

## THE GOSPEL OF REVOLUTION

*An Analysis*

by ALICE WIDENER

*of official documents issued at the*

**1966 CONFERENCE ON CHURCH AND SOCIETY**

*held in Geneva, Switzerland, by the*

**WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**

### THE RADICAL POSITION

The 1966 Conference on Church and Society held by the World Council of Churches took place last July at Geneva, Switzerland. There were participants from 70 countries, including all the Socialist bloc except Albania and Red China.

At the end of the Conference, the participants issued a formal message to thank God for bringing them together, and for granting them "this experience of the world community which is emerging in this age of advanced technology and social revolution."

The word "revolution" was a *leit-motif* of the Conference, occurring and recurring throughout the various working papers which were only recently released in revised and edited form. Evidently, the World Council of Churches holds gradual evolutionary change to be inadequate in our times and even undesirable.

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The participants' message states, "we Christians cannot escape the call to serious study and dynamic action." These are to be directed toward four issues: "Modern technology . . . ; The need for accelerated development in Asia, Africa and Latin America . . . ; The struggle for world peace . . . ; The problem of just political and social order and the changing role of the state."

Concerning point four, the participants' message states, "Here a fundamental issue is the function of law in our revolutionary times and its theological foundation."

The Conference message goes on to say:

As Christians, we are committed to working for the transformation of society. In the past, we have usually done this through quiet efforts at social renewal, working in and through the established institutions according to their rules. Today, a significant number of those who are dedicated to the service of Christ and their neighbor, assume a more radical or revolutionary position. They do not deny the value of tradition nor of social order, but they are searching for a new strategy by which to bring about basic changes in society without too much delay. It is possible that the tension between these two positions will have an important place in the life of the Christian community for some time to come. At the present moment, it is im-

portant for us to recognize that this radical position has a solid foundation in Christian tradition and should have its rightful place in the life of the Church and in the ongoing discussion of social responsibility.

All the foregoing is put forth without any attempt at definition of terms. What is meant by the radical, revolutionary position? What is meant by the transformation of society? How does the World Council of Churches define a "just" political and social order? The Conference message acknowledges "a wide variety of points of view" among the participants due to their diversity of situations and different perspectives in social questions. The participants say they discovered that dialogue is possible between those representing different positions and that such discussion exposes "the limitations of our thought and challenges us to greater faithfulness."

It is not clear what the World Council of Churches participants in the Conference on Church and Society mean by faithfulness. In the Soviet Union and satellite nations, the governments are not merely non-Christian or unchristian, they are anti-Christian. Written with apparent objectivity, a part of all the Conference documents reflects the position taken by the Communist

regimes as expressed by clergymen who have consented to go along with these regimes and are therefore tolerated by them for propaganda reasons. Has this Communist radical position "a solid foundation in Christian tradition," and should it have "its rightful place in the life of the Church" and also in "the ongoing discussion" of social responsibility?

What, today, is the World Council of Churches, concept of social responsibility—is it one of moral and spiritual aloofness from any choice between Christian and anti-Christian?

The Conference message states, "In many parts of the world today, the Church represents a relatively small minority, participating in the struggle for the future of man alongside other religions and secular movements. Moreover, it can hope to contribute to the transformation of the world only as it is itself transformed in contact with the world."

Is the Church, a self-confessed relatively small minority, going to be transformed by secular contact with anti-Christian and non-Christian majorities? If so, how will the Church survive? And how does the World Council of Churches reconcile such a position with its own statement, "As Christians, we are committed to working for the transformation of society working in and through the established institutions according to their rules."?

The rules of the established institutions of the Socialist societies are anti-religious, anti-Christian, and atheistic. How can a Christian work according to such rules? Would the Church work for the transformation of society by working in and through the established institution of the Mafia according to its rules?

### CHRISTIAN NEUTRALISM

The first and main document in the World Council of Churches Conference on Church and Society is entitled "Economic Development in a World Perspective."

The introduction brands as "a scandal and an offense to God and men" the existing imbalance between rich and poor countries.

