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# 1966 Proceedings of the Eleventh World Methodist Conference

World Methodist Council

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Max W. Woodward

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# PROCEEDINGS OF THE ELEVENTH WORLD METHODIST CONFERENCE

Including the meetings of the
World Methodist Council
and the
World Federation of Methodist Women

Edited by
LEE F. TUTTLE
and
MAX W. WOODWARD

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#### PART ONE

#### ASSEMBLY OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF METHODIST WOMEN 1966

#### SOUTHLANDS COLLEGE, WIMBLEDON, SURREY

THEME: TO KNOW CHRIST AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

#### Wednesday, 10th August

- 4.00 p.m. Tea
- 4.45 p.m. Meeting of Executive Committee
- 7.00 p.m. Dinner
- 8.00 p.m. Meeting of Executive Committee

Closing Devotions: Mrs C. R. STEPHENSON, Area

President, South Africa

9.45 p.m. Refreshments

#### Thursday, 11th August

- 8.30 a.m. Breakfast
- 9.45 a.m. Opening Prayers, Mrs Gundersen, Norway Meeting of Executive Committee
- 11.00 a.m. Coffee Break
- 11.30 a.m. Meeting of Executive Committee closed by Mrs T. Otto Nall, U.S.A.
  - 1.00 p.m. Lunch
  - 2.00 p.m. Registration of Delegates and Full-time Visitors
  - 4.00 p.m. Tea
  - 5.30 p.m. Welcome and Information Session. Chairman: MRs Frank H. Anderson, Area President, United Kingdom.
  - 7.00 p.m. Dinner
- 8.00 p.m. Opening Service, Introductions and Welcome, President's Message. Mrs Ray J. Latham (Australia), President.

DR DOROTHY H. FARRAR (United Kingdom), Vice-President.

Procession of Units

9.45 p.m. Refreshments

#### Friday, 12th August

**8.00**-

8.20 a.m. Fellowship of Prayer. Bible passages: Psalm 98, Ephesians 1: 3-14. Leader: Mrs F. I. Fowode, Area President, West Africa.

8.30 a.m. Breakfast

9.15-

10.00 a.m. Bible Study, 'To know Christ and to make Him known.'
I Salvation, DR MORNA HOOKER

10.00 a.m. Business Session

11.00 a.m. Coffee Break

11.30 a.m.-

12.30 p.m. Lecture: DR MADELEINE BAROT, World Council of Churches. 'Women in the Church of the 1960's.'

1.00 p.m. Lunch

4.00 p.m. Tea

4.45 -

6.00 p.m. Commissions for Delegates.

I The Reconciliation of Separated People

Leader: Mrs Ryrie Smith, Canada

Co-Leaders: Mrs E. S. Cooper, Liberia and

MRS COLLIN, Sweden

Recorder: Mrs S. Gordon Wilson, Ireland

II Recruitment and Training of Women for Church Work

Leader: Miss Marion Derby, U.S.A.

Co-Leader: MRS OCERA, Philippines

Recorder: SISTER GLADYS COOK, Guvana

III The Next Few Years—the functioning of W.F.M.W.

Leader: Miss Florence Chen, Area Presi-

dent, East Asia

Co-Leader: Mrs Myra Pfeiffer, Area Vice-

President, U.S.A.

Recorder: Mrs Dorothy Shaw, Rhodesia

IV Knowing Christ through Prayer

Leader: MISS PAULINE WEBB, U.K.

Co-Leader: Mrs Kelera Tukituku, Fiji

Recorder: Mrs Nathaniel Bedford, U.S.A.

(C.M.E.)

4.45-

6.00 p.m. 'Women of my Church' (Visitors' Session)

Chairman: MRS ODETTE DE BARBIERI, Area Presi-

dent, Latin America

MRS ATSUMI KUME, Fraternal Delegate,

Japan

MRS WONG TSOK, Hong Kong MISS BEATRICE WILSON, Canada

7.00 p.m. Dinner

8.00 -

9.15 p.m. Business and Closing Prayer. Mrs Eileen Mackinnon,

Canada

9.45 p.m. Refreshments

#### Saturday, 13th August

8.00 -

8.20 a.m. Fellowship of Prayer. Bible Passages: Micah 6: 6-8,

Philippians 1: 27–3: 15.

Leader: Mrs Clarence P. Jackson, Area Presi-

dent, North America

8.30 a.m. Breakfast

9.15-

10.00 a.m. Bible Study, 'To know Christ and to make Him known.'
II Obedience Dr. Morna Hooker

10.00-

11.00 a.m. Business

11.00 a.m. Coffee Break

11.30- Reconciliation in the Church. Dr Dorothy McCon-

12.45 a.m. NELL and Panel of speakers.

1.00 p.m. Lunch

4.00-

6.00 p.m. Reception and Tea. Park Lane Church, Wembley

7.00 p.m. Dinner

8.00-

9.15 p.m. Commissions. Closing with Prayer

8.00-

9.15 p.m. 'Any questions.' (Visitors' Session).

Chairman: Mrs T. M. Morrow, U.K.

Panel: Mrs F. D. Jordan, U.S.A. (A.M.E.)

MISS ZILLAH SOULE, India MRS W. S. PIDGEON, Australia MRS SIKAKANE, SOUTH Africa

9.45 p.m. Refreshments

#### Sunday, 14th August

8.00-

8.20 a.m. Fellowship of Prayer. Leader: Mrs Ernst Scholz, Ex-President, Germany

8.30 a.m. Breakfast

9.15-

10.00 a.m. 'To know Christ through Worship.' Dr Georgia Harkness, U.S.A.

10.30 a.m. Coffee

11.00 -

12.00 noon Morning Worship. Preacher: REV. DR MALDWYN L. EDWARDS, Chairman of Cardiff and Swansea District, Wales

1.00 p.m. Lunch

2.00 -

4.00 p.m. Rest

4.00 p.m. Tea

f 4.30-

5.45 p.m. Commission Groups for Study or Prayer

4.30-

5.45 p.m. President's Hour. (Visitors' Session).

6.45 p.m. Dinner

8.30-

9.30 p.m. Informal Hymn Singing. Conductor: Mrs H. C. Mantripp, U.K.

9.45 p.m. Refreshments

#### Monday, 15th August

8.00 -

8.20 a.m. Fellowship of Prayer. Bible Passages: Psalm 22: 1-11, Mark 8: 11-33
Leader: Mrs Juanita Beckles, Area Vice-President,

Latin America

8.30 a.m. Breakfast

9.15 -

10.00 a.m. Bible Study. 'To know Christ and to make Him known.'
III Faith DR MORNA HOOKER

10.00 -

11.00 a.m. Election of Officers and Reports

11.00 a.m. Coffee

11.30 -

12.45 p.m. Lecture by REV. PHILIP A. POTTER, M.Th. World Council of Churches. 'Making Christ known in a World of Conflict'.

1.00 p.m. Lunch

2.30 p.m. 'Women of my Church'

Chairman: Miss Chanda Christdas, Area Presi-

dent, East Asia

Mrs Grace Igwe, Nigeria

DR PATROCINIO OCAMPO, Philippines

4.00 p.m. Tea

6.45 p.m. Dinner

7.45 p.m. Music for You—Orpington Methodist Singers

Conductor: Mrs Evelyn Jenkins

Liturgical Drama: 'The Tree of Life'. Drawn up by DOROTHY H. FARRAR

9.45 p.m. Refreshments

#### Tuesday, 16th August

8.00 -

8.20 a.m. Fellowship of Prayer. Bible Passages: Psalm 22: 22-28, Romans 10: 1-15

Leader: Mrs Winifred Dudley, New Zealand

8.30 a.m. Breakfast

9.15 -

10.00 a.m. Bible Study. 'To know Christ and to make Him known'.

IV Witness. DR MORNA HOOKER

11.00 a.m. Coffee

11.30 -

12.45 p.m. Business and Reports.

1.00 p.m. Lunch

5.00 p.m. High Tea

7.00 p.m. WESLEY'S CHAPEL. COVENANT SERVICE

INDUCTION OF NEW OFFICERS HOLY COMMUNION

Leader: BISHOP CORSON, President of The World Methodist Council assisted by Visiting Ministers. Charge to be given by: DR DOROTHY H. FARRAR

Refreshments on return

#### Wednesday, 17th August

8.00 a.m. Breakfast

ONE DAY CONFERENCE ON FAMILY LIFE at Kingsway Hall, London, W.C.2

Departure of those not going to this Conference.

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF METHODIST WOMEN HELD AT SOUTHLANDS COLLEGE, WIMBLEDON, LONDON 11th-16th AUGUST, 1966

This was attended by some 250 women, 87 of whom were official delegates from 55 countries.

The theme for the Assembly was the Aim of the Federation itself— 'To Know Christ and to make Him Known'.

Dr Morna Hooker led the sessions of Bible Study each morning and in expounding the theme based her studies on (1) Salvation, (2) Obedience, (3) Faith, (4) Witness. These were stimulating and thought provoking, and did much to prepare the way for the work of the day. On the Sunday morning the Bible Study was led by Dr Georgia Harkness of the U.S.A. on the theme 'To Know Christ Through Worship'.

Morning Worship in the beautiful Assembly Hall was a time of enrichment and inspiration. The service was conducted by Dr Maldwyn Edwards, an Ex-President of the British Conference. His sermon, on 'The Danger of Supposing' was based on three lines of thought (1) Supposing Him to be the Gardener, (2) Supposing Him to be a Spirit, (3) Supposing Him to be of the Company, will be remembered for a very long time. Another inspirational highlight of the Assembly was the Liturgical Drama based on the Federation symbol, 'The Tree of Life' drawn up by Dr Dorothy Farrar and presented by members of the Assembly.

The two lectures were a valuable contribution to the programme, giving added depth in thought and concern. Both from the World Council of Churches Dr Madeleine Barot lectured on 'Women in the Church of the 1960's' and the Rev. Philip A. Potter on 'Making Christ Known in a World of Conflict'. Naming some of the conflicts as those between the Generations, Sexes, Classes, Races, Nations, Mr. Potter indicated some of the special gifts women could bring to the healing of these.

There was a strong emphasis in the Assembly upon the growing unity of the Church and the need to support ecumenical activity. Dr. Dorothy McConnell of the U.S.A. led a session on this, addresses were given and questions answered by Miss Helen Roberts of the Anglican Church and Miss Pauline Webb, both of Great Britain.

Delegates were engaged in work, study and discussion in four Commissions—(1) The Reconciliation of Separated People. (2) Recruitment and Training of Women for Church Work. (3) The Next Few Years—The functioning of the World Federation of Methodist Women. (4) Knowing Christ through Prayer. The outcome of these discussions was given in a series of Resolutions which will form the Programme of the Federation for the next five years. These will be published in the official Federation Handbook.

Running concurrently with these sessions for delegates were the Visitors Sessions. Women from many countries took part in these,

sharing experiences, problems, opportunities, some producing lively debate.

The Business of the Federation was conducted with vigour. Mrs Latham reported on her activities as President and it was obvious that the Federation owes much to her tireless efforts, constant travel and deep sincerity of purpose. Mrs Nall of the U.S.A.—as Secretary—had her finger on the pulse of all the Federation's activities, and Mrs MacKinnon, of Canada, presented the accounts with clarity. Contributions from the Units had come in very well and though there had been a heavy demand for grants towards the travel of delegates to the Assembly, she had been able to meet these. Delegates reported on the activities of their Units-55 in all. Four Units had been unable to send a delegate and these were remembered with special affection. It was a source of real pleasure, and a moving moment, when HUNGARY was welcomed into the fellowship of the Federation as the 60th Unit. An invitation was gratefully accepted from the Women's Division of the Board of Mission of the Methodist Church in the U.S.A. to send a woman to serve as a Seminar Assistant at an In-Service Training Programme at the Methodist Office for the United Nations in New York. Mrs. Annie Musunga of the Congo was appointed for the first year and others will follow.

Officers elected for the ensuing Quinquennium were:

President: Dr Patrocinio Ocampo, Vice-President: Mrs. E. S. Cooper, Treasurer: Mrs A. B. Pfeiffer, Secretary: Mrs Winifred Dudley.

Here is a true alliance of East and West—the Philippines, Liberia, U.S.A. and New Zealand. Presidents for the nine Areas were also elected and these form the Executive Committee.

The one social occasion was a reception given by the 'Central Committee for Women's Church Work' of Great Britain, on behalf of the women of the Church. This was in the beautiful new church at Park Lane, Wembley.

The Assembly closed with a Covenant Service at Wesley's Chapel led by Bishop Corson, assisted by ministers from several countries. Dr Dorothy Farrar—the retiring Vice-President—gave the Address.

Tribute must be paid to the Bursar and staff of Southlands College for the very generous and willing service given. The Assembly gained much by being residential and the beauty of the surroundings added to the fellowship enjoyed by all.

Dorothy G. Mantripp

### WORLD FEDERATION OF METHODIST WOMEN PRESIDENT'S REPORT, 1961–1966

#### by Mrs Freer Latham

The time has come for me to pass on the torch of the W.F.M.W. to my successor. This I do gladly with deep gratitude for the spiritual blessings received during this term of office, for the unexpected open 'doors of opportunity', and particularly for the inspiration of Christians round the world whose 'lives are the sacrament of their message'.

I wish to record my gratitude to the Australasian Church for the loyal, prayerful support and loving encouragement right through the quinquennium.

#### Officers

Teamwork has been the basis of all our endeavours. I pay tribute to: MRS T. OTTO NALL (Secretary) who, in co-operation with the publishers, Mrs Le Roy Stiffler and Mrs. Robert L. Owens, has faithfully produced the fine *Newsletter* each quarter. Because of her wide experience, ability, initiative and dedication, she has been able from 'behind the scenes' to help each one of us officers in our endeavours to do a worthy task.

DR DOROTHY FARRAR (Vice-President) who, as our spiritual leader has inspired us all. We have all come to look forward eagerly to the series, 'Thinking on our Knees', which has proved to be a vital part of our

#### Newsletters.

MRS JOHN Y. MACKINNON (Treasurer) whose ability in that office is unquestionable. She has done a thorough task. Her colleagues have come to appreciate and enjoy her fine Christian qualities, and to respect her other gifts of Christian leadership.

MRS. LUISE SCHOLZ (Past-President). At Oslo, in 1961, when I was overwhelmed at the thought of the task ahead of me, I was befriended by our beloved colleague, Mrs. Luise Scholz. At her invitation I visited her home in Berlin. She told and showed me all she could about the office of 'President', but we both realized that the only path for me, as she had proved for herself, would be according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It was a benediction to have the assurance of the prayers and true

It was a benediction to have the assurance of the prayers and true friendship of Dr and Mrs Ernst Scholz.

#### Area Presidents and Vice-Presidents

I feel that we have a good, workable system in our Area divisions. When opportunities came to visit Areas, it was of considerable help to contact the Area President who invariably worked out an itinerary or plan for me to meet as many members as possible, and profitably to use the available time.

I pay tribute to the fine work of Mrs Clarence P. Jackson, Sra Odette O'de Barbieri, Sra Juanita Beckles, Mrs A. B. Pfeiffer, Miss Chanda Christdas, Miss Lydia Wehrli, Mrs Frank H. Anderson and Mrs H. H. Trigge, whom I met in their own countries; to Mrs F. I. Fowode, whom I met at Executive Meetings in New York and Jamaica; and to Mrs C. R. Stephenson, Miss Florence Chen, Mrs Astrid Gundersen and Mrs R. Dudley, with whom I have had consistent correspondence.

#### Present Position

In 1961 we had 52 Units in 47 countries. These numbers have grown to 59 Units in 54 countries. The new units are Pakistan, Italy, Tonga, Fiji, Samoa, Dahomey-Toga and Sierra Leone.

#### World Methodist Council

When the W.F.M.W. became affiliated with the W.M.C. at Junaluska in 1956, it was given representation on the W.M.C. Executive Committee which meets annually in different parts of the world. To this Executive Committee the president of the W.F.M.W. submits an annual report. This I have done. At the first two meetings Dr Dorothy Farrar kindly deputized for me, but I was personally able to present the report at Jamaica, in October, 1964 and at Stockholm in August, 1965.

#### United Nations

Although we have not as yet succeeded in obtaining accreditation for the W.F.M.W., steps have been taken which are leading us towards that goal. For the first time W.F.M.W. had a representative at the United Nations Status of Women Commission which met in Teheran, Iran, 1st-19th March, 1965. Mrs P. R. Michael, Official Correspondent of the nearest Unit, Pakistan, ably represented us.

The U.N.I.C.E.F. Executive Meeting, preceded by a workshop for African women, is to be held from 15th–28th May, 1966, at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Representatives of the W.F.M.W. from two Units (Liberia and Sierra Leone) will have the wonderful opportunity of being part of a delegation from the Commission of Churches on International Affairs. Possibilities for increasing the interests of women in various Units of the World Federation in the things which the United Nations is doing, are opening up continually; and this is of great help to women of many countries, particularly those in the developing ones.

We are indebted to Mrs Margaret Bender and Dr Dorothy McConnell for keeping us informed of these developments and alerting us to the available 'open doors'.

#### Relevance of W.F.M.W.

We believe the W.F.M.W. was brought into being 'for such a time as this', at the outbreak of World War II in 1939. To match the 'present age', the constitution was adjusted at Junaluska in 1956 and again at Oslo in 1961, so that now United Churches may be included. I believe that the W.F.M.W. is wide awake to the 'signs of the times' and is a living, vital, growing fellowship.

#### Pictures of Areas Visited

With this conviction in my heart, all my visits to the Areas have been times of confident expectancy.

I am not attempting to give reports of the Areas, as these will be given by the Presidents themselves, but I wish to try and give a brief picture of some of the groups in which I participated.

(The Area Presidents and Official Correspondents of the Units have kept us well informed through the *Newsletters*. It is thrilling to read through these *Newsletters* and share in spirit in the activities of our women—in their triumphs and in their adversities).

#### Executive Meetings

The geographical position of Australia has been advantageous in world travel.

Circumstances made it possible for us to have Executive Meetings during the quinquennium, at Chicago (1963), New York (1964), Stockholm (1965).

At each meeting the available officers attended, and most of those unable to be present, I contacted on my return journey.

#### West Africa (Area President-Mrs F. I. Fowode)

In October, 1961, I visited Accra, Ghana. What a welcome! Mrs Noom, President of the Women's Fellowship, and sixty of the members were at the airport. What a delightful picture they made in their spotless, white uniforms, blue head gear and distinctive 'W.F.' pins! We had a short time of fellowship before separating for our respective homes on the understanding that we were to meet later for a 'Tea Party' and meeting. This had been prearranged thanks to the loving forethought of Miss Muriel Stennett (former W.F.M.W. Secretary), who had advised Mrs Noom of my intended visit.

Rev. F. C. F. Grant (President), the District Superintendent, young Ministers and local Church officers joined with us all in the fellowship meeting. We felt that 'Co-operation of Men and Women in the Church', was a reality in this part of the world.

Official Correspondent, Sister Irene Morrow, was absent in the country, but the members spoke in glowing terms of her progressive work among them.

I spent valuable time with Mrs. Noom, who told me of their own missionfield—the north of Ghana. The method of work, plans and programmes of our Ghanian sisters are considerable.

We shall hear first hand of the working out of God's plan for the 30,000 Methodist Women in Ghana, of which 6,000 are members of the Women's Fellowship, from Mrs Noom herself, for she has been elected as delegate to the Assembly.

#### South Africa (Area President—Mrs C. R. Stephenson)

After leaving Ghana we linked up with our folk in Johannesburg. Mrs Webb (wife of the President) arranged a meeting for me to meet executive representatives from the Southern Transvaal Women's Auxiliary, the Manyano (African Section) from which are recruited the Bible Women, the Coloured Women's Association and the Country Women's Secretary. Having previously met, in Oslo, Mrs Mokitimi and Mrs Fourie, who represent two of these groups, I felt immediately at home with these folk.

I was privileged to visit Pretoria, where the President of the Women's Auxiliary had gathered another representative group.

Rev. J. Wallace, Superintendent Minister of the Johannesburg African Circuit, took us many miles to see one of the African townships, and meet the African Ministers and their wives, and some of the Church members. We appreciated the warm hospitality extended to us.

#### Natal

Former Area President, Mrs H. Haley, invited us to Durban for a week, in which she endeavoured to show us every aspect of the Church work. She made it possible for me to meet groups from each of the Units. It was a special joy to share in a Manyano meeting chaired by Mrs Sikakane.

One of the highlights was a visit into the interior of Natal, travelling in a one-engined, four-seater plane, to visit Manguzi Hospital in Maputuland, the home of the Zulus. Here Dr Prigga and Matron (his wife) were

caring for primitive Africans. It was a revelation to visit such well caredfor patients and to meet such a fine group of nurses-in-training in such a remote rural area.

In Durban, among other places, we visited Cato Manor, and then Kwa-Ma'shu. Such a difference!

Christ and His Church are in the midst—in every section, in every aspect of Africa. God help us to pray for Africa according to His will.

Latin America (Area President, Sra Odette O'de Barbieri).

How can I possibly get across to you all the wonder, the inspiration and the challenge of the Quadrennial Confederation of Latin America, held in Mexico City, 19th–27th January, 1963? There were over 40 delegates from nine Latin American countries.

I was welcomed at the airport by Sra Celia O. de Hernandez and Sra Rebecca M. de Perez, who I had never met before, but to whom I was strangely drawn at first sight. From the moment of meeting, I, a traveller from 'down under' (as all facetiously refer to Australia) felt completely at home. For the 10 days I spent at Laura Temple in Mexico City I felt part of the Christian family.

As I listened to the addresses on the theme, 'The Ministry of Reconciliation', I was convicted and challenged to return to the Cross to meet again Jesus Christ, the Reconciler. During the course of the Conference I was alerted to the fact that the members of the Christian Church in this area are aware of the tremendous forces of evil working, not only in their own countries, but in the world at large, and were together seeking God's guidance for definite plans to combat the problems.

Sra Celia O. de Hernandez will be the delegate to the London Assembly. (Should you need a Spanish-English interpreter, do not go past missionaries, Joyce Hill and Josephine Laskey. I heartily commend them.)

#### Tulsa

My first experience of an American Jurisdictional Conference was at Tulsa, Oklahoma. Never have I experienced such near-perfection in preparation and presentation combined with dedication and devotion.

The reaction to the Meditation which preceded the final Communion Service was thoughtful re-reading of the Gospels. The Pastor reminded us that

Christ's message in MARK is to PERSONS
Christ's message in MATTHEW is to NATIONS
Christ's message in LUKE is to ALL PEOPLES

Christ's message in JOHN is for TIME AND ETERNITY

North America: Area President—Mrs Clarence P. Jackson Area Vice-President—Mrs A. B. Pfeiffer

God has His own way of opening doors. The invitation to share in the Rock River Semi-Annual Conference on 25th January, 1963, brought me from Mexico City right into U.S.A. Between that date and 8th and 9th March (the time planned for an executive meeting in Chicago), it was made possible for me to visit our women in 10 States. One of the highlights of the Rock River Conference was the opportunity for association with our beloved first President, Mrs Thomas Nicholson. I yearned to gain from her something of her spiritual discernment and vision. At our meeting she impressed on me, 'Always remember our primary purpose—To Know Christ and to Make Him Known.'

#### Kentucky

After Tulsa came Louisville, Kentucky. Here my colleague, Dr Abbie Jackson, 'took over'. She, with her co-workers, had drawn up a comprehensive schedule for the fortnight I was to spend in this area. It was their great desire that I should get an insight into the work of this area with its great potential and evidence of achievement, as the challenges peculiar to this part of the world were faced. Many honours were graciously bestowed on the 'office' which I held, including the Key to the City of Louisville, and the privilege (unique for a woman) of offering the prayer in the House of Representatives.

À highlight was the privilege of sharing with Dr Abbie Jackson, at the gracious invitation of Dr Ted Hightower, in the Race Relations Observance in the St. Paul's Methodist Church.

The World Day of Prayer became even more meaningful to me as I shared in three different services, at different hours, with my Louisville sisters.

#### Florida

It was a privilege to visit Bethune-Cookman College at Daytona Beach, Florida, for the 20th Annual Meeting of the Central Jurisdiction.

A great challenge was presented to the 73 delegates, 15 Jurisdiction officers and three Board Members of the W.S.C.S. as the theme, 'Our Mission Today' was unfolded. We were inspired and encouraged by the Jurisdiction President of the W.S.C.S., Mrs Louis H. Fields, as her subject 'Factors that Confront Us', came alive. 'Although the wrong is "awful" strong, God is ruler yet', rang out, and the last statement enthused us all confidently to follow the Master as He spoke to our hearts.

In the Holy Communion 212 communicants participated. In the preceding meditation, Dr Murray lovingly impressed upon us all to realize our inestimable value to our Creator. He entreated us to be ourselves because, as God never created two persons alike, each one of us has a special place in God's plan for His world in this age.

