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"A LETTER TO OUR FRIENDS"

(Problems for consideration in the working of a social Institute).

(This is the title of a brief document published in June 1980 by the Jesuits who work in the Centro de Estudos e Ação Social (CEAS) in Salvador do Bahia, Brasil. The task of a Social Institute working to promote structural change in a basically unjust society is beset with delicate problems.

Here four problems are considered, "not" - as the authors themselves point out - "in a spirit of self - justification, but to let our friends know where we stand and invite them to pursue these reflections with us. We hope for their criticisms and suggestions."

We print it here as an example of some elements which go to make up an analysis of the situation pertaining to the work of a Christian Social Institute such as CEAS - Ed.)

(1) A WORK OF THE SOCIETY STAFFED BY JESUITS AND LAY PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT IDEOLOGIES

The CEAS, as a work of the Society, is associated with the Church and guided by a christian inspiration. But from the outset it was joined by lay people with different ideological views and belonging to different political groups. At the executive level (orientation and direction of the review, advising popular movements, etc.) all members have the same rights and responsibilities. Constitutionally we established that the basic condition for working with CEAS is concern for and service of the popular classes as they strive for liberation, admitting a pluralism on the levels of faith and ideology that should not be a motive for discrimination. It is a relative pluralism, continually tempered by working together and, above all, by trying to follow up our basic point of reference: the service of the popular classes.

At a practical level, there have been tensions. But more than anything we must recognize the richness of this experience. We try to resolve the tensions through a democratic process of evaluation and discussion in which problems and differences are examined in depth and minority viewpoints respected. And in our work there is also a mutual respect for the positions of our members. We Jesuits have to admit that we have gained a lot from the lay members, especially in getting over our intellectualism and clericalism. And the lay people have gained too. Integration into the team has helped overcome divisions often also present among the people and in the leadership of leftwing movements. Sectarianism yields to a dynamic thrust towards unity in popular organization.

(2) THE USE OF ELEMENTS OF MARXIST ANALYSIS

In the path we follow, we enter into contact and collaborate with marxists. We ourselves use certain categories to analyse reality. Here too there are risks owing to the complexity of the problems. We do not give absolute value to any ideology, since we are always careful to uphold the eschatological claims of the faith. We should however acknowledge what has been positive in our experience: we have gained a more concrete vision of reality and have thus been able to put into practice the Church's social teaching. More than any theoretical gain, the use of marxist instruments of analysis has helped us uncover the problem of 'power' and take up positions more coherent with a defense of the oppressed and, consequently, more in line with the Gospel. It has helped us pay more attention to politico-economic forces than to cultural issues; to give more weight to changing practices than teaching theories. This is the present orientation of CEAS.

We are aware that Church documents make a number of distinctions. Within the Society, a recent survey revealed different positions, some, especially in Latin America, similar to ours. We believe that discernment in this area should continue based, on a common experience which alone can help us overcome preconceived ideas and mutual distrust. We hope we are making our small contribution to this process, along the line suggested by Dom Helder Câmara: "to do today with Karl Marx what St. Thomas did with Aristotle." (Cadernos do CEAS, n. 37, p. 59)

(3) THE PROBLEM OF FAITH

Some members of CEAS profess no explicit faith. This does not prevent them making a contribution at the same level as the others, or rather, to the problems with which CEAS is usually concerned: justice, popular movements, social analysis, possibilities for change, etc. More theological or pastoral matters are dealt with by the other members. Perhaps we are guilty of the sin of omission and should give more emphasis to these latter. But in our day to day work, direct service of the faith depends more on the popular communities we are in touch with and varies according to different needs and situations.

As for the Jesuits, we do not think we are in the process of becoming secularized but rather make every effort to deepen our faith. Faith leads us to take up the struggle for justice, as the substantial content of the Gospel, and is continually strengthened in this struggle. Changes with regard to certain 'spiritual practices' do not mean a rejection of prayer or the sacraments. The transcendent and gratuitous reality of the Kingdom is always present, though affirmed in a different manner. Our understanding of the Eucharist is deepened in the relationship between sacramental and material bread.

(4) RELATIONS WITH THE HIERARCHY

They are not always easy. Our point of departure is the Church's social teaching and continues to be the guidelines of the Pope and the Bishops (as also of the Society) with regard to evangelization. We study the official documents (Medellin and Puebla) and, above all, try to apply them in real life to our work. Our critical statements don't claim to be oracles from above; they are no more than a modest service offered to the people and also to our brothers the bishops. We have received much support from several of them. We believe we have to correct our attitude towards power in so far as it is contaminated by the secular elitism of our institutions. We must also denounce any exploitation of little people, including that which can be found within the Church. Conflicts almost always arise not from questions of orthodoxy, but because of a power base that is challenged; not so much from church motives, but because of the growth of a popular movement which questions the existing structures of society.