In a section dealing with the changing economic and social pattern of the advanced countries, the Conference summarizes "three types" of economic policy:

... There are those who argue for the moral virtues of the market economy (because of its impartiality, its treatment of everyone as equal in status), and the importance of freedom of individual choice and of economic incentives in the making of decisions which will lead to development. They are suspicious of government intervention, doubt the usefulness of detailed forecasts, and rely on short-term controls to ensure a steady rate of growth. They emphasize the use of the price system to allocate resources for growth, and are suspicious of efforts to adjust income levels by manipulating prices. . . .

Others hold that, in the 20th century, the welfare state and a mixed economy are the essential means for furthering desired social objectives and the most rapid growth. While recognizing that free enterprise has its proper place, and that the price system is the best mechanism in many situations, they stress that in other situations the price system does not work, and government action is more effective than free enterprise. They see a role for nationalized planning. They stress the need for overall control of investment by whatever means are most suitable. They see a place for framework plans outlining a future path for private industry. They tend to decide between government and private enterprise planning on pragmatic grounds, though some would have a bias in favor of government action.

Still others hold that economic life is best organized in a single centrally planned economy, with no private ownership of the means of production, though with some freedom of consumer choice and occupation. Even though economic incentives are used, resources are allocated according to a central plan and there is a state monopoly of international trade. In recent years, there has been more interest among those who advocate this view in the use of prices and profit incentives within the framework of a centrally planned economy. Some who advocate this type of organization believe it will not come about without revolutionary overthrow of the existing order, whether violent or non-violent. They believe that only a society of this kind can achieve a maximum rate of growth, can distribute widely the benefits of growth, and can assist the successful development of poor societies.

Having more or less described capitalism, socialism and communism without courage to name names or call spades, the World Council of Churches then goes on to bless all three with the statement that they "have shown themselves capable of rapid economic growth and wide distribution of income."

Not a single word in the Conference document reflects the fact that the Soviet Union and other nations with centrally planned economies have been unable to produce a self-sustaining agriculture, have been forced to adopt some profit and price incentives to rescue their bankrupt economies, and have been unable to develop wide enough distribution of income to permit consumers any but the narrowest choice of goods and services. Not a single line in the document contrasts the low productivity of welfare state economies to the high productivity of the private enterprise ones. Moreover, not a single line refers to the present stagnation of the centrally planned economies which are falling further and further behind the advancing economies of West European nations, to say nothing of Japan and the United States.

The World Council of Churches' report on economic development in a world perspective states flatly that all three economic systems—free enterprise, welfare state and centrally planned—can be supported by Christians "not as ends in themselves" but to achieve "ends for which men were made. The role of Christians is to be critical participants in the societies in which they find themselves."

How can Christians be critical participants in anti-Christian Communist societies that forbid criticism? Russian Orthodox Archbishop Alexei, who resides in Moscow, would not have been able to help govern the Conference in Geneva as one of its presidents had he dared to be critical of the Red regime in the USSR. The price of his Christian participation in that society is his absolute obedience to and acquiescence in its tyranny.

Though the World Council of Churches' report on economic de-

velopment is replete with lofty humanitarian concepts and most idealistic exhortations, it also is full of ill-founded slogans and clichés, many without the slightest foundation in fact. Thus the report contains such sweeping assertions as, "Mechanization has meant lighter work, but it has also brought with it monotony, boredom and frequently a form of organization in which employees can have little sense of responsibility for or real interest in their work."

With all due respect, this is pure bunk. Is a laborer picking cotton by hand less bored than one operating a cotton-picking machine? Is a woman sewing a fine seam by hand less bored than one operating a sewing machine?

It is a modern Liberal myth, indeed a Leftwing anti-business intellectual superstition, that a man or woman who operates a machine to earn his or her living turns into a machine.

In a free society—and how can a Christian conscientiously support any other?—no machine can turn a human being into a soulless, heartless, conscienceless robot. The biological law of the differentiation of the species guarantees individual reaction to similar circumstances, and certainly this law must be counted among the greatest of God's gifts to mankind, though it is consistently disregarded by the disciples of Karl Marx. Happily, the fact that no two blades of grass, no two petals of flowers and no two thumbprints of human beings are alike is what spells doom to Marx' concept of an egalitarian scientific society.

