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CURRENTS AND TENDENCIES IN CONTEMPORAR

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Currents and Tendencies in Contemporary Latinamerican Catholicism

By Cesar A. Aguiar

Introduction

It is no easy task to present and classify many groups, currents and tendencies that exist today in the Latinamerican Church. The experience of the Church there, as indeed of the Church anywhere else in the world, is intimately linked with the history of the people who belong to it, and it reflects more or less faithfully all that people's vicissitudes. Perhaps because they are culturally dependent, Latinamericans have never thought of themselves except with patterns borrowed from other peoples. To that extent then, they have neither a general theory nor particular categories to help them formulate an historical perspective on their world. It would be easy to apply unchanged the more or less generic categories that fit other societies and to try to understand through them the Church in Latin America. Such a process would not teach us much, though. Hence we prefer to learn about the man in the pew in Latin America by examining the man in the street there, to see the Church's internal stresses--and the groups, currents and tendencies resulting from them--within the stresses and trends of the continent's development. We will approach the Church indirectly that way, and we may distort the picture and lose some precision, but at least we will gradually come to clearer notions. Ours will not be a strictly scientific undertaking, challenging each hypothesis proposed, but rather a sort of intuition, leading to certain affirmations that we may or may not have time later to prove in all the rigor of science.

A difficulty may arise if the distortions introduced by this indirect approach--studying the development of the Church in the light of the development of the continent--

are too extensive and sweeping. Yet we believe that even greater distortions would follow from the traditional ways of examining the Church as if it were an isolatable institution, with its own history overlaid on the general history. Even from a theological point of view, and not only from the sociological one, such an approach is questionable. For the Church cannot be grasped as something in itself, and when it is seen as something for itself, it should simultaneously be seen as for others; the Church makes its own history, but history also makes it, so that the Church cannot understand itself rightly by merely studying Holy Writ, but must also keep looking at the mainstream of human history. In that sense, it seems quite impossible to grasp what the Church is unless we understand the world it belongs in, and their reciprocal relations. The way we understand the world will determine how we understand the Church. Sociology affects theology, which in turn (though sociologists may protest) affects the whole of sociology.

We need some notion of Latinamerica's profane history, then, to understand how the Church evolved (1).

Dependence is perhaps the fundamental fact in Latin America's underdevelopment. The states that exist today in our continent were created by the imperialist action of Great Britain--divide et impera--and can never be explained by merely internal variables. We must always remember the external variables that so effectively shaped our countries internal structures. Dependence is not, then, merely something exterior to Latinamerica's social fabric; the fabric was created to be dependent.

The Church is intimately bound to the social structures of Latin America. If the continent is dependent, the Church will be too. If the key to bringing about changes in society at large in Latin America is to eliminate dependence, that will be the key

for making changes in the Church, too. Obviously, since the Church will somehow parallel those in the social structure of the continent. In addition, when external factors specific to the Church (e. g. , the Council) begin to function here, their effect will be modified by our profane history. This can shed light, too, on the question of ecclesial dependence that the Church has only recently become sensitive to (3) and that will no doubt profoundly affect the thinking of the Latinamerican Church in coming years.

In classifying the various currents within the Latinamerican Church, we will utilize the various typologies that have been sketched out in recent years (4). The difficulty with typologies--which our classification inherits--is that they were devised for particular purposes, without pretending to have absolute scientific validity. They suffer from having been made ad hoc, and they can serve here only in a very general way.

In any event, we hope that these typologies will be helpful in explaining to non-Americans the general outlines of the present situation of the Latinamerican Church. We hope, too, that our hearers can compare, deepen and extend the ideas we shall present.

One final point. It should be stressed that the crucial fact about the Church in Latin America is its confrontation with politics. If in the early years of the present Church renewal the key words that divided avant-garde members of the Church were "preconciliar" and postconciliar," today that avant-garde no longer goes off on theological paths but political ones.

In other words, theology is used now to shed light on political questions (6). There was a time when politics was considered a threat to wholesome Christian living (7), but

today anyone trying to understand the Church is simply obligated to observe the political order too. So as we analyze each type of group, we shall emphasize its political stance and its view of the political order.

Traces of the landholders Christianity

One segment of Latinamerican Catholicism--of greater or lesser importance, according to countries--has its origins in the dominant classes of the 19th century social structure, up to the moment of imperialist modernization.

Political independence did not bring the Latinamerican nations any real economic or cultural transformation. The economic underpinnings, with slight modifications, continued to be the same as in the Colony and perpetuated the hegemony of a basic class--the landholders and the commercial bourgeoisie in the cities--who were intimately allied within the patrician stratum.

By its position in the economic structure, the commercial bourgeoisie may have been more exposed to the ideas of the Enlightenment, and later of Romanticism, but the landholding class was closely bound up with Catholicism from its origins in the founding days of the Colony.

From independence on, down to perhaps 1890--to pick a date more or less true of all the countries--Latinamerican Catholicism found itself in a rather homogeneously Christian society. There were exceptions--e. g., under certain Mexican and Colombian governments that followed secularizing policies--but the culture of the masses was not really changed--just as they were not accepted into the state's political apparatus nor the academic life of university campuses (8).