"The experience of the past and of our own time demonstrates that justice alone is not enough, that it can even lead to the negation and destruction of itself, if that deeper power, which is love, is not allowed to shape human life in its various dimensions. It has been precisely historical experience that, among other things, has led to the formulation of the saying: summum ius, summa iniuria. This statement does not detract from the value of justice and does not minimize the significance of the order that is based upon it; it only indicates, under another aspect, the need to draw from the powers of the spirit which condition the very order of justice, powers which are still more profound."

(Pope John Paul II: Dives in Misericordia, 12).

Reference: Promotio Justitiae, No. 20, December 1980.

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DEVELOPMENT, DIALOGUE AND EVANGELIZATION

J. B. Chethimattam

(L'auteur rappelle que le fondement de la mission a évolué au cours des siècles. Après avoir passé en revue les différentes approches - ecclésiocentrique, théocentrique ou trinitaire et christocentrique - employées pour justifier la mission, J. B. Chethimattam rapporte que de nos jours l'évangélisation, en tant que continuation de l'Incarnation, a acquis une dimension humaine. Ainsi, l'activité missionnaire élargit ses perspectives pour embrasser tous les peuples avec leur pluralisme religieux et leurs problèmes politiques. Tant la conscience religieuse que la conscience culturelle, qui comprend le souci de l'homme pour ses problèmes socio-économiques, doivent être évangélisés. L'évangélisation présuppose donc le dialogue, c.-à-d. la recherche commune pour percevoir le sens et les implications de la Bonne Nouvelle pour tous les hommes.)

Missionary work has a bad name in the whole "Third World." It was long identified with the manoeuvres of the colonial powers to gain dominance over other nations and to keep them under subjection. It was also discredited as propagandism and proselytism that sought to impose a foreign culture and foreign values on unsuspecting masses. But with the political liberation of most of the peoples of the Southern Hemisphere and the subsequent revival of their national and religious consciousness the missionary focus has shifted from the foreign churches to the local churches, and there is today a new outlook on mission work that widens its scope and perspective to embrace a whole people with its religious pluralism and multiplicity of human problems dominated by economic and political issues. Hence today the task of evangelization in Asia and particularly in India cannot be thought of without an active involvement in dialogue with the age-old religious traditions, and in the crying need for finding adequate solutions for widespread poverty and social inequality.

IDEALS OF EVANGELIZATION

Surprisingly, Friedrich Daniel Schleiermacher, one of the first in recent times to think of a science of missions, within the wider discipline of theology, was also a pioneer in taking a wide view of evangelization within the context of human culture. In his line of thinking truth for man was identical with his religious consciousness, and the Gospel had to become incarnate in contemporary thought forms. So he treated the subject of missions in the section on ethics rather than in practical theology, and viewed Missions as a cultural responsibility in specific situations where Western culture penetrated non-western cultural areas.

Even at the time of the Apostles evangelization was not conceived as a simple unidirectional communication of spiritual doctrine. St. Peter defines the fundamental missionary attitude when he states: "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation any one who fears and does what is right is acceptable to him" (Acts 10,34-35). Peter was forced to admit Cornelius and his group to Baptism when he was confronted with the fact that the Gentiles got their own Pentecost just like the Jews. St. Paul builds his sermon on the God of heaven and earth at the Areopagus basing himself on the Athenian worship that had erected an altar even to the Unknown God (Acts 17,23).

In their preaching of the Gospel the Apostles were sensitive to the material needs of the poor, and made special provision for them (Acts 6,2-6; Gal. 2,10). In fact, the missionary ideals of the Apostles were much more comprehensive than those emphasized in later missionary movements, often overshadowed by political conflicts and colonial ambitions. The first lesson St. Peter learned in his missionary approach was: "What God has cleansed, you must not call common" (Acts 10,13). For, through the redemptive death and resurrection of Christ creation as a whole was saved and brought under the headship of Christ (Eph. 1,9-10).

The missionary task is to actualize and bring to the consciousness of all what has already been accomplished in Christ. Hence it was the Good News! The Apostles were asked to dedicate all men to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, through their preaching and through the sacramental action. This could be accomplished only by proclaiming that the God in whom all live and move and have their being is One (Acts 17,28), and that since through the Risen Lord all have risen from sin and death all must reform their lives accordingly (Col. 3,1). The preaching of the Gospel was not considered a domination over or subjugation of other peoples, but a humble ministry. Christ himself came "not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mk 10,45; Mt 20,28; Phil 2,7). The task of the apostles was to be witnesses of this service of redemption accomplished by Christ (Acts 1,8).

DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO EVANGELIZATION

But, only in recent times was some real effort made to define and formulate a theology about mission work. In the Middle Ages, when the whole of Europe was practically Christian except for a few scattered Jewish communities, and Islam was considered more a political threat than a religious challenge, evangelization was not a significant theological problem. The missionary explosion of the West from the 16th to the 19th centuries was more or less a side effect of the colonial enterprise and did not elicit much theological reflection. Only from the 19th century with the evident signs that the end of the colonial era was within sight did people start asking the theological reason for doing missionary work in foreign countries especially in Asia and Africa. The answers to this question were different owing to the difference of perspective from which the question was approached.