#### **Indianapolis**

In the light of the knowledge of 'Race Relations' gained from my close association with my colleague and friend, Dr Abbie Jackson, it was a high moment to be again associated with her at the Annual Conference of the North Central Jurisdiction held in Indianapolis on 14th–16th October, 1964. The highlight of the Conference was the Service of Welcome for the members of the former Lexington Conference which had merged with the North Central Jurisdiction. (Another positive step towards complete integration). It was a thrilling moment when the officers of the former Lexington Conference were introduced and brought forward to the Communion rail, where they were joined by Conference Presidents of the North Central Jurisdiction in a ceremony of welcome and fellowship. All joined in a standing ovation and singing of 'Blest be the tie that binds'.

The final meeting of the Conference, in the form of a World Federation Banquet, was a time of heart-warming fellowship when some 750 shared in the experiences of missionaries from South America, Burma and Korea.

Splendid team-work, under the guidance of President, Mrs Paul Spencer, resulted in much information, inspiration and blessing for many people, to be further shared in local situations on the return home of the delegates.

#### Fort Dodge

Dr and Mrs Tomkins drove 90 miles in a snow storm at night to collect me at Des Moines because the weather prevented the plane from landing at Fort Dodge. On the day of the meeting there was a terrific snow storm—twelve inches of snow, I heard someone say—yet there was a fine attendance and the fellowship was rich indeed.

'Friendship Haven Garden', home to so many Senior Citizens, is justly proud of its tireless pastor, Dr Charles Tomkins.

#### Hawaii

The interracial character of Hawaiian Methodism has to be experienced to be appreciated. No race prejudice in these glorious islands! Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Samoans, Caucasians and many others are all equally at home. Originally congregations were established for language groups, but now, as English becomes the language most used, linguistic distinctions are fading.

I was impressed by a Korean pastor who told us that students coming from Korea to Honolulu for education were potential leaders. He said, 'We have to work hard to lead them to Christ, not be satisfied with just Church attendance. If they return to Korea as Christians, this is a truly great work.'

W.S.C.S. members Mrs Mary Komuro and Mrs Loren Steiner opened

the way for contacts with many of our members.

#### Canada

To meet with our members of the United Church in Canada was an unexpected highlight. Realizing that the trend in the world today is 'unity' in the truest meaning of the word, we are all vitally interested in the practical working out of all phases of unification. I am grateful to Mrs Mackinnon, our World Treasurer, and to the Officers of the Women's Board and United Church Women of Canada, for their co-operation as I endeavoured to gain a picture of the working procedure of the United Church. Again I had cause to thank our Master for the common meeting ground of Christian women in the W.F.M.W. which acknowledges no barriers.

#### Alaska

I am indebted to Mrs Elva Scott, member of the Women's Division and President of the Anchorage W.S.C.S. for making the five days I spent in Alaska so profitable.

In Anchorage, Nome (American Methodist Church farthest West) Fairbanks (American Methodist Church farthest North) Seward and

Kenai I met groups of our women.

It was a wonderful experience to have fellowship with our Eskimo sisters and brethren in Nome. Dr and Mrs Coate and Miss Esther McCoy, director of the Lovinia Wallace Community Centre, made it possible for me to see many aspects of the work, including the Maynard-McDougall Memorial Hospital and the Betez Vocational College, which is a branch of the University of Alaska situated in Fairbanks. Opportunity was given for me to have a long talk with two of the oldest Methodist Eskimos, Mr and Mrs Nagoznik. Mr Nagoznik told me of the fine work of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He told me how wonderfully the director of the Community Centre co-operates with all the agencies in the community that promote the welfare of the people. I was especially interested to learn that Mr Nagoznik (now a retired school-teacher) takes a Senior Bible Class at Church on Sunday mornings in the Eskimo language. We can well understand that here, as in many of our own countries, the English language is soon learned by the children at school, but the older folk find it very difficult (sometimes too difficult) to learn another language.

I was interested to learn that the University of Alaska in Fairbanks provides some of the finest facilities in the world for studying, among other things, the Arctic and Permafrost (earth 18 inches to three feet below surface of the earth permanently frozen).

From the Rev. Mr Randall of the A.M.E. Church I learned of the fine fellowship enjoyed by all students at the 'Wesley Foundation', associated with the University in Fairbanks. This fellowship is indicative of the Christian spirit in evidence throughout the Alaskan Church.

#### Jamaica

The President of the Conference, Rev. Hugh Sherlock, is affectionately referred to by the Jamaicans as 'father', for he is a beloved and loving 'shepherd' of his 'flock'.

To see the Rev. Mr Blake and Sister Julia at the Clinic and School was a revelation. 'Operation Friendship', as the project is called, was 'born' to aid the 70,000 to 80,000 Rastafarians and help them to become socially integrated.

I realized afresh the privilege that is ours to have Deaconess Dorothy Farrar as a colleague and co-worker in our great fellowship. With her we visited Deaconess House, and the evident Christian bond between Sister Dorothy and the Deaconesses in residence was heart-warming. Girls 15–21 years are given a nine months' training course for domestic service. As you can imagine these trained Christian girls are in great demand in the community.

Sister Elsie Bemand, the first West Indian Deaconess, is our Official Correspondent in Jamaica.

#### West Asia (Area President-Miss Chanda Christdas)

A highlight of my visit to Bombay was an open-air tea-party at which I met representatives from 20 groups of our Indian women. Area President, Miss Chanda Christdas, exercised much faith when she organized this unique and splendid gathering, for some of her colleagues prophesied that the blackbirds would reach the afternoon tea before us. However, her faith was rewarded, for this did not happen. I appreciated, with my colleague, Miss Christdas, the warm co-operation of Bishop Singh and Mrs Singh, who shared in our meeting. It was an inspiration to me to note the high esteem in which Miss Christdas is held among her own people.

It was most enlightening to learn of the programmes and unique methods that Miss Christdas adopts in conveying ideas and information to members in the developing areas. Fellowship with our Indian sisters was rich indeed.

#### East Asia (Area President-Miss Florence Chen)

#### Hong Kong

A veritable fairyland! That is Hong Kong from the plane by night. By day it is equally fascinating to cross Kowloon to Hong Kong island on the ferry. But what of the people? As one looks with astonishment and unbelieving awe at the hillsides (masses of shacks with no roads and no 'breathing spaces') and then at the huge block after block of 'resettlement apartments', one can just gasp, 'So much to be done!' Yet, when one has met such Christian 'Giants' as Missionaries Alice Dickinson, Louise Avett, and Katherine Ward and other English and American missionaries and their wives, and when one has seen the work of Dr Timothy and Mrs Chow and the Rev and Mrs Wong and their wonderful colleagues, one is

astounded at what is being done. It is just amazing what is being done on the roof-tops that are set aside for education, recreation and culture. Our concern and prayers are for them all in their colossal task.

Mrs Wong is to be a delegate to the 1966 Assembly.

#### **Philippines**

It was a wonderful experience to visit the first Asian nation to gain its independence—the Philippines. Here I was made aware of the great blessing brought to the World Church by the American Crusade Scholarship Programme. No fewer than 60 scholars went from the Philippines and now the home church is feeling the benefit, for many are serving in positions of leadership. At the time of my visit, several of the doctors in the Mary Johnson Hospital were Crusade Scholars, as also was the President of the Harris Memorial School for Deaconess training.

We remember with much pleasure the fine fellowship we have had over the years with Mrs M. Valencia and Miss Saturnina Lara.

Mrs Elisa Ocera and Dr Pat Ocampo will be at the 1966 Assembly.

#### Japan

Although the Japanese Church women are not officially affiliated with the W.F.M.W., we are one in Spirit and they share in our aim 'To Know Christ and to Make Him Known'.

I was warmly welcomed into the fellowship of the Japanese Church by members of the Women's Commission of the Kyodan (United Church of Christ). The dedicated leaders of the 'Kyodan', a number of whom have studied overseas, are well aware of changing world trends and are working to keep the women in the local churches informed, with the help of specially prepared, relevant study books.

The progress of the Japanese nation over the last decade has been fantastic. I was told that there is no unemployment in this country of 100,000,000 citizens.

Education in Japan is compulsory up to and including Junior High School. The Government provides adequate schools and facilities for the Elementary and Junior High Stages, at the end of which there is a difficult competitive examination, for there are insufficient High Schools and Junior and Senior Colleges to follow. In this area of education Church schools are needed.

I was interested to learn that the government, during the war, had obliged the Protestant Churches to unite. After the war some of the denominations had withdrawn, feeling that they could serve better alone. However the majority had remained in the Kyodan, which is the largest Protestant Church in that country. The Christian Church is less than one-sixth of one per cent of the Japanese population!

We look forward to fellowship with fraternal delegate, Mrs Atsumi Kuma, at the 1966 Assembly.

Europe: (Area President—Miss Lydia Wehrli)
(Area Vice-President—Mrs Astrid Gundersen)

#### Switzerland

Miss Lydia Wehrli arranged for me to meet the members of the Women's Executive at Zurich. The dedication and devotion of our Swiss Sisters to their Church and Christian commitments is very evident. I appreciated the time given by 'former missionaries' to acquaint me with Bethany Hospital (with its most modern equipment) and the work of the deaconesses of whom there are 270 in Switzerland.

Miss Wehrli has done a fine work in difficult situations, which we all appreciate.

Mrs Ruth Bickel is to be the delegate at the 1966 Assembly.

Italy

In 1963, at the gracious invitation of the Standing Committee of the Italian Church, I visited Milan before proceeding on to Rome, as I had planned. I was deeply grateful to President Sbaffi and Rev. Alfredo Scorsonelli for making it possible for me to meet with the Methodist women in both cities, in executive and open meetings.

After my return home it was a great joy to receive the news that the Methodist women in Italy had 'organized their work in a Conference Committee'. This meant that they were now united and could affiliate with the W.F.M.W. on a National basis.

It was a joy to visit Rome on my return from Stockholm last year (1965) and make contact with Official Correspondent, Miss Saida Papini, whom we shall meet at the 1966 Assembly.

#### United Kingdom Area President-Mrs Margaret Anderson

To be able to confer with Vice-President Dr Dorothy Farrar at Executive Meetings in New York, Jamaica and Stockholm, as in England, during the quinquennium has been inexpressibly helpful.

After the meeting with available officers at Chicago in 1963, where we began tentative plans for the 1966 Assembly, I returned home via London, for the purpose of keeping an appointment with Mrs Anderson and Mrs Wilson who flew from Belfast to meet me. Together we considered the suggestions from the Chicago meeting which had been based on contributions from a questionnaire which had been previously sent to all Areas. On that visit opportunity was given to meet a number of our British colleagues at a tea at the Mission House.

Before the Stockholm meeting in 1965 it was most encouraging to meet Mrs H. C. Mantripp and the London Steering Committee. We are fortunate indeed to have such a fine group of dedicated Christians preparing for the welfare of the delegates and visitors to the Assembly.

Dr Farrar had arranged with Mrs. Mantripp to show me over Southlands and Queensmere Colleges, the venue of our Assembly.

Australasia: Area President—Mrs H. H. Trigge Vice-President—Mrs R. Dudley

'What God hath wrought! It is marvellous in my eyes!'

Inspired by these words from Mrs. Thomas Nicholson, first President of the W.F.M.W., I set out to share in the Inaugural Conferences of the Pacific Churches.

During the first World War, a group of Fijians passed through America on their way to Europe. Concerned interest by Mrs Nicholson was felt for the people represented by these young men. In 1928 she met a Fijian Missionary at the International Missionary Council held in Jerusalem. Naturally she was keen to learn more of Fiji. She was moved to tell that missionary that she hoped that one day there would be a real World Federation, and that Fijian women would be members.

Imagine her joy when she read in the *Newsletter* that I was planning to attend the Inaugural Conferences both of Fiji and Samoa, and to visit the Tongan Church which has already become autonomous.

At each of the three great women's meetings held during our visits, I had the privilege and great joy of officially inviting each Church to become affiliated with the W.F.M.W.

During the quinquennium I have been able to share in meetings in each of our States, including Tasmania. Many opportunities have been given me to share in District Rallies, and thus get information through to our people.

#### The On-Going Task

Early in my term I was influenced by an article written by the late Mr Dag Hammerskjold, previous General Secretary of the United Nations. He wrote to the effect that in this present age of change and confusion (the Congo crisis was in the news) one must have the conviction that the particular work in which one is engaged, the particular path one is treading, is *right*. This made me turn my thoughts to the work in which I was engaged and seriously to ask myself the question, 'With so much stress on Unity and talk of organic Church Union, is the W.F.M.W. relevant for this time of transition?'

In this time of transition, many of the younger Churches (Ghana, Samoa, etc.) have become autonomous, and have become affiliated with the W.F.M.W. Although they have just become independent, they are in the era which is definitely *inter*-dependent. So we believe it is most valuable for them to be in the loving, helpful fellowship of the W.F.M.W. during this time of adjustment and development.

In the developing countries the gap between the highly educated and the illiterate is still great, though lessening. The great need in all our countries still is to get the 'whole of life' Message through to our people. Further ways of doing this are to be considered at the Assembly. For example, could Regional Conferences with preceding 'workshops' be part of the answer?

But, whatever the means to which the Holy Spirit may guide us, the set-up of the W.F.M.W. is indeed relevant to meet this world-wide need.

We are still in the period of transition even as we were at the beginning of the quinquennium. Whatever the situation—transitional or otherwise—God is still at work in His world as He always has been and always will be

The utterance of a Preacher some four years ago is still relevant: 'In these "explosion points" God is creating—He is carrying out His creative purposes.'

In 'The Faith of the Church', Karl Barth says: 'Wherefore callest thou Him, our Lord?

Because He hath redeemed us, both soul and body, from all our sins, not with gold or silver, but with His precious blood, and hath delivered us from all the power of the devil, and thus made us His own property.

Jesus Christ, our Lord. This is the secret of the Church's life. And this secret is plainly revealed in the Scripture which leads us day by day, situation after situation, through His Lordship.'

As Christ is indeed Lord—the secret of the Church's life—then our aim—'To Know Christ and to Make Him Known'—will be relevant as long as this world shall last.

#### PART TWO

### ELEVENTH WORLD METHODIST CONFERENCE

Westminster Central Hall, and Church House, Westminster, London, England

18th to 26th August, 1966

THEME: GOD IN OUR WORLD

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#### Secretary Emeritus:

Dr Elmer T. Clark, Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, U.S.A.

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Dr E. Benson Perkins, 38 Belle Walk, Moseley, Birmingham 13, England

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Rev. Rupert E. Davies

Dr John O. Gross

Rev. W. Frank Hambly

Miss Dorothy McConnell

Bishop Shot K. Mondol

Dr Harold Roberts

Bishop Herbert Bell Shaw

Rev. Wilfred Wade

Dr J. Vincent Watchorn

Dr J. B. Webb

and President and Secretaries ex-officio members.

#### WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Devotions: Rev. A. Raymond George

Groups: Rev. Wilfred Wade and Dr William C. Finch Sunday Plan (21st August): Dr A. Stanley Leyland

#### LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Mrs. R. Amies

Rev Christopher D. Bacon (Youth Conference)

Rev David Blatherwick (Registration)

Miss Nina Borelli (Groups)

Rev. John C. Bowmer (*Printing*)

Mr. Cecil Chilvers (Cashier)

Mrs Brian J. N. Galliers

Rev. George A. Groves (Hospitality)

Mr. H. H. Hartley (Souvenirs)

Rev Ronald W. C. Hoar (Hall Arrangements and Stewards)

Mrs H. C. Mantripp (World Federation of Methodist Women)

Mrs H. Trembath

Rev Max W. Woodward

Chairman of the Catering Committee: Mrs Maurice Barnett

#### OBSERVERS

who were present in the Council meetings

Rev J. Stephen Bremer, The Lutheran World Federation

Dr Laurence V. Kirkpatrick, World Convention of Churches of Christ

Lt.-Col. F. Griffin, The Salvation Army

Brigadier W. Watkins, The Salvation Army

Very Rev. Canon Anthony Hulme, Roman Catholic Church

Fr Michael Hurley, S.J., Roman Catholic Church

Mr Daniel Meaney, Roman Catholic Church

Rev. Dr Roy D. Whitehorn, World Presbyterian Alliance

Dr Ronald Goulding, Baptist World Alliance

Bishop and Mrs D. Ward Nichols, Reformed African Methodist Episcopal Church

Rev. Canon D. M. Paton, Anglican Church Rev. Canon E. W. Kemp, Anglican Church

Rev. Ralph F. G. Calder, International Congregational Council

Mr William D. Gould.

#### COUNTRIES AND CHURCHES REPRESENTED INCLUDED

United States of America Methodist American Methodist Episcopal American Methodist Episcopal Zion Christian Methodist Episcopal Evangelical United Brethren

Free Methodist

England Scotland Wales Ireland Austria Belgium Bulgaria

Czechoslovakia Denmark

Denmark Finland France Germany Italy Norway

Portugal Sweden Switzerland Yugoslavia

Poland

Algeria Congo Dahomey Gambia Ghana

Ivory Coast Kenya Liberia

Mozambique Nigeria Rhodesia Sierra Leone South Africa Tunisia Zambia

Australia Burma Ceylon Fiji Islands Hong Kong

India
Indonesia
Japan
Korea
Malaysia

New Zealand
Pakistan
Philippines
Samoa
Singapore

Taiwan
Tonga
Argentina
Bolivia
Brazil
Canada
Chile

Costa Rica
Cuba
Hawaii
Mexico
Panama
Uruguay
West Indies

Total number of those registering: 2,090.

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Dr George A. Butters, U.S.A.
Dr James Buxton, U.S.A.
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Rev. Kenneth Jeyanathan Chellappah,
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#### **DAILY PROGRAMME**

#### THEME: GOD IN OUR WORLD

#### THURSDAY, 18th AUGUST

3.00 p.m. Meeting of 1961/66 Executive Committee at the Central Hall, Westminster

7.00 p.m. Inaugural Meeting, Central Hall
President: BISHOP FRED PIERCE CORSON

Devotions conducted by the President of the British Methodist Conference, Rev. Douglas W. Thompson

#### Greetings brought by:

The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster: The Most Reverend John C. Heenan

The Bishop of Winchester: The RT REVEREND S. FALKNER ALLISON

The Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council: REVEREND DR NORMAN GOODALL

Presidential Address: Bishop Fred Pierce Corson

#### FRIDAY, 19th AUGUST

8.30 a.m. Holy Communion: in Conference Chapel at Central Hall

The Chairman of the Committee to arrange Devotions (The Rev. A. Raymond George), assisted by Bishop Reuben H. Mueller (E.U.B.), The Rev. Dr Harry V. Richardson, Bishop John W. Shungu (Congo), and The Rev. Reidar Skarung (Norway)

9.30 a.m. Council in Church House

Devotions: Rev. Setareki A. Tuilovoni, M.B.E.

(Fiji)

9.45 a.m. Council Meeting

9.30 a.m. Conference in Central Hall

REV. DR ERIC W. BAKER to preside

Devotions: THE REV. DR ERIC W. BAKER (U.K.)

9.45– 10.45 a.m. God's Purpose for the Church Dr William Strawson

11.00 a.m.–
12.00 noon Discipleship in this Age
Dr Finis Crutchfield

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2.30 p.m. Bible Study in the Bishop Partridge Hall, Church House Led by Rev. RUPERT E. DAVIES Galatians, Ch. 1. The Authentic Gospel

2.30-

4.00 p.m. Discussion Groups

For leaders and secretaries, place of meeting and questions for discussion, see pages 51-54

5.00-

6.00 p.m. Public Lecture in the Central Hall

PROFESSOR RUSSELL HINDMARSH

Modern Scientific Developments in the Light of Christian Faith

RISHOD SANTE UPEDTO RAPPIED to preside

BISHOP SANTE UBERTO BARBIERI to preside

7.30 p.m. Youth Meeting at Southlands College, Wimbledon

Unwillingly to Aldersgate—A Happening involving young people from around the world, and you

#### SATURDAY, 20th AUGUST

8.30 a.m. Holy Communion in Conference Chapel at Central Hall
The Chairman of the Committee to arrange Devotions (The Rev. A. Raymond George), assisted by Bishop Shot K. Mondol (Philippines),
Bishop H. Thomas Primm (A.M.E.), The Rev.
Edwin L. Taylor (Bahamas), and Bishop Lloyd C. Wicke (U.S.A.)

9.30 a.m. Council and Conference in Central Hall

BISHOP FRED P. CORSON to preside

Moderator: Dr J. B. Webb

Devotions: The Rev. Dr Maurice Barnett

(Westminster)

9.45 a.m.-

12.00 noon The Crisis in Human Relations

Introduced by Rev. Dr John H. Satterwhite and Mrs Renuka Somasekhar

2.00 -

2.30 p.m. Bible Study in the Bishop Partridge Hall, Church House Led by Rev. Rupert E. Davies Galatians, Ch. II. The Gospel in Conflict

2.30 -

4.00 p.m. **Discussion Groups** 

For leaders and secretaries, place of meeting and questions for discussion, see pages 51-54

7.30 p.m. Youth Meeting at Southlands College, Wimbledon

Unwillingly to Aldersgate—A Happening involving young people from around the world, and you

### SUNDAY, 21st AUGUST

10.30 a.m. Holy Communion with sermon, Wesley's Chapel

BISHOP FRED P. CORSON (President), assisted by THE REV. FRED S. DE SILVA (Ceylon), THE REV. G. HERBER DAVIES (Wesley's Chapel), THE REV. FRANCIS F. C. GRANT (Ghana), THE REV. CECIL F. GRIBBLE, O.B.E. (Australasia), BISHOP PAUL E. MARTIN (U.S.A.), THE REV. MARIO SBAFFI (Italy), THE REV. HUGH B. SHERLOCK, O.B.E., J.P. (Jamaica), and BISHOP PETER RANDOLPH SHY (C.M.E.)

6.30 p.m. Conference Service in Westminster Central Hall Preacher: BISHOP FRED P. CORSON

#### MONDAY, 22nd AUGUST

8.30 a.m. Holy Communion in Conference Chapel at Central Hall
The Chairman of the Committee to arrange Devotions (The Rev. A. Raymond George), assisted by Bishop Walter H. Amos (C.M.E.), The Rev. Ireneu da Silva Cunha (Portugal), The Rev. Ronnie Diong-Ming Goh (Malaysia), and Bishop Walter C. Gum (U.S.A.)

9.30 a.m. Council in Church House

Devotions: BISHOP ALEJANDRE RUIZ MUNOZ (Mexico)

9.45 a.m. Council Meeting

9.30 a.m. Conference in Central Hall

MRS R. J. LATHAM to preside

Devotions: BISHOP PRINCE A. TAYLOR, JR (U.S.A.)

9.45-

10.45 a.m. Christian values in an over-populated world
DR Jose MIGUEZ BONING

11.00 a.m.-

12.00 noon Is Christian Education different?
BISHOP GERALD ENSLEY

2.00-

2.30 p.m. Bible Study in the Bishop Partridge Hall, Church House Led by REV. RUPERT E. DAVIES Galatians, Ch. III. Law and the Gospel

2.30 -

4.00 p.m. Discussion Groups

For leaders and secretaries, place of meeting and questions for discussion, see pages 51-54

5.00 -

6.00 p.m. Public Lecture in the Central Hall

DR ALBERT OUTLER

What God is saying to us in Contemporary Theology
BISHOP IVAN LEE HOLT to preside

7.30 p.m. Youth Meeting at Southlands College, Wimbledon

Unwillingly to Aldersgate—A Happening involving
young people from around the world, and you

### TUESDAY, 23rd AUGUST

8.30 a.m. Holy Communion in Conference Chapel at Central Hall

The Chairman of the Committee to arrange Devotions (The Rev. A. Raymond George), assisted by The Rev. Dr Donald E. Demaray (Free Methodist), The Rev. J. C. Myusi (South Africa), and The Rev. P. C. Nyamukapa (Rhodesia), and The Rev. Dr Joseph Szczepkowski (Poland)

9.30 a.m. Council and Conference in Central Hall

Moderator: Dr Charles C. Parlin

Devotions: BISHOP S. DORME LARTEY (A.M.E.

Zion)

9.45 a.m.12.00 noon Methodism in the Ecumenical Movement

Introduced by The Rev. C. F. Gribble and Dr Harold Roberts

2.00 -

2.30 p.m. Bible Study in the Bishop Partridge Hall, Church House Led by Rev. Rupert E. Davies Galatians, Ch. IV. Faith and Freedom

2.30 -

4.00 p.m. **Discussion Groups** 

For leaders and secretaries, place of meeting and questions for discussion, see pages 51-54

#### WEDNESDAY, 24th AUGUST

8.30 a.m. Holy Communion in Conference Chapel at Central Hall
The Chairman of the Committee to arrange Devotions (The Rev. A. Raymond George), assisted by Bishop Oswaldo Dias da Silva (Brazil), Bishop James K. Mathews (U.S.A.), The Rev. Ronald S. Mng'ong'o (Kenya) and The Rev. Professor Park Pong Bae (Korea)

9.30 a.m. Council in Church House

Devotions: The Rev. ARTHUR R. WITHEFORD (New Zealand)

9.45 a.m. Council Meeting

9.30 a.m. Conference in Central Hall

BISHOP HERBERT BELL SHAW to preside Devotions: The Rev. SAMUEL J. JOHNSTON (Ireland)

9.45 -

10.45 a.m. The World of nations under the rule of God REV. COLIN M. MORRIS

11.00 a.m.-

12.00 noon God at work in an industrialized society
DR RANDOLPH NUGENT

2.00 -

2.30 p.m. Bible Study in the Bishop Partridge Hall, Church House Led by Rev. Rupert E. Davies Galations, Ch. V. Freedom and Licence

2.30 -

4.00 p.m. **Discussion Groups** 

For leaders and secretaries, place of meeting and questions for discussion, see pages 51-54

7.30 p.m. Central Hall

Festival of Praise

Led by The London Methodist Choir Conductor: Mr Clifford Harman, B.A., F.R.C.O.