The landholders Christianity began to break up in the modernization process that, starting about 1870, profoundly transformed the structures of Latinamerican society. That society was changed from a predominantly rural to a predominatly urban one,

from one organized along precapitalistic lines to one run on capitalistic lines. And if such changes meant for certain sectors the adoption of agnostic, theistic or even atheistic political and philosophical tenets, they did not modify in any serious way the culture of the people, who went right on as they had always done. The conservative parties brought together on the political plane the defenders of the landholding Christianity, and their opposition to liberal parties was to exacerbate, among other sore points, the problem of Church-State relations.

As a result of their fixed final view of nature and of truth (this latter they saw at its purest in revealed truth). typical Catholics of that landholding Christianity did not look on the world about them as a task to be undertaken. For them, faith was not something to reflect on, but to accept. Totally devoid of theological originality they were incapable of inspiring into society an active, leavening presence of the Church. In fact, the only interest they had in that society was to hope that there would be felicitous Church-State relations in it, and in general they were dogged defenders of everything traditional. They thought of the Church as a juridical, vertical institution that had exclusive possession of grace and access to salvation, limiting its activity to divine worship and vigilance over private morality. Faith was a strictly intellectual thing, to be judged by one criterion: religious observance. As a result of this emphasis on ritual and this legalistic, formal view of the Church, the popular, more or less syncretistic piety of the masses was smiled on as a laudable thing and no reason for alarm.

For those groups, Latin America was a continent that needed protection against a number of threats, some of which had already made considerable headway and were therefore to be attacked: laicism, Protestantism, indifferentism, Masonry and communism. Opposing those threats called for an apologetic stance, first of all,

then a head-on opposition. The swelling ranks of the Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (9), collecting signatures to denounce Helder Camara, Fr. Combin and the magazine Vispera to the Pope, are an outstanding example of this mentality. The more reactionary members (10) of the Organization of Catholic Universities of Latin America (ODUCAL), which bitterly repudiated the conclusions of Buga (11), illustrate a second attitude, which can similarly be found in the publication of magazines like Roma and Cruzada (Argentina), Catolicismo and Permanencias and Hora Presente (Brazil), Fiducia (Chile), etc. In any event, the same old pastoral approach is proposed--apologetic, moralizing, sacramentalistic--aimed primarily at preservation, hoping to use the resources of temporal power for the advantage of the Church (12). Its economico-social purpose is the same, too: defense of the existing class structure (from whose representatives the most vigorous help is received) and the existing land-tenure system (13).

The virulence displayed by these groups was totally outdated more than 15 years ago, if it was ever called for. Yet the traditional tendencies of the Church's hierarchic structure still pointed that way (14)--as the early difficulties that CELAM had to grapple with in a number of countries showed. If those groups continue to be virulent and if they have abandoned apologetics for open hostility now against the positions of the official Church--thus revealing how flimsy were their protestations about obedience to the magisterium--it is because the entire situation has been substantially changed by the transformations in the general social structures.

Not all these groups; however, rejected all the transformations; some of them seemed to welcome the coming of an industry-based society and they launched plans for modernizing the economic system. They did not welcome modernization in other areas, though. The changes these traditionalist groups accepted were only superficial, yet they were a significant beginning. Members of those groups began to look on the world as something

they should shape, and they put new emphasis on religious living; but the shaping of the world was seen as something merely technical and religious living as something individualistic. Technique and individualism--those were the two ideological tenets behind the social effort of the industrial bourgeoisie out of whose numbers were to come the members of the later traditionalist groups.

Results of the Social Ferment: The Social Christians

The Social-Christian movement arose in Europe toward the middle of the 19th century, and the Church embraced it, under Leo XIII, toward the century's end. As a cultural import, it was to reach Latin America early--even before the civilizing and technological processes that in Europe had been its cause and origin. As early as 1910 certain Social Christian projects were launched, unnoticed among the typical programs of the land-holding Christianity. They were assistential projects on the social level, urging political union among Catholics to defend the rights of the Church (16).

But only after 1935 did the Social Christian movement achieve any wide diffusion, as an outgrowth of the industrialization that was slowly taking hold in our countries, and during the 1950's their movement became definitely dynamic. The groups supporting it were the growing industrial bourgeoisie, certain technical sectors, a good part of the clergy and hierarchy, and the emerging middle classes. They would continue to expand, through temporal institutions of "Christian inspirations," into the workers' and peasants' classes and other marginal sectors, with the assistance of generous financing from groups (some Catholic and some not) in Europe and the United States.

They found political expression in the Christian Democratic parties (17) that were supported by the Church hierarchy and a number of agencies promoting research into development (18).

Whereas earlier groups had looked on nature as sacred and truth as achieved, these Christian Democrats were all stirred by a "social restlessness," an evidence that they

saw history as a task to be accomplished and the profane world as something with its own objectives. Maritain's "integral humanism" had a strong impact on these groups from the beginning. Faith was for them certainly more reflected on, more committed than it had been for the earlier groups: the validity of one's faith has to be justified before one can grasp the specific value of the temporal order. The Church, still understood along fundamentally institutional lines, was slowly acquiring a new image in their eyes as the Mystical Body and was getting a fresh vitality expressed in vigorous apostolic motivation, renewed spirituality and growing temporal involvement.