ECCLESIOCENTRIC MISSIOLOGY

A commonly expressed reason for doing missionary work was that Christianity is the complete and final revelation of God and the absolute religion, while other religions contained only hints of truth and intimations of salvation. Missionaries like J. N. Farquhar argued that though every religion contained some truth and provided guidance for its followers, only Christianity contained the integral truth and so could withstand the eventual shock of modernization. The institutional aspect of the Church was very prominent in this early missiological thinking. As German Lutheran theologian Gustav Warneck pointed out, only the Christian religion has a Church, "the institute of healing for all humanity", and world mission is her inherent task and the lifeline of her very existence.

Even in this ecclesiological approach to the Mission some place the emphasis on the philanthropic concern for the salvation of those who would otherwise be lost outside the Church, while others like William Carey give importance to the salvation of the whole man, and include in the missionary programme also social projects like teaching the ignorant and providing medical facilities for the sick. But as Manfred Linz has maintained, the principal ecclesiological consideration in the work of evangelization is: "Mission is God engaging the Church as a partner in his work in the world. Through mission Christ establishes and exercises his Lordly rule. Mission frees men for discipleship in every area of human life and thereby offers active hope for the final goal of God's creation to be reached. Vatican II in its document on the Missions emphasized this ecclesiocentric approach: "The specific purpose of the missionary activity is evangelization and the planting of the Church among those peoples and groups where she has not yet taken root".

THEOCENTRIC AND TRINITARIAN MISSIOLOGY

But the basic of the missionary orientation of the Church is the will of God, and the trinitarian dimension of the Godhead from which the Church takes origin. The same Vatican II document says: "Missionary activity is nothing else and nothing less than a manifestation or epiphany of God's will, and the fulfillment of that will in the world and in world history. In the course of this history God plainly works out the history of salvation by means of mission". God is Triune and the reason for mission work comes from the heart of the Trinitarian mystery. As Ps. Dionysius and other Oriental Fathers following the Neo-Platonist trend of thought point out, the diffusive character of the Supreme Good that is the Father expresses itself internally in the personalities of the Word and the Spirit, and externally in Incarnation and Pentecost and the supernatural experience of grace; in a limited way it extends to all creation. Hence the missionary task is to intensify the sharing in the Supreme Good.

The Conference of the International Missionary Council held at Willingen, Germany in 1952 stated: "Mission has its source in the Triune God. Out of the depth of his love for us, the Father has sent forth his own beloved Son to reconcile all things to himself, that we and all men might, through the Spirit, be made one in Him with the Father, in that

perfect love which is the very nature of God". Similarly, Vatican II explaining why the church is missionary by her very nature says: "For it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she takes her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father. This decree flows from "that fountain of love" or charity within God the Father. From Him who is "the origin without origin the Son is begotten and the Holy Spirit proceeds through the Son".

CHRISTOCENTRIC MISSIOLOGY

Others find the basis for missionary work in Jesus Christ and especially the Christ event. What happened to humanity in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the Good News for all men. The kerygma of the New Testament is the message of the God who has acted decisively in Christ and whose actions demand response. Hence, the function of evangelization is to proclaim Christ, the one Mediator between God and men, "the one ordained by God to be judge of the living and the dead" (Acts 10,42). This is not the original or natural order of things, but a new order established by God in Christ. In this new dispensation "there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under the heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4,12). As Vatican II stated, "by himself and by his own power no one is freed from sin or raised above himself; all stand in need of Christ, their Model, their Mentor, their Liberator, their Savior, their Source of life". So through the preaching of Christ and of his Gospel is to be fulfilled the divine plan according to which the whole human race is to coalesce into one body of Christ.

THE HUMAN DIMENSION OF EVANGELIZATION

But what is often forgotten in the work of evangelization is that it is the extension of the two temporal divine missions, of Incarnation and of Pentecost, in both of which shines out the incarnational principles: It is through man that God saves man; man's salvation comes from within humanity, and is not imposed from outside. The Son of God became the son of man in a particular human culture at a particular place to save man. The oft repeated principle of the Fathers of the Church was that what Christ had not assumed from man was not really saved. Hence missionary activity should come as it were from within humanity integrating all that is authentically human, man's socio-economic, political, cultural and religious dimensions. As Vatican II says "missionary activity is closely bound with human nature itself and its aspirations". The task of evangelization is to present Christ who is "the source and model of that renewed humanity, penetrated with brotherly love, sincerity and a peaceful spirit, to which all aspire".

According to *Evangelii Nuntiandi* of Pope Paul VI, even though the Gospel and hence evangelization cannot be equivalent to any particular culture, still, the kingdom which is announced by the Gospel is translated into life by men who are imbued with a certain culture and in building up the kingdom some elements of culture as well as of human cultures have

necessarily to be used. In fact human culture itself or rather cultures themselves are evangelized. Hence evangelization is not complete until the close relation between the Gospel and the concrete personal and social life of man is taken into account.