Organist: DR W. S. LLOYD WEBBER, F.R.C.O. Commentator: The Rev. Dr Francis B. West-BROOK

Chairman: BISHOP W. ANGIE SMITH

Devotions led by REV. NORMAN P. GOLDHAWK

#### THURSDAY, 25th AUGUST

8.30 a.m. Holy Communion in Conference Chapel at Central Hall

The Chairman of the Committee to arrange Devotions (The Rev. A. Raymond George), assisted by Bishop Paul N. Garber (U.S.A.), Bishop Noah W. Moore, Jr (U.S.A.), Bishop Lance Webb (U.S.A.), and Bishop Friedrich Wunderlich (Germany)

9.30 a.m. Council in Church House

Devotions: MRS GLENN E. LASKEY (U.S.A.)

9.45 a.m. Council Meeting

9.30 a.m. Conference in Central Hall

BISHOP ROY H. SHORT to preside Devotions: The REV. SIR IRVING BENSON, C.B.E. (Australia) 9.45 -

10.45 a.m. The Finality of Christ DR D. T. NILES

11.00 a.m.-

12.00 noon The calling of the Christian layman
MR RUDOLF SCHIELE

2.00 -

2.30 p.m. Bible Study in the Bishop Partridge Hall, Church House Led by Rev. Rupert E. Davies Galatians, Ch. VI. Freedom and the Spirit

2.30 -

4.00 p.m. Discussion Groups

For leaders and secretaries, place of meeting and questions for discussion, see pages 51-54

#### FRIDAY, 26th AUGUST

8.30 a.m. Holy Communion in Conference Chapel at Central Hall
The Chairman of the Committee to arrange Devotions (The Rev. A. Raymond George), assisted by Bishop Bertram W. Doyle (C.M.E.), The Rev. Dr Carnes McKinney (A.M.E. Zion), and The Rev. S. G. Pitts (South Africa).

9.30 a.m. Council and Conference on Central Hall

Devotions: BISHOP RICHARD C. RAINES (U.S.A.)

9.45 a.m.-

12.00 noon Council and Conference in Central Hall
Presentation of Council's Report and Message
Induction of new President

3.00 p.m. Meeting of newly appointed Executive Committee at the Central Hall, Westminster

# BIBLE STUDIES IN THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS Led by Rev. Rupert E. Davies, M.A., B.D.

#### Friday, 19th August. Chapter One: The Authentic Gospel

The important thing about the Letter is not the solution of the old problem of the North or South Galatians as its possible recipients, but its content and its message for today. We may take it that it was written to Christians in the Roman province of Galatia, in Asia Minor, at the height of the controversy whether Gentiles were to be admitted into the Christian Church without circumcision; and that its occasion was that some Jewish Christians who thought circumcision to be indispensable had gone behind Paul's back into Churches founded by him and spread their teaching.

Paul asserts that he had a direct commission from God to proclaim the true Gospel, and that the true Gospel is: Christ has liberated us from the present age, that is, the age in which human life is dominated by powers that work for our destruction by co-operating with the aggressive urges

within ourselves. 'Those who say that the acceptance of the Gospel requires the performance of the rite of circumcision are denying the grace of God, which works freely towards all men. And if men deny that I preach the true Gospel, let them hear how God called me and revealed his message to me—directly, without any human intermediary'.

#### Saturday, 20th August. Chapter Two: The Gospel in Conflict

Paul continues the narrative of his Christian career, to make it clear beyond all doubt that he received his message directly from God; and passes insensibly to the rebuttal of his opponents. 'Some time after my conversion and my call I went to Jerusalem to talk to the other apostles, and laid my Gospel before them. I was asked to make some concessions to the Judaizers, but I made none; and the heads of the Church in Jerusalem acknowledged my divine commission, and that I was sent to the Gentiles as they were sent to the Jews, and we shook hands on it. Later on, Peter came to Antioch, and wavered in his loyalty to the truth. But I stood firm, for I am perfectly certain that it is only faith which justifies, not the Law. I have died to the Law with Christ. And my life now is a life of faith in union with Christ.'

#### Monday, 22nd August. Chapter Three: Law and the Gospel

At this point Paul's argument becomes very involved, and it is only by sticking to the main points that we can grasp his meaning. 'Fancy going back to Law after meeting Christ! Abraham lived by faith, not by obeying the Law, and it is the men of faith, not those who obey the Law, who are his true sons. Those who rely on the Law are under a curse, for they are bound to keep the whole Law and none of them does, for it is impossible. Christ came and submitted himself to the curse of the Law, with the express purpose of freeing us from it. You can see this by noting the analogy of a will. God promised in his "will" that he would make his gifts to Abraham and his "seed" (singular), not "seeds" (plural). So it must refer to Christ, and the promises could not be fulfilled till Christ came. There was thus a great gap of time during which the promises were pending, and between the time of Abraham and the time of Christ the Law was given as a stopgap. It never bestowed righteousness. It was a kind of prison, or a tutor, to look after us till Christ came.

'But now Christ *has* come. The interim regime is over. We are all by baptism united with Christ, and the whole human race is one person with him.'

# Tuesday, 23rd August. Chapter Four: Faith and Freedom

Paul starts the chapter with an argument, passes on to a personal appeal, and resumes the argument before the end. 'The Gentiles, before the coming of Christ, had not come of age, that is, they were subject to the rule of demons. Christ came to set them free. Now they are the sons of God who have entered upon their inheritance. Why, in heaven's name, should they now turn back to childish things like the Law? My friends, you never hurt me in the past; you would have done anything for me. Do you now hate me? My opponents' intentions are dishonourable. So come back to me, that we may resume the old terms of friendship. In the past you were good and kind to me. Indeed, you are my own dear children.

'Remember the story of Abraham's wife Sarah and his concubine Hagar. Hagar, the slave, is the type of the present Jerusalem, Sarah is the type of the promise fulfilled in Christ. Christians are the children of Sarah; they are persecuted and yet free.'

#### Wednesday, 24th August. Chapter Five: Freedom and Licence

It is time to ask what relevance the controversy has to us. Luther saw its relevance in the battle between Rome and himself—and he was partly right. Some today identify the imposition of circumcision with the requirement of historic episcopacy in schemes of reunion! The real counterpart of 'circumcision' is any form of Christianity, Catholic or Protestant, which makes the performance of a rite, or the fulfilment of a law, necessary for God's forgiveness. And this is to be found in all our Churches—and indeed in many of us.

'Stand firm in freedom! If you go back to receiving circumcision, you are putting yourself under the whole Law. We Christians live by grace; the only thing that really counts is faith which is active in love. The seducers who trouble you do not come from God, and they must stand God's judgment. But do not let freedom give the green light to your lower nature. Put yourselves under the Spirit, for him to bring forth His harvest in you.'

#### Thursday, 25th August. Chapter Six: Freedom and the Spirit

As always, Paul proceeds in this Letter, as he nears the end, from high doctrine to humble practice. But there is a last outburst of anger against his opponents before the end. 'We must be merciful to those carried away by temptations, and help to bear each other's load of guilt. We must avoid conceit by judging ourselves severely and shouldering our responsibilities. We must be generous to our teachers, and kind to all men, especially our fellow-Christians'. Then he seizes his pen from his secretary and finishes the letter in his own handwriting. 'Those who insist on the keeping of the Law do not keep it themselves—they do what they do only to give themselves prestige. The only true prestige is in the Cross of Christ which brings us to utter humility—and new life. Hereafter let my opponents leave me in peace; to attack me is tantamount to attacking Christ, whose marks of suffering I bear'.

#### **GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

#### Group One:

Church House, Committee Room 6

Leader: Rev. Walter Zeuner

Secretary: Rev. William Graves

#### Group Two:

Central Hall Chapel

Leader: Mr A. Stanley Worrall Secretary: Mrs Grace Igwe

### Group Three:

Central Hall, Assembly Room Leader: Mr Ragnar Horn Secretary: Bishop F. D. Jordan

# **Group Four:**

C.B.I. Building, President's Room Leader: Rev. G. Thackray Eddy Secretary: Mrs Dorothy Walls

#### Group Five:

Caxton Hall, Norfolk Room

Leader: Rev. Fred S. de Silva

Secretary: Rev. Robert E. Bearden

# Group Six:

Caxton Hall, Lancaster Room

Leader: Rev. Arthur B. Shaw

Secretary: Mr James W. Fowler, III

# Group Seven:

Caxton Hall, Kent Room

Leader: Rev. Atherton Didier

Secretary: Mrs J. R. Bailey

# Group Eight:

Caxton Hall, Tudor Room

Leader: Bishop Paul Hardin

Secretary: Mrs Raymond J. Latham

# Group Nine:

Caxton Hall, Room 15
Leader: Dr C. H. Stine
Secretary: Mr M. H. Eddy

# Group Ten:

Caxton Hall, Room 25

Leader: Bishop Stephen Gill Spottswood

Secretary: Mrs Carin Wedar

#### **Group Eleven**

Church House, Bishop Partridge Hall Leader: Bishop Virgil G. Holloway Secretary: Mr P. G. Bartlett Lang

# **Group Twelve:**

Church House, Council Room Leader: Dr Byron Stroh Secretary: Mr John Longworth

### Group Thirteen:

Church House, Committee Room 3
Leader: Rev. E. M. Howse
Secretary: Rev. Harold Smith

## Group Fourteen:

Church House, Committee Room 4

Leader: Bishop Dwight Loder

Secretary: Rev. Setareki A. Tuilovoni

At 2.30 p.m. Friday, 19th August; Saturday, 20th August; Monday, 22nd August; Tuesday, 23rd August; Wednesday, 24th August; Thursday, 25th August.

# **OUTLINE QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION**

# Friday, 19th August

- 1. When you speak of 'The Church' what do you mean?
- 2. What is the Church for?
- 3. Is the Church's purpose different in different national environments, e.g., the U.S.A., Ghana, Ceylon?
- 4. What has Christianity to say to those at work in industry?
- 5. Where and how is Methodism achieving its best results among factory workers?
- 6. What are the reasons for industrial man's lack of interest in religion?

# Saturday, 20th August

- 1. To what degree is tolerance a Christian virtue?

  Are there social wrongs about which the Church should be intolerant? If so, name them.
- 2. Why does the emancipation of women progress more slowly in the Church than in the secular world?
- 3. What ought to be done in and by the Churches to solve the race problem in its various forms?

# Monday, 22nd August

- 1. What are the facts about world population which should concern us?
- 2. In what ways should Christians seek to care for an increasing world population?
- 3. What have we to say as Christians about family planning?
- 4. What is the place of Christianity in education?
- 5. In what ways would you expect the education offered by a good Christian school to differ from that offered by a good Buddhist school, or a good Humanist school?

# Tuesday, 23rd August

- 1. Is there any conflict between World Methodism and the Ecumenical Movement?
- 2. What contribution can our Church make to the Ecumenical Movement?
- 3. In what ways has the Ecumenical Movement changed Methodism?

# Wednesday, 24th August

- 1. How far is nationality of divine institution?
- 2. Are there eternal standards by which nations are judged? What are they? How do you know?
- 3. How would UNO differ if it were a Christian organization?
- 4. For many in the fourth century discipleship meant becoming a hermit; for many in the Dark Ages it meant entering a monastic order; for many in the nineteenth century it meant becoming a missionary; what does discipleship mean in practical terms as the twentieth century approaches its end?
- 5. How necessary is Church membership to the disciple?
- 6. Again in practical terms, what is there for the twentieth century disciple to hope for in this world and in the world to come?

#### Thursday, 25th August

- 1. To what is the Christian layman called?
- 2. What have proved the most effective methods of lay training known to the Group?
- 3. How can we harness the idealism and adventurousness of youth?
- 4. Is Christianity the final religion?
- 5. We speak of the finality of Christ—

What does that mean

- (a) Within our own homes?
- (b) In our home Church?
- (c) In our relationship to the State?
- (d) In industry and commerce?

#### PART THREE

# Minutes of the 1961-66 Executive Committee of the World Methodist Council held at the Central Hall, Westminster, London, S.W.1 on 18th August, 1966

The Executive Committee of the World Methodist Council met in the Conference Chapel on Thursday, 18th August, 1966, at 3.00 p.m. with Bishop Fred Pierce Corson presiding.

The Committee was led in prayer by Dr Eric Baker.

Bishop Corson asked consent of the Executive Committee that the calling of Executive meetings be at the discretion of the President and Secretaries.

- (1) The minutes were approved as circulated to the members of the Committee.
- (2) The Committee approved asking the Secretaries to prepare appropriate resolutions on those who have died during the quinquennium. The Secretaries were permitted to name several associates.
- (3) Report of the Steering Committee: The responsibilities usually considered to be the work of the Steering Committee were delegated to the Programme Committee, Bishop W. Angie Smith, Chairman.
- (4) Formation of Message Committee: The President was authorized to appoint a Nominating Committee to include the chairmen of the British and American delegations, the two Secretaries in addition to President Corson, to nominate a Message Committee. Dr Tuttle is to convene the Committee. (Bishop Corson, Bishop Martin, Dr Roberts Rev. M. Woodward, Dr Tuttle).
- (5) Rev. Wilfred Wade opened discussion on *Procedure for Report of Discussion Groups*. All members of Council and Conference have been allocated to discussion groups. Therefore, Mr Wade requested a way to bring findings of discussion groups to the Message Committee, that the vital concerns of the groups be represented in the final Message.

On Motion of Rev. Rupert Davies the Message Committee was requested to combine the findings of the discussion groups with the Council Message. Motion Adopted.

(6) T.V. Coverage: Rev. Max Woodward stated that general approval had been given to the B.B.C. News Team to cover the meeting, and certain commercial firms had been given permission to cover certain individual addresses, subject to the consent of the Executive Committee and the individual speakers concerned. Permission was requested for the West German News Team and other national television representatives.

It was agreed that further television coverage be granted on approval of the Public Relations Committee (Charles C. Parlin, Chairman) in consultation with the Secretaries.

(7) Future Executive Committee Meetings: Dr Lee Tuttle read from the minutes of the American Section a proposed schema of Executive and Officers' Meetings for 1966–1971:

Year	Group	Place
1967	Executive Committee	Australasia
1968	Officers' Meeting	Africa
1969	Executive Committee	Latin America
1970	Officers' Meeting	(To be decided)
1971	Conference Council	United States

After discussion it was resolved that the Nominating Committee (Dr Baker, Chairman) suggest a policy as to size of Executive Committee and number of meetings during the next five years and report to an early meeting of the Council.

# (8) European Relations Committee:

- 1. Rev. Wilfred Wade reported that the three European Episcopal Area Bishops had invited Mr Wade to attend a discussion of these matters in Goeteborg.
- 2. There is a proposal to hold a European Youth Conference in Denmark in August, 1967.
- 3. Will it be better to postpone further action until the new Executive is elected?
- (9) The Secretaries were authorized to receive invitations for the next World Conference.
- (10) Designation of both Secretaries as General Secretaries: This matter was postponed on suggestion of the Secretaries.
- (11) Procedure for Including Youth Members on Council: The question is how shall we select youth members?

The Nominating Committee was directed to consider methods of having youth representatives on the Council and to hear the Youth Conference resolutions as presented by Dr John O. Gross.

(12) 1966-1971—Emphasis: Dr Tuttle suggested that 'Recruitment of the Methodist Ministry in all parts of the World' be the emphasis for the next five years.

Discussion ensued. Bishop Short moved that a small committee be raised to consider the matter of 1966–1971 Emphasis and report to the Council. It was adopted.

By common consent it was agreed that the agenda for Friday be left in the hands of the Secretaries Tuttle and Woodward.

The meeting adjourned.

Minutes of the Meeting of the World Methodist Council held at Church House, Westminster, London, on Friday, 19th August, 1966

The World Methodist Council convened in the Assembly Hall of Church House, Westminster, London, on Friday, 19th August, 1966, at 9.30 a.m. Bishop Fred Pierce Corson, President, presented the Reverend Setareki A. Tuilovoni, M.B.E. (Fiji) who led in devotions using John Oxenham's 'In Christ There Is No East Or West' and reading from Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. The leader prayed and led in the Lord's Prayer.

The Secretaries presented matters of personal privilege. Secretary Woodward expressed gratitude for co-operation from so many avenues. Announcements were made concerning Bible Study Groups and the County Council reception, Tuesday next.

After brief discussion, it was moved that Press representatives be

admitted to Council meetings. It was adopted.

Dr Tuttle spoke concerning the illness of Dr Elmer T. Clark and Mrs J. Fount Tillman. Felicitations were directed to Dr Benson Perkins and greetings to Dr Clark and Mrs Tillman.

Rev. Max Woodward presented the Report of the Secretary

Resident in Great Britain. (Appended).

Catholic Representatives were greeted by President Corson and presented to the Council. (Canon Anthony Hulme, Mr Daniel

Meaney, Rev. Michael Hurley).

Dr Lee Tuttle presented the Report of the Secretary Resident in the United States. He directed the body toward the reading of the section beginning on page 28 of the printed report—'In General'—and then read the quotations from Dr W. A. Visser't Hooft beginning on page 30.

Rev. Rupert Davies presented the resolution from the Executive Committee's Stuttgart meeting of September, 1963: That the following Doctrinal Clause be inserted in the Constitution under II

Purpose between paragraphs (a) and (b):

'To bear witness to the truth of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as it is revealed in Scripture, embodied in the historic Creeds (Apostolic and Nicene), and expounded by John and Charles Wesley, and to further in all men that holiness of heart and life which the Holy Spirit gives.'

Mrs Raymond J. Latham, President, reported on the work of the World Federation of Methodist Women as follows:

(1) The Federation meeting at Southlands College has been completed successfully.

(2) The election of officers resulted in a wide-spread selection of

persons from a number of countries.

(3) The Federation will now have an official observer at the United Nations in New York.

The report was received.

#### Recess

The Council reconvened at 11.00 a.m.

Bishop G. W. Blakeley spoke of the illness of Bishop S. L. Greene, and Dr Tuttle was asked to send greetings and gratitude for services rendered, to Bishop Greene.

Dr A. Stanley Leyland reported on the Exchange of Pastorates. A total of 166 exchanges have been arranged through the years. Desire for expansion was expressed by Bishop Frederick D. Jordan and the Reverend Fred Enelamah of Nigeria. Dr Tuttle and Dr Leyland assured the Council that expansion of the programme was a part of continued planning.

# Location of 1971 Conference/Council

Dr Lee Tuttle gave a resume of former meeting places of the Conference and Council and moved that the 1971 session meet somewhere in the United States of America. Bishop E. C. Hatcher seconded the motion. Sir Irving Benson suggested that the Pacific Area be considered for 1976. Dr Hurst Anderson, President of American University, Washington, D.C., invited the Conference/Council to use the campus and facilities of the University in 1971. Dr C. C. Parlin seconded Dr Anderson's invitation. The motion was adopted. *Presentations:* Representatives and fraternal visitors from the Salvation Army, and the World Presbyterian Alliance (Dr Whitehorn) were presented to the Council.

The Council meeting then adjourned.

Frank W. Ake, Secretary, Pro Tem.

239 Members Present.

# Minutes of the Meeting of the World Methodist Council, Westminster, Monday, 22nd August, 1966, at 9.30 a.m. Bishop Fred Pierce Corson, presiding

Dr Alejandro Ruiz (Mexico) led in the devotional period using the hymn 'Holy, Holy, Holy' and Scripture from I John 1 and 2. The Council joined in the Apostles' Creed and prayers.

The Secretaries were authorized to appoint a Committee to examine the minutes. Mr Woodward nominated Rev. Reginald Kissack. Dr Tuttle will nominate a member at a later date. (Richard H. Bauer).

Dr Eric Baker reported for the Nominating Committee as follows:

President: Bishop Odd Hagen of Sweden. He was elected and

presented to the Conference.

Vice-Presidents: Rev. Eric W. Baker

Rev. Carlos T. Gattinoni Rev. Francis C. F. Grant

Dr C. F. Gribble Dr C. C. Parlin Bishop H. B. Shaw Rev. H. B. Sherlock Bishop R. H. Short Rev. Dr J. B. Webb Miss Patricinio Ocampo One Vice-President to be selected from New Zealand, Asia, and a representative from the World Federation of Methodist Women.

The Vice-Presidents nominated by name were elected. The Vice-Presidential election areas of New Zealand, Asia and World Federation of Methodist Women were deferred.

Secretaries: Dr Lee Tuttle and Rev. Max Woodward were

elected.

Treasurers: Edwin L. Jones, and L. A. Ellwood were elected.

At Mr E. L. Jones' request, the Council elected E. L. Jones, Jr. Assistant Treasurer without membership in the Council.

Associate Secretaries (Corresponding), were elected as follows:

Dr Harold Wood, Australia Rev. W. R. Laws, New Zealand Dr J. B. Webb. Africa

The Nominating Committee, Dr Eric Baker, Chairman, opened the discussion on the size of the Executive Committee. The entire matter was deferred until Tuesday at noon in Church House, Westminster to satisfy Section XII (Amendments) of the Constitution.

Dr Lee Tuttle reported for the Committee to nominate members of the Message Committee. They were as follows:

President: Bishop Fred Pierce Corson

Dr C. F. Gribble, Chairman
Dr C. C. Parlin
Bishop J. K. Mathews
Bishop F. D. Jordan
Dr C. Sommer
Mrs. Carin Wedar
Miss Patricinio Ocampo
Dr Setareki A. Tuilovoni

Dr Finis Crutchfield Mr J. S. Annan

Miss Pauline Webb Rev. Stanley B. Sudbury

Rev. Edward Rogers Dr Jose Miguez Youth Representative: Leven Puno, Philippines

and Secretaries Tuttle and Woodward

and The Presidents of the American and British Sections Dr Harold Roberts, Bishop Paul E. Martin

The members so nominated were elected with provision for necessary substitutions by the Secretariat.

It was agreed that Rev. Wilfred Wade be added to the Message Committee as liaison person with the Conference Discussion Groups.

Rev. Rupert Davies presented agenda Item 4, the Doctrinal Clause as printed in the agenda with substitution of the words 'Apostles' and Nicene Creeds' for the words 'historic Creeds'. After much discussion, Dr Arthur R. Witheford (New Zealand) moved to amend by presenting a new doctrinal statement. The entire matter was referred to the Executive Committee to be reported later.

Item 6A on the agenda was called. Dr John O. Gross presented a report from the Youth Conference and mimeographed statements were distributed to the members of the Council. On motion the report was accepted and referred to the Steering Committee that items from the report might be included in the agenda.

Bishop Hazen Werner presented Agenda Item 6C. World Family Life. The report asked for a change of status in the Family Life Committee from 'provisional' to 'standing'. The entire report was referred to be considered with Item 5 on the agenda.

Bishop Corson presented Father Thomas Stransky representing the Vatican Council secretariat on Christian Unity. He expressed his appreciation for the opportunities to observe and to initiate conversations through the Secretary for Christian Unity.

Bishop Nolan Harmon spoke to the Council concerning the

Encyclopaedia of World Methodism.

President Corson announced a meeting of the Council for Tuesday morning at 9.30 a.m.

The Council then adjourned.

Frank W. Ake, Secretary, Pro Tem.

# Minutes of the Meeting of the World Methodist Council, Church House, Westminster, 23rd August, 1966, 9.30 a.m.

President Fred Pierce Corson called a regular meeting of the World Methodist Council to order at 9.30 a.m., 23rd August, 1966 in Church House, Westminster, and asked Bishop Friedrich Wunderlich to pray.

Bishop Corson asked the body concerning their desire as to the agenda. It was agreed to proceed with the Nominating Committee's report on size and frequency of meeting of the Executive Committee. Dr Eric Baker recapitulated the situation and restated the motion of the Nominating Committee that the Executive Committee be composed of 50 elected members in addition to the officers of the Council. (Total 70).

Rev. Wilfred Wade moved a substitute 'that we adhere to the constitution and its present standards'. The motion to make Mr Wade's motion the main motion was defeated.

It was then moved to adopt the recommendation of the Nominating Committee as made by Dr Baker. The motion was adopted. The Council then adjourned.

FRANK W. AKE, Secretary, Pro Tem.

216 members present.

# Minutes of the Meeting of the World Methodist Council, Church House, Westminster, 24th August, 1966

The World Methodist Council met in Church House, Westminster, 24th August, 1966 at 9.30 a.m., with President Fred Pierce Corson presiding. Dr Arthur R. Witheford, New Zealand, led in devotions using a reading from I Peter and prayer.

Bishop W. Angie Smith for the Steering Committee recommended that a meeting of the Council be held at 4.30 p.m. and that items number 5, 9 and 8 be the morning agenda, in that order.

A motion to limit debate speeches to two minutes was defeated.

It was moved to have a session of the Council beginning at 2.00 p.m. in the Church House. It was *adopted*.