Christian Democrats looked on the Church's social doctrine as the basis of their political ideology. They had not yet formulated a historical concept of the continent's peculiar reality: the Christian Democrats had no historians and thus could hardly evolve a historical sense. For them, history was concerned with pre-evangelization, in which one tried to create a propitious "climate" for the growth of grace--which they still thought of as extrinsic to human history. The Church was, of course, sole master of grace and salvation, even if the doctrine of the votum ecclesiae was beginning to solve the problem of the salvation of non-Christians.

Pastoral action, as we noted above, was geared basically toward creating Christian temporal institutions (19), which were deemed to have not only a religious purpose but their own human end. Trade unions, political parties, various centers, Christian-inspired universities began to pullulate all over Latin America, and in them the earlier relations of priests and laity were redefined. Laymen have a specific task in the profane world: the consecration of the world. Priests should be moderators not only of the life of faith but also of Christian temporal institutions; thus they set up labor unions, counsel,

political parties, etc. , all justified by the theological formula of "filling in. "

For these Christians the political problem is expressed in terms of "Christianity and politics. " They look for the relations between Christian thought (which they consider a complete, self-sufficient total, at least on the ethical plane) and political action. Similarly the problem of Marxism is resolved: Christianity and Marxism are judged to be total, "either-or" alternatives, specific and autonomous social efforts.

The crisis of the Christian Democrat effort, today so obvious, arose, on the one hand, because of pressure on the leadership from student groups, marginal and worker sectors, the clergy and hierarchy most closely identified with those sectors, who had assimilated much of the conciliar thought and European theology from Congar on (21).

The present situation and crisis of the Chilean Church, and even the Chilean political situation, reflect to a great extent the crisis of Christian Democracy. For even though its institutional cadres demonstrated considerable elasticity, allowing for new points of view and incorporating new goals, Christian Democracy is now undergoing a progressive breakdown and turning to a variety of pluralistic experiments.

The pluralistic experiments

After the two relatively clean-cut, straight-line tendencies just described, important segments of the Latinamerican Church began to take up experiments of a pluralistic nature. They grew in number and variety: some were superficial, some were serious. It is not easy therefore, to find a pattern behind them or to portray them clearly. Hence it may be best merely to point out several general trends, which will at least be illustrative if not complete.

a) After the Council and after Medellin

The years following the Council had a profound impact on the Latinamerican Church. Whereas it has been rather static, it now reacted to the Council with some frank soul-

searching. Certain ecclesiastics in particular tried sincerely to renew pastoral structures and launch imaginative pastoral plans (22).

The Council had not been, however, a stock-taking for the Latinamerican Church so much as for the Churches of Central Europe. Its conclusions could not, then, be transferred directly and applied mechanically to Latin America. Its spirit could be accepted, but it had to be reshaped and fitted to the Latinamerican scene, the outstanding fact about which was its involvement in social change and the all-importance of its political events. The Medellin conference of the Latinamerican bishops set out to have the Council's findings adapted for Latin America and by Latin America. It was the most important event of the century for the Church there.

But the fact that it was Latinamerican and an answer to a Latinamerican situation gave the conference a peculiar turn: the advanced political ideas presented there led to advanced theological ideas. It was not avant-garde dogmatic theologians, however, who set the tone, but those who were alert to the already begun revolution--and the demand for political liberation that Medellin was to highlight. The avant-garde dogmatic theologians, trained in Europe in the theological--as well as political and pastoral --problems of Central Europe, would have to rethink their perspectives--or fail to grasp what was taking place and be completely out of touch (23).

There were, thus, two principal groups among those urging pluralistic experiments: the postconciliar school, theologically "progressive" but still absorbed in developmental political views (24), e. g. , particularly the staff of the magazines Criterion (Argentina) and Comunidad (Mexico), plus certain groups associated with the magazine Mensaje and DESAL (Chile); and the school we could label post-Medellin, which emphasized the political process as all-important.

b) The elite and the masses

convictions about the elites and the masses, minorities and majorities, the faithful remnant and people at large. Starting about 1960, certain more advanced thinkers in the Latinamerican Church became convinced of the need for a personal, "adult and mature" faith. Their strong views on the crisis of Christianity and the need for a freely accepted Catholicism made them focus on the formation of elites, small nuclei of slowly and carefully prepared Christians, solid in their faith, aware of the theological implications of their faith. They tended, therefore, to frown on any participation of Christians in what was not specifically theirs. They were especially harsh in their judgment on the Social Christian experiment, which they accused of "ideologizing" Christianity. Their stress on communitarian life, plus maturity, led them to emphasize the training of small groups, usually somewhat apart from the Church's official pastoral programs. Their followers were drawn from professional sectors, the middle class, student groups and, for a while, specialized movements of Catholic Action. Their insistence on having a mature faith and a theological sophistication led them to focus on persons of a certain intellectual background.

Such an approach was opposed by other Christians, who underlined the needs of the masses. P. Gustavo Gutierrez has noted: "Certain criticisms can be raised about the special attention those pastoral programs devoted to minorities. The masses were less important--maybe because in our continent two other pastoral efforts were directed toward them: that of "Christianity" and that of the "new Christianity"... One might wonder, though, what that pastoral attitude would have done about the masses if nobody were caring for them. It would seem that in some cases that attitude was a parasite on the others" (25). The political postures of militant Catholics of this elitist mentality varied from person to person. In any event, some of them were wary, skeptical about Christians being involved in political activity, because politics is

a matter for the masses (26). Later, though, they faced up to the unavoidability of the political issue and the dilemma thus posed for Christianity (27).