As was clearly expressed in the Roman Synod of Bishops in 1974 that discussed the matter of evangelization, the concern for the whole man is fundamental to missionary work. This integral human outlook in evangelization is today oriented in two directions, one with regard to the socio-economic and political liberation of man, and the other in reference to his religio-cultural background. Development and religious dialogue, therefore, constitute a closely knit trilogy with mission work.

MISSION WORK AND LIBERATION

As far as Asia is concerned preaching the Gospel without any concern for the millions that wallow in abject poverty is a mockery of their humanity, using religion as a sort of opium to dull the sensibility of people. As Paul VI identifying himself with the sentiments expressed by the Bishops from the Third World in the Roman Synod, 1974, states: "When people are struggling to overcome poverty, contagious diseases, illiteracy, drought, and especially economic, doctrinal and political neo-colonialism the Church with her Gospel has to give them every help in their struggle. In fact, there is an intimate connection between evangelization, human development or progress and liberation. The man to be evangelized is not an abstraction, but a person exposed to social and economic problems".

But the simple missionary fact in India is that the poor people like the fisher-folk on the coastal areas of South-India evangelized by St. Francis Xavier have kept their faith and along with it their misery and poverty as well. Coupled with Christian faith is a fatalistic attitude towards life, that their socio-economic lot cannot be improved. Evangelization has not imparted to them a sense of responsibility to change their condition of life. The reason for this failure is that the Gospel was presented to them as a purely spiritual message to help them escape from the world of misery and suffering, and not as something to transform their earthly existence itself. But in fact the call to establish God's kingdom on earth is a mandate to make the world suitable for all men to live in, and more conformable to God's will. Hence, as Paul VI emphasized in his encyclical "Populorum Progressio" when the Church evangelizes a people she also tries to improve their socio-economic condition.

Economic development and evangelization: Many do not see between economic development and evangelization a direct and formal relationship, but only an indirect one which they call pre-evangelization. But, since it is the same people who are to receive the Word of God and also an answer to their material problems and needs, there is an integral existential relation between these two aspects of the mission of the Church. But as Paul VI rightly warns us, the liberation and development of people should not be taken in a narrow economic, political or social sense but must embrace the whole man. Every notion of liberation or development is based on a certain concept of man and system of anthropology. But certain concepts of man and anthropological perspectives are incompatible with the Gospel vision of man.

But in actual fact there is no doubt that the commitment to social justice and the liberation and full development of people, often comes into conflict with the program of "direct" evangelization. A missionary committed to both aims may find himself incapable of doing justice to both.

Conscientization for liberation and the programs for development hold too great a fascination for people's minds to allow them to concentrate attention properly on the Gospel message, that has to transform their world outlook and life concerns. But, the answer for this is not to separate the two functions into water-tight compartments, but rather to synthesize them and make the task of development a function of the total transformation of man by the Gospel.

Total transformation: It is part of the mandate of the Church to lead this world back into the kingdom of God, which also means to improve it, develop and elevate it to be a more human world. According to Vatican II the task of the Church in the world is, on the one hand, to recognize the autonomy of the earthly affairs and the dignity of the human person, and to manifest its solidarity with the entire human family and on the other to see that the community of men united in Christ is led by the Holy Spirit in its journey to the kingdom of their Father. Christ's redemptive work directed towards the salvation of men involves also the renewal of the temporal order.

The trinitarian basis of mission work as a movement of loving communication from the bosom of the Godhead, the infinite dynamic of the love and life of the Supreme Good demands that its waves embrace the whole man. We cannot make an artificial separation between the creating and the redeeming God, between the natural and the supernatural life of man. As Johannes Schütte says, "Redemption does not create another world, but recreates the present".

Here the eschatological dimension of the Church's mission is significant. Mission is the manifestation of the eschatological sovereignty of God among nations. Eschaton is the end, but it is also the beginning, the manifestation of God as Master of the whole future. Hence if Christ is the eschatological fulfillment of the glorification of God, he must also be the fulfillment of the missionary hopes and expectations to liberate the whole man. This missionary command "to go" and assemble nations must be considered the inauguration of the sovereignty of God over all men and all creation. "The eschatological kingdom of Christ embraces and embodies the totality of creation, the whole mankind and every man, in the spiritual, historical and socio-economic dimension: The final form of salvation is not merely the survival of the spirit, the immortality of the soul, but the resurrection of the whole man, including the resurrection of the body. In its turn the redemption of the body implies the redemption of the whole social, economic and political relationship of man's earthly life also".

(J. B. Chettimattam's article will be concluded in the June 1st Bulletin).
Reference: EUNTES 1980 - (7) - XIII.



COMBATING THE BEAST: CHURCH AND STATE IN EAST ASIA

Tom Peyton, M.M.

