political oppression which caused the French Revolution, but rather the rise of the idea that Man by Reason could remake society.

The basic political form in Europe, says Groen, was the monarchy, but a monarchy ruling under God’s law, and with power limited by the Estates of the realm (“Parliament”) and by all the other groups and associations which had their own special freedoms. Sovereignty was given by God to the ruler, and the ruler ruled under God. After 1650 this idea loses out to the “Revolutionary” idea that sovereignty is based on the people, that the people form states (the contract theory), and that there are no limitations on the power of these states except those that the people themselves set up. This idea, says Groen, leads inevitably to despotism sooner or later. Louis XIV is an early example of what this idea can produce; Robespierre or Napoleon a better example. If it is not recognized that government is under God, government will become despotism, no matter how much it may talk of democracy.

Groen thus rejects both absolute monarchy (and the divine right of kings) and absolute democracy. Neither of them can produce a healthy society. If either of them is adopted, the health of the body social suffers grievously. For, in either case, the bases of society—the organic social groups, the kringen—are deprived of their power, and only the individual and the state are left; and this means that absolutism of one form or another will result. What is needed (p. 113) is a Christian democracy. Such

Nonetheless, Groen elsewhere says that he agrees with the Socialists that the Liberal-capitalism of his day simply meant “a new aristocracy,” and that the worker was probably worse off than before. Cf. also A. Kuyper’s Christianity and the Class Struggle (Grand Rapids: 1951) for a fuller expansion of Groen’s treatment of Liberal economic policy.

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** Groen Van Prinsterer, Ongeloof en revolutie (1847), (Frisoek: Weyer; 1961.) 12f.

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²) This phrase should be called to the attention of those people who feel that our Christian schools can substitute Spanish or shop or basketweaving or what-not for the study of history. If our schools take over Liberal ideas of education and base their curriculums on Liberal educational thought, the simple addition of Bible courses will not make them “Christian” schools.
an idea of democracy will recognize that governments grow up because of history, that society grows up in history, and that it cannot be changed overnight by man using reason. Such a democracy will emphasize the intermediate social groups (this idea was later developed by Kuyper into “sphere-sovereignty,” which are the real building-blocks of society.

The Revolutionary idea of freedom, says Groen (in a keen analysis), is opposed to the Christian idea of freedom. For the Christian freedom is not unrestricted but is found in submission to God’s will. Otherwise freedom leads to tyranny. For Rousseau, majority will decides all things, children are free to disobey their parents (and hence to be enslaved by the State), and religion simply becomes a socially useful thing with no real meaning. As Groen points out, if law is simply majority will, there is no logical answer to Socialism or even more extreme views, if they gain majority support.

In its effects on society, the Revolution (also, in the larger sense, as political trends 1689-1789) meant the replacing of a society based on organic groups such as the guilds and the estates by a society based on the individual and thus also by the State. Indeed, says Groen, the Revolution is basically social; and the problem of the social ills (unrestrained capitalism, revolutionary Socialism, etc.) which it has brought about will be the key question of the future. Liberalism, with its doctrines of laissez-faire and unlimited competition, has no answer to the problems it raises; Socialism’s answer will be a democratic Caeserism; reactionary ideas will not help—it is impossible to turn the clock back to 1650. Only Christianity has the answer.

What is to be done? Groen’s answer is rather vague, apart from insisting that organic social groups must be revitalized and given back their old power. But he sees clearly that one immediate thing which needs doing is the freeing of the Dutch educational system from State control and Liberal control. In a Christian school system there can be trained the leaders of the future, the men who will solve these problems. And indeed, fifty years after Groen wrote, Abraham Kuyper became prime-minister of the Netherlands. In addition to this, the Christian community must rouse itself from its lethargy and become conscious of its duties. An inspired group of Christians can do wonders; faith can conquer the world. Perhaps Europe can still be saved from destruction.

Well, this is a provocative book. It is too bad it has not been translated. It also requires more familiarity with history and political thought than most of our people have. But for those who can read it, it will be most provocative.

Groen’s ideas were taken over and expanded and worked out in detail by Abraham Kuyper. Groen had taken over and worked out the ideas of others. The three great influences on Groen’s ideas were Bilderdijk, the Byronic poet of the Revell; Von Haller, the German conservative who ably opposed Revolutionary political theory; and Edmund Burke, whose Reflections on the French Revolution should be read by all Forum readers. Julius Stahl, the Lutheran social thinker, also influenced Groen. From these men Groen borrowed many of his ideas. What is original with Groen is his sharp historical analysis of the background to the French Revolution; his insistence that reaction was no answer to the revolution; his stress on organic groups as the basis of society (though others anticipated him in this); and, most importantly, his reworking of various ideas into a coherent whole, a Calvinist anti-revolutionary philosophy.