- Dr D. T. Niles, Ceylon, presented item number 5 and a mimeographed additional statement was distributed to the delegates. After considerable discussion and many suggestions Dr Niles accepted and announced the following changes and additions to the original presentation as follows:
  - to 2b(i) add a meeting of Methodist lay leaders, and a meeting to consider worship and liturgy.
    - 4a change to a Commission on Ecumenical Affairs with special reference to Methodist/Roman Catholic relations.

It was moved and seconded that Dr D. T. Niles' report on agenda item 5 be adopted. (See addenda with corrections on report).

An amendment was moved and seconded that a committee to implement the action in Agenda item 5 shall be composed of one member of each of the constituent bodies of the World Methodist Council, the members to be selected by each of the bodies from their own membership. The amendment was defeated.

Mr. Leonard Slutz moved an amendment under 2a that the Committee to implement this course of action (Agenda Item 5) be selected by the Council Executive Committee from within or from without its body as they deem wise and that the Executive Committee be empowered to determine the exact number and their apportionment among the various constituent bodies. The motion was adopted.

Rev. N. A. Birtwhistle offered an amendment to be numbered 2c under Agenda No. 5 as follows:

That funds be raised by voluntary assessment for the support of a bureau competent to deal with these matters established under Agenda No. 5.

On proper motion Mr Birtwhistle's amendment was referred to the Finance Committee for study and report.

The meeting then adjourned to reconvene at 2.00 p.m.

FRANK W. AKE, Secretary, Pro Tem.

# AGENDA ITEM No. 5 ON STRUCTURE AND PROGRAMME OF THE WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL

- 1. That an imaginative and comprehensive programme be formulated without delay for implementing the declared purposes of the Council, and making clear ways in which without legislating for or invading the autonomy of the Member Churches, the Council may competently serve the Member Churches and give unity to their witness and enterprise.
  - 2. That this matter be implemented as follows:
  - (a) The appointment of a special committee to prepare a plan in consultation with the World Council of Churches and the Regional Ecumenical Organizations, the Committee to meet

at the time of the W.C.C. Assembly in 1968 and the plan to be presented to the W.M.C. Executive soon after to be adopted by the next W.M.C. Assembly

Mr. Leonard Slutz moved an amendment under 2a that the Committee to implement this course of action (Agenda item 5) be selected by the Council Executive Committee from within or from without its body as they deem wise and that the Executive Committee be empowered to determine the exact number and their apportionment among the various constituent bodies. The motion was adopted.

(i) The Committee will draw up its plan in the light of the following Resolution which is an elaboration of Resolution No. 1.

That a full-bodied, energetic and continuous programme of research, study and experiment, complementing and furthering the study programme of the W.C.C., regional ecumenical agencies and other Christian Communions and carried on through competent regional work parties of ministers and laymen functioning in consultation with regional ecumenical agencies and acknowledged experts from other Christian Communions as well as non-Christian specialists, be put into operation immediately and efficiently sustained by this Council and its Executive Committee for the time being as the principal way in which the Council will henceforth seek to interpret and implement its declared purposes, and, along with the study documents of the W.C.C., regional ecumenical agencies and other Christian Communions, as a source of preparatory study material for debate and action by the Council and its Member Churches whereby the full resources of World Methodism, theological as well as material, may be devoted to making a substantial contribution in the total Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ to the Contemporary World.

- (b) The adoption of the following programme for the next five year period.
  - (i) That arrangements be made to hold in conjunction with the next Assembly of the W.M.C. a Convention of Methodist Youth and youth leaders; a Conference on World Family Life; a meeting of Theological Educators; the meeting of the World Federation of Methodist Women, a meeting of Laymen and a consultation on Worship and Liturgy.
  - (ii) That the above organizations seek as far as they are able to get full Methodist participation in regional ecumenical programmes which are related to their respective concerns.
  - (iii) That the necessary committees to carry forward the above programme be appointed.

(Note: Dr. D. T. Niles summarised No. 2 above as follows:

That a full bodied energetic and continuous programme of research study and experiment be put into operation immediately by the Council, whereby the full resources of world Methodism, Theological as well as material, may be devoted to making a substantial contribution in the total Mission in the Church of Jesus Christ to the contemporary world.

This programme will be the principal way in which the Council will henceforth seek to interpret and implement its declared purposes, and along with the study documents of the W.C.C. regional ecumenical agencies and other Christian Communions as a source of preparatory study material for debate and action by the Council and the member Churches.

It will be carried out through competent regional work-parties of ministers and laymen functioning in consultation with regional ecumenical agencies, and acknowledged experts from other Christian Communions as well as non-Christian specialists).

- 3. The World Methodist Council will also have related to it three programmes, that organized by the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theologians, that set forward by a Consultative Committee on Missionary Affairs, and the Exchange of Pastorates.
- 4. This Council authorizes the new Executive Committee also to set up the following commissions:
  - (a) A Commission on Methodist Ecumenical Relations with special reference to Methodist-Roman Catholic relations.
  - (b) A Commission on International and Social affairs. This Commission will present proposals to the World Methodist Council, and, or, its Executive Committee from time to time as may seem desirable.
- 5. That the Executive Committee also take steps to set up an information service of the World Methodist Council.
- 6. That suitable provision of funds shall be made by the Executive Committee.

(Adopted).

# Minutes of the Meeting of the World Methodist Council, Church House, Westminster, 24th August, 1966

The World Methodist Council was called to order at 2.00 p.m., 24th August, 1966 in Church House, Westminster, by President Fred Pierce Corson.

Dr Lewis F. Walley led in prayer.

Mr Edwin L. Jones presented the Treasurer's report to be received by the Council. It was received.

Mr Fowler questioned the term 'Youth leaders' and Dr Niles accepted the substitute phrase 'Youth and youth leaders'.

Dr Niles made further corrections and additions to his report which was then adopted by the Council. (See addenda).

Bishop W. Angie Smith for Steering Committee called up agenda Item 8. Mrs Porter Brown then augmented the mimeographed report on 'Missionary Strategy and Autonomous Churches.' The report was received and adopted.

Dr Tracey Jones, Jr presented agenda item number 9—'World Methodism and the East Asian Christian Conference'. Dr D. T. Niles spoke concerning the work and work methods of the East Asian Christian Conference. The reports were received.

Dr Gerald McCulloh presented the report under Item 6b Theological Educators.

The Theological Education Committee asked: (1) that it be recognized as an integral part of the World Methodist Council; (2) that international exchange of literature and ideas be implemented;

(3) that a list of names developed by the Theological Education Committee be considered by the Nominating Committee in its selection of the new Theological Education Committee. The report

with recommendations was adopted.

Rev. Reginald Kissack moved that the World Methodist Council directs its Nomination Committee to take as its principal consideration in selecting names for the Executive Committee their suitability in implementing the policy to which the Council has now pledged itself. The motion was adopted.

Bishop Paul E. Martin reported for the Budget Committee as follows: 'The Budget Committee is entrusted with the responsibility of making such voluntary assessments upon the member bodies of the World Methodist Council as necessary for the financing of the programme appearing under item 5'. It was moved and adopted.

The Budget Committee further recommended:

- (1) We adopt the same budget as we now have for the 'World Fund'.
- (2) The Treasurer of the World Fund is to be responsible for handling, i.e. collecting and disbursing all 'World Fund' money, with necessary assistance of the Secretaries.
- (3) As has been done previously, the Treasurer, upon advice of the President, may, where necessary, transfer items within the 'World Fund' budget. This was adopted.
- Rev. K. G. Greet reported on 'What is the Christian Ethical iudgement?' He touched upon matters of contraception, abortion and total abstinence. The report was received.

Dr Dow Kirkpatrick reported for the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies and announced 1969 Institute for the last two weeks of July on the theme 'The Living God'.

Dr J. Otis Young reported on Item 16 'The Creation of the World Methodist Committee on Publishing Interests.' The proposal was adopted by the Council.

Dr Robert G. Mayfield reported on Lay activities and announced the publishing of a Study Book on training of laymen. (See addenda).

Rev. Max Woodward introduced the Rev. Dr Whitehorn who spoke as representative of the World Presbyterian Alliance. Dr André Appel of the World Lutheran Federation was presented.

The Council then adjourned.

# Minutes of the Meeting of the World Methodist Council at Church House, Westminster, 25th August, 1966, 9.30 a.m.

The World Methodist Council was convened by President Fred Pierce Corson on 25th August, 1966 at 9.30 a.m. in Church House, Westminster.

Mrs Virginia Laskey led the devotions using the hymn 'God of all power, and truth and grace' and reading from I John 3.' Mrs Laskey then led in prayer.

The Committee on minutes announced that the minutes were correct as written. The Conference received the report.

Bishop Angie Smith announced that the Message Committee would be ready to report at 11.00 a.m.

The Council then adjourned to reconvene at 11.00 a.m. on motion of Bishop Frederick D. Jordan.

FRANK W. AKE, Secretary, Pro Tem.

# Minutes of the Meeting of the World Methodist Council, Church House, Westminster, 25th August, 1966, 11.00 a.m.

Bishop Fred Pierce Corson called the Council to order at 11.00 a.m., in Church House, Westminster.

Bishop W. Angie Smith moved that the Executive Committee appoint representatives to the Organization of the Caribbean Methodist Church in Antigua in May, 1967.

It was moved and seconded that the new Executive Committee meet immediately after their election today and report to the Council as to their appointments to the Commission on Conversations with the Roman Catholic Church and also the appointments to the new committee to prepare a plan and programme for the World Methodist Council for the next quinquennium as outlined in the D. T. Niles report. (Adopted).

It was moved that an order of the day be set for 2.30 p.m. for the presentation of the officers of the World Federation of Methodist Women. The motion was adopted.

Dr C. F. Gribble presented the Message Committee's report. Much discussion ensued and a number of suggestions were made for addition and correction.

On motion of Dr Arthur Marshall the Message Report was deferred until other resolutions in the hands of the Steering Committee could be read to the Council. It was adopted.

President Corson as a matter of high privilege presented Archbishop Cardinale who addressed the Council on Methodist-Roman Catholic relationships. Bishop Corson commented on the very spiritual and helpful message and the blessed hope that we can become one in Christ. (Address is set out in full at foot of these Minutes).

Bishop Angie Smith began to read the resolutions that had been given to the Steering Committee.

It was moved by Mr Glass and seconded that further resolutions be referred to the Message Committee for reading and treatment in a revised report.

Rev. Wilfred Wade moved an amendment that the resolutions be referred to the Committee on Social and International Concerns. The motion was *defeated*.

Mr. Glass's motion was then adopted.

Bishop Wunderlich delivered the benediction and the Council adjourned until 2.30 p.m.

FRANK W. AKE, Secretary, Pro Tem.

# ARCHBISHOP CARDINALE'S ADDRESS TO THE WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL

# Thursday, 25th August

It is a privilege I greatly value to be able to add my personal greeting to those of Cardinal Heenan and of the official Vatican Observers at this Council. I have been thinking of you and praying for the success of your Assembly from the first day of your meetings here in Church House. I am especially pleased to note that ecumenism is the leit-motif of your reports and conversations. It could not be otherwise under the chairmanship of such an eminent ecumenist as Bishop Fred Pierce Corson whose inaugural speech I chose today as the subject of my morning meditation. He well deserves the title of 'Doctor Ecumenicus'.

You may have heard of the forthcoming celebration of the VII centenary of the birth of John Duns Scotus, who is known as the 'Doctor Subtilis'. But it may come as a surprise to you if I tell you that in studying his works in order to prepare the inaugural lecture that I shall give at the International Congress taking place next month at Oxford to mark the celebration, I found many points in common with Methodism—so much so that I thought of Scotus as the first Methodist! The stress he puts on the Primacy and Finality of Christ in the Universe, his deep devotion to the Person of Christ, his great respect for the individual and his basic rights, and above all his concept of God's love as constituting God's very nature, infinite, inexhaustible, unfathomable, wholly undeserved, generous, self-giving—that love with which men are to be filled and to be fashioned in the image and likeness of God:

Love thine image, love impress! Stamp it in our face and heart!

Even the vituperation to be suffered from the misunderstanding of men! These are all things that bring the two Johns—John Scotus and John Wesley—very close indeed.

The Church in Council was eager to establish efficient means of contact with all men of goodwill. In his first encyclical, Pope Paul VI presented her to the world as the Church of Dialogue. The Conciliar Decree 'on Ecumenism' and the Pastoral Constitution on 'the presence of the Church in the world' develop the theme of dialogue of the Church with the brethren of other allegiances and with the modern world, while special Secretariats have been established to carry out this dialogue with other Christians and non-Christian believers as well as with all goodwill believers.

For the effectiveness of these contacts and in view of the Methodist-Catholic Dialogue which will soon take place, Scotus can offer a positive influence in the principles that were the soul of his critical method. Let us look at them briefly.

- (1) 'As humanity progressed, the knowledge of the truth has always increased', though the truth itself remained unchanged. Lack of knowledge, laziness of the mind in the will or want of skill, Scotus comments, may vitiate the reasoning of men otherwise eminent.
- (2) 'Authority has only the value of the arguments it advances'. Although everything it teaches with appropriate arguments is to be accepted, what it does not teach may also be true. Even the Fathers of the Church, wishing to combat error, 'frequently have gone to excess in their mode of speaking'.
- (3) 'To no other are we to posit or attribute a false opinion or an absurd one, except in the case where this is expressly clear from what he says, or openly follows from it'. The mind of one's opponent is therefore to be interpreted with sympathy, from his own words and not from commentaries or hearsay.
- (4) 'It is dangerous to adduce sophisms (to defend the faith) because one exposes the faith to derision . . . it is better actually to acknowledge one's ignorance than to pretend to be wise through sophisms'. It is wrong therefore to think oneself able to know and prove all revealed truths with the intellect alone, for this is limited and weak.
- (5) Not even in matter of faith should unnecessary proofs or many miracles be multiplied. Sacred Scripture should be explained literally and naturally as far as possible, making use of profane sciences as well, in order to reach a clear understanding. Dogmas should not be unnecessarily restricted to a particular sense, but exposed with a certain liberty.
- (6) No one is held to consent to something new (even if it is proposed by a theologian), but first he is bound to 'consulere ecclesiam' and thus avoid error. The Church in fact is the trustworthy community above everything else . . . in whose testimony one can believe without erring. As St. Augustine says: 'Evangelio non crederem nisi Ecclesiae credidissem'.

It is my fervent prayer that the forthcoming dialogue between Methodists and Catholics will stress the great truths we hold in common and cancel the strain caused by what we do not share, so that in our earnest quest for unity we may forget what we have left behind, and intent on what lies before us, press on with the goal in view, eager for the prize (Phil. 3:13)—which is to become one in Christ Jesus, the Lord and Saviour of us all.

# Minutes of the Meeting of the World Methodist Council, Church House, Westminster, 25th August, 1966, 2.30 p.m.

President Fred Pierce Corson opened a session of the World Methodist Council at 2.30 p.m., Thursday, 25th August, 1966. Dr Kermit Long led in prayer.

Mrs R. J. Latham, retiring president of the World Federation of Methodist Women spoke briefly and introduced new officers of the World Federation of Methodist Women:

World Secretary: Mrs W. M. Dudley
Vice-President: Mrs E. S. Cooper
President: Miss Patricinio Ocampo

Dr Eric Baker presented the reports of the Nominating Committee:

(1) Officers of the Council

President: Bishop Odd Hagen

#### Vice-Presidents:

Rev. Dr Eric W. Baker, Great Britain Rev. Carlos T. Gattinoni, Latin America Rev. Francis C. F. Grant, Ghana Rev. Cecil F. Gribble, Australia Dr Patrocinio Ocampo, Philippines Dr Charles C. Parlin, United States Bishop Herbert Bell Shaw, United States

Rev. Hugh B. Sherlock, Caribbean Bishop Roy H. Short, United States

The above have been already agreed upon.

Additional nominations were presented. Confirmation of the name of the Rev. Dr J. B. Webb, South Africa.

From New Zealand: Rev. Bernard Chrystall

From Asia: Dr D. T. Niles

#### Secretaries:

Dr Lee F. Tuttle Rev. Max W. Woodward

#### Treasurers:

Mr Edwin L. Jones Mr L. A. Ellwood

Assistant to the American Treasurer, Mr Edwin L. Jones, Jr (on the understanding that this should be without prejudice to any future appointment and would not carry a seat on the Executive Committee).

# Secretary Emeritus:

Rev. Dr E. Benson Perkins

# (2) Executive Committee:

Dr Hurst Anderson Dr R. E. L. Bearden Bishop Bertram W. Dovle Bishop Gerald Ensley Bishop Eugene Frank Bishop Paul N. Garber Bishop Paul E. Martin Miss Dorothy McConnell Bishop Noah Moore Bishop Otto Nall Dr Robert F. Oxnam Mrs J. J. Perkins Bishop Angie Smith Dr Willis Tate Dr Franklin Thompson Dr William Cannon Rev. Robert Curry Mr George M. Ivey

Dr Byron Stroh Dr Tracey Jones

Bishop James K, Mathews

Dr Myron Wicke

Bishop William R. Wilkes

Miss Pauline Webb

Rev. C. D. Bacon

Rev. Peter Bolt

Mr Paul Bartlett Lang

Rev. Douglas Thompson

Dr Stanley Leyland

Rev. Kenneth Greet

Rev. Wilfred Wade

Rev. Raymond George

Rev. Rupert Davies

Rev. Harold Sloan

Rev. Thomas W. Koomson (Ghana)

Mr Ragnar Horn (Norway)

Dr Ernest M. Howse (Canada)

Miss Agnes Shaw (India)

Rev. G. T. Inglis (Australia)

Rev. Setareki Tuilovoni (Fiji)

Mrs F. M. Baber (New Zealand)

Rev. Hamonangan Panggabean (Sumatra, Indonesia)

One from the Korean group, to be nominated by them

Bishop Friedrich Wunderlich (Germany)

Dr Stanley Sudbury (South Africa)

# (3) Committee on Theological Education:

Dr Gerald O. McCulloh, U.S.A., Chairman

Rev. N. Allen Birtwhistle, Great Britain

Dr Manuel Flores, Mexico

Rev. A. Raymond George, Great Britain

Rev. G. T. Inglis, Australia

Rev. W. F. Flemington, Great Britain

Dr Leslie Hewson, South Africa

Dr Thorwald Kallstad, Scandinavia

Dr Jacob Quiambao, Philippine Islands

Dr John S. Radhakrishnan, India

Dr Joseph D. Quillian, Jr, U.S.A.

Dr Carl Ernst Sommer, Germany

Dr Norman L. Trott, U.S.A.

Dr Baker moved the resolution re alternates: If a member of the Executive Committee is unable to attend, an alternate may attend provided that he is a member of the Council and from the same area. The motion was held over as being a change of constitution.

On motion made and duly seconded, it was voted that the President and the two Secretaries are ex officio members of all committees.

Bishop Dodge moved that a vice-president for Africa be elected. It was *adopted*.

Bishop Dodge nominated Rev. Gabriel Setiloane as a Vice-President for Africa.

#### The Finance Committee was elected:

Chairman: Bishop Paul Martin

Dr Eric Baker

Bishop Fred P. Corson

Mr L. A. Ellwood

Mr Ragnar Horn

Mr Edwin L. Jones

Dr Charles C. Parlin

Dr Hurst Anderson

Dr Harold Roberts

Bishop Spottswood

Dr Lee F. Tuttle

Rev. Wilfred Wade

Rev. Max W. Woodward

# The Committee of Oxford Institute was elected:

Dr Dow Kirkpatrick

Rev. A. Raymond George

Bishop Odd Hagen

Rev. Reginald Kissack

Dr Gerald O. McCulloh

Dr Harold Roberts

Dr E. Gordon Rupp

Dean William R. Cannon

Dr D. T. Niles

Professor Jose Miguez-Bonino

Rev. Dr Frank Hambly

Rev. E. A. Adegbola

Dr John Satterwhite

The Committee on Publishing Interests was elected with substitution of Bishop Almir Dos Santos for El. J. Gattinoni and additions of Bento Navess (Mozambique), Bishop F. C. Jordan (U.S.A.), Professor Joseph Szczepkowski (Poland).

Dr Frank Cumbers, Great Britain, Chairman

Bishop Almir Dos Santos, Brazil

Miss Eunice Slyter, India

Dr J. Otis Young, U.S.A.

Mr Ernst Rysor, Switzerland

Rev. Keith Ditterich, Australia

Dr Harold Larsen, Norway

Mr Karl Eric Hellberg, Sweden

Dr Theophil Wend, Germany

Dr Lovick Pierce, U.S.A.

Dr Lee Tuttle moved that the youth membership on the Executive Committee be left open until such time as each member church can be polled for youth nomination by the Secretaries.

Motion made by Bishop J. K. Mathews to extend time to 4.30 p.m. to complete Message was adopted.

Robert Mayfield presented additional statements re: LAITY FOR MESSAGE which were accepted by Dr Gribble for Committee.

Previous Amendments re: *China* was recalled and on motion by Dr Dow Kirkpatrick it was voted to accept.

Motion made by Dr Gribble to adopt Message paper as amended;

duly seconded and voted.

Council adjourned at 4.30 p.m. with Benediction by Dr Eric Baker after announcements were made, and the call for new Executive Committee to meet immediately was given by Bishop Odd Hagen. Council was asked to reconvene at 9.30 a.m. Friday to meet with Methodist Conference.

FRANK W. AKE, Secretary, Pro Tem. RICHARD H. BAUER, Secretary, Pro Tem.

# Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee of the World Methodist Council held at the Central Hall, Westminster, on Friday, 26th August, 1966

The President, Bishop Odd Hagen, presided.

Present: Bishop Fred Pierce Corson, Bishop Ivan Lee Holt, Dr Harold Roberts, Dr Eric W. Baker, Rev. Francis C. F. Grant, Rev. Cecil F. Gribble, Bishop Paul E. Martin, Dr Patrocinio S. Ocampo, Dr Charles C. Parlin, Bishop Herbert Bell Shaw, Bishop Roy H. Short, Rev. Max W. Woodward, Dr E. Benson Perkins, Mr L. A. Ellwood, Mr Edwin L. Jones, Mrs F. M. Baber, Rev. C. D. Bacon, Dr R. E. L. Bearden, Rev. Peter Bolt, Dr William R. Cannon, Rev. Robert Curry, Bishop Bertram W. Doyle, Bishop F. Gerald Ensley, Bishop Paul N. Garber, Rev. Kenneth G. Greet, Mr Ragnar Horn, Dr Ernest M. Howse, Mr George M. Ivey, Bishop Frederick D. Jordan (for Bishop William R. Wilkes), Rev. Thomas W. Koomson, Mr Paul Bartlett Lang, Dr A Stanley Leyland, Miss Dorothy McConnell, Bishop Otto Nall, Rev. Hamonangan Panggabean, Mrs J. J. Perkins, Bishop W. Angie Smith, Bishop Stephen G. Spottswood, Dr Stanley B. Sudbury, Dr Willis Tate, Dr Franklin Thompson, Rev. Setareki Tuilovoni, Rev. Wilfred Wade, Miss Pauline M. Webb, Bishop Friedrich Wunderlich, Dr Lee F. Tuttle. Reverend Wilfred Wade led in prayer.

- 1. It was agreed that Bishop W. J. Walls and Bishop S. L. Greene should be honorary members of the Executive Committee.
- 2. Additional Youth Representation on the Executive Committee; It was agreed that the four additional youth members of the Executive should be selected from a list of nominations made by young people in the Member Churches. There should be one from each of the following areas: America, Europe, Africa and the Far East. A

request would be made to the Churches concerned to submit nominations with information about the nominees. It was agreed that the Nominating Committee be empowered to select and appoint the respective members.

3. Ecumenical Commission: The members of the Ecumenical Commission with special reference to relations between Methodism and the Roman Catholic Church were appointed as follows:

Ex Officio: Bishop Odd Hagen

Members:

Bishop Fred P. Corson Dr William R. Cannon Bishop F. Gerald Ensley Dr Bolaji Idowu (from Ibadan) Professor E. Gordon Rupp Dr Eric W. Baker Dr Harold Roberts

Research Consultant: Professor Albert C. Outler

The above shall be the commission to hold a dialogue with the Vatican Secretariat of Christian Unity.

The President was empowered to fill any vacancies that might occur.

4. Committee on Structure and Programme: It was agreed that the special committee to be appointed under Item 5 of the World Methodist Council agenda should be known as 'The Committee on Structure and Programme'. The following members were appointed:

Bishop Bertram Doyle
Bishop Paul E. Martin
Bishop James K. Mathews
Miss Dorothy McConnell
Dr. Charles C. Parlin (Secretary)
Miss Pauline M. Webb
Rev. Wilfred Wade
Bishop Alejandre Ruiz
Rev. Carlos T. Gattinoni
Rev. Gabriel Setiloane
Dr Daniel T. Niles
Dr Patrocinio Ocampo
Rev. C. F. Gribble

Rev. Kenneth G. Greet (Chairman)

President, the two Secretaries and the two Treasurers of the Council to be *Ex-Officio* Members of the Committee.