(L'un des éléments de la mission, mis en relief lors du récent Séminaire de Sedos est la nécessité d'analyser la situation dans laquelle la mission prend place. Cette analyse devrait embrasser aussi bien les dimensions locales que les dimensions globales et devrait comprendre non seulement les facteurs religieux, mais aussi les facteurs économiques, sociaux et politiques. L'une des difficultés pour des analyses de ce genre, consiste à trouver des critères objectifs d'évaluation. La contribution que nous présentons ici, est un exemple d'une analyse des facteurs affectants. aujourd'hui les relations de l'Eglise et de l'Etat en Asie de l'Est. Est-il la seule? Est-il complète? N.d.l.R.).

In what form will the church survive within the national security states of East Asia? As a priest who has spent the last fifteen years working with social justice ministries in the U.S., I found myself continually asking the above question during a recent three month tour (Hong Kong, Philippines, S. Korea, Taiwan, and Japan). Probably the dominant impression during this Asian tour has been the economic oppression imposed upon the peoples of East Asia.

East Asia has been acclaimed as a model of miraculous economic development and I would certainly admit to the growth of G.N.P's, the growth of the industrial sectors, the rise in per capita income and the building boom that is taking place in the ever expanding urban areas. However, as I observed all this, I also kept asking - at what cost to human development has this economic growth been purchased?

ANALYSIS: The closer I looked at the reality of East Asia, the more abhorrent it became when I discovered that the masses of people have been pandered to (perhaps "pimped" is a more accurate word) and even forced to accept an economic system that will hold them as indentured servants to the banking and investment interests of the U.S., primarily, and Japan, secondarily. Literally, I found the people of Hong Kong, Philippines, S. Korea and Taiwan in a situation of neo-colonial bondage - mortgaged in body and even spirit to become cheap labor in the capitalistic system.

I was not impressed by the argument that these people were in an abject state of poverty before this "economic miracle" and that now they can take their place in a global economic design as one of the great markets for consumer goods. People have a right to economic, social and political well being; the latter are not a privilege to be handed out to the people by the elite controllers of the world money supply. Therefore, the reality, to be concentrated on is not how fortunate people now are because they can buy a motor-bike, car or colored T.V., but what they have to do to get it.

What I discovered in East Asia is that industrialization and the needed capital to develop it came to this part of the world because of the governmental promises to provide cheap labor that would not be effectively organized and an economic infrastructure that would allow maximization of profit within a short period. The result of these promises was the mortgaging of the nation's greatest wealth, its young people, to become factory and service workers without receiving their just compensation. Except for a relatively few (including Japan), a just living family wage with adequate health and social benefits is unheard of in East Asian factories. 24-28 day work months with overtime is standard. Inflation has made a mockery of the workers' real buying power. Survival now depends upon the family as a working unit rather than having a dominant "breadwinner" person. Land speculation has made urban rentals and housing development a gold mine for investors and the rich, and even public housing is in collusion with the present system of keeping the profits from private housing at record high levels. The development of a true middle class is a myth as the gap between rich and poor gets greater; and the number of poor expands as the result of inflation.

WOMEN: These economic miracles have yet another hidden horror and that is the exploitation of women. It is women who have made up the bulk of workers in the factory systems of East Asia. They have given the best years of their lives to the factory system at grave risk to their physical and mental well being due to the long hours and the exacting nature of the work. They receive little in the way of compensation for health damage. After marriage many women continue to be part time workers or piece workers at home. In either case, women receive inadequate pay without the meager fringe benefits of full time workers. Moreover, women plug the gaps in rural jobs as men move away to the urban areas. I dare say that women (as economically and socially exploited) are an indispensable element for the cheap labor pool upon which capital investors have "banked" so enthusiastically in East Asia.

Those who advocate the present economic models of East Asia as something that the people want, certainly do not take into consideration the intense militarization that I observed on my trip. The military are omnipresent to make sure that the main direction of economic planning is not interfered with. I am also uncomfortable with those who explain that Asian culture is not suited to an open democracy. The success of opposition movements in educating the people to alternative models of economic development and participation is one of the reasons for the strong military presence in Asia!

It was evident to me that the peoples of East Asia were not just complacent in the face of the above, for I was told of growing unrest. External military control along with vast networks of internal civilian surveillance prevent most efforts at consciousness raising or open organizing. Student movements were also evident in their criticism of economic policies and the curtailment of civil rights that these policies entail. All governments in East Asia are violators of human rights, some very serious ones. Media is either explicitly censored or controlled by the vested interests of those making the profits from the present economic arrangements. I found this tight control of personal liberties, assemblies, and even education one of the most frightening elements of East Asia.

Coupled with an economic infrastructure in which dependence upon outside investors is a constant, the political control and manipulation of the people to conform to this dependence made East Asia appear to me as an area of the world in which the national security state was the norm rather than the exception.