It might also be noted that Groen, like Kuyper later, clearly states that the American Revolution of 1776 was not the outcome of Revolutionary ideas. It was based rather on Puritan influences in the main; it is more like 1689 than 1789. American society thus grew up in a different historical background from that of Dutch society in the 1700’s and 1800’s, according to Groen. It would seem to me that a good deal of the present discussion in our circles centering around the Antithesis would be improved by recognition of this fact. The USA is not in Europe; we were little affected by the French Revolution, and not affected to the same extent by the “Revolution” in the broad sense. The working out of the Revolution which European culture went through from 1650 to the present has been shared only partially by this country. If Groen recognizes important differences between the Netherlands and this country, should not we do likewise? Groen’s outlook is Calvinistic, and there can be no quarrel with his general principles. But, as he himself suggests, the USA has a different history from the Netherlands; and therefore it would seem to me that the application of Groen’s outlook might be different in this country.

Groen, in summary, felt that the only answer to the “Revolution” of modernity and modern thought, which leads inevitably to the defied State, was Christianity. He also realized that only a revitalized Christianity could stem the tide. Groen’s followers stemmed the tide in the Netherlands, though they have not built the Christianized society Groen also hoped for. In this country Groen’s followers—ourselves—have the Christian school system Groen saw as the necessary first step. Beyond that, we have done nothing to fulfill the vision Groen had, of a
Calvinism which would be in the forefront of the fight against Revolution. Perhaps the reading of Groen’s book will help us catch something of Groen’s vision.

A cynic might say that this wish is simply whistling in the cemetery. It is, he might say, difficult to see how a Calvinistic community whose discussions of Christian action are confined, with a few exceptions, to questions on whether Halloween parties are allowed, or whether movies shown over TV can be safely watched — how such a community can produce Christian action in Groen’s sense. Or how a rising generation of high school graduates fed a diet of Spanish, Social adjustment, shop, and basketball can produce the leaders equipped to carry out Groen’s vision of Christian action. But then, cynics are wrong — sometimes.

**Book Reviews**

**KORTE VERKLARING DER HEILIGE SCHRIFT: HEBREEKEN**
by Dr. F. W. Grosheide, and I, II Timotheus, TITUS, FILEMON, by Dr. C. Bouma. (Kampen: J. H. Kok; 1953).

HAVING used many of the volumes in this series, *Korte Verklaring der Heilige Schrift,* for some twenty years, I am not at all surprised that from time to time new editions of these valuable little books should come off the press. There is not anything quite like this publication in our English language. It is significant that several of our younger ministers, who have some difficulty with the Holland language, buy *Korte Verklaring.*

The reason for this popularity lies, I believe, in two things. These commentaries are the fruit of the scholarship of Reformed theologians. They may be brief, but behind brief explanations we discern truly scholarly labors. Another reason for enthusiastic interest in these handy volumes is their simplicity and brevity. There is a constant attempt to avoid unfamiliar technical language, which places them within reach of all readers who are interested in studying the Word. The brevity of the explanations also is calculated to promote frequent use of *Korte Verklaring.* We might as well reckon with the fact that people today will not wrestle with heavy and difficult books. It appears to this writer that the success of this publication has vindicated the conviction of the publisher that there was need for a commentary of this type.

It need hardly be added that in the above-mentioned virtues lies also the limitation of this work. The well deserved praise of *Korte Verklaring* is not intended to mean that ministers might as well dispose of the larger exegetical works and concentrate exclusively on it. That such was not the intention of the contributors is evident from the fact that many of them are also collaborating in the publication of a larger work intended for the use of theologians.

A valuable feature of these little volumes is a new translation by their respective authors. These translations are in modern Dutch and help one to understand the Word of God better. We recommend these volumes wholeheartedly and hope that they will find their way to the shelves of all our ministers who can read the Dutch. As for our non-ministerial readers we would say: if you can read them, by all means secure them. They are little jewels.

**THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST,** by L. Berkhof. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; 1953); $1.50.

THE pen of the venerable President Emeritus of Calvin Seminary continues to produce. This time it is a treatise on the glorious appearance of the Lord at the end of the ages.”

Here is more than devotional reading. Here is sharp Bible study, not too technical for the average lay reader, yet respectfully thorough. There are five chapters on the Second Coming.—The Time, The Manner, The Purpose, The Glory, and The Comfort. The author’s treatment of the Isms, particularly dispensationalism, is the work of an expert.

Premillennialists will be embarrassed by the following paragraph: “It is a conundrum to me how they who belong to the Church, for whom the promises given to Israel do not at all apply, can derive special comfort from the fact that Jesus at his return will establish a temporal Jewish kingdom on earth; how they can find it a specially consoling thought that Jesus, who after his resurrection was already endowed as Mediator with an endless life and as such could not remain in this sinful world, but had to ascend to heaven, will after his return again dwell on earth for a thousand years in a world in which sin and death still hold sway; and how they can find it a cause for special rejoicing that Christ will again exchange his heavenly bliss and glory for an environment that is not at all suited to their glorified conditions” (p. 93.)

Thank you, esteemed professor, for this helpful book.

**LEONARD GREENWAY**

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