#### CHRISTIAN TAXATION

The transfer of capital from rich nations to poor ones is the World Council of Churches' main concern in the report on economic development. The Council's aim is set forth as follows:

**One hopeful sign of our times is the growing sense of international responsibility for assisting in the development of the economically less advanced nations. External aid is most helpful when it serves as a catalyst for internal efforts, is related to the mainstream of a nation's development strategy, and is**

**directed toward its longterm rather than its short-term growth needs.**

**Unfortunately the level of government contributions has only rarely been determined in consultation with the receiver. These contributions, even to international agencies, are voluntary, short-term commitments. However, the transfer of capital and skill through governmental channels must be considered as a longterm process, and more formal, medium or longterm arrangements and commitments are becoming increasingly necessary for the efficient operation of these agencies and the carrying out of development programs.**

What is the World Council of Churches aiming at?

The answer lies in the conclusion to the foregoing argument for long-term transfer of capital. "Eventually," declares the Council's Conference report, "these may lead to an 'international budget' and 'international taxation.'"

Such a budget and such a system of taxation could be accomplished only under a system of World Socialism in which the Marxian doctrine "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" would be supreme.

Inevitably, then, the World Council of Churches' report on economic development stresses "the key role of the state and the public sector" in the process. The Council calls for "gradual imposition of supranational approaches upon national efforts." It also adopts the anti-capitalist doctrine, "The fundamental problem [in the transfer of capital from rich to poor nations] is that the goal of the businessman—to make profits—sometimes conflicts with the goal of governments—to increase the social product and to distribute it equitably."

Purporting to be a Christian document, it fails to point out many of the principal reasons for poverty in many lands—for example, polygamy, the worship of sacred cows and monkeys, the ban on eating pork and the husbandry of plant-destroying, desert-creating goats, the practice of tribal blood rites—and places basic blame on the modern businessman's legitimate, constructive and truly useful search for profits essential to capital savings and investment.

Through three dozen pages, the Conference report on economic development moves slowly but surely toward a radical goal, taking utmost care to avoid those words and phrases which might shock an American reader believing in the free system that has made our nation into a fountainhead of benefactions to needy humanity, and might cause such a reader to reject the report as thoroughly alien. Finally, after lengthy persuasive pontification, the report lists a series of recommendations closely resembling the old Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist plan for One Socialist World, the plan that was eventually proposed to the United Nations in the Havana Charter of 1947, but was wholly rejected by Congress and President Truman, the plan that still later was presented at the United Nations in 1951 under the name "SUNFED" (Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development) and was again rejected by Congress.

Anyone familiar with the Havana Charter, the SUNFED scheme, and Gunnar Myrdal's "An International Economy" will recognize the almost complete similarity between these documents and the World Council of Churches report on economic development.

It calls for grants instead of loans by rich nations to poor ones and for "rationalization of *distribution . . .* under the auspices of the United Nations." (Italics in original.) The report calls for "elimination of the *adverse effects* of price *fluctuation* and *terms of trade*" and also "the establishment of world commodity marketing boards."

#### CHRISTIAN DEPORTATION

The 1966 Conference report then calls for measures that beggar the imagination in trying to conceive of the resulting injustice, suffering and horror, all amounting to a hell paved with good intentions that would exceed in tortures even the grimmest fantasies in Dante's "Inferno."

Obviously believing that a desired end justifies any means, the Conference report proposes:

**the deliberate transfer of non-capital and non-technical intensive**

industries to countries with insufficient capital but abundant man power, and the acceptance of the problems involved in the fundamental restructuring of economies in the developed countries which that entails.

At this point, it must be remembered that a few years ago some Latin American socialists at the United Nations Economic and Social Council actually proposed that the United States get out of the textile manufacturing business so that Central and Latin American countries could have a Western Hemisphere monopoly of it! What would be the fate of thousands upon thousands of U. S. textile workers was of no concern to the socialist planners eager to help the economic development of backward Latin nations.