5. Committee on Liturgy: It was agreed that the members of the Committee on The Liturgy should be as follows:

Rev. Rupert E. Davies and
Bishop Lance Webb (Secretaries)
Rev. Fred S. de Silva

Rev. Carlos T. Gattinoni
Rev. Brian E. Beck
Dr W. Frank Hambly

It was agreed that this committee should conduct its work as far as possible by postal communication.

The question of any substitution was referred to the officers with power to act.

6. Implementation of Council Resolutions: The Committee on Structure and Programme after having met in February, 1967,

would bring its recommendations regarding study of projects, costs, etc., to the next meeting of the World Methodist Council Executive.

- 7. Next Executive Committee Meeting: On the motion of Dr Willis M. Tate, it was agreed that there should be a meeting of the World Methodist Council Executive in 1967.
- 8. Future Meetings: On the motion of Dr Eric W. Baker it was agreed that there should be three meetings (instead of four), of the World Methodist Council Executive during the next quadrennium. The suggested dates being 1967, 1968-9 (say mid-January) and 1970. This would allow for an interval of approximately eighteen months. There would be a full meeting of the Executive Committee in 1971.
- 9. Date and Place of 1967 Executive Committee: It was agreed that the date should be during the last week in August, 1967. This to be interpreted as meaning towards the end of August.

The decision regarding the place was left to the President and

Secretaries.

The following suggestions were made in the meeting:

Crete (before 23rd August)

Brussels

Nairobi

10. New Nominating Committee: It was agreed that the Committee on Structure and Programme should be the new Nominating Committee.

(Note: The Committee on Structure and Programme subsequently meeting in Geneva in February 1967 felt that this item No. 10 needed clarification. The acceptable interpretation appeared to be that the Committee on Structure and Programme can nominate any new committees which it considers necessary to carry out its mandate. The nominations to be ratified by the Executive Committee of the World Methodist Council acting on behalf of the Council.)

11. The matter of the emphasis on The Ministry as the special theme for the World Methodist Council during the next quinquennium, was referred to the Committee on Structure and Programme.

The meeting concluded with the Benediction pronounced by the President.

# REPORT OF THE SECRETARY RESIDENT IN GREAT BRITAIN

Presented to the Council on Friday, 19th August, 1966, at Church House, Westminster, London.

#### Introduction

The first word must be to repeat the welcome already so sincerely expressed to the Members of the Council and Conference. We are very happy that you have come to London and we pray that this may be a time of great inspiration.

In his report to the World Methodist Council at Oslo, Rev. Dr Benson Perkins said: 'A report such as this is probably one of the most unsatisfactory things that a Secretary is called upon to prepare'. With this sentiment the present Secretary is in total agreement. Appointed at Oslo in 1961, for three years he attempted to combine the secretaryship of the World Methodist Council with the pastoral charge of Wesley's Chapel. Two years ago the secretaryship was made a full-time appointment and during the past twelve months the London meeting of the Council and Conference has given him something to think about.

There is no official headquarters of the World Methodist Council in London. For ordinary purposes this involves no real problems and may well be commendable, for it serves as a reminder of the transitional nature of the World Methodist Council. But with a World Conference on hand it does present certain difficulties and the first acknowledgment the Secretary would make is to express gratitude to the members of a local arrangements committee, small in number, who have shown an enthusiasm and patience that are beyond praise.

# Shared Responsibilities

This has been the general pattern of the administration. In connexion with the Exchange of Pastorates Rev. Dr Stanley Leyland has done all the work from this side, with characteristic care and accuracy. Rev. Wilfred Wade has had responsibility for the increasingly important Relationship with European Churches section and is to be congratulated on the work he has done. The Consultative Conference at Brussels in March, 1962 and at Dublin in April, 1965 and a European Methodist Youth Conference in London in 1963, were each in their own way significant. The creation of the Council of Central Conferences in Europe this year will provide a regular means of contact between the three episcopal areas of continental Methodism associated with the American Church.

# Death of Bishop Ferdinand Sigg

The untimely death of Bishop Ferdinand Sigg on 27th October, 1965 came as a shock to us all. Everyone who had known him was stunned by the news and felt an acute sense of personal loss as of a very dear and honoured friend. It was an indication of the great range of his friendship and the depth of the esteem in which he was held. 'He was a verray parfit gentil knight'. We miss him sorely.

#### Union Schemes

The five years since the Oslo meeting have seen the beginnings and swift development of many union schemes. At the Executive Committee at Stockholm, reports were received from at least fifteen areas where the Methodist Church is involved in union negotiations with other Churches. This process is spreading and gathering momentum. In the present ecumenical climate happier relationships with the Roman Catholic Church are significant. The Secretaries have

received many gracious gestures of goodwill in this connexion. The presence of such distinguished observers at our own Council meeting in London must bring great gratification to us all.

#### Geneva Consultations

In 1957, due to the initiative of Rev. Dr Benson Perkins, a consultation of the World Confessional Organizations was held in Geneva. A similar consultation now takes place regularly and is proving of great value. These consultations between the World Confessional Families are particularly important at such a time as this.

# East Asian Christian Conference

The World Methodist Council was represented at another consultation of particular significance, convened by the East Asian Christian Council and held at Kandy, Ceylon from 6th-8th December, 1965. The threefold theme related to programmes and procedures of Inter-Church Aid, Autonomy and Church Union and the nature of the Confessing Church in Asia and its theological task.

# Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies

The Second Institute of Methodist Theological Studies was held at Lincoln College, Oxford from 17th-27th July, 1962, on the subject of The Doctrine of The Church. It was attended by nearly one hundred Methodists from four continents. Describing it Rev. Raymond George wrote: 'It was generally felt that this Institute affords an opportunity for theological thinking and consultation which World Methodism cannot afford to neglect and which may also guide the Methodist contribution to the thought of the Ecumenical movement'.

The Third Institute was similarly held at Oxford, and Dr Dow Kirkpatrick was Warden. Over one hundred members were present from twenty-two countries. The theme was The Finality of Christ. The principal papers read are to be published by the Abingdon Press. It was decided to send a copy of this book and a summary of the proceedings to the Division of Studies of the World Council of Churches as a contribution to their study of the same subject.

# Methodist World Encyclopaedia

Under Bishop Nolan Harmon's vigorous direction the Encyclopaedia of World Methodism is rapidly taking shape. Publication will be in two volumes and is scheduled for early 1968.

# Methodist Historic Buildings

The Old Rectory at Epworth is the property of the World Methodist Council. It continues to be a delight to the thousands who visit it each year. The renovation of the Methodist Church in Epworth reflects much credit on all concerned.

# Of Travel and Executive Committee Meetings

For the record, Executive Committee meetings of the World Methodist Council were held at: London—25th-28th June, 1962; Stuttgart—9th-11th September, 1963; Kingston, Jamaica—28th-30th

October, 1964; Stockholm—26th-30th August, 1965. The Secretary has been glad to use these occasions as far as opportunity allowed, to visit local churches.

A visit to the Bahamas to share in the Centenary celebrations of Trinity Church, Nassau, was a wonderful experience. Two visits to the Vatican Council (though of necessity much too short) were a great privilege. Similarly it was a great pleasure to be present at the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches meeting at Enugu, Nigeria in 1965. During the past two years in particular, the British Secretary has been very happy to speak about the World Methodist Council in a number of churches in England. It is encouraging that such invitations are increasing.

### Council/Conference

At this London meeting, the oft-repeated plea for provision for adequate meetings of the *Council* has at last been heard. We hope the arrangements will prove to be adequate. That Council and Conference should meet separately (and sometimes together) has occasioned a certain amount of confusion which does not seem to have been entirely dispelled by the Secretary's frequently repeated explanations. It is hoped that the Members of the Council will now clarify and implement the constitution adopted at Oslo.

#### The British Committee

What has been pleasantly referred to as 'the British set-up' consists of a Committee elected annually by the British Methodist Conference. This Committee appoints its own Executive. At least two meetings of the Committee and one meeting of the Executive have been held each year since the 1961 meeting of the World Methodist Council. The President is Rev. Dr Harold Roberts.

At the time of the annual meeting of the British Methodist Conference a luncheon is held by generous invitation of the President of the Conference, to which all the overseas representatives are invited. This has become a very acceptable event.

#### Rev. Dr Benson Perkins

The illness of Dr Benson Perkins during the year has caused us much concern. He is assured of our prayers and affectionate good wishes.

#### World Methodist Council as a Forum

Are denominations doomed? Has the Methodist Church, as such, any future? If so, what is to be its pattern or structure? These and related questions are being keenly discussed and the answers are of vital importance. The World Methodist Council provides a forum, and the only forum, where these issues can be debated on a world scale with vision and in the sight of God resolved in love. The contribution made by a local Church in a particular situation ought to be felt and seen to be the total contribution of the World Methodist Church.

#### Conclusion

The Secretary wishes to express his gratitude to those who have helped so much in so many ways.

This report is respectfully submitted, MAX W. WOODWARD, Secretary.

London, August, 1966.

## REPORT OF THE SECRETARY RESIDENT IN U.S.A.

A Quinquennium in Review—1966, London

In undertaking to review the work of the World Methodist Council during the past five years beginning in Oslo, Norway, in August of 1961 and coming now to London, England, in August 1966, one's mind turns to the search for a symbol or symbols which will portray clearly and effectively something of the activity which must accompany the more significant relationships and responsibilities of the Secretariat of the Council. Communication is certainly the key word and there are three tools which are used almost constantly in carrying out the work of this office. Any one of the three could serve as a symbol but since all are so vital no one of them without the other two could be complete. The symbols, therefore, are three—a typewriter, a telephone and a jet liner.

No day in the headquarters office is without its hours of dictation and individual replies to the enormous flow of mail which arrives with every delivery. Since the Council works with twenty-one different Methodist denominational groups in eighty-six countries of the world, letters bearing stamps of great interest from 'far away places with strange sounding names' flow into the office, and replies flow out. Personal correspondence is the means of most frequent contact with Methodists around the world. Each of the thousands of letters is personally answered and if there is helpful information to be given from the Lake Junaluska headquarters, attention is promptly given. The typewriters are constantly at work!

The telephone is an instrument which is also indispensable in the work, and which is probably used more in long distance calls than local ones. In addition to the flow of letters which comes to the office from within the United States there are many daily long distance calls for information and help which cannot await a slower means of communication. The daily average of long distance calls, both incoming and outgoing, would probably run between ten and fifteen, and then, too, there is the occasional overseas call when emergencies arise.

The jet liner also comes in for its place of importance since no one can be Secretary\* of the World Methodist Council and stay too long in any one place. In addition to trips to countless meetings, committees and the like in the United States, the duties of this office have

<sup>\*</sup> Throughout this review the word Secretary refers to the Secretary Resident in the United States unless otherwise stated.

required trips three times around the world and into forty-eight countries during the past five years, including some twenty-six flights across the Atlantic Ocean.

No one recognizes better than the Secretary, however, that all of this activity can mean little or nothing unless there is a great useful Christian purpose at the centre of it. Perhaps one instance of the interrelation of Methodist people throughout the world would reveal that there is such a purpose.

#### A Dramatic Incident

This incident occurred in mid-May of 1963. A twenty-three-year-old Methodist young man from Northern Rhodesia, who had been away from home and parents for more than five years and who was attached to the United States Air Force, was in London. He placed a long distance call to his father, the first native mayor of Lusaka, and who was an outstanding Methodist layman. Evidently the connexion was poor, for about all the father got out of the conversation was that his son desperately needed an advance of three hundred pounds.

Remembering that his son's Air Force base was in Las Vegas, Nevada, the father became worried lest his son, whose earnings were more than adequate, might have gotten into debt through gambling. The next morning the father carried his problem to his minister, a British Methodist missionary, who in turn dispatched an appeal for help to the Secretary of the World Methodist Council in the United States.

The Secretary called the Methodist Commission on Chaplains in Washington, D.C., to get the name of a Methodist chaplain in or near Las Vegas and connected with the Air Force. Upon receiving the name and making a long-distance call, he learned that the chaplain was a minister of the Free Methodist Church. He promised to make an immediate and thorough investigation and to report to the British missionary and American Secretary of the Council.

In less than two weeks the chaplain's report was back in Northern Rhodesia showing that the young airman not only was in no difficulty but was considered one of the outstanding young men in his outfit. It seems that he was on leave in London and had expected to receive Air Force transportation back across the Atlantic. This could not be arranged in time, and he was forced to appeal to his father for a temporary loan in the emergency.

In less than two weeks a problem arose: the chain of communication crossed three national boundaries and three denominational barriers, and a happy and satisfactory conclusion was brought to the matter. This is a vivid illustration of the working of the World Methodist Council among all of its twenty-one Methodist denominations across the world.

While all of the activities of the Council and the work of its Secretary are not as dramatic, nor as happily resolved as the above incident, this is somewhat typical of our activities. With these introductory thoughts as a background let us now take a look at some of the aspects of the work year by year during the past quinquennium.

#### Year 1961-1962

On 25th August, 1961, in Oslo, Norway, when elected Secretary Resident in the United States to succeed Dr Elmer T. Clark, the importance and need of orientation was immediately recognized. At the meeting of the Council in the afternoon of that same day it became evident that such orientation would be immediate and rapid. The Council authorized attendance upon meetings in New Delhi, India; in Geneva, Switzerland; and in London, England during three different periods immediately following the 1961 World Conference.

# Third Assembly, World Council of Churches

The Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi, India, in November and December of 1961 was a broadening experience as this Secretary was first brought into contact with the leaders of the larger ecumenical movement and was able to participate as a fraternal observer. This was also the first opportunity to become acquainted with Secretaries of other World Confessional Organizations. Among the many inspiring events of the Assembly there was also some minor expression of opposition to the World Confessional Organizations in the ecumenical movement. This somewhat disturbing note, however, was later to prove a blessing as it stimulated the desire for consultation and better understanding with Regional Christian Councils.

# World Confessional Consultation

The first formal contact with the organization of World Confessional Secretaries came in April, 1962 in the annual meeting held at the World Council of Churches headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. It was at this meeting that your Secretary proposed that an across-the-table consultation be held between World Confessional Secretaries and the East Asia Christian leaders. It was agreed that Dr W. A. Visser 't Hooft, who as General Secretary of the World Council regularly attends the Confessional group meetings, should bring this proposal before the Central Committee meeting in Paris later that year. This was the beginning of better relations between Confessional groups and the East Asia Christian Conference.

## Vatican Council Contact

First contacts with the Secretariat on Unity of the Vatican Council were also established at this meeting in Geneva in April 1962. Dr Visser 't Hooft asked the Confessional Secretaries whether or not their various world organizations would be receptive to an invitation to have observers at the approaching Vatican Council, and whether they would be willing to assume the responsibility for selecting and maintaining the corps of observers at the Council. This obviously placed the World Confessional Organization at the centre of contact

with Protestantism since they alone could represent their total denominational groups throughout the world. Acceptance of this proposal was almost unanimous and Bishop Willebrands (then Monsignor Willebrands) came into our meeting to make the initial arrangements. It was from this beginning that the whole matter of Protestant observers to the Vatican Council developed, and there was, and continues to be, a justifiable sense of pride that both the World Councils of Churches and the Secretariat on Unity of the Vatican Council selected the World Confessional Organization as the one instrument through which this important work could best be accomplished.

# Oxford Theological Institute

One of the fine contributions of the World Methodist Council to World Methodist Theological scholarship is the regularly recurring Oxford Theological Institute. This institute which is sponsored by the Council is held quadrennially at Lincoln College, Oxford University, Oxford, England. The Rev. Raymond George on the British side and Dr Dow Kirkpatrick on the American side have assumed the major responsibility for carrying on this worthwhile enterprise. One hundred Methodist theologians from throughout the world are selected and invited to attend for ten days of scholarly papers and discussion, as well as fellowship. Usually these one hundred are divided one-third from the United States, one-third from Great Britain and one-third from more distant areas of the world.

In July of 1962 the Institute which had been scheduled for 1961, but was delayed because of the World Conference in Oslo, was convened and it was the Secretary's privilege to be present for a part of the session. The theme of the Institute was 'The Doctrine of the Church.' The high-calibre papers read at this Institute were compiled under the editorship of Dr Kirkpatrick and were published by the Methodist Publishing House under the title theme of the Institute. As one way of distributing more widely the benefits of the Institute, the American Section bought several hundred copies of this book and sent them with the compliments of the Council to all of the overseas members of the 1964 General Conference of the Methodist Church (U.S.).

# Ministerial Exchange

The seventeenth annual programme of ministerial exchanges between British and American Methodist ministers was carried out during the summer of 1962, when five British, two Irish and seven American ministers participated. This was the first year that responsibility for the exchange programme had been located in the Secretariat of the American Side. Bishop T. Otto Nall, and before him, Dr Carl Quimby had served voluntarily in this capacity.

#### World Executive

The World Executive Committee for the 1961-62 year was held in London, England, the last week in June and at this time the work of

the Council and of both Secretaries was reviewed, decisions were made and new directives given.

Altogether this first year of busy and active orientation was a most inspiring and stimulating one as the old contacts cultivated through many years of regular pastoral work were renewed within the new dimensions of this world-wide task.

Year 1962-1963

Two important actions of the 1961-62 World Executive in London were immediately implemented at the beginning of this new year of work.

#### World Parish

A new format for *World Parish* was approved by the London Executive and the Secretary Resident in the United States was designated as the Editor. From the beginning the purpose of the new format was to carry in brief news articles, stories and pictures, the happenings and events of World Methodism to every part of our world-wide Council and Methodist membership.

There have been many flattering comments upon the appearance and the usefulness of this small periodical. One of the most significant, however, was the request from a Methodist leader in Hong Kong that every 'English-speaking Methodist in that city be put on our mailing list.' This request has been most happily complied with.

The original subscription list for World Parish was made up of approximately 1,200 persons who had been receiving the old World Parish which served both the Association of Methodist Historical Societies and the World Methodist Council. There was immediate response, however, to this new format and the subscription list began to grow until now, less than four years later, the list is running between 6,000 and 6,500 and reaches every part of the Methodist world.

#### Vatican Council

Acting favourably upon the invitation from the Secretariat of Unity of the Second Vatican Council, the World Executive approved the sending of three official observers to Rome for the sessions beginning 11th October, 1962. The naming of the Observers was left in the hands of the President's Advisory Committee, which selected the following Observers: Bishop Fred Pierce Corson, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Dr Albert C. Outler, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas and Dr Harold Roberts, Richmond College, London, England. Dr Harold Roberts was appointed Dean and Co-ordinator of the Methodist delegation.

Seven alternates were also selected to enable World Methodism to be represented continuously throughout the sessions of the Council. The alternates were: Dr Franz Hildebrant, Drew University, Madison, New Jersey; Dean Robert E. Cushman, Duke Divinity School, Durham, North Carolina; the Rev. Reginald Kissack, Rome, Italy; Dr Jose Miguez, Facultad Evangelica de Teologia, Camauca 282, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Rev. Philip Potter, London, England, and the two Secretaries, the Rev. Max W. Woodward,

London, England, and Dr Lee F. Tuttle, Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. At later sessions Dean Walter Muelder of Boston University School of Theology, Dean William Cannon of Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, and Dr. Emerito Nacpil were added to the list of observers.

An outstanding characteristic of the Methodist Observers is the varied and representative makeup of the group. It has been said that the Methodists were represented by the only non-Catholic Latin American and by the only non-Caucasian among the original Protestant Observers.

At the suggestion of our Observers, the Council reprinted and mailed with its compliments and those of the Vatican Council Observers copies of John Wesley's great letter of tolerance, entitled 'A Letter to a Roman Catholic,' to approximately 700 English-speaking Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church throughout the world. There resulted a literal stream of letters of appreciation coming from over the world to the office for several months. At least two of these persons have spoken of John Wesley in terms of sainthood.

# Aldersgate Around the World

Probably the most successful promotion of closer personal Methodist ties surrounded the idea of 'Aldersgate Around the World.' In implementing this idea it was decided to produce a round medallion of brass, seven inches in diameter, which could be attached to wooden or masonry walls of Methodist buildings. This medallion bearing the official symbol of the World Methodist Council as well as the name had also in an outer circle the quote of John Wesley, 'The Methodists are one people in all the world.' On the inside circle the words 'Aldersgate 1738' with the quotation just above it, 'I felt my heart strangely warmed.'

The plaque designed by the Secretary and produced by the Balfour Company brought an immediate response. Every medallion which could be produced by the manufacturers between 1st January and Aldersgate day, 24th May, 1963, was placed in some special location of Methodist interest in more than 50 countries of the world. There were many interesting stories of spiritual renewal which attended the conducting of the services connected with mounting the medallions. The service of dedication and renewal was written by Bishop Fred Pierce Corson, President of the Council.

Since this 'Aldersgate Around the World' observance, the World Executive Committee has recommended the promotion of the Sunday nearest 24th May as World Wide Wesley Day.

# Methodism in an Ecumenical Age

Another enterprise which proved unusually successful was the inauguration in August, 1963 of the first Conference in Methodism aimed at determining the ecumenical stance of the Methodist Church. This was actually a project of the American Section but the results of this first Conference have been far-reaching. The decision to promote such a Conference was prompted by the fact that no other agency

in Methodism seemed to be active in this field. The following Methodist and Ecumenical leaders participated in the Conference as speakers and discussion leaders: Dr Albert C. Outler, Mr Edwin L. Jones, Dean Robert E. Cushman, Dr Claude Nelson, Dr Tracey K. Jones, Dr Robert Bilheimer, Dr Gerald McCulloh, Bishop Fred P. Corson, Archbishop Hallinan, Dr Gaither P. Warfield, Bishop Gerald Ensley, Miss Dorothy McConnell and the Rev. William Selwyn Dawson.

#### World Methodist Associates

Acting upon the authority of the World Methodist Executive meeting in London in late June of 1962 a supporting organization known as World Methodist Associates was set up. Charter honorary members of this organization were: President and Madame Chiang Kai-shek, Taipei, Taiwan; Dr Elmer T. Clark, Lake Junaluska, North Carolina; Bishop Ivan Lee Holt, St. Louis, Missouri; Dr E. Stanley Jones of New York City; Dr Oscar T. Olson, Cleveland, Ohio; Dr Benson Perkins, Birmingham, England; Dr Harold Roberts, Surrey, England; Sir Arthur Rank, London, England; Dr Ralph Sockman, New York City; President William V. S. Tubman, Monrovia, Liberia; and Bishop Herbert Welch, New York City.

A number of leaders of Methodism have become World Methodist Associates contributing generously to a fund which formed the first basic support for the World Methodist Youth Convocation to be held preceding the London World Methodist Conference in 1966.

Among miscellaneous items of interest during the year was the invitation to the American Secretary to become a visiting member of the Council of the Council of Secretaries of the Methodist Church (U.S.). This invitation was extended for the period of some two years preceding the General Conference in 1964, at which by special memorial to the General Conference by the Council of Secretaries, the American Secretary of the World Methodist Council became permanently an official member of the organization.

In the exchange of ministers between the United States and Great Britain for the summer of 1963 there were twenty-four British and American Methodist ministers participating.

#### Year 1963-1964

The World Executive Committee Meeting was held in Stuttgart, Germany, 9th-12th September, 1963, with special emphasis placed upon the proposed merging of the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Methodist Church (U.S.). The meeting was held in Germany since this country more than any other outside the United States could be affected by such a merger. There were a number of significant events in connexion with the 1963 World Executive in Stuttgart.

It was at this meeting that the application of the Evangelical United Brethren Church for full membership in the World Methodist Council was unanimously approved.

One of the most inspiring aspects of the meetings in Stuttgart was the great Methodist-Evangelical United Brethren Rally which took place on Sunday, 8th September. The German Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren members attended in such large numbers that it was necessary to hold simultaneous services in the two largest halls of that city. Both of these large halls were overflowed and in all something more than 6,000 persons attended these rallies at which leaders of the two denominations and other leaders of the World Methodist Council rotated in order to address both rallies. There was the feeling that much was done during this World Executive to cement the already close relations between the participating groups.

# Report on Vatican II

Reports on the first session of the Second Vatican Council were considered in the Stuttgart Executive and preparations made for the opening of the Second Session which was to occur within the month. The delayed opening of the second session, of course, was occasioned by the passing of Pope John XXIII and the election of his successor Pope Paul VI. The Secretary attended the opening of this second session along with other observers and came away from Rome with the feeling that the new Pope Paul would seek earnestly to carry out the work of the Council in the same fine spirit which had been exhibited by his predecessor.

From the Vatican Council the Secretary next attended the annual meeting of the World Confessional officers and leaders in the head-quarters building of the World Council of Churches in Geneva. It was at this meeting that four representatives of the East Asia Christian Conference, two of them incidentally being Methodist, were present for the across-the-table consultation with the World Confessional bodies.

So many points of misunderstanding were cleared away by this initial meeting of the two groups that everyone was overjoyed at the success of the meetings. The General Secretary of the World Council of Churches stated that so much had been accomplished that he felt it would be decidedly worthwhile to meet each six months for a period of time to consolidate the splendid gains accomplished.

Methodists who attended this meeting in addition to Rev. Max W. Woodward, Secretary Resident in Great Britain, and the Secretary Resident in the United States, were Mr. Charles C. Parlin and Dr Tracey K. Jones, representing the American Section and Dr D. T. Niles and Rev. Robert Nelson representing the East Asia Christian Conference.