Another school--some called it an alternative, others a complementary group--insisted on continued identification with the masses because of the post-Medellin view of the need for a social nationalistic and even anti-European protest (28). It called for political action and tended to form groups of laymen and priests who took up social protest as their special cause, as we shall see later.

c) Insertion into the institutional Church

Depending on their attitude toward the local, national Church, various groups took different views of the institutional Church. One sector, reacting to what it deemed the rigid ecclesiastical structure and the hierarchy's lack of feel for the political realities, elected to move outside the Church--or to stand up to it and challenge it (29). Others closed ranks around the hierarchy and sought to formulate some universal stance of the Church toward politics. A third group wrote out blank checks of confidence in the hierarchy, setting for the gains being made through the renewed pastoral efforts (31). The so-called postconciliar groups focused on updating pastoral structures, with particular emphasis on liturgical, catechetical and ecumenical--rather than political--programs. Those opting for giving attention to the elite pointed to the success of smaller communities, even if they were somewhat outside the official pastoral effort, and asserted the right of those communities to self-development--even greater perhaps than the rights of the ecclesial masses (32).

Finally, the post-Medellin group organized its own activities independently of the hierarchy (though they did not refuse dialogue with them) and resolutely opted for an authentic but politically radicalized commitment (33).

By way of conclusion: The position of the avant-garde groups

1. Three great historical currents have existed in Latin America, corresponding apparently to different generations but really reflecting different social structures and social classes or groups bound up with them: 1) one, based on Christianity, that divided into two branches: the landholding and the industrialist camps; 2) one based on Social Christianity; and 3) one based on insertion into a pluralist world. The third of these currents is the one from which those we have called the avant-garde group come--those who today display both a revolutionary political drive and a desire to transform the Church.

2. A growing recognition of the important role of politics in defining what the Christian presence and its purposes are to be (34). This trend suggests new and more fruitful perspectives of pastoral action, but also questions the current formulations of Catholic faith and Church structures. Most important, however, it provides a deeper knowledge of Latin America's social structure and its history.

Recent event in Paraguay are an unmistakable example of how a fresh awareness of the political situation can lead to new pastoral perspectives (35). If Paraguay's peculiar history makes its experience inapplicable elsewhere, it is none the less an irrefutable instance of how the Church can plan its action in the light of both political and pastoral situations.

In other cases--especially where radicalized avant-garde groups have cut loose from the official Church--a crisis arises in the traditional formulation of the faith, as hidden bourgeois ideological structures are manifested within the Church (36). Ecclesiology is fundamentally swayed by historico-sociological factors. Christology focuses on the dispossessed, poor Christ, liberator of the oppressed. Theological terminology feels

almost helpless as it tries to express Latinamerican forms of secularization: the revolutionary ideology, the political radicalization --but certainly not the science, technique and modern world that Europeans talk of so much, and above all not the urban civilization and social mobility that Cox sees as constitutive of the secular city.

In any case, those are the Church groups that seem to be making the richest contribution by raising issues that, in different ways, confront the Latinamerican Church everywhere.

The very unity of the Church is queried. "Do I belong to the same Church as the man who tortures prisoners, as the man who exploits the people?" a Paraguayan asks. "Can I receive Communion alongside the Minister of Culture responsible for the police attack on students that cost three of them their lives?" wonders a Uruguayan. Ideological differences split the Church wide open and call into question its good faith, especially that of its magisterium. Whom should the Church talk to? To the oppressor or the oppressed? To the torturer or his victim. (37). In Uruguay, a number of Christians demand the excommunication of a clique of Catholics who back the government of Pacheco Areco. Maybe they are overreacting. But the Paraguayan bishops did not exaggerate when they excommunicated police officials responsible for the attacks on students and priests, nor did the Archbishop of Riberão Preto, Brazil, when he excommunicated the torturer of a nun. No one wants indiscriminate excommunications, but we must extirpate all traces of liberalism in the Church.

There is a growing realization of our theological dependence, both from the strictly institutional aspect and from the very content of the questions raised. The European approach to the theology of secularization is today rejected, or at least revised, except by certain small postconciliar, elitist circles. Humanae Vitae triggered off a tremendous

discussion (38) among groups considered very advanced. The declarations of Cardinal Suenens are being hotly discussed, too (39). The Third World Priests' Association in Argentina came out as explicitly anti-European. The traditional theology is being called into question (40) and great emphasis is laid on the need to rethink theology, primarily to cope with the political issues and liberation. (41)

4. A crisis has arisen over the Church's structures, basically as an effect of the crisis in the relations of Christians to politics. One group, the "postconciliarists," holds that the Church should in principle always be ready to participate in politics; another group believes it should participate on appropriate occasions, when such action is needed. The problem of authority, so dear to the Churches of more developed areas, is receiving scant attention today in Latin America---except inasmuch as it is linked with the ultimate problem: the Church's historical commitment. An underground Church is appearing in Latin America, not to toy with liturgical or ecumenical innovations, but to clamor for a political involvement. As a matter of fact, it is underground with regard not to the Church but to the political establishment.