The Latins' plan was relatively innocuous, however, when compared with that of the World Council of Churches. Its 1966 Conference report declares:

**The fundamental restructuring of the world economy necessarily implies temporary dislocation and possible suffering for a large number of people. The first task of the churches in this situation is to speak to the government or power structure responsible and to insist that prior measures be taken to prevent or at least to minimize and alleviate the difficulties which individuals and groups may have to face. Only after every preventive measure has been taken should the Church prepare people to accept and overcome these problems and impart the vision of a wider world order for which restructuring is a necessary preliminary.**

Whew!

It is necessary to pause and take a deep breath before launching into horrified analysis of what the foregoing really means.

It is not an exaggeration to say that nuclear war could not inflict greater suffering on people than the mass restructuring of the world economy, with mass transport of populations and mass transfer of non-capital and non-technical industries from the developed nations to the backward nations with insufficient capital and over-population.

Evidently the World Council of Churches—professing to be Chris-

tian—has adopted the cold-blooded, blood-curdling cynicism of “humanitarian” Swedish socialist Gunnar Myrdal who called for redistribution of land (land reform) in India and other underdeveloped nations even though “It will almost always reduce temporarily the marketable surplus of agriculture, and it is easy to imagine cases where sheer starvation in the towns may be the result.” (“An International Economy”, page 183.)

How many millions of people would be dislocated, ruined, enslaved, tortured and murdered under a World Council of Churches plan to restructure the world economy, and to redistribute wealth among nations by arbitrarily allocating the right to engage in this or that kind of industrial manufacture? Will it be as many millions as those who perished in the Bolshevik collectivization of agriculture in Russia or in the establishment of the Red Chinese communes? Was any past crime committed in the name of Christianity during the darkest ages of history of greater magnitude than that contemplated in the World Council of Churches “Christian” document? Does the organization really believe that millions of employed workers in developed countries will supinely accept abandonment of their industries in favor of poverty-stricken peoples in backward lands, while wage earners in advanced nations furnish the backward ones with the capital and know-how to establish these industries on faraway continents?

How could the Church “prepare” people in advanced nations for such suffering?

The World Council of Churches document envisages preparation for such enslavement as establishment of “an ethic of altruism and justice which will make these measures intelligible.” The document goes on to state, “In the developed countries this would involve active support by the churches of such specific measures as severance pay, industrial retraining, higher unemployment benefits and mobility subsidies.”

Could any advanced economy endure such stress?

Can one really believe that a Swiss worker in an embroidery factory, a Belgian worker in a lace factory, a New England worker in a cotton textile factory, or French or Italian worker in a vineyard could be persuaded by the Church to forfeit his means of livelihood so that it could be taken over by an African worker in Somalia, a Latin worker in Guatemala, an Arab worker in Algeria, a Bantu worker in South Africa, a Buddhist worker in Laos?

#### CHRISTIAN DICTATORSHIP

To effect such redistribution and restructuring of the advanced nations' economies in favor of the backward ones, there would be only one possible way—total enslavement of populations in advanced and backward nations. For this there would be required a World Dictatorship and the reality was recognized by the World Council of Churches which called for a “World Economic Plan” for “the ultimate aim: an international division of labor . . .”

To help bring about such totalitarianism, the 1966 Conference report on economic development calls for replacing the present forms of aid by the rich nations to the poor ones “by a system of international taxation.”

Since by far the greatest part of such aid is now rendered by the United States, the heaviest burden of international taxation would fall on Americans.

To obtain this, the World Council of Churches calls for “church participation in political education” in order “to produce the political will for a world economic and social order compatible with Christian conscience.” The Council's 1966 Conference also calls for “social education designed to help society understand and accept the costs of world economic development.”

In total disregard of the United States Constitution, the American participants in the Council's Conference in Geneva supported without evident dissent or formal protest the participants' recommendation that “the Church” urge governments “to introduce economic, political and so-

cial education into national school systems" for support of the Council-proposed measures, including "a diminution of national sovereignty."