# New Editor for Encyclopaedia

Among the other noteworthy events of the 1963-1964 year was the final changeover in the editorship of the World Methodist Encyclopedia. This work was started under the direction and editorship of Dr Elmer T. Clark. Following the retirement of Bishop Nolan B. Harmon, who before his election to the episcopacy had been Book

Editor of the Methodist Church (U.S.), a committee representing the World Methodist Council and the Association of American Historical Societies was able to persuade Bishop Harmon to accept editorship of the encyclopedia. He has given splendid leadership to the project and it is now expected that the completed encyclopedia will be available by the beginning of fall, 1967.

# A Map and a Flag

Recognizing the need for a World Methodist Map which could vividly portray all of the world areas of Methodist activity, the Secretary undertook this task which involved a considerable amount of research and work. Upon completion of this project considerable interest was aroused since it is the only map of its type now in circulation. It shows the work of each of the twenty-one different Methodist groups which form the Council and the total full Methodist membership in each of the countries. Thousands of these have been distributed and at least three permissions have been granted to use this map in Methodist literature of various types which reaches several million people. At certain times also our mails have been filled with requests for the map and the Handbook of Information of the World Methodist Council which should be studied along with it. It is felt that this project has been most worthwhile and highly successful. The distribution of the map and the handbook will be continued.

During the year also work was done on the design of a Methodist flag. The flag is quite colourful, having a field of United Nations blue with a fringe of gold. Emblazoned upon this field is the symbol of the World Methodist Council and one of the many colourful coats-of-arms supposedly connected with the family of John Wesley. There has been a good deal of interest in this flag and a number of churches and Methodist historical sites are now flying it regularly although it has been in production and available only a few months. It should be made clear that this flag was adopted by the American Section with the consent of the World Executive Committee and should be called a Methodist flag and not the World Methodist flag. This distinction is made clear in references to it.

# Commission on Ecumenical Affairs

During the 1960-64 quadrennium the Secretary represented the World Methodist Council on the Commission on Ecumenical Consultation, serving on the Executive Committee. The 1964 General Conference replaced this Commission with a larger and a more representative Commission on Ecumenical Affairs. The Secretary has served as Recording Secretary and as a member of the Executive Committee. During the first year until a General Secretary was elected, he served in a voluntary capacity in this position also.

Such relationships as the above are but typical of the many ways in which the Secretary is called upon to represent the World Methodist Council in other activities and agencies of the Church.

## Council/Conference Committee Work

Beginning with the Stuttgart World Executive, the Programme Committee for the 11th World Conference in London was activated and work begun. During the intervening three years there have been many meetings and far-reaching decisions resulting, it is felt, in excellent prospects for an outstanding World Council/Conference with a truly representative World Methodist roster of speakers, and other leaders.

Among the many continuing activities most noteworthy perhaps was the decision to increase *World Parish* from a four-page to an eight-page periodical.

The Exchange Programme for the summer of 1964 saw twenty-four British and American ministers working in one another's parishes.

#### Year 1964-1965

The World Executive Committee met in late October in Kingston, Jamaica, upon the invitation of Rev. Hugh Sherlock, a member of the World Executive Committee, and the President-elect of the new autonomous Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas which officially comes into being in 1967. The Executive was preceded by one full day by a meeting of the Programme Committee of the World Council/Conference and also by the Programme Committee meeting of the World Methodist Youth Conference, the Family Life Conference and the Planning Group for the World Federation of Methodist Women. All of these significant Conferences were planned in close affiliation with the 11th World Methodist Council/Conference.

# World-Wide Wesley Day

At Kingston, by action of the World Executive, the Sunday nearest 24th May was designated as World-Wide Wesley Day and Bishop Odd Hagen of the Stockholm area was requested to prepare a special order of worship to be used throughout the world on that Sunday.

# Report on Methodist Union Negotiations

One of the features on the Jamaica World Executive was the full report given on the various union conversations and negotiations involving the Methodist groups throughout the world. It is interesting to point out that consistently through the quinquennium there have been from fifteen to twenty such official union negotiations taking place in various parts of the world. The Executive Committee of the Council has endeavoured to keep abreast always of these negotiations and to give, as desired, guidance and direction. These various projects included the following: Church of England, British Methodism; American Methodist-Evangelical United Brethren, Commission on Church Union; Methodist Church Australia; New Zealand Methodism, North India and Pakistan, Methodist Church in Upper Burma, Southern Rhodesia, The Methodist Church in Sierra Leone, in Nigeria Methodists, Anglicans and Presbyterians; and in the United Church of Ghana in which the Anglicans, the

Evangelical Presbyterians, the Methodists and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana are involved. The situation in the Western Area was outlined by the Rev. Hugh B. Sherlock. The Presbyterians and the Congregationalists had decided to unite and the United Church would continue discussions with the Moravians, the Disciples of Christ and the Methodists. The South African conversations were continuing with Anglicans. Bishops Wall and Doyle reported on the situation in their Churches, the A.M.E. Zion and the C.M.E.

### Vatican Council

Among the more important of the continued responsibilities of the Secretary's office was, of course, the continuing sessions of the Vatican Council. It was the privilege of this Secretary together with President Corson to spend the week in October in Rome attending the sessions of the Conference. It was a particular privilege during this brief visit to the Council to accompany Bishop Corson during a private audience with Pope Paul VI.

From the Vatican Council in Rome, Bishop Corson and the Secretary went directly to the meeting of the Confessional Groups in the World Council of Churches headquarters building at Geneva, Switzerland. We were met there by Rev. Max Woodward, Secretary Resident in Great Britain and Rev. Douglas Thompson also representing the World Methodist Council and the British Methodist Missionary Society. It was the privilege of this Secretary to preside over the sessions of the World Confessional Groups during these meetings.

# Visitation Fiji-New Zealand-Australasia

One of the most interesting and it is felt, one of the most worthwhile contacts with Methodism in other parts of the world, came as a result of a six weeks' visit to the Fiji Islands, New Zealand, Australia and other areas in East Asia. This was made in company with Bishop Corson, President of the Council, and Mrs Corson. Mrs Tuttle also accompanied the Secretary on this tour.

Many closer contacts were established and it was found that the progress of the Church in this area was most inspiring. Of particular note was the enthusiasm of the new Fijian Conference under the

presidency of Rev. Setareki Tuilovoni.

The tremendous influence and activity of the New Zealand Methodist Church which though relatively small in the number of its members exerts an influence upon that country far beyond its

numerical strength, was especially inspiring.

The aggressiveness of the Methodist Church in Australia proved also to be most interesting. Their progress in stewardship and Church extension was most encouraging, and their co-operation with the Government in providing greatly needed social welfare facilities for elderly people was most enlightening.

It was very helpful also to see at first hand the situation with regard to Church Union negotiations taking place in both New

Zealand and Australia.

### Methodism in an Ecumenical Age

In June, 1965, at Lake Junaluska, the Second Conference on Methodism in an Ecumenical Age was held. As indicated previously in this review it was felt that this was and continues to be an area in which the World Methodist Council can make a real contribution, especially in the American Section. Another group of outstanding Methodist and Ecumenical leaders brought papers of unusual merit and the discussion groups were most lively and helpful. It was at this Second Conference on Methodism in an Ecumenical Age that the much discussed COSMOS plan, representing the thinking of the Commission on The Structure of Methodism Overseas of the Church (U.S.) was unveiled. We have been able also to open several other opportunities for discussion of this interesting proposal.

Leaders participating in the Second Conference on Methodism in an Ecumenical Age were: His Excellency Lord Caradon, Mr Edwin L. Jones, Bishop Fred P. Corson, Bishop Paul E. Martin, Bishop Herbert Bell Shaw, Bishop Earl G. Hunt, Bishop Richard C. Raines, Bishop Bertram W. Doyle, Mr Charles C. Parlin, Bishop W. Angie Smith, Bishop James K. Mathews, Dr Edwin Espy, Bishop Roy H. Short, Bishop T. Otto Nall, Dr Dorothy McConnell, Dean William R. Cannon, Bishop Paul N. Garber, Bishop Eugene M. Frank, Dr Robert E. Cushman, Bishop S. L. Greene, Most Rev, W. G. Connare, Bishop Shot K. Mondol, Bishop Noah W. Moore. Bishop F. Gerald Ensley, Dr Albert C. Outler, Dr Albea Godbold and the Secretary.

# Oxford Theological Institute

Getting back on the regularly recurring cycle of meetings, the Oxford Theological Institute with a world-wide representation of Methodist scholars was once again held in the month of July at Lincoln College, Oxford University, Oxford, England. Many felt this conference under the direction of Dr Dow Kirkpatrick and with the usual help and co-operation from the Rev. Raymond George and others on the British side was one of the most important yet held. Dr D. T. Niles of Ceylon brought the keynote address on the theme of the conference, 'The Finality of Christ'. Once again the papers from this conference will be published by the Methodist Publishing House under the title theme of the conference and it is expected that the volume will be widely distributed.

A project of unusual interest and historical value was launched during this year due to the special interest and activity of Dr Nat M. Harrison of High Point, North Carolina. It was decided to begin a miniature historical garden adjacent to the World Methodist Building at Lake Junaluska. The Lake Junaluska Assembly has cooperated by setting aside several acres in a natural amphitheater adjoining and to the rear of the present building. The addition of this valuable land came as a gift from the Assembly. Already plans have been made, a landscape architect's drawings have been completed and a number of the historical shrines connected with the beginnings of Methodism have been completed in beautiful scale

model miniatures. It is expected that this project will be continued until significant structures related to early Methodist origins from throughout the world will be included in this garden.

# 11th World Conference

In the fall of 1965 it became necessary to implement a number of the plans for the 1966 World Methodist Council/Conference which had been made by the last several Executives and the General Programme Committee. First in order, of course, was the official nominating of delegates from the Episcopal areas and other proper authorities of the Churches in the continental United States. This was followed by the securing of proper nominations for delegates to the World Methodist Youth Conference and the search for 'Buddy Scholarship' funds from the Church in America. These funds are provided for the expense of outstanding young Methodist leaders from areas of the world which would not otherwise be represented. This particular project has proved most successful and the prospects now are for a full Conference truly representative of the Methodist World.

Registration has also been proceeding at a rapid pace requiring a great deal of additional secretarial help and expense of mailings,

printings, etc.

Care has been taken in all of this time to keep in close touch with the activities and the working plans of the host conference committees in England. In the most recent consultation on these matters there appeared every reason to be optimistic about the forthcoming World Council/Conference and all of the attendant meetings.

The ministerial exchange programme for the summer of 1965 went forward with thirty exchanges representing the participating countries. It was also beginning to appear possible to make an extension of the exchange programme to cover a number of other countries of the world besides.

#### The Year 1965-1966

This final year of the quinquennium beginning with a significant World Executive Committee session during the last week of August in Stockholm, Sweden, brought about one of the heaviest years of activity both in the details of office administration work and on enlarged travel schedule. This has been the year of almost constant attention to the affairs of the 1966 World Conference/Council. A new staff member has been added to deal with the many complicated aspects of securing official nominations from the various Methodist groups and carrying these through to registration.

In addition to these matters this has also been the largest ministerial exchange in the twenty year history of the movement. There were thirty-two ministers exchanging during the summer of 1966.

One new aspect of the Exchange Programme this year has been the experience of the First Methodist Church in Englewood, New Jersey, in sending its pastor to India to exchange with an Indian Methodist pastor for some two months largely through the interest and good

offices of Mr Charles Parlin, layman of the local church and Vice-President of the World Methodist Council. Arrangements have been worked out and it is expected that the exchange will begin immediately following the sessions of this Council/Conference.

Officers Nominated During Stockholm Executive Committee Meetings The Nominating Committee made its report on new officers for the quinquennium to take office at the close of the London Conference. Bishop Odd Hagen, Resident Bishop of the Stockholm Area, was unanimously nominated as President as were the following Vice-Presidents: Dr Eric W. Baker, Rev. Francis C. F. Grant, Rev. Carlos T. Gattinoni, Rev. Cecil F. Gribble, Dr Charles C. Parlin, Bishop Herbert Bell Shaw, Rev. Hugh B. Sherlock, Bishop Roy H. Short and Rev. Dr J. B. Webb.

Renominated for five year terms were the incumbent Secretaries and Treasurers.

#### Conversations with the Roman Catholics

Another significant action of the Stockholm Executive was its vote to leave in the hands of the President and his Consultative Committee the matter of following up and consolidating the advances in the ecumenical co-operation resulting from the Vatican Council, particularly as it relates to the membership of the World Methodist Council. This has been done in co-operation with the Secretary on Christian Unity of the Vatican Council. Communication has been regularly maintained and it has been deemed wise to announce conversations between the Roman Catholics and the World Method-dist Council. It should be understood, of course, that this neither takes the place of, nor prejudices, the work of conversation teams between member churches of the Council and the Roman Catholic Church. This step would seem to be well within reasonable expectation with the greatly improved climate of understanding and co-operation between the respective groups.

#### Consultation with East Asia Christian Conference Leaders

Another relationship, which has been cultivated during the past several years and which seems to be bearing fruit of better understanding and mutual confidence, is that with the East Asia Christian Conference. In early December, for the first time on their home ground, the East Asia Christian Conference invited the officers of World Confessional Organizations to sit down with them in consultation on our mutual responsible relationships.

Probably more than any other group this opportunity was accepted by the World Methodist Council and by the Methodist Church in general. In addition to both of the full-time Secretaries of the Council there were present in Kandy, Ceylon, for this consultation some fifteen Methodist representatives from Council member Churches throughout the world. In fact nearly one-half of the total membership of the consultation represented some branch of the Methodist Church. It is fair to say that further progress and understanding in co-operation were arrived at, and the willingness of

Methodist people throughout the world to participate in such

consultation was particularly noted.

In order to make the fullest use of such a lengthy journey the Secretary arranged his itinerary to visit certain areas of the Methodist Church as he journeyed to this distant meeting. There were meetings held with Methodist leaders in Anchorage, Alaska, and in the Philippines on the way to Ceylon.

Since the return from this meeting and in response to a request from the Secretariat of the East Asia Christian Conference the Council has agreed to share in the expense of a further consultation of the East Asia Christian Conference to be held in October in

Hong Kong.

During the past year the increase in our volume of work and expanded programme overtaxed the facilities of our very fine World Headquarters building at Lake Junaluska. By action, therefore, of the American Section Executive Committee meeting in Philadelphia on 7th-8th March plans for a new wing on this building were adopted and the work is now nearing completion. Actually this new wing completes the architectural style of the beautiful stone building of which there is much reason to be proud.

#### In General

No review of the past quinquennium would be complete without a special word concerning the ecumenical involvement of the World Methodist Council during this period.

From the time of the election of the two new Secretaries at the Oslo Conference in 1961 there has been the understanding that Council work would be carried out in co-operation with and within the framework of the larger ecumenical movement, particularly as it has been represented through the World Council of Churches. Because of this understanding and stated purpose, one of the Secretaries has attended the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi, India, and each of the meetings of the Central Committee as they have been held in Paris, Rochester, Enugu and Geneva.

While there are some who look upon World Confessional Organizations with suspicion it would be difficult indeed to find any group or organization which has worked more closely with the World Council of Churches or the Ecumenical Movement as a whole than has the World Methodist Council. In several instances this organization has been instrumental in clearing away misunderstandings and confusions, and significantly there is no instance in which the Council has worked contrary to the purposes of a greater Christian unity in the world.

Instances of the above are the suggestions of the Secretary that consultations between the East Asia Christian Conference and the World Confessional Organizations be arranged under the auspices of the World Council of Churches. The bringing together of denominational mission leaders with the World Council of Churches represented real advance. The making and adopting of the following statements by the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches

concerning the relation of World Confessional Bodies to the Ecumenical Movement was first suggested by this Secretary.

This statement by Dr W. A. Visser 't Hooft adopted at the Consultation in 1965 is a clarifying statement long needed and of

great importance.

'We believe that to think and act as if the historic confessional church families represent the only spiritual reality to be taken seriously is to live in the "pre-ecumenical age". In that sense the statement of a Lutheran theologian that the confessional era is at an end, is true.

'On the other hand, we believe that to think and act as if the fully ecumenical age had been reached, in which confessional disagreements have been overcome and in which it is possible to think only in terms of an integrated world-wide Christian community, is premature and therefore also unrealistic.

'It is characteristic of the present period of church history that the Church lives "between the times," when the confessions remain the main expression of its life, but in which these confessions have all to answer the ecumenical question: "What is the relevance of the faith that all the confessions hold in common for their relationship to each other and for the unity and mission of the Church of Christ today?" and "How can they express in common witness and new ecclesiastical structures the unity in Christ which exists already and for which they are responsible to our Lord for the sake of the world?" —Dr W. A. Visser 't Hooft.

# Other Ecumenical Participation

The World Methodist Council through close contact with the Secretariat on Christian Unity of the Vatican Council has sought to cooperate in every constructive and worthwhile way with this Council which is one of the historic ecumenical events of the century. In addition to assuming the responsibility of World-Wide Methodism for selecting and keeping Methodist Observers at the various sessions of the Vatican Council both the President of the World Methodist Council and the two Secretaries have served as Observers in various sessions. The follow up of the Vatican Council leading to conversations between the World Methodist Council and the Roman Catholic Church has also been a significant instance of ecumenical co-operation.

# National Council of Churches

The Secretary has also served on the Programme Board for Christian Unity of the National Council of Churches of Christ and is a memmer of the sub-committee on ministerial exchanges conducted by that organization.

#### Commission on Church Union

As an alternate member of the Methodist team in the Commission on Church Union, the Secretary has kept abreast of this movement

as it has progressed as well as the move toward merger between the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Methodist Church (U.S.).

#### British American Methodist Conversations

Along with the President and several other officers of the World Methodist Council Committee the Secretary is serving on the General Conference team of the Methodist Church in conversation with the British Committees leading toward closer relations. One meeting of this group has already been held in London and another is scheduled during the next year in Bermuda.

#### Methodist Ecumenical Stance

Attention is being given both in the World Methodist Council as well as in the Commission on Ecumenical Affairs of the Methodist Church (U.S.) to the defining of a Methodist Ecumenical Stance. The Secretary has met with the Study and Liaison sub-committee of this commission in seeking to arrive at such an accepted position.

Altogether the World Methodist Council continues to look ahead to the fuller ecumenical movement with plans for full co-operation as the Holy Spirit leads.

#### PART FOUR

#### **INAUGURAL MEETING**

Thursday, 18th August, 1966, 7.00 p.m., The Central Hall, Westminster, London

**Bishop Fred Pierce Corson Presiding** 

#### THE WELCOME

Address by the President of the British Methodist Conference, Rev. Douglas W. Thompson.

Mr President, Mr President Designate, Members of Council and Members of this Conference, friends all— It is not every President of the Methodist Conference who has the privilege of welcoming Methodists from all the world to these shores as they 'fly as doves to their windows' (Isaiah 608). But such you are each and all flying home to the dove-cotes from which the first Methodist experience flew out across the world.

I am deeply aware of what a privilege is mine in this opportunity. It is as the lineal successor to our Revered Founder—John Wesley—that I am called to do so for the primal tradition of our Methodism rests here. This is the only reason why I should be asked to give you welcome, there are many others in Britain more eloquent and more scholarly than I but it must be he who for the brief moment sits in John Wesley's Chair who tells you how glad we are in this country to see you all.

I have read to you from the 60th chapter of Isaiah and already quoted from it. It is a great song of returning sons and daughters. I am sure that many among you have looked forward to this day not only to meet fellow-members of our Tradition gathered from all the world but also and may be in some, dominantly, to see for yourselves the places in which it all began.

Here is Fetter Lane, here Aldersgate Street, here Wesley's chapel and prayer room, here the Bristol New Room. The spark kindled here which set so great a flame blazing to the earth's ends. These things you desire to see. And I'm sure you shall. I wonder if you will read the meaning of these things aright? Perhaps I can help you to do so. Perhaps that is my chief duty in these words of welcome.

Pondering on the 60th chapter of Isaiah, in your behalf, I was reminded of the great communities of Jews in London and in New York. I remembered how year by year at the Passover for countless years they have lifted the Cup of wine and said in their families—'Next year in Jerusalem'. Yet they have known that their Jerusalem is a divided city of which they possess not the whole even after the return to Israel. And there are many who lift the Cup and cry 'Next year in Jerusalem' who would not choose to go there, having become part of the nations among whom they dwell.

So you will in between sessions of this Conference and in our sessions of worship, go to the great Methodist shrines of this city and this land. You will find that Fetter Lane is no Methodist preserve, that Aldersgate Street is hard to find and that the attendances at the Royal Festival Hall's Concerts—as well as the clubs of Mayfair, is higher than that at Wesley's Chapel. London is a great and busy city—even a Conference of this size may take place in it and pass un-noted. If your Methodist church-life has

meant everything to you, you may well think that the heartland of Methodism and the city of Wesley's determining encounter with the Holy Spirit should show more signs of its holy history than it does. This Jerusalem is not simply divided like that of the Jewish people it is fragmented into a thousand gain-desiring bits many of which will not match your faith and practice at any point.

The chapter in Isaiah sings in terms of the glorification of the land and city of Jehovah's revelation and choice. The ships of Tarshish bring home Israel's captive sons to be princes over the earth. Men bring in the wealth of the nations. Instead of bronze there is gold, instead of iron there is silver. We do not welcome you for such reasons of the glorification of Wesley's Ierusalem

Jerusalem.

It is true that if you ask the stewards and ushers they will tell you where to find exciting bits of Methodist work done in this city well worth your examination. It is true that you come to a land where the network of places of worship in the Methodist Connexion is only less than that of the Established Church's Parish system—and in one Western Corner is actually much greater.

But violence is heard in this land, devastation and destruction are as much within our borders as within any other land's border of which you know. Wesley's homeland is not totally possessed by Perfect Love.

May I remind you of another Jerusalem? 'The heavenly Jerusalem is FREE, she is our Mother'. As you stand in Wesley's Chapel, as you hunt for the old scenes of the revelations given to John and Charles Wesley, we hope that you will accept them as signs of the unending battle—of the war in which there is no discharge—these are buildings erected to the name of the Saviour by simple men who fought out the battle we still fight, using their modest means, ignoring the insults and petty tyrannies of those about them.

Britain is a terrain long fought over and to be fought over again and again. There are places where Wesley won battles in which his adversaries have retaken the ground he once won. There are cities and towns, on the other hand which did not exist when he lived in which we modern Methodists of Britain have won victories which to him would have seemed

apocalyptic.

It is not into Britain that you bring today the spiritual wealth of the nations, the glory of the peoples of the earth. You display them before us here in Wesley's homeland but they are the treasures of that New Jerusalem which has no frontiers, possessed by the All High God. If yesterday's victories are an inspiration which makes you fight the better we shall be glad. If you see some of our contemporary evangelism and encourage our Ministers or lay-workers in them they will be grateful to you.

Take then, our city as the symbol of the teaming modern world which Christ claims as His own; Take the Wesley shrines as symbols that He has not left himself without witness—either here or where you live. Enhearten us as we shall endeavour to enhearten you. Try to see the connexion between some worn stone in some village from which Wesley preached and the throbbing teenage club some Methodist minister today uses to the same end as that stone and you will not have visited us in vain.

#### Address by Cardinal J. C. Heenan, Archbishop of Westminster.

You have come to this Conference from all over the world and cannot afford to waste time. Let me say therefore without rhetoric how glad I am to be here. I thank you for inviting me. The fact that no Christian body now feels happy to celebrate its great occasions in isolation is reason for offering thanks to God.

My programme says that this first meeting has been called to receive greetings from leaders of other churches. We must try to give you something better than greetings. You have the good will of all my community and I gladly greet you in their name. But a World Conference calls for more than greetings. When one great body of Christians meets it is the concern of all other Christians. If we are Christians we are members of Christ's body. What happens to one member matters to all. 'We, though many, are one body in Christ and members one of another' (Romans 12<sup>5</sup>). If your conference makes wise decisions the whole body of Christ benefits. If you act unwisely all Christianity suffers: 'If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together' (1 Corinthians 12<sup>26</sup>).

I do not think that most international conferences are important. They are now so numerous as to have become a threat to normal work. Worse still, too many of the same people attend and say the same things. There is almost a fraternity of international conference speakers who appear on both sides of the Atlantic at meetings of every theological complexion. There is no little danger that the multiplication of conferences will lead to a neglect of pastoral action. If too much time is spent in speculation there will be too little spent in preaching the word of God. That, incidentally, is one of the dangers of ecumenism. We can become so engrossed in discussing each other's theology that the flocks committed to our care feeling unwanted may begin to disperse.

I want to say something about the word ecumenism. It is a deplorable word. One of the great faults of Christians is to present God's gifts in the most unattractive wrappings. We constantly use terms which ordinary people cannot understand. In this way we confirm the impression that religion is unrealistic and irrelevant to actual living. Thus the heart-warming action by which Christians laying aside enmity and suspicion learn to know and love each other is called being ecumenical. Thus the movement for

Christian Unity is made to seem like a theological pastime.