5. Because there is now a persecuted Church, right in the bosom of the official Church, we will have to develop a theology of persecution (44), and the cross, which we had forgotten for sometime has once again come to the fore as very important. Fray Beto, jailed in Brazil after the killing of the revolutionary leader Carlos Marighela, wrote in a letter to his parents: "Only one thing is important now: I am a prisoner---but that is something I can boast of. My jailing should not cause you shame but pride. I am at peace, my conscience is clear. What I have said and done has been to bring closer the day of a just world, a free land. Here I am living in total interior freedom. I know that my prison is a sign for the Church in Brazil. I feel that everything is in keeping with God's plans. Have trust in Him" (45).

6. New stress is being laid on the pedagogy of the faith. We are beginning to see that the traditional religious terminology and the institutional means of Christian pedagogy are depersonalizing. Efforts are therefore being made to find a liberating pedagogy to end the dichotomy between elite and masses -- and to bring the Church to side with the masses. Paulo Freire's techniques, his emphasis on liberating (as opposed to dominating) action, have stimulated a number of experiments that are influencing even our ways of catechizing, and modifying the pedagogical thrust of the lay movements by giving new directions to their former modes of political action (46).

7. The old antithesis of Christianity vs. Marxism is being restated. Latinamericans have no time any longer for the parlor discussions that are so popular in Europe (47). They want a dialogue in action and for action, focusing on the political and strategic future of the Latinamerican revolution. They do not consider either Christianity or Marxism as immutable, self-sufficient or mutually exclusive options. The Social Christians used to find in Christianity a more or less complete set of answers to various problems in man's life, with all the basic directions he would need--and an ethical justification for them, too. They considered Marxism an alternative complete system, vitiated by a number of philosophically untenable principles but inspired by a most praiseworthy, positive sense of justice and able to provide workable guidelines for political action. Between the two camps a man had to make his choice, yet dialogue was possible too, for which--as for action--Christians had to be given a solid intellectual formation, particularly in those areas where Marxism's answers are so clearly effective. The crisis in this approach--it coincides with the internal crisis of Social Christianity itself--comes to the surface just as the Christian-inspired movements are beginning to fall apart ideologically and as new conceptions of Christian-Marxist relations are coming into vogue. Christianity is no longer believed to be a system,

a total and complete reality, useful for all levels of historical action. Trying hard not to fall into fideism, this new view considers faith as primarily a motivation, as affording one special kind of reason for undertaking an action, but not precisely a historical one in which the Sciences would be important. (Marxism, of course, has an indispensable contribution to make to the sciences.) At the same time, Marxism is no longer accepted as a monolithic, complete unity, either. There isn't just one Marxism but a number of outgrowths, divergent and even conflicting, from the original nucleus of Marxist theory; and if there are dogmatic, intransigent Marxisms that even while denying metaphysics become one, and while sneering at it exalt it into a religion, there are also more positive developments of Marxism that stay on the scientific plane and leave atheism relegated to the ideological shelf, that view historical materialism as a hypothesis rather than as a conclusion (science does not admit ultimate conclusions). In such a Marxism, the repudiation of religion as an alienation need not necessarily become an obsession and lead automatically to a denial of the abstract existence of God. Whether this interpretation, by separating science and philosophy, blasts apart the very substance of Marxism is something for Marxists themselves to decide, and as a matter of fact that isn't the only awkward dilemma following from such an interpretation. There would be others, too: 1) if one accepts Marxism as a science and rejects it as a metaphysics, is he thereby torpedoing all that is positive in the historical existence of Marxism as an instrument that can transform society, and resolving in a simplistic manner a problem that for Christians is much more elusive and thorny: whether to use the touchstone of science as a universally applicable criterion of life? 2) does a separation of science and metaphysics destroy the validity of Marxist thought as a bloc, in toto? 3) if Marxism is categorized as a science, is it likely to come off second best in competition with other scientific explanations of reality? In

any event, no one can deny that many elements of Marxism have been incorporated into the praxis of avant-garde Christians, many of whom become increasingly alienated in as they undertake common efforts with Marxists (48).

8. The option: violence or not? that monopolized the avant-garde's attention in 1968 as a merely moral question is now quite outdated. Accepting the moral legitimacy of violence does not ipso facto establish its political validity; that must be decided by criteria of efficacy, not morality. Violence is today, therefore, a matter for political strategy, not ethical justification.

9. No longer do violence and revolution necessarily mean guerrilla warfare in the remote hills. New political options and possibilities are being opened up: Nationalistic militarism, urban guerrilla warfare, mass revolutionary warfare, even revolution through the electoral process. But at least we have been able to put behind us two serious obstacles that clouded our political judgments in the past: the tendency to view the Christian-Marxist dichotomy in mutually exclusive, "either-or" terms, and the preoccupation with violence as a question primarily of morals and ethics rather than one of political expediency.

Conclusion

There is just one conclusion: if for the first group mentioned in this paper history was not a task at all, and for the second group it was a task resolvable through the Christian message and social doctrine, for today's Christians in Latin America history is recognized as a task already in the process of solution, and Christianity, which gives it ultimate meaning, has little or nothing to contribute as an element of interpretation.

Secularization has been caused, not by our modern, urban civilization, but by the pressure for revolution. Hence, we will have to reformulate theology and modify the Church's structures to the necessary extent. There will be, in all likelihood, a persecuted Church. And the contribution of Latin American Catholicism to the universal Church will arise out of its increasing realization of the kind of world it lives in.