If all this is not a call for world socialism, then what is it? The fact that it is made by a handful of "Christians" in the name of "God" is characteristic of the moral decline of the West, of its fall into the bottomless pit of revolutionary nihilism of the kind that gave rise to Stalinism and Hitlerism, and made the Fifth Column a satanic force more potent and injurious than a nuclear bomb.

### THE WHITED SEPULCHRE

It seems that what the World Council of Churches proposes in its World Economic Plan is a world whited sepulchre full of dead men's bones. Not surprisingly, therefore, the Council sanctions violence and civil disobedience in its second Conference document on "The Nature and Function of the State in a Revolutionary Age."

The sanctioning of violence and civil disobedience is preceded by a lengthy philosophical discussion of the nature of power and its exercise by the state. The basic fault in the discussion—from the truly Christian point of view—is that it fails to differentiate between Caesar and God and thus renders unto Caesar that which belongs to God, and renders unto God that which belongs to Caesar.

In discussing the nature of power and the State, especially in developed countries, the document states:

Power, as the capacity to get things done, is essential to any person or society. As Christians we believe that it originates in God, that human power is part of the dominion God has granted man. Like all God's gifts, it is subject to misuse. The Christian concern is that all human power be used to benefit man rather than to abuse or betray him. . . .

Technology increases concentrations of power in large, intricate organizations. The state has a moral responsibility for initiating and directing the uses of power, for supervising the sharing of power, for keeping the use of power responsible, for relating the power of any

given society to that of other societies.

As we examine the operations of power within the state, we discover that the actual functioning of power may be far different from the formal allocation of power, e.g., constitutions and laws are not always accurate guides to the centers of power in a society. Legal rights may be effectively denied to those who lack the economic means for their exercise. In seeking a responsible society, we need to discover the operations of power, unveil the hidden centers of power, and hold all power accountable to men and God. . . .

In the foregoing, it must be noted that nothing is said about the effective denial of legal rights to those who lack *political* means for their exercise in Communist-dominated nations where The State is judge, jury and prosecutor.

It is a logical consequence of this omission, therefore, that the very next paragraphs in the World Council of Churches document set forth an entirely neutral position in discussing "The exercise of power by the state." These paragraphs are characteristic of a moral relativism now confusing all the basic issues confronting congregations of Christians delegating responsibility to a small group of representatives at international conferences. The paragraphs state:

We have asked ourselves the question, "Should the state be the only repository of power?" and we have found that the answer is no. . . . Christians and their fellow men may honor and respect the state, but they cannot give it the ultimate allegiance that is due to God alone.

But beyond this agreement, we find major differences among ourselves. Some of us regard the state as only one instrument of society—a unique instrument having some jurisdiction over all people and all other organizations, but still one institution among others. Those holding this conviction emphasize the importance of diversity of sources of power within society, and of a system of checks and balances.

Others among us give the state a more encompassing role. They see the state as the effective organ of community as against the dangers of excessive individualism, and they regard the nationalizing of the means of production in the framework of central planning as a basis for responsible participation of citizens in political life.

Are the imprisoned poets in the Soviet Union guilty of excessive individualism? Is Cardinal Mindtzenty guilty of it? Ah—let us weep for Dr. Zhivago! Was the musical genius Serge Prokofieff guilty of excessive individualism and deservedly forced to make public apology for his deviation from the Communist Party line by writing his great symphony on the tragedy and spirit of man?

### COME THE REVOLUTION

It is natural, then, that the World Council of Churches regards the changing relationship between "state and law" as a "dialectical process moving from improvement to improvement and simultaneously from error to error" and that "Revolutionary action needs law to keep open the path to further change."

It is entirely natural, too, that the participants in the World Council of Churches 1966 Conference on Church and Society in Geneva, Switzerland, raised the question, "What is the Christian attitude towards the 'law of revolution' which is conceived by revolution itself?" The Conference also asks, "What are the criteria for an acceptable 'law of revolution'?" and then says that Christians may exercise their influence on the "law of revolution" that it may not be misused against the principles of human rights. But though there is frequent reference to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, there is nowhere reference to individual property rights or any condemnation of "revolutionary law" as it has been applied by Fidel Castro and other dictators to justify firing squad executions and expropriations of private property and investments without adequate compensation.