JAPAN: At this point a special mention needs to be made of Japan. Japan is no longer third world or even "second" world. Japan is first world. Japan's own economic involvement in Asia and especially in the countries that I visited can only be described as first world exploitation. The relationship between Japan and the U.S. as the two main investors in East Asia and, therefore, the two main profiteers from this exploitation is not entirely clear to me. It is a connection that needs further serious study. My impression is that Japan's economic planning and investing is becoming equal to that of the U.S. and that Japan's model of economic development is becoming dominant. This means that Japan's own social injustices are being structured into East Asian countries, especially the exploitation of small industry and women. It almost appeared to me that Japan was doing more of the economic planning and the U.S. was providing the military hardware, the training of Asian military to enforce that policy.

INTERNATIONAL BANKS: It will always appear paranoic to speak of conspiracies. But there is a reality occurring in Asia that also needs to be studied more closely. It is the growing influence of major U.S. banks together with those in Japan to set the economic policies in east Asia which in turn dictate the political structures that implement those policies. As East Asian countries sink further into debt because of oil prices, and failing markets for their low skill manufactured goods; as inflation and recession cycle back to devastate thin "dependent" economies, the major banks can literally dictate the terms of recovery. The banks have made it very clear that new investments and loans will only come if a "politically stable" environment is assured.

What I saw on my trip was a growing similarity of martial law states in the Philippines, South Korea, and Taiwan. Taiwan would appear to be the model toward which the others are trying to move. U.S. arms and Japanese and U.S. money are the dominant realities. In all three afore mentioned countries I witnessed brutal militarization replacing routine police tactics, military justice supplanting civil courts, and reorganizing of the armies to handle more technologically advanced weapons and methods of control.

As mentioned above there is an obvious connection between this militarization and the economic realities. All countries are increasing exports; all countries are expecting more work for low wages and all countries are expecting labor unrest and even some unemployment. The pattern is clear - the U.S. Japanese banking interests have come together and they are imposing a basic economic plan of recovery on all these countries. This plan will once again attempt to mortgage young workers - especially women - in exchange for new monies. This plan will also further alter the economic infrastructures of those countries making them even more dependent upon U.S./Japan banking policies. U.S. arms and military aid will assure that the people "vote" "approval" of their own bondage under the guise of new leaders and new constitutions. All

alternative politics and efforts to form independent unions will be ruthlessly crushed. Call this a conspiracy or not, but the reality is a centralization of outside economic power to maintain a neocolonial empire in East Asia that serves Trilateral banking interests. And there is even another reality that will further necessitate the presence of security states in East Asia. It is nuclear power.

NUCLEAR POWER: Nuclear power is presented as the answer to continued economic growth. It is supposed to lessen dependence upon high price foreign oil. However, the facts of nuclear energy are these:

- 1) total cost of nuclear power makes it more expensive than fossil fuel power, i.e. technological inflation, rising price of uranium, cost of storing and disposing of waste products, frequent repair and final entombment of contaminated power plants;
- 2) risks of nuclear accidents and environmental pollution are growing with more complicated technology, e.g. "three mile island";
- 3) U.S. nuclear industry is folding and is trying to dump unused hardware in the third world.

In view of the above, why are East Asian countries continuing to plan on installing nuclear power. The answer could well be military rather than economic. Taiwan has already been a partner along with Israel and South Africa in exploding a nuclear device. Nuclear weapons in these countries would assure them of a greater strategic role in future military/economic considerations and keep them at least on an equal military footing with other Asian nuclear powers (China, India and Pakistan). The materials for nuclear weapons could come from the nuclear plants. But such a process requires rigid national security. As mentioned above, the security state operators required for protecting nuclear reprocessing are already in place.

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH: What is the role of the church against this growing concentration of economic and military power that is so persuasive in affecting the lives of the people in East Asia at this time? How can the church survive in such security states? I believe that the church first needs to enter into a process of socio-economic analysis to understand the forces at work at East Asia. The early church did not hesitate to alert the people to the evils of the Roman Empire, - the "beast" of the Apocalypse.

Unfortunately, such socio-economic analysis appears to be secularistic to many or borders on the church becoming "political". And within the reality of the present security states, to become political is to invite expulsion or loss of visas. But I would suggest that what's at issue is the very Process of evangelization. True evangelization must deal with the reality of sin and the structures of sin that affect everyone (i.e. original sin). In one sense, a new kind of original sin is being created in East Asia that threatens the salvation of its people.

THE SECURITY STATE: The security state is fundamentally evil; and, especially as described above its only purpose is to further enslave people to outside economic interest and to allow for greater

militarization - even nuclear. It is not enough to condemn its abuses or its human rights violations. The evils of the security state and the unjust economic system it protects go much deeper than denial of certain rights. The fundamental evil of the security states in East Asia is a gradual sapping of spirit vitality through purely economic goals which make materialism, individualism, and consumerism the ends of human activity.