FOOTNOTES

1. The best over-all interpretation of Church history from this angle is that of Alberto Methol Ferre, "Las Epocas," in Vispera (July, 1968), p. 61. For the first four centuries and up to the mid-19th century, a useful work is Enrique Dussel, Hipotesis para una historia de la Iglesia en America Latina (Estela-IEPAL, Barcelona, 1967). Two articles by Dussel are also good: "Chretientes latinoamericaines" and "L'eglise d'Americque latine," in Esprit (July, 1965). On general Church growth: for the colonial period, see Egana, Historia de la Iglesia en la America espanola (BAC, Madrid, 1965); for mid-19th century: P. Eyzaguirre, Los intereses catolicos en America (Paris, 1859); for mid-20th century: Richard Pattee, El catolicismo contemporaneo en Hispanoamerica, Fides, Buenos Aires, 1951; for the beginning of the 1960's: Francois Houtart and Emile Pin, A Igreja na revolucao da America latina, (Duas Cidades, Sao Paulo, 1969).
2. Dependence has long been used as a category for studying Latin America. Recently, as the social sciences have been emphasized in certain academic centers, particularly in Chile, it has been used as a sociologically helpful variable within a number of fields. Marxism has been a productive angle of approach for these studies. The bibliographical roundup by Gonzalo Arroyo, S. J., "Pensamiento latinoamericano sobre subdesarrollo y dependencia externa: revision bibliografica," in Mensaje (October, 1968), is a fine introduction to the problem. See also: Fernando H. Cardoso, Cuestiones de sociologia del desarrollo (Ed. Univ., Stgo., Chile, 1968); Fernando H. Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, Dependencia y desarrollo en America Latina (ILPES, Stgo., Chile, 1967); Andre Gunder Frank, Capitalism and underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical studies in Chile and Brazil; Theotonio dos Santos, El Nuevo caracter de la dependencia (ECSO, Stgo., Chile, 1969); Anibal Quijano, Dependencia, cambio social y urbanizacion en America Latina (ICS), Montevideo, 1969). Under the general heading of dependence a variety of other phenomena--economic, political and cultural--are also studied.
3. Several years ago a series of prophetic articles raised this question over a specific issue. See Ivan Illich, "The seamy side of charity," in America, (Jan. 21, 1967); Horacio Bojorge, "El futuro del cristianismo latinoamericano." in Retrato de Camilo Torres (El Ciervo, Barcelona, 1968). A fundamental, essential article is that of Henrique de Lima Vaz, "Igreja fonte vs. Igreja reflexo," in Cuadernos Brasileiros (April, 1968), also published apart by MIEC-JECI, 1968. More specifically on the subject, see Alberto Methol Ferre, "Pablo VI o el honor de Dios," and Cesar Aguiar, "Una cause para las reacciones," in Vispera (October, 1968), where both articles apply Humanae Vitae to Latin America; also Juan Luis Segundo, "La teologia: problema latinoamericano," in IDO-C, 14/68; Alberto Methol Ferre, "Iglesia y sociedad opulenta," in Vispera (August, 1969).
4. Written for different purposes and about different events, these are worth consulting: Gustavo Gutierrez Merino, "La pastoral de la Iglesia en America latine" (MIEC-JECI, Montevideo, 1968); Gilberto Gimenez, "Introduccion a una pedagogia de los movimientos universitarios," (MIEC-JECI, series 1, no. 15); Luis Alberto Gomes de Souza, "Los cristianos en la accion politica," conference given at a Vispera seminar, unpublished, 1969; Gustavo Gutierrez

Merino, "La crisis de la conciencia teologica latinoamericana," conference at the same Vispera seminar, unpublished, 1969; Luis Meyer, "Presencia de los cristianos en las universidades," in Universidad catolica hoy (DEC, Estudios educacionales, no. 2, Colombia, 1967; Enrique Dussel, "Los cristianos ante tres 'hechos' contemporaneos" (Maguncia, unpublished, 1964). Touching on special matters, see also: Jose Comblin, "Tipologia do catolicismo no Brasil," in Revista eclesiastica brasileira (March, 1968, Petropolis); Aldo Bunting, "Interpretacion motivacional del catolicismo popular," in Vispera (May, 1969).

5. For a critique of this dichotomy, see Juan Luis Segundo, "Hacia una exegesis dinamica del Vaticano II," in Vispera (September, 1967).

6. My development is heavily in debt to the notes of Hector Borrat, "Vanguardia, retaguardia, postconcilio," in Vispera (June, 1967), and his forthcoming book Terra incognita (Peninsula, Bracelona, and Cerf, Paris).

7. See the classic book by Juan Luis Segundo, Funcion de la Iglesia en la realidad rioplatense (Barreiro y Ramos, Montevideo, 1962, pp. 77ss.) and also an updating of it, "Hacia una Iglesia de izquierda," in Perspectivas de dialogo (No. 32, Montevideo, 1969).

8. On this period, see Dussel, Hipotesis...

9. The Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Private Property (TFP) is strongest in Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, and is trying to move into Paraguay. Its members, very energetic, carry medieval banners into churches and public squares denouncing the "Marxist infiltration" of the Church. When Paul VI came to Bogota, they collected signatures with a letter in which, depending of the countries, Dom Helder Camara and Fr. Comblin, the magazine Vispera, the magazine Mensaje they denounced and the magazine Criterio, and called for a purge by the Pope. Several bishops belong to the movement, the best known of whom is Dom Geraldo de Proenca Sigaud. The movement has little backing--except financial.