Categorically, the World Council of Churches Conference on Church and Society rejected the concept that it is enough for Christians "to seek to save souls and improve individual characters on the assumption that good people will produce good government." Declaring that Christians must be concerned "for the structures of society" as well as for the moral qualities of individuals, the

Conference declared it is "imperative" that Christian involvement in politics "become conscious" and active. There is no reason, states the Conference, "why ministers of the Gospel should not play an active political role, although certain church and civil laws limit them."

Evidently the participants in the Conference do not regard these church and civil laws as insurmountable barriers to ministers' political action. The Conference document recognizes there are "special issues of Christian participation" and goes on to state:

**Political involvement at times confronts Christians with especially difficult issues such as the use of constitutional or extra-constitutional methods of political action, the use of violent or non-violent action, and the rights of minorities or other oppressed groups within the life of a nation.**

From this, inevitably, proceeds the following Conference statement:

. . . In many cases where legislation violates an acceptable constitution, and no speedy means of legal relief are available, the Christian may be called to civic disobedience (sit-down strikes, passive disobedience or deliberate violation of laws). In cases in which the constitution itself is inadequate, the Christian is called to work for its amendment in the interest of firmer guarantees of human rights. Where such changes are impossible, the Christian may come to the conclusion that he has no alternative but to violate the constitution in order to make possible a better one. . . . We understand that laws may be defied in the defense of the constitution, and that the constitution may be defied in defense of human rights.

Is it any wonder that law and order are breaking down in Western society in general and in the United States in particular? How can laws be defied *in defense* of a constitution?

Proceeding from relativism to confusion, then to anarchism and nihilism, the Conference document argues that the question often emerges today "whether the violence which sheds blood in planned revolutions may not be a lesser evil than the violence which, though bloodless, condemns whole populations to perennial despair."

The Conference next declares that the state "has the function of serving

all its citizens. This includes the obligation to make provision for free discussion and criticism. We recognize the desirability of different political structures and institutions in varied situations and stages of development, all subject to the same will and purpose of God."

There is no mention in all the foregoing argument of free elections though lack of them in socialist nations dooms whole populations to despair.

The second World Council of Churches Document in the 1966 Geneva Conference on Church and Society ends with a prayer "for the daring faith that obeys God as he leads us out of our old securities into new ventures."

There is no explanation of what are the old securities. With a World Economic System as the point of destination, Christians are urged to set sail in a Sea of Change with a non-directional compass and revolutionary law for a rudder.

#### REVOLUTION FOR PEACE

The third document issued by the World Council of Churches 1966 conference in Geneva is entitled "Structures of International Cooperation—Living Together in Peace in a Pluralistic World Society." It is a modern gospel for revolution and declares:

. . . the function of the state in God's purpose is to provide, if necessary by lawful coercion, that order which enables men to live in peace and justice with one another. Human experience as well as Holy Scripture shows us that the power of laws is required to compel man to respect the rights of others. While this remains true in our day, many circumstances in the modern world force men to revolution against an unjust established order.

There is no satisfactory explanation of what are the present day circumstances that "force men to revolution." There is only the sweeping assertion that this is so, and there is no censure of professional anarchists and agitators seeking to foment revolution in even the most prosperous and advanced societies.

In the Conference documents, one generalization follows another in almost unending sequence. Thus there

is the unequivocal statement, "war between states results from the present disorganized and unjust political and economic conditions of international society . . ."

To ensure peace, social justice, prosperity for all, the equality of men, to decrease tensions and increase cooperation, the Conference proposes "a supranational authority" over "the two major nuclear powers" and calls for the elimination of international trade conducted according to market rules in order to free all people from hunger, misery and poverty. Just how international trade conducted without market rules will accomplish Utopia is not explained, but the over-all implication is that socialism will solve all human problems.

The World Bank is severely criticized, for example, for being "more concerned with monetary stability than with growth" in the relationship of developed to underdeveloped nations. Yet monetary instability is one of the greatest deterrents to growth in any nation.