The modern security state as being developed in East Asia is politically sophisticated and thoroughly materialistic. It seeks to manipulate people into thinking that happiness consists in material well being alone and to make human development consist in accumulation of material goods. Though in fact atheistic, it does not commit the error of communism by openly avowing materialistic atheism. As a matter of fact it openly encourages freedom of religion. However, like everything about the security state "freedom of religion" is narrowly defined to mean freedom to come to church and to worship - as long as there is no socio-economic criticism and no organizing of people to seek their basic human rights. In other words, the security state approves of a one-dimensional religion that at least in its silence sanctifies the status quo and thus serves to buffer the security state from public reaction.

WHAT MUST THE CHURCH DO? As I perceive the reality of East Asia, the Church is facing a very determined and serious persecution. A persecution that seeks to impose an inadequate theology of church, a persecution that will punish only when one does not accept a purely sacral view of church. The danger in this type of persecution is that silence and inaction - just keeping the status quo - can play right into the hands of the government. The threat to remove visas or to tax facilities or even to harass and imprison members is designed not to do away with the church but rather to use the church for the ends of the state. The church does not need large membership within a particular country to suit the purpose of the security state, for the international aspect of the church makes it a useful ally in international politics and world recognition.

The principle role of the church, and especially the missionary church, is to preach the gospels. These gospels must be preached in such a way that they can assist people in making moral judgments in their daily living. Within the security state, the gospel must be preached so as to alert people to the atheistic materialism, individualism and consumerism toward which the state is moving them. People need to be warned about mortgaging their persons to acquire more money. People need to know that they have fundamental rights that come before profits. People need to know of their rights as workers to organize. In many areas the church may be small, but its world wide nature gives it a status and an added reason to speak out. The more I reflect upon the nature of the security state, the more I see it as the antithesis of all that the church stands for - the most diabolical foe of the church today.

From what I observed, in East Asia, the church needs to move into small groups' process (Basic Christian Communities) for the purpose of consciousness raising and to conduct a socially more critical catechesis. Special ministries also need to be set up that reach out to workers and students to help them in their restless search for values. And more analysis of the socio-economic order must be done by the church so as to better prepare their catechesis. I do not believe that an "isolated" gospel message serves

the purpose of enlightening oppressed human spirits. It must take flesh in alternatives. Finally, centers need to be set up that will assist in analysis and provide educational services, especially to teach people how to analyze their own environments.

Socio-economic analysis can often frighten people because it is "overwhelming". People always ask, "Where do I begin to act after viewing reality comprehensively?" The answer is at the grass roots. The analysis is not the answer or solution; it is merely a tool or a guide to make the ordinary actions of life more meaningful. It's important to know the forces of evil aligned against us, for their influences will be felt in the ordinary workings of daily living. People need to know that the state is using them; they need to know that they may be selling themselves too cheaply or that they should not sell themselves at all!

As the people begin to strive for their just share of world wealth and resources, they need to know about those who have too much; and those who have too little. It is playing the "game of control" to deny ordinary people a world view of their lives.

The church should seek to give as much truth as it can discover to the people of East Asia and then enable people to make their own decisions re: action. New economic orders will not emerge from universities or world conferences of governments; they will come from informed people who decide to act justly toward people they have not yet met.

The church of East Asia can do a great deal to promote new orders by helping those it contacts to reject the atheistic, materialistic models of exploitation and to seek new relationships toward people and environment that honor life and not profit. I eagerly anticipate this role for the church of East Asia and the models it can create. The "beast" has many heads - The forces of economic/military oppression must be opposed wherever their ugly heads are raised. "Miraculous" economic models of development are not necessarily "just" models.

Reference: CENTER FOR THE PROGRESS OF PEOPLES, Newsletter, No. 7, December 1980.

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To hope is to remember.

It is not by chance that the destruction of memory is a typical measure of totalitarian rule.

REFLECTIONS ON THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON RELIGION AND PEACE
AND THE BRANDT REPORT: "NORTH - SOUTH: A PROGRAM
FOR SURVIVAL",

James McDonnell, cssp.

These few reflections are prompted by a quick reading of the proceedings of the Third Assembly of the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP III) held at Princeton, New Jersey in September of 1979, especially the consensus statement, entitled THE PRINCETON DECLARATION. I could not help thinking of the Brandt Report as I perused this document. Both are concerned about the future of our world. Both of them make the same recommendations, except that the WCRP offers something that is lacking in the Brandt Report - the necessity and the role of religion's influence. Brandt can only make suggestions and recommendations in the practical field. It does mention the indispensable necessity of the "will" to change and to implement the suggestions, but is helpless in the face of this lack of "will", and for that fatal lack it has no solution to offer. And this is precisely where the role of religion comes into its own: it has the power and the force and the vision and the inspiration to bring about in people the "will" to change, the "will" to do what is necessary to create a world community, where there is justice and peace and respect for human rights and dignity.

Here are a few significant quotations from the Princeton Declaration:

"We pledge ourselves to continue to grow in our mutual understanding and our work for peace, justice, and human dignity. The Assembly is aware that we are approaching not only the turn of the century, but also a turning point in human history, with the survival of world civilization at stake. Therefore, we chose as our theme: Religion in the Struggle for World Community."