10. See the book Hacia una nueva universidad (Buenos Aires, 1956), by various authors, including Mons. Octavio Derisi, presently the leader of ODUCAL.

11. See the conclusions, "Mision de la universidd catolica-en America Latina," in Vispera (March, 1967). The revolutionary character of the document was seized on as a symbol by groups interested in a reform of Catholic universities, an important movement in 1967-68 affecting Catholic universities in Chile, Peru, Colombia, Argentina, Paraguay, etc. A complete documentation on the crisis of the Catholic universities is kept at the MIEC-JECI center in Montevideo.

12. It is interesting to note that the TFP in Brazil called on public officials to halt Communist infiltration into the Church.

13. Three favorite books pushed by the TFP concern agrarian reform: Reforma agraria, cuestion de consciencia, Brazil; Reforma agraria: falsa solucion para un problema falso, Argentina; and Reforma agraria: falso planteo, falsa solucion, Uruguay. In Chile the offensive was led by a book of Fabio Vidigal Xavier da Silveira: Frei, el Kerensky chileno

14. Cesar Aguiar, "Las puertas abiertas," in Vispera (July, 1968).
15. The spread of Opus Dei among certain sectors of the Latin-american Church is a classic case. Similarly the cursillos de cristiandad, whose influence on the Argentinian government has frequently been pointed out.
16. For Uruguay, see Patricio Rode and Juan Luis Segundo, "Presencia de la Iglesia," Ed. Enciclopedia uruguaya, no. 34; Patricio Rode, "Promocion del laicado," Ed. CCC, 1963. For Argentina, Julio Cesar Neffa y otros, "Evolucion de la Iglesia en Argentina," IDO-C, 1968. Similarly, the work of Hector Ferreiros, "Grupos y tendencias en la Iglesia argentina," to be published in Vispera, no. 15.
17. There is an abundant bibliography on Christian Democracy in Latin America. See the special report published in Vispera, no. 11, 1968.
18. Principally grouped around DESAL, whose headquarters are in Chile, directed by P. Roger Vekemans. The magazine Mensaje devoted two special issues in 1962 and 1963 to the revolution in Latin America, giving a markedly Social-Christian interpretation. Beginning with 1968, the magazine began to shift rapidly from Social Christian views toward a fully pluralistic stand.
19. A classic document is "Apostolado de evangelizacion y de civilizacion," in Mensaje, (March-April-May, 1965).
20. Roger Vekemans, "Doctrina, ideologica y politica (Stgo., Chile, 1964). The consequences of P. Vekemans' very special ideas can be noted in various of the studies published by DESAL, which reveal the center's notion of development.
21. Politically, this process stems from the crisis in the populist, Christian-Democratic system. See the excellent "Comentarios nacionales" by Jose Jaquin Brunner in Mensaje in recent years.
22. Here we should mention the colossal research carried out by FERES (Federacion de estudios de sociologia religiosa) at the beginning of this decade. An outline of the principal volumes is included in Dussel, Hipotesis..., p. 219. Once the Council ended, there was a flurry of enthusiasm for pastoral planning. See: Conferencia episcopal ecuatoriana, Encuentro nacional de obispos, clero, religiosos, religiosas y seglares para estudiar la aplicacion del concilio en Ecuador, Quito, 1966; Conferencia episcopal argentina, Plan nacional de pastoral, Buenos Aires, 1968; Sinodo pastoral de Santiago, Documentos fundamentales, Stgo., 1967; Sinodo pastoral de Santiago, Iglesia, que dices de ti misma?

Stgo., 1969; Conferencia episcopal uruguaya, Jornadas interdiocesanas de pastoral, Montevideo, 1965; Junta central de la accion catolica argentina, I Congreso latinoamericano para el apostolado de los laicos--VI semana interamericana de accion catolica, Buenos Aires, 1967.

23. On this important matter of the avant-garde, see the articles under Note 3, and also; Juan Jose Rossi, Iglesia latinoamericana: Protesta o profecia? (Busqueda, Buenos Aires, 1969), which contains the principal documents of the Christian groups that in recent years have issued proclamations on social problems.

24. I use quotation marks because one can argue quite seriously about how far a theology can be progressive--as European and Northamerican theology is in many ways in dealing with certain vital issues--and yet be politically reactionary in defending the interests of the world capitalist system.

25. Gutierrez, La pastoral...

26. Segundo, "Funcion de la Iglesia..." An interesting unpublished documentation from the Seminario nacional de la juventud universitaria catolica uruguayo de 1967 discusses this thesis at length.

27. Segundo, Hacia una Iglesia...

28. Lucio Gera y Guillermo Rodriguez Melgarejo, Situacion actual de la Iglesia argentina, to appear in Vispera, no. 15. The statements of these groups have been collected in a number of sources: Rossi, Iglesia latinoamericana...; Comision episcopal de accion social (Peru), Signos de renovacion, Lima, 1969. See also: Cuadernos de Marcha, Nos. 17 and 24.