This is a very serious matter. Last week I was studying a correspondence file concerning applications for a university lectureship. One candidate described himself as competent to teach sixteenth century history with an ecumenical bias. The professor of history replied that there was already an abundance of lecturers in the history of economics. I am not much concerned that a secular scholar had never heard of ecumenism. I am concerned with our fellow Christians. Why must we keep using words like ecumenism, dialogue, involvement, commitment and encounter? Ninety per cent of our people have no idea what they mean. Our people should be our first concern. Christ gave the messengers of John the Baptist the formula for recognizing his Church 'The poor have the Gospel preached to them' (Matthew 11<sup>5</sup>). If we talk above the heads of working men we are failing as pastors. So I talk not of ecumenism but of Christian Unity.

I notice that our President, Bishop Corson, was in trouble recently because he was alleged to have said that Unity Talks are in prospect between Methodists and Catholics. I don't know whether or not he said this but I am quite sure that he ought not to have been in trouble if he did say it. Of course we want Unity talks with Methodists. One of the errors of the Unity movement has been to speak as if the Church of Rome, the Orthodox and the Church of England are the only serious partners. Christian Unity is the concern of all. I am just as anxious for talks with Methodists, Baptists and Congregationalists as with Anglicans.

Christian Unity will be achieved through Christ. As all denominations come closer to Him they must obviously come closer to each other. Meanwhile we learn from each other. Catholics have a great deal to teach

others about the Holy Eucharist and Mary the Mother of Jesus. You Methodists give a great example from your tradition of a deep personal love of Christ our Lord. Once in a series of broadcast Services I selected our hymn 'Sweet Heart of Jesus'. Immediately I had letters from Methodist choirmasters and ministers asking for the words and music. I had to repeat the hymn before the end of the series. This was eloquent proof of the profound love of Jesus practised in the Methodist Faith.

I have said enough. I hope and believe that we shall find warmer and deeper friendship as we grow together in the love of God. I wish you well in your Conference with its noble theme. The theme on the programme sent to me was wrongly worded. It said 'God in our World'. It should, of course, be 'God in his World'. May the World Methodist Conference of 1966 take a great step towards restoring the world to God through Christ His Son our Lord.

# Address by the Rt. Reverend S. Falkner Allison, Bishop of Winchester.

MR PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST,

First of all I bring you warm greetings from the Archbishop of Canterbury. He is most sorry that he is unable to be present himself. As I am on holiday in Suffolk it was comparatively easy for me to break my holiday and come up specially for this occasion and I am most happy to be with you. I have many friends among your leaders in this country and other parts of the world and it gives me great joy to know that in this country our two Churches are drawing so close together after our years of separation. We live in exciting and challenging times.

You will all be aware of what has been happening in this country. You will know of the conversations that have been taking place between our two Churches and of the Joint Commission that is now sitting with a view to clearing up some of the outstanding problems that remain to be solved before our two Churches go forward, as they desire, into full communion and ultimate organic unity. It may be of interest to you all to know that recently a new Council has been inaugurated to foster the growing together of our two Churches in this country. A former President of the Methodist Conference and I have accepted invitations to be joint Chairmen of this Council. The Council is to be called the Anglican-Methodist Council for Unity. Here in this country we are endeavouring to get down to grass roots and we are much encouraged by the way in which our two Churches are growing together steadily on the local level. In many parts of my own diocese, to take an example which can be paralleled I think all over the country, neighbouring congregations of Anglican and Methodists are sharing in occasional worship together, sharing in pastoral and evangelistic work and sharing in plans for Church Extension.

Some of you from other parts of the world may have certain anxieties about the coming together of Anglicans and Methodists in this country and, in particular, about the plans outlined in the Report of the Conversations. I should therefore like to give you two assurances which I hope may go some way to set your minds at rest. The first is that neither Anglicans nor Methodists are thinking in terms of a take-over bid. Needless to say Methodists would certainly not be willing to be taken over by Anglicans and with equal truth I can say that Anglicans would not relish being taken over by Methodists. We regard our coming together rather as a process of mutual enriching. Secondly, Anglicans and Methodists are agreed that there must be no break in fellowship with fellow Anglicans and fellow Methodists in other parts of the world as the result of our coming together

in this country. Such a break would be a doubtful service to Christian Unity. Rather we regard our ultimate coming together as a contribution to a wider unity.

As we all know, there is a steady movement towards Church Unity in many lands and in this movement Anglicans and Methodists are deeply involved, as for example in India, Ceylon and Africa. This involvement raises for us both a critical question which demands a clear answer. The question is this. Which is more important—the perpetuation of the Anglican Communion or the World Methodist Church, or the sharing of our heritages with one another within the fellowship of a united Church on a national or regional level? My personal conviction, the conviction shared by an increasing number of Anglicans, is that the recovery of Church Unity, whether it be in England, Africa or India, or indeed America, is so important that we must be ready if need be for the ultimate disappearance of the Anglican Communion as we know it today. Only a united Church can adequately meet the challenge of secularism in the world today and only a Church whose unity is plain for all to see can effectively reveal the unity of God.

In greeting you all I greet you with the earnest hope and prayer and with the joyful expectancy that one day, I trust within the lifetime of many of us, we shall have recovered our unity and be in organic union with one another within the fellowship of the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

# Address by Reverend Dr Norman Goodall, The Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council.

Mr. President, Members of this Council and Conference, fellow guests. blood relations all at the Cross of Christ. As has already been indicated, I owe the privilege of this moment to the fact that I represent the Free Church Federal Council of England and Wales. That great honour, incidentally, lands me immediately in a slight procedural dilemma, because the largest member church of this Free Church Federal Council in this country is, in fact, the Methodist Church. Therefore, although I happen to be a Congregationalist, so far as a significant section of this gathering is concerned, through me at the moment Methodists are shaking hands with themselves. What the precise theological significance of such a gesture may be is beyond my immediate apprehension and I would not wish at the moment to search for a psychological explanation of it. But whatever anomalies may attach to this particular procedure, it is in fact with the warmest goodwill and sense of high privilege that in the name of all the member churches of this Free Church Federal Council I join in the salutations that are being offered to you on behalf of your partners in the other ships. We pray, that all you share together through these days, and all that you offer to God may prove to be for the edification of the Church Universal, for the furtherance of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God and to the glory of His holy name.

You meet as a World Methodist Council in a time of much institutional self-examination. This is true of the Council that I represent before you at the moment; it is also true of this World Methodist Council, which like all other organisations, called (by one of those phrases that I expect Cardinal Heenan would anathematise) "world confessional organisations", is under severe criticism from many parts of the world today; most seriously from Asia and Africa. This kind of criticism of the institutional continuance of our denominational separations on the international plane is something that we must take most seriously.

It is not, however, my purpose tonight in this brief salutation even to begin to look at the possible course and outcome of this self-criticism within our Christian institutions. I simply want to ask, what is the ultimate source of this disturbance? whence come the questionings? and I venture to offer an answer. I believe it lies in the fact that the graciousness of God is disturbing all our endeavours to define with finality the ways of Grace. Surely one of the saddest features of the long story of the disunity of the Churches is to be seen in the fact that our final point of divergence from one another, and the continuing, unresolved crucial problem gathers around that word Grace. What a strange sad paradox it is that the most gracious word in any language (no 'ecumenical jargon' attaches to the word grace) should mark in fact the place of our stumbling. Stumbling in Christian relationships. Stumbling even in our search for the way of reconciliation. Yet it is here that we still touch the heart of our differences concerning the Sacraments, the Ministry, the nature of the Church itself and the relation of the Church to God's world.

Again, this is not the moment for expanding this assertion and it would be an impertinence on my part to attempt to do so. I simply want to point (in continuing my answer to my own question) to the significance of this new attitude, the new atmosphere, what we often call 'the changed climate' in the whole Christian scene today which is so welcome a characteristic of our age and which has found notable expression in what has been said by preceding

speakers this evening.

Whence comes this change? Oh, I know we can speak of a greater tolerance, of a readiness to listen and learn even more than to argue our own case. We gladly and thankfully recognise that there is more charity about; more courtesy, but is this all? Have adult Christians with centuries of history of Christian profession and practice behind them only just begun to learn the elementary lessons in deportment? Sometimes it does look as though our state has been as bad as that, but surely this is not all. For what is happening amongst us, what is disturbing us, provoking the profoundist and most radical self-criticism with all our Christian institutions is surely the fact that once again the Grace of God hath appeared, compelling us not only to mind our manners but to mind our mind. To think again about the difference between the permanent and the transient, even in our deepest inherited loyalties—yes, even in the doctrines we believe they have enshrined. To wrestle afresh with the reasons for our separations, separations between the churches, separation between the Church and the world and that most tragic separation between our assertions concerning saving Grace and our limited success in communicating it within all the graceless ways of men. And it is Grace itself which lays upon us this necessity for self-examination, for new assessments, for new beginnings, for new relationships, all in new humility. And because the source of our disturbance lies here, we can also know that we are near the source of our redemption. What obedience to this recognition must involve theologically, ecclesiologically and in our conception of Christian witness and service is, of course, the continuing and urgent task of the Church Universal (and the days of this conference and council, we pray, will be a worthy sharing in that task which is also our calling.) But I believe that if we continue to engage in it in humble, adoring, faithful recognition of whence the new disturbances and the new incentives of our day proceed, we may be enabled, we may be allowed of grace, yet again to say to one another and to proclaim in spirit and in power to the world; "Lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh!" So be it!

#### THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

by Bishop Fred Pierce Corson, D. Ecum.

DEAR FATHERS AND BRETHREN.

The convening of the eleventh session of the World Methodist Council is a significant occasion both for Methodism and the Church universal. Here we shall review the past, survey the present and plan for the future.

Because of the spirit and example of our Founder, John Wesley, we shall also be thinking ecumenically in these sessions.

The first organized World Assembly of Methodists was held in London eighty-five years ago with four hundred delegates present from thirty-five Methodist bodies throughout the world. Similar Conferences convened thereafter at ten-year intervals except that the 1941 Conference, because of war conditions, did not convene until 1947. At this session in Springfield, Massachusetts, U.S.A., a new study was made of the function, place and organization of ecumenical Methodism and at Oxford in 1951 the name of the movement was changed to 'The World Methodist Council' and provision made for a World Methodist Conference in addition to the Council. In 1956 at the session of the World Methodist Council held in Lake Junaluska, U.S.A., a new constitution was adopted which, after five years of trial and experimentation, was revised at the session in Oslo in 1961. A sensitiveness to world conditions and the place and function of the Church in contemporary society, along with a renewed interest in the foundation on which Methodism has been built, and a conviction that flexibility and change within the Church are essential for its effective continuing service, have marked the development of the World Methodist Council during these recent years.

Today, assembling for its eleventh session, reporting larger service and growing strength, we are thankful to its leaders, both past and present, who have found no resting place in their achievements but who, reflecting St Paul's attitude, do not claim the mastery and fulfillment of the mission of the Council as accomplished but intent upon the future, 'press on with the goal of oneness in Christ in view.' Philippians 3<sup>13</sup> (Knox).

For all those who have believed in and worked for the World Methodist Council, we pause to think about and to express our gratitude for their example and accomplishments.

We have been blessed, also, by the wider fellowship we are now enjoying within the universal family of God, the pleasure and inspiration of which we have experienced tonight through the gracious presence and the challenging and encouraging words of the representatives of other great World Church bodies as well as from the many messages of good wishes, felicitations and assurance of prayers which have come from all parts of the world.

Charles Wesley expressed our feelings evoked by these gestures of fellowship when he wrote:

'Touched by the loadstone of Thy love, Let all our hearts agree And ever toward each other move And ever move toward Thee.'

# Opening Doors of Opportunity

The quinquennium now ending has been the most significant from a religious standpoint since the Reformation.

As a result of the Second Vatican Council a new dimension has been brought into the ecumenical movement and new areas of thought, brother-hood and action have opened to the Christian Church. What began as a Protestant movement for oneness in Christ among themselves has now embraced all the great Christian communities, and the discussions and planning for our ecumenical endeavours must, therefore, be up-dated in order for us to enter this door of opportunity which God, through the Holy Spirit working in Pope John XXIII, has made effectual.

It has been a period characterized by a new spirit in ecumenical conference and action. While solemn pronouncements of doom for the Christian Church have echoed the predictions heard in every generation since the Church was founded, Christians have gathered to discuss the future of the Church, not in fear or desperation, but in the spirit and confidence of renewal, revival, advance and its ultimate victory.

Likewise, there has been a much wider recognition of the need of the Church in the world as a force for good and the evidence that the world will listen, though not always heed, when the Church with a united voice makes moral and spiritual pronouncements on the issues which currently confront mankind.

Communication between the Church and the world, though far from reaching its potential, has multiplied in its media and expanded in its outreach and increased in its uses so that what the world says to the Church and what the Church says to the world are more clearly heard and understood and heeded than our Fathers anticipated could be.

This period has been marked by a revival of theological studies which on its highest level seeks to 'rub shoulders with the world,' and acknowledges the need of speaking in the language of our time in order that a clear and decisive call to the imitation of Christ may be issued. While there is lively controversy concerning whether or not the theologians are succeeding and how these goals for theological study and application can be realized, the important fact is the recognition of their necessity and the effort to find a way to re-establish the theological foundations for the Christian life.

Notable gains have also been made in the coherence of our multiple Christian communities. From having relations through activities with each other only, we have developed the bonds of our spiritual oneness which makes us conscious of our organic unity. A new order and consistency in our ecumenical witness is discernible.

The world has become aware that the Church is not apart from it but in its midst where Christ placed it and, in practical ways, is making attempts to solve the spiritual and material problems which beset the present age.

The ecumenical movement itself has achieved a new hope of realization through the movement away from unity as centralization and towards the concept of unity as a centre. One body in Christ which we seek does not necessitate only one organization of His Church. To be 'all one' does not mean to be 'all alike'.

Perhaps the greatest advance for Christian unity has come about through a restatement of and a new commitment to the doctrine of religious freedom. That to which we have frequently given lip-service and have largely confined to the area of academic discussion has become a recognized practice and a reality in community religious relations. It is, however, requiring a new study of the political doctrine of the separation of Church and State and the exploring of the new meanings of what constitutes

religious freedom. For Methodists it is a congenial change in point of view since one of our basic tenets is the right of choice in matters of faith and the right, even though it destroys him, for a person to reject.

We should note, also, the revival of the teaching function of the Church both in the content of knowledge and the restoration of the teaching office to the pastoral and supervisional apostolates of the Church. We should understand that teaching must be dealt with in content and objective as well as method to be effective.

These open doors of opportunity both restore hope to the Church and confront the Church with challenge.

### Opening Doors of Challenge and Hope

We must bear in mind that it is not the first step that completes a journey but the last step and while we have seen good things begun for Christ we have 'not seen all things put under His feet'. Our hope lies in the reassurance that the Church has a place in the world and the reaffirmation of our belief that 'the Church is of God and shall endure to the end of time'.

This hope is quickened by the receptivity of this age to the ecumenical movement initiated by our Protestant churches in which Methodism has been involved from the beginning and to which it has contributed great leaders such as Dr John R. Mott and the new possibilities for it which have emerged from the Second Vatican Council.

The changes taking place within the ecumenical movement bring us the assurance that it is acquiring a discipline of action and a refinement of meaning and purpose which is moving toward a balance between fellowship, brotherhood and spiritual recognition on the one hand; and structure and organization on the other, and away from an over-emphasis of one to the neglect of the other.

Simply because a man, as in the times of Christ, doesn't walk in our way is no sufficient reason to forbid or deny his right to witness or to pass judgment upon him apart from the evidence of his spiritual fruits.

There is hope in the shift in ecumenical thinking from unity as a science to unity as an art and to a rearrangement in the order of its consummation which accepts Pope John's expressed conviction that put 'brotherhood before doctrine'.

There is hope in the now widely accepted and oft-repeated belief that in building the pyramidal structure of unity we cannot secure its permanence if we are concerned only with the apex of its intellectual and supervisional leadership and neglect to lay the broad foundations of understanding of it and commitment to it in the dioceses and parishes. The man in the street wants this Christian unity he hears about but with few exceptions he has not the faintest idea what is involved in achieving it. He must be informed, committed and trained since it is on his shoulders of strength, service and understanding that the temple of our unity in Christ must be supported. Thus a new apostolate of the laity is being sought both within Protestantism and Catholicism.

Another hopeful sign of the emergence of a stronger Christian witness is to be found in the movement of the churches to leave their isolation, their self-constructed ghettos, both in the actions of the denominational divisions and in the relations of the divisions within the denominations. Methodists know much more about each other, have a clearer understanding of each other's situations, have more fellowship with each other and are working more in unison of objective and effort than they were five years ago, and the World Methodist Council deserves a larger measure of credit for this change. To be sure, isolation and fragmentation still exist

within the World Methodist family but the direction in which we are moving is away from it and not toward it.

#### Opening Doors of Fellowship and Concern

This era may be characterized in the history of the Christian Church as a period of getting acquainted with each other, a time when public relations became a major concern of the Church, and when differences were recognized as being distinctive and not always divisive; an era described by Pope John XXIII as a time when 'we look at each other without mistrust, meet each other without fear and talk with each other without surrendering principle'; a time when the price of unity is not fixed at a surrender of power on the part of some and the acquisition of power by others but, as Dr Hans Kung pointed out, a time when the churches flow together through a renewal within themselves, a time when demands are not made that one group return to another but when the call comes for all sides to advance toward a unity in Christ.

There appears to be a stronger prospect for immediate advances in ecumenical affairs because of a settling down to deal with the realities faced in the problems of unity before we deal with the ultimates. The slogan:

'In necessary things unity In doubtful things freedom But in everything love'

has helped us to reach agreements in areas where before the attitude of 'all or nothing' kept us apart.

While a union of the branches of Christianity is gaining in popularity, we must not overlook the dangers and pitfalls that lie in the path of that popularity. A danger for instance of rushing headlong into a unity which is not fully comprehended or for which we are unprepared; the danger of mistaking a difference in the methods for attaining unity or of the goals to be achieved for opposition to ecumenism itself; the danger of assuming that what is popular by the world's standards must be accepted and what is unpopular must be abandoned. There is truth for the Church in the observation that 'those who marry today's fads will find themselves tomorrow's widows'. 'Band-wagon' strategy is always to be scrutinized. Today the chief superficial argument for abandoning the New Testament position on morals and conduct and belief is that they are no longer popular or acceptable. But we should ask, 'When have they ever been popular?' And remember the words of John Wesley 'that for a Methodist the customs of the world should not at all hinder his running the race that is set before him.

The World Methodist Council has been alert to these changes which have affected the ecumenical movement and has spent this past quinquennium in seeking to see clearly the current place of Methodism in the efforts and opportunities to strengthen the Christian witness and in moving the churches closer together.

These studies and activities have been undertaken in the concept of the World Methodist Council as a World Confessional Body and with the conviction that Methodism has ecumenical problems of its own which must be solved within itself and that the World Confessional denominational bodies as entities have distinctive responsibilities to assume and service to render to the spiritual unity which makes us one in Christ.

Because of these convictions the World Methodist Council has sought to develop a unity in diversity among the Methodist denominations of the world and has helped the young churches to find and assume their place in

the Methodist family. It has taken an increasingly active part in the larger Protestant ecumenical movement and has been an active, constructive and appreciative participant in the new Catholic-Protestant ecumenical relations. We have sought to dispel the popular notion that denominations want to be and must be competitors with one superior to or authoritative over the other and have encouraged every gesture and activity of oneness which recognized our common and equal brotherhood of Christ. We have also recognized the danger that one of the side effects of the new ecumenicity could be a rash of a new kind of denominationalism also.

It appears to me that with goals more clearly in focus and agreements on the status of participants more specifically defined we need to look realistically at these goals and what is involved in them and to the actual and pragmatic concessions regarding status and recognition for participants and especially to the methods for achieving a working and enduring ecumenicity. Schemes offered need careful scrutiny. They need to be examined in relation to universal as well as local ecumenicity. They need to be tested for the possibility of any ecclesiological heresies. We need to project their operation to foresee whether or not in actual practice they might evolve in a confederacy rather than a union and multiply denominations rather than decrease them. On the other hand, we must be sure that a method will not decrease the strength and effectiveness displayed by separate denominations or produce a rise of authoritarianism against which the Church in the past revolted.

The current mood for consensus must not lead the ecumenical movement to the pitfall of becoming 'a little bit of everything and not much of anything.'

The World Methodist Council enters the ecumenical movement leading from strength and not from weakness. Its motivation is not that of fear or desperation but of achieving the mission of the Church to which Christ calls it.

The World Methodist Council, therefore, must judge every proposal for union by its capacity to give strength and its provision to receive the strength of heritage, doctrine, method and organization which Methodism can contribute.

The circumstances under which the Church of the twentieth century works has been aptly described by Dr Roger Lloyd who characterized 'Christians today as not seeming to have any new purpose to put in place of old purpose which has gone dead on us.' We must seek to relate a current application to Christianity's enduring purpose expressed in commanding ways and applied to man's full life both temporal and eternal. To lift up such a purpose and to gain and maintain wide acceptance of it is not easy. Many panaceas as substitutes spring forth and as Jesus warned, many supporting them will cry, 'Lo he is here! Lo he is there!' But we must not be deceived.

This renewed purpose will be a hard taskmaster. It will not be approved by 'acclamation.' It will require vision, diplomacy, the power of projection and careful management lest it be killed in its birth.

To proceed cautiously that no precipitous action produces disastrous mistakes will bring from some quarters the accusation of foot-dragging. But we must not be stampeded into action for which the world has not been adequately prepared nor drugged into delays by an over-concern for the solution of every problem experienced and anticipated before any movement is begun.

It should be said for Pope Paul that he has maintained the advance in Roman Catholic renewal and in Protestant-Catholic relations because he followed neither of these groups and has been not too much concerned with the daily and superficial appraisals of his actions. He has set us an example of proceeding cautiously without foot-dragging and has proved the accuracy of the saying, 'He who goes slow goes safe and goes far.' He has taught all of us that for the ecumenical movement we must work toward solidarity in the future rather than for the popularity of the hour.

#### Opening Doors for Agreement

There are two determinative issues on which the future of true unity depends and concerning which Methodism has taken and demonstrated its position. One of them is recognition—a broad validation of membership in the Body of Christ not determined by denominational exclusiveness and a recognition of ministerial orders grounded in the New Testament and accepted because of its fruits in evidence of divine approval. There is a major difference between the terms 'irregular' and 'invalid' and in the requirements for regularizing and those of validating. Here we must pause until we find a workable application in church doctrine and polity of the principle that there are circumstances where two things may be different without one being antagonistic, inferior or superior.

The other issue is the ability for all Christians in their attitudes and organizations to become one in purpose and conduct and to maintain the flexibility in expression which denominationalism was intended to provide and has, even to allowing the inflexible to survive while not permitting such groups to block the stream of flexibility flowing within the Christian movement.

Here Methodism has a contribution to make to the ecumenical movement of a spirit and method of flexibility given to it in concept and example by its Founder, John Wesley, a concept of flexibility which has remained flexible (which is quite an achievement in both persons and organizations as they grow older) and accounts in no small part for the cohesion through the years of world Methodism.

The World Methodist Council is seeking to understand Methodism's history in the larger context of world Church history and the lessons of its experience as guides in building a Church for the present and the future. It is true of churches as of people and nations that some forget history, some fight over again the battles of history and some never learn any history at all.

The past has much to teach us: our Fathers' mistakes, their sins, their limitations and also their insights, their discoveries and their inspirations. It can save us from costly experimentation in areas where the Church has tried and failed or succeeded and why, which is perhaps history's most important contribution to the present. It can keep the present from losing both its moorings and its bearings, the recognition of its home harbour and its ports of destination. History is one of God's media for having a serious conversation with us who are engaged in building the present and the future.

Finally, as Methodists we should be proud of the place history has given our Founder, John Wesley, as the first truly ecumenical leader in Protestantism. We should also feel our obligation to maintain that leadership through his Church: to face the problems of the Church militant and not ignore them or attempt to hide them, to recognize our differences and with respect for the freedom and personality of each other live with them in a happy ecumenical marriage, to respect the past but not to become a slave to it, to welcome change but not to become an addict to novelty, to appreciate form but not to substitute it for vitality, to devise systems but not as straight-jackets to confine enthusiasm and the spirit, to accumulate resources but only as a means and not as an end.

Therefore, conscious of the guidance of the past and the demands of the present and the hopes of the future,

Let us go forward Let us go forward together Let us go forward with God.

# CONFERENCE SESSION Friday, 19th August, 1966 Address by Dr William Strawson GOD'S PURPOSE FOR THE CHURCH

It is impossible for any man to give a satisfactory answer to the question 'What is God's purpose for the Church?' We can only turn with expectation to Holy Scripture and to the other vehicles of divine revelation. The letter to the Ephesians declares the purpose of God as follows 'He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth . . . To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places' (Ephesians  $1^{5-9}$ ; 3.  $8^{-10}$ )

Those who think that theologians always make straightforward things into complicated abstractions will perhaps conclude that this is a sufficient answer to our question, and wish to leave well alone. Yet I fancy that many of us will be unwilling to do that. The heart of the answer is in these scriptural statements, but we are bound to look deeper into the issues involved.