The context of the conference itself was a witness and sign of world community: 358 participants from all the great world religions - Buddhist, Christian, Confucianist, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Shinto, Sikh, Zoroastrian, and other religions. They were all gathered together around that common theme: world community. On this theme and on the themes of justice and peace, human rights and dignity, and the place of religion in personal and communal existence they found "a basic unity of purpose and goal amid diversities of religious belief".

Their analysis of the world situation agrees with that of the Brandt Report, and it reduces the world's sorrows and needs to the same pervasive and ever present evil: human greed. The elimination of human greed is an essential part of the creation of human community. Religious insights and actions, the Conference recognizes clearly, are only one element, but an indispensable one, in the struggle against the forces of human greed in the world. The Conference deals with the contribution of religion to this struggle, while the Brandt Report deals with the contribution of a new economic, political, social and communications order. Both approaches and both fields of action are inter-related and interdependent - one without the other is incomplete.

The Brandt Report makes this point well: "The world is now a fragile and interlocking system"... "The world is a unity and we must begin to act as members of it who depend on each other.... We have to offer the world a plan and a vision of hope". Here, in my view, is precisely where the Brandt Report and the Princeton Declaration meet; or, to put it another way, here is precisely where religion, politics, economics and culture meet, and mutually influence each other.

The ultimate aim of the suggestions of the Brandt Report and the Princeton Declaration is the creation of true world community by the elimination of greed. (Greed here stands for all that is evil and negative in peoples' treatment of each other, on the personal, communal and international levels).

The Princeton Declaration acknowledges that at the moment there is little community or peace in the world, and that religion has contributed a lot to the ills that have afflicted and still afflict humankind. Nevertheless, the vision of world community and the conviction that peace is possible is affirmed:

"World community, built on love, freedom, justice and truth, is another name for peace. It is the goal of all our striving. It is not a utopian dream. Despite the temptation to despair as competition for dwindling resources grows more fierce, as centers of economic power intensify their exploitations, and as stockpiles of nuclear weapons grow, we have come together in a spirit of hope. In our various religions, we know that we are members of one human family. Sustained and motivated by the spiritual power by which we all live, we believe that there is an alternative to violence. We believe that peace is possible".

And then they go on to say:

"We believe that, as religious people, we have a special responsibility for building a peaceful world community and a special contribution to make".

"We are all commanded by our faiths to seek justice in the world in a community of free and equal persons.... We believe that peace in world community is not only possible, but is the way of life for human beings on earth, as we learn it in our prayers or meditations and by our faiths".

Peace in world community is at stake today. All agree that it is possible to achieve; the question and the problem is how to achieve it.

The Brandt Report says, more or less, that the world today is faced with a critical alternative: either opt for and achieve peace and world community or opt for continued greed and oppression and its inevitable consequences, wholesale destruction. That is the classical threshold upon which humankind stands today: the threshold of a new era in human existence.

References to this are frequent in the Brandt Report. It is especially evident in the constant recurrence of terms like these; dialogue, solidarity, interdependence, partnership, joint interests, equality, mutual respect, a shared planet, a global community, a global vision, power sharing, sharing, and their synonyms. It speaks either of the lack of these or the need of them in human relations.

But as I remarked above, the Brandt Report only points out what must be done in the fields of economics and politics if catastrophe is to be avoided. It admits the absence of the "will" (it sometimes refers to it as "political will", where we would add "moral will") to do this on the part of those who presently have political and economic and media power in the world.

If the heart of man, particularly those in positions of power and leadership, is not healed then we are truly and inevitably on the road to mutual destruction. The Princeton Declaration says that religion has the resources to heal the heart of man and thus save the world. It offers to man the vision and the scale of values that can save him.

"Therefore, we can go further and share a common confidence about the fruits of religious witness in the world. We trust that: the power of active love, uniting men and women in the search for righteousness, will liberate the world from all injustice, hatred and wrong;....

"Ultimately, peace and justice move toward the salvation and wholeness of all humanity, and flow from them as well. We, as followers of great religions, should be channels through which spiritual power can flow for the healing of the world. We confess that we have not been worthy of this high calling, but we pledge ourselves here anew to be its faithful servants and witnesses. World peace in world community, with justice for all, is possible. We believe that the faith and hope which brought us together in this Assembly have been nurtured and strengthened during our time together. If this faith and hope were to be shared in the same throughout whole life of the religions to which we belong, then, at last a new force would be brought to bear in human affairs and a new era would begin in the world. We shall pray or meditate, as well as work, that this new era may be realized."

A moral and religious campaign must be undertaken - personal and collective, extending to all the spheres of human existence and in the all the areas of human relations, economic, cultural, political, social, etc. The report of the proceedings of the Conference develops all these themes in greater detail. For me, they tie in very well with the Brandt Report and provide a necessary complement to it. And for me, too, the Christian religion - Christ and His Gospel, and the mediator of both to the world - the Church, have a contribution "par excellence" to make to this aspect of our salvation for "extra mundum nulla salus".