The World Council of Churches Conference not only recognized the "revolutionary mood" of the most active and influential groups in the "Third World" (meaning Asia, Africa and Latin America) but also endorsed these groups' impatience with any kind of development that is not "rapid". Such rapid change must be achieved—so the Conference says—"if necessary, by violence".

What should Christians do?

Let heads roll. Then help mop up the blood.

Here is the "Christian" proposal:

No generally valid over-all prescription can be given for the ways in which changes in the organization of political and economic power in developing nations should occur and how Christians should respond to such changes. . . .

There are, however, at least two generalizations which can be made about the approach of Christians to the reorganization of the structures of power in the "Third World". One is that wherever small *elites* rule at the expense of the Welfare of the majority, political change toward achieving a more just order as quickly as possible should be actively promoted and supported by Christians. The second is that, in

cases where such changes are needed, the use by Christians of revolutionary methods—by which is meant violent overthrow of an existing political order—cannot be excluded *a priori*. For in such cases, it may very well be that the use of violent methods is the only recourse of those who wish to avoid prolongation of the vast covert violence which the existing order involves. But Christians should think of the day after the revolution, when justice must be established by clear minds and in good conscience. There is no virtue in violence itself, but only in what will come after it. In some instances significant changes have been made by non-violent means, and Christians must develop greater skill and wisdom in using these.

The remainder of the third Conference document is a plea for world disarmament under supranational control and for the settlement of international conflicts. There is a plea for peace in Vietnam and the statement, "the massive and growing American military presence in Vietnam and the long continued bombing of villages in the South and of targets a few miles from cities in the North cannot be justified."

The Conference also calls for the admission of Red China to the United Nations and declares, "The United Nations is the best structure now available through which to pursue the goals of international peace and justice."

### RADICALISM FOR YOUTH

The World Council of Churches Conference on Church and Society entitled its fourth and final major document, "Man and Community in Changing Societies."

The emphasis in this document is on social change created by modern technology that is "radically new in history". In accordance with the currently fashionable way of regarding technology as changing the relation between man and nature, the forms of human relationships and of social structure, the Conference document calls for accommodation to change in secular society, and for a Christian faith promoting a unity of mankind "which transcends political and economic factors". All the contemporary fashionable theories about men, women, children, families and sexual

relations are taken into account with *avant garde* sociological interpretation. Everything is put into question, viz., "In affluent societies the transfer to other institutions of many functions of the family, and the increasing interest in (as well as experience of) emotional and sexual attachment outside marriage raise the question of whether the family does or does not have an important role in society and in social change."

Perish the thought that the Church should hold any but the most advanced views on contraceptives, sterilization, unmarried mothers, divorce, and all existing "value systems".

Perhaps the entire document can best be characterized by the following two quotations:

- "The danger of integrating young people in existing structures is that the need for radical change will thus be covered up."

- "The concept of authority has to be rethought. . . . Honest sharing of doubts and uncertainties by both adults and youth is a first requirement here. All this we shall have to learn together. It calls for renewal and continuity of education of those who traditionally held [sic!] positions of unquestioned authority—parents, teachers, ministers. It also calls for a careful scrutiny of what theology and, primarily, the Bible has to teach us. In a courageous and imaginative approach to authority, the Church could experiment for the whole of society."

Why should the Church become transformed into an experimental institution?

"The problem of the contemporary structure of the Church," declares the Conference document, "is that it was devised for a past form of society, which was static, generally agrarian, and religiously conformist."

Was society ever static?

The whole history of mankind refutes such a concept. Has the Church been static? Of course not. But the Christian ethic, let us pray, was permanent.

How can the contemporary structure of the Church become suitable for present and future forms of society?

The answer given by the World Council of Churches 1966 Conference on Church and Society is that the churches, "in all forms of mission and ministry," must make full and effective use "of the insights and data of the social and behavioural sciences."

Are these insights and data truly scientific or are they merely empirical deductions and interpretations?

St. Paul gave the answer:

*O, Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and opposition of science falsely so called.*

*Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.*

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