29. See the testimony of P. Noel Olaya, "En la ruta de Golconda," in Vispera (November, 1969). On the priests and other adherents of Golconda, see also: Manuel Alzate, Libertad religiosa en Colombia (Ed. Pacifico, Cali, 1969); by the same author, Plataforma conciliar (Ed. Pacifico, Cali, 1968); Golconda (Ed. Muniproc, Cali, 1969). Their principal statements are gathered in the books given under Note 28.

30. The clearest case is the Church of Paraguay. See MIEC-JECI Centro de Documentacion, Paraguay: Conflicto Iglesia-estado (Montevideo, 1969); Leoncio Clavel, "El conflicto Iglesia-estado en el Paraguay," in Vispera (November, 1969).

31. A typical case is that of the Church in Montevideo, with one of the richest experiences in widespread pastoral planning.
32. See Juan Luis Segundo, "Ritmos de cambio y pastoral de conjunto," in Perspectivas de Dialogo (no. 35), a most interesting and suggestive article.
33. The most obvious cases are those of the Oficina nacional de informacion social (ONIS) and the Association of Priests of the Third World. The former, in Peru, comprises a number of priests and religious from the whole country. Their declarations are contained in the books given in Note 28. There are other documents, particularly some addressed to the Peruvian hierarchy, with which ONIS has much influence and with most of whose members it has intimate dialogue. The Third World priests are growing in prestige in Argentina, through their concrete actions and statements. They have an internal newsletter, Enlace, which has been published seven times. Their documents are contained in Rossi (See Note 23).
34. See Note 28 and the works of Segundo, Gutierrez and Borrat cited *passim*.
35. See MIEC-JECI Centro de documentacion, Conflicto... (Note 30).
36. This is one of the most burning questions raised by many lay apostolic movements, especially by campus groups. See MIEC-JECI Centrl de documentacion, Fe e ideologia (mimeographed, 1968).
37. Cesar Aguiar, "La Iglesia perseguida," in Perspectivas de dialogo (July, 1968).
38. See Vispera, no. 7, with an extensive commentary on Humanae Vitae, and the debate with Perspectivas de dialogo in Vispera, no. 9, and in Perspectivas de dialogo, no. 32. The debate was explicitly on the political level.
39. See Alberto Methol Ferre, "Iglesia y sociedad..."
40. On the problem of theology, see Juan Luis Segundo, "La teologia..."
41. See Gustavo Gutierrez, "Hacia una teologia de la liberacion," in the MIEC-JECI Servicio de documentacion, no. 16, series 1; also numbers 3 and 4 of the magazine Ponto Homem (Viamao, Brazil, July, 1968); Hugo Assman, "Situacao geral de teologia hoje," in Texto e contexto (March-June, 1968). A good part of Latinamerican theology today is grappling with these problems.

42. See the year's end issue of Criterio, 1968: "Participation."

43. The series of interecclesial conflicts that arose all through Latin America in the course of 1969 should be understood in the light of this criterion. See: Cuaderno de Marcha: La Iglesia latinoamericana: crisis y renovacion (no. 24, April, 1969), in which a great quantity of the material connected with this conflict is contained, plus some important interpretations.

44. See Buenaventura Pelegri, "Meditacion ante el cadaver de Antonio Henrique," in Vispera (August, 1969). Also see Fray Carlos Alberto Cristo, Jesus o marginal, in a forthcoming issue of Vispera. See also Aguiar, "La Iglesia..."

45. Sergio Mendez Lima, "Superior dominico afirma: Dominicanos no traicionaron a Marighela," NA, No. 2/1970.

46. On Paulo Freire's method, see: Paulo Freire, Educacion como practica de libertad (Tierra Nueva, Montevideo, 1969). See also Felipe Berryman, "Conscientizacion y religiosidad popular," in Vispera, no. 12.

47. See Luis Alberto Gomes de Souza, "Christianismo y Marxismo," a conference given at the Encuentro latinoamericano del movimiento de la juventud agraria y rural catolica (mimeo., Stgo., 1969).

48. A history of this development would be most interesting. One might compare for example, the original concept that those political groups had of Marxism which arose with a principally Catholic base, such as AP in Brazil and the MAPU in Uruguay, with the present tenets of those groups and indeed of the Christian avant-garde in general. In Colombia, Camilo Torres insisted on the need for common action with Marxists as fellow fighters, but not on Marxism as an instrument of analysis; the Golconda priests, on the contrary, lay great stress on this latter aspect too. (Cf. Noel Olaya, "En la ruta...") In Uruguay, the revised view of Juan Carlos Zaffaroni, Marxismo y cristianismo (Apoce, Montevideo, 1965) and his positions expressed later at the Cultural Congress in Havana. Equally interesting are certain student documents. Argentina is where they seem to have reached a solution to the problem of Marxism. (Cf. Gera and Rodriguez Melgarej; op. cit.) An over-all summary of this problem would be fundamental.

49. Sergio Mendez Lima, "Superior dominico afirma: Dominicanos no traicionaron a Marighela," NA, No. 2/1970.

46. On Paulo Freire's method, see: Paulo Freire, Educacion como practica de libertad (Tierra Nueva, Montevideo, 1969). See also Felipe Berryman, "Conscientizacion y religiosidad popular," in Vispera, no. 12.

47. See Luis Alberto Gomes de Souza "Christianismo y Marxismo," a conference given at the Encuentro latinoamericano del movimiento de la juventud agraria y rural catolica (mimeo., Stgo., 1969).