In the first place there is the objection that to put this subject first in our discussions shows that we are too much concerned with ourselves; surely our first thought should be of the world and its need. But we are not talking about ourselves, except as we are found in Christ. We are thinking of God's purpose for the Church; for that mystical body of Christ on earth Methodists claim to belong to the Holy Catholic Church, by reason of our belonging to Christ and being part of that community which shows by faith and practice its continuity with the whole Church of God. We are only interested in God's purpose for Methodism in so far as it is to this part of the whole Church that we belong, and for the contribution of this part of the whole Church that we are in some measure responsible.

Secondly, you will notice that these statements about the purpose of God for the Church involve also His purpose for the world; far from forgetting the world, the fact is that we find that these passages speak of the purpose of God for the world through the Church. The position of the Church in this regard is best expressed in a paradox. The Church is not an end in itself nor simply a means to an end, but truly both. To neglect either part of the paradox is to lose something of the truth. The Church is the company of those who have arrived; or to put the matter another way, all who are truly of the Church are incorporated into Christ, who is the Head and the life of the Church. Without this sense of having arrived, of having laid hold on life in Christ, the Church becomes a company of neurotics who are always

wanting others to join them, so that they can encourage others to join them, so that . . . etc., etc. . . . The Church is a home wherein the prodigal is welcomed by his father and invited to sit down and partake of the bread of life; the Church is a refuge from the storms of life wherein men can enjoy the sweet company of friends while outside the winds blow and the rains come down; a house builded on a rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. But the Church is also and equally a company on the march, an instrument in the hand of God for His purpose of reconciling all men to himself. In this sense it truly does not exist for itself, but for those who are outside its fellowship. When the Church forgets this it becomes introverted, unduly sensitive of criticism and suspicious of the world outside it. It is this self-centred view of the Church which has so rightly aroused the criticism of the angry young men of radical theology. In many places the Church seems more interested in self survival than in fulfilling the purpose of its existence; more concerned about buildings for worship than for the houses in which the children of God have to live. This introverted view of the Church is now under attack in many parts of the world, but yields only slowly to the forces of the gospel which are driving the Church out among men, to be the means of God's purpose among them.

This brings us to another underlying assumption of this biblical statement of the purpose of God for the Church. If the Church exists in part so that God may effect His purpose in the world, what relationship does this imply between the Church and the world? Is the world 'the wicked world' from which the Church is to snatch whom she can, as from the jaws of the devil? Or is the world that for which Christ died; the object of the divine mercy and pity; to bring this world to God Christ came down from heaven and became man? What indeed do we make of the Incarnation—is it a rescue operation like that mounted in those areas where animals are saved from the rising waters of new man-made lakes—only the subjects are men, not animals and birds? Or is the Incarnation more like a scheme of land reclamation, in which instead of the wastes of the sea or the desert, there comes into existence a land which will truly blossom as the rose and bring forth food for men and animals? Surely the whole Church is slowly learning that the second is the right model: Christ has come to reconcile all men to God; our basic passages say 'principalities and powers, things in heaven and things on earth'.

But this awareness of the world involves more than a wider view of our mission; it includes the growing conviction that God teaches His Church through the world lessons which she will not learn in any other way. The 4th World Conference on Faith and Order, meeting at Montreal in 1963, expressed its unease at the way in which the reports of its sections did not recognize that the world is a reality which shapes the Church's witness and through which God addresses the Church. (Montreal Report, p. 47). Two particular ways in which the world is influencing the Church are respecting the growing sense of unity among peoples; and the sense that things really new are being produced in our time perhaps more rapidly than ever before before in human history. These movements in the world must surely be taken into account by the Church, and prevent us continuing in narrow denominationalism or refusing to recognize that a church which stands still when all mankind is on the march is bound to be left behind.

This sense of the Church on the move; the pilgrim Church, as the Second Vatican Council often calls it, yet the Church which has truly arrived, adds urgency and interest to our subject. If the Church is, as George Florovsky, an Orthodox theologian, says 'Both the Church of the redeemed and the Church of the miserable sinners—both at once' If it is in statu patoise and in statu viae (The Universal Church in God's Design, p. 54)—then God's

purpose for the Church cannot be simply static; but neither can that purpose be infinitely variable. It can only be described as a clear and determinate purpose, which has changing manifestations in changing historical circumstances. Assuming this to be a principle worth pursuing, our task becomes clearer. We have to see what is that fundamental principle which expresses the purpose of God in the Church for all time; and then we have to examine how this principle works out in different circumstances.

In the NT there are three words which are translated purpose, plan or intention. They have shades of meaning which help us to appreciate more adequately what is meant by the purpose of God.  $\Pi \rho o \theta \epsilon \sigma \iota s$  means the setting out in order of something like the shewbread in the tabernacle for the holy meeting in which the glory of God appeared (see Exodus 40). 'Eυδοκια always involves the sense of good pleasure or good will, as when Jesus thanked the Father for revealing to babes things hidden from the wise, or when Paul expresses his heart's desire and prayer to God for his own kinsfolk. 'Oikovoula derives from the word which means to manage as a steward, and suggests efficiency and responsibility. It is used in Ephesians 3 to express the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, and now revealed in Christ. If we put these words together, as I think we can, since their meanings do in fact overlap, we find the content of our rather cold and neutral word 'purpose' considerably expanded. The purpose of God for the church is orderly, gracious and efficient. That is, it is a purpose which can be relied upon, for it is not fickle or unpredictable; it expresses the good will of God towards all mankind, and what it sets out to do will be accomplished in the most effective and successful way.

It is abundantly clear that the first Christians thought of the purpose of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Whatever may have been the signs of the divine purpose in the election and discipline of Israel, only in Christ has the mystery become plain. This purpose is orderly, for it is the culmination of the age old plan of God, first made before creation, and now in these last days revealed to those who believe in the Lord Jesus. It is a gracious purpose, exemplified and embodied in the compassion and love towards all men shown by Christ in His life of doing good and in His death of obedient humility. This gracious purpose has been effected already in the reconciliation of all men to the Father by the willing obedience of the Son, and it is for the completion of this purpose that the church is called into being, to be the instrument of reconciliation. Such a plan, being of God, and such a Church being a company under God's choosing and direction, cannot fail. This view of the purpose of God and its relation to the Church was expressed in the message of the First Assembly of the WCC at Amsterdam in 1948. 'We all believe that the Church is God's gift to men for the salvation of the world; that the saving acts of God brought the Church into being; that the Church persists in continuity throughout history through the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit . . . We believe that the Church has a vocation to worship God in His holiness, to proclaim the Gospel to every creature. She is equipped by God with the various gifts of the Spirit for the building up of the Body of Christ. She has been set apart in holiness for the service of all mankind, in faith and love, by the power of the crucified and risen Lord and according to his example. She is composed of forgiven sinners yet partaking already, by faith, in the eternity of the kingdom of God and waiting for the consummation when Christ shall come again in the fullness of His glory and power.' To this important ecumenical statement there should be added the words of the Montreal Faith and Order Conference of 1963. 'We confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour in the certainty of His glorious victory over the forces of sin and death. Yet we dare never forget that the Lord of the Church is the "Lamb with the marks of slaughter upon Him" i.e. one who for ever remains in His exaltation as the Crucified One... The Church must be viewed as the body of the crucified and risen Christ, with an existence determined by participation in the death and resurrection of the Lord who is its Head.'

So far then, we can answer our question in terms of the NT and the consensus of the mind of the WCC. The purpose of God for the church is made known in Christ as the eventual reconciliation of all men to God their Father and Creator. And it is right to stress the unchangeable nature of this purpose. Whatever man may do, however clever he may become, no matter what new comforts and interests man's knowledge and skills may produce, this remains God's purpose. Often this purpose is being fulfilled in these very advances in knowledge and skill, for the purpose of God does not wait upon man's recognition of the presense of God; wherever men find a fuller, nobler, richer life, there the purpose of God is being fulfilled.

Yet it is easy to be falsely optimistic; our century has seen enough of 'progress' to know that it isn't all beneficial; it's all very well for secularizing modern theologians to deride the Church, and to say that God is now mainly at work outside the Church. This ignores the truth that material progress is not the same as fullness of life; that in any case the increasing prosperity of the West only serves to highlight the continuing poverty of the East; that war is still far from banished from the earth; that racial tension easily erupts into rioting and brutality. The Church as the instrument of the divine purpose is still set in the midst of a rebellious and dis-

ordered world. What is God's purpose for the Church now?

One of the best ways of answering that question is to look at the Biblical conception of the people of God, of which a good deal has been made in recent theology. I think Dodd and others are right in saying that although there are many insights into the place and function of the people of God which illuminate the position of the Church, we have to be quite clear that the Church of Jesus Christ is new; we only begin to understand God's purpose for it when we see that in Christ there has come into being that which did not exist before. Even the Remnant, which is surely the most spiritual concept of the people of God in the OT, is not a true pattern of the Church; for the remnant became in fact increasingly exclusive and inward looking. If the Church is rightly called Israel, full weight must be given to the truth that she is the New Israel; which title implies the failure of the old Israel. The true nature of the people of God is seen in Christ. But having realised this, we can go on to use the insights of the OT to see the pattern of divine purpose worked out for the people of God. Even when they were very imperfect, the divine purpose operated through them, which in itself is a truth which can be applied to our situation. But what I think is more significant is that the activity of God among His people was adapted to their changing conditions. A few well-known instances will illustrate what I mean. The purpose of God for Abram was 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you' (Genesis 121). But read on in the story. The people who settled in the land of Canaan were eventually driven out by famine, into the land of Egypt; this was not just a coincidence, or as we should say 'one of those things'. It was part of the purpose of God; at least that is how the prophetic historians saw it. How could anyone sweltering under the burning Egyptian sun, making bricks without straw, think that the purpose of God was being fulfilled through that? Yet so it turned out to be, for how else could the people of God have learned the power of God, how else could they have called him 'The God of our fathers, of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who brought us up from Egypt, from the house of bondage?' If one were rash

enough to suggest general truths about the purpose of God for His people revealed in the OT, one might venture to say that they learned more of that purpose in adversity than ever they did in prosperity. They learned more of the power of God to save when they were defeated by their enemies and restored under the judges than they did when for brief periods they prospered in the land of Canaan. Their great prophets spoke to them of judgement and salvation; without the first the second would have been meaningless, for they would not have known from what they needed to be saved. And a second truth might be suggested as follows. The purpose of God is not fixed in all its details without reference to the situation faced by the people. It was not just political opportunism that persuaded Isaiah of Jerusalem to insist that the holy city would be inviolate; to him, in his particular situation, this was the purpose of God for His people. And equally, and just as certainly, to Jeremiah the purpose of God was that Jerusalem should go into captivity, for this was God's response to a people who would not hear, and could only be saved through a remnant.

Yet a Christian is forced to conclude that in spite of His long suffering and patience, in spite of His use of many circumstances to guide His people into the way of His will, God failed in the story of Old Israel. A new way had to be found, and was found in Christ; new in the sense that no longer did God rely on great leaders to show His people His purpose; He himself sent His only Son to live among men, so that His purpose may be known. And yet some of the old lessons continue. For the new Israel, just as much as for the old. God's purpose is often more clearly known in adversity than in ease and success. It was when the disciples were scattered abroad after the persecution following the martyrdom of Stephen, that the Church really began to go out into the wider world. Paul the prisoner saw the purpose of God more clearly than did Paul the free, incessant traveller. And the signs of persecution in the New Testament are closely related to some of the most significant truths of the Christian faith—when was the risen Christ more real to Peter and his friends than when they were in the Jewish prison? When was Paul's faith in the living Lord stronger than when he appealed to Caesar and went bound to Rome and inevitable death?

There is in this an obvious warning to the Church in any time of prosperity; and lest we think that this warning cannot apply to us because of our poverty and apparent ineffectiveness, let me remind you that Latourette calls this age one of the great ages of faith. We naturally rejoice in the spread of the gospel to many lands, but let us beware lest our successes lead us to trust in ourselves, and not in God. But the more difficult truth to be gained from this survey of the way of God with the people of God, is that God meets new situations with new action; His purpose remains fixed, but His way of working out His purpose shows ever new adjustments to new situations. It is fatally easy to find some period in the past which seems a close parallel to our time, and conclude that therefore we have only to imitate the Church's response in the past to make a satisfactory response now. In fact history does not repeat itself; there are always many factors in any situation which have never occurred before, certainly not in the same combination.

So the Church needs to be able to discern the signs of the times if she is to be responsive to the purpose of God. Some seem to suppose that this requires new leaders of a prophetic mould, and we look longingly for some great new leader to arise. No doubt there is something in this, as is illustrated by the extraordinary influence of 'good Pope John' over masses of Catholics and non-Catholics almost equally. Yet I dare to suggest that this is not the way in which God will reveal His purpose to

His Church in our time. If we ask how can the Church in our time know God's purpose for her, the answer seems to lie in the large number of councils, conferences and consultations which have become a regular feature of church life in this century. When Christian leaders meet together and in an atmosphere of mutual confidence consult together about the purposes of God, new light does seem to dawn. In a privately circulated paper, William Richey Hogg of the Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, has done useful service by drawing attention to the great 'ecumenical' councils which have been held in the past 100 years—namely Vatican I (1870) Edinburgh (1910), Amsterdam (1948); Vatican II (1965). Alongside these and other councils such as the Orthodox Council in Moscow in 1948 and the East Asia Christian Conference in Kuala Lumpur in 1959, there have sprung up a bewildering list of ecumenical bodies whose very initials provide a useful test of awareness of what is going on in the world Church today. Perhaps you would like to test yourself on these: do you know what the letters stand for, and even more, what these bodies are supposed to be doing?—W.C.C., E.A.C.C., J.A.M., N.C.C.C.U.S.A., C.E., A.A.C.C., etc., etc.

Now it's easy to condemn these activities on at least two grounds. You may say that these various assemblies do nothing more than provide world trips for the boys at the expense of the local churches—with a reasonable chance of taking your wife too, who if she is lucky, may be seated as a substitute delegate, and attend all the meetings. By careful arrangement among the executives it's possible to arrange for most of the members of the ecumenical circus to have at least one long air or sea trip every year. and some church leaders must run our Prime Minister and U Thant a close second as world travellers. Perhaps a more serious comment is that we are substituting world assemblies for effective work in the local church. Our congregations get smaller, our list of members grows shorter, we are desperately in need of candidates for the ministry, and no one seems to take much notice of what we say on moral and social affairs. But never mind. We can forget we are a very small minority when we meet in our hundreds for a World Conference. We can busy ourselves with our message, provided we don't bother too much to ask who is going to read it, and there's always the next conference to arrange!

But even if some of this were true, there is more to world conferences than this. Through meetings like this Conference the will of God for His Church is becoming known. No one single person nowadays, not even the Pope, can hope to interpret the mind of God for the Church entirely on his own. If the Church is to discover the purpose of God for the Church it will do so through our common counsel, through our fellowship together in the gospel. It seems clear that effective consultations require at least supra-national representation and preferably truly ecumenical gatherings, in which there is such mutual confidence that differences need not be glossed over. So the mind of God is made known through the work of the Holy Spirit. I hope we can think of this Conference in this way. It may be that London, 1966, will become an important landmark in the story of the Methodist people, we should certainly regard our part as important, for it is the meeting together and sharing of convictions among Christian people which helps to formulate our view of the divine purpose.

It will quickly be recognized that if there is any real hope of our discussions making clearer the purpose of God for the Church, it ought to be possible to say what insights have already been gained in the ecumenical movement. For Christians have been meeting together in ecumenical conferences all this century; certainly since the Edinburgh Conference of 1910 these consultations have been held regularly, and if this is one way

by which God reveals His purpose for the Church, there should be something to show for over fifty years of ecumenical activity. This activity has been centred in the World Council of Churches, which now includes representatives of the Eastern Orthodox churches, who indeed joined in Faith and Order discussions long before their churches became members of W.C.C. The absence of the Roman Catholics continues to be a major weakness of the W.C.C., but since the publication of the official statements of Vatican II I think we can say that Rome has openly joined in the ecumenical dialogue. As a result an entirely new ecumenical situation has presented itself, and any attempt to evaluate the results of ecumenical thinking must take these documents into consideration. I believe this to be a better way of approaching the findings of the Vatican Council than either an overoptimistic assumption that there are now no doctrinal differences between Romans and Protestants, or a cynical conclusion that Rome never does change, and has not changed now. Vittorio Subilia in The Problem of Catholicism reminds us that the main assertions of Rome have not changed. Even when allowances are made for the fact that Subilia published his work just before the Vatican Council came to its main theological decisions, and therefore unfortunately a lot of what he says is invalidated by those decisions: and also making due allowance for the fact that Subilia wrote almost literally under the shadow of St Peter's, from the position of a very small Protestant minority in an overwhelming Catholic situation, much of Subilia's contention is borne out by the statements of the Council. The claim of Rome to be the only true Church is still made; in the words of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church 18,9, 'This Church constituted and organized in the world as a society subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in union with that successor, although many elements of sanctification and truth can be found outside her visible structure'. Equally, the absolute authority of the Pope over the church is still asserted in III<sup>22</sup> (ibid.) 'The Roman Pontiff (as Vicar of Christ and Pastor of the whole church) has full, supreme and unique power over the church. And he can always exercise this power freely.

Yet a new situation has come about, not only because Romans are ready openly to confess their part and responsibility in the divisions of the Church, and to ask pardon of those whom they have wronged, as well as offering forgiveness to those who have wronged them. By the very fact of stating their doctrine of the Church, for instance, which as Professor Outler points out, has never been done before, the Romans are surely inviting ecumenical dialogue. There must surely now be an end of that bitter and acrimonious argument between Romans and Protestants which has disfigured the Church of Christ on and off for 400 years. The way of reasonable discussion is open; the task of Protestantism, as Subilia asserts is not to denounce Catholicism or try to defeat her but to contend for the truth of the gospel committed to the Church. In such a dialogue we must expect to learn as well as teach, and we have much to learn from the emphases of the Romans, as well as much to unlearn of our prejudices and misunderstandings. All this demonstrates, so it seems to me, that as we try to say what ecumenical thinking has so far produced which shows more clearly the purpose of God for the Church, we must not leave Rome out of the story.

The first truth that has been reiterated again and again is that God wills the unity of the Church. Amsterdam put this bluntly and plainly, 'God wills the unity of His Church, and we must be obedient to Him'. Nothing has been seen more clearly in the ecumenical movement than this; here the Vatican decree on Ecumenism speaks with the same voice, 'Today, in many

parts of the world, under the inspiring grace of the Holy Spirit, multiple efforts are being expended through prayer, word and action to attain that fullness of unity which Jesus Christ desires. This sacred Synod therefore exhorts all the Catholic faithful to recognize the signs of the times and to participate skilfully in the work of ecumenism' (Ecumenism i.4). Now unity can be a deceptively simple idea. If we think it only means organizational unity; one form of church government, one dogmatic interpretation of Christian truth, one stereotyped form of Christian worship; and if the object is organizational efficiency and tidiness of structure, then the idea is neither attractive nor commendable. But this is not what the ecumenical consciousness of the Church is seeing as unity. Two features stand out in contemporary Christian thinking about unity. One that unity means fullness; the fullness of faith and love and service. There are many aspects of Christian truth which we can never appreciate so long as we are separated from our Christian brethren. Not only are our ministry and our sacraments in some sense defective so long as they belong to divided churches; but even our faith is defective too. The quest for unity is therefore a quest for Catholic truth, the fullness of the gospel as it is in Christ. Further, the ecumenical dialogue is showing those who belong to a Western structure of the Church, whether we conform to the Roman pattern, or protest against it, that other Christians see unity as sacramental, not organizational. In the East the unity of Christians derives from their sharing in the one Eucharist, not in being under one ecclesiastical head. This eucharistic unity is related to continuity and apostolicity of ministry, in the case of the Eastern Church, a priestly ministry dependent on bishops who can claim continuous succession from the Apostles themselves. There is a similar idea in the Vatican Council view that 'separated brethren' can be accepted with respect and affection because men who believe in Christ and have been properly baptized are brought into a certain, though imperfect communion with the Catholic Church (Ecumenism, i.3). The plain implication here is that the purpose of God, which is unity for the Church, requires more attention to sacramental unity as well as methods of unifying organizations.

Brief references only can be made to other aspects of the doctrine of the Church which have been emphasized in ecumenical thinking. Barth's support for the idea that the Church is firstly the local congregation (see his contribution to the studies in preparation for the first Assembly of W.C.C.) is a useful reminder that it is at the grass roots of the local society met for worship, seeking to know the scriptures and to serve the community in the name of Christ, that much of the real work of the Church is done. Interesting theological issues are raised by Subilia and by the Vatican Council about the relation between ecclesiology and the doctrine of the Trinity. If Catholic doctrine of the Church is over-Christological and if Protestants tend to think mainly of the Holy Spirit when they think about God and the Church, is there more to be said along the line that in the full doctrine of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit there is a fuller foundation for the belief about the nature of the Church? Max Thurian, the sub-prior of the Taizé community thinks that more regard should be given to the relation between creation and the Church. And we who are brought up in a Protestantism which has tended to be over-individualistic should note the comments of the Anglican study of Catholicity, that instead of our order of Christ-individual-church; a strong case can be made for insisting that the Church comes before the individual, since only in the Church does the individual come to faith in Christ. In any case many Christians cannot separate faith in Christ from acceptance and use of the Christian sacraments. And lastly on this subject, the continual tendency of ecumenical conversation to drift towards the question of the ministry is producing valuable suggestions about ways of unifying episcopal and non-episcopal ministries, and possible ways of combining episcopal and synodal methods of church government (see Max Thurian, *Visible Unity and Tradition*).

All this means that in ecumenical dialogue the Church has become increasingly self-conscious. This would not be a good thing, were it not true that in her self awareness the Church has become aware of her failings. There was a time when the Church's teaching about herself was almost entirely defensive; when it was thought necessary to emphasize the wonder and security of the Church 'her privileges and security' as the M.H.B. (G.B.) puts it. But now we are learning that humility and confession of failure are as appropriate for the Church as for individuals. In preparation for the first Assembly of W.C.C. at Amsterdam the theme running through all the studies was 'Man's Disorder and God's Design'. Richard Niebuhr indicted the Church of allowing the disorder of man to influence the life of the Church, in respect of inter-denominational rivalry, mutual recrimination, subservience to worldly standards and plain lack of faith in Christ, whom we regard as dead instead of the living Lord of the Church. This desire to repent and to cease to make unfounded claims for ourselves appears for instance in the report of the fourth World Conference on Faith and Order (Montreal, 1963). Some of its questions are very searching—If the Church is the body of the crucified Lord, can it ever expect to be more honoured than He? If the Church consists of the followers of the Lord who spent His time with publicans and sinners, why does it look so much like a congregation of scribes and pharisees? If the Lord of the Church was crucified outside the camp, why is the church so often comfortable within its walls? Perhaps most surprising of all is the admission of failure and desire for forgiveness expressed by the Vatican Council, to which I have already referred. 'In humble prayer, we beg pardon of God and of our separated brethren, just as we forgive those who trespass against us.' Indeed the very reason for the calling of the Council was renewal, as Kung shows in The Council and Reunion. But renewal implies that all is not well with the Church; that in many ways the Church has failed, and must be turned again to the right way, if it is to serve Christ in our time. And God forbid that we Protestants should think it's high time Rome showed signs of repentance, and not realize that we too have much repenting to do. Surely the purpose of God for the Church is clear in this at any rate; as with individuals, so with the Church. God cannot fulfil His purpose where there is pride and boasting. A church which flexes its muscles and feels its own power will not know the power of the Spirit. Even if it does seem to present a not very favourable image to the world, the church's penitence and humility are more important than its efficiency and self-sufficiency.

One cannot read long in the story of the ecumenical movement without realizing that the Church has become increasingly aware of its mission. It is significant that the ecumenical movement really began in what was originally planned as a missionary conference. But the Church has learned that however praiseworthy its overseas mission may be (and it surely is one of its brightest jewels) 'mission' means the whole work of the Church, in every place, a responsibility of every member of the church, not a duty conveniently off-loaded on to 'missionaries'. The urgency of the Church's mission was well expressed by the Amsterdam assembly 'If the Gospel really is a matter of life and death, it seems intolerable that any human being now in the world should live his life without ever having the chance to hear and receive it' (W.C.C. Report, p. 70). This is really so much a

commonplace of ecumenical thinking that it needs no further illustration.

But as we come to the end of our discussion, what does need much more consideration is how can the Church today meet this divine demand for mission. God's purpose for the Church is that through it the whole world should be reconciled to himself. We know this, and we accept that this task demands unity; we must be 'One Church renewed for Mission'. But how little we seem to know about how to tackle this mission in our time! In one sense this is the age of faith; but in another sense it is an age of ominous unbelief, for wherever civilization advances, where man takes more control of his own destiny, where standards of education are raised, in almost every instance the Church finds its task too much for it. How do we evangelize our modern, secular society? Where do we find the words which can bring modern man to our Saviour? How can we find a way of introducing our contemporaries to this new way of life in Christ? George Florovsky said to the Amsterdam Assembly, 'The church is more than a company of preachers, or a teaching society, or a missionary board. It has not only to invite people, but also to introduce them into this New Life, to which it bears witness . . . to convert them, to bring them through their faith and repentance to Christ Himself that they should be born anew in him and into him by water and the Spirit'. Surely part of God's purpose for us is that we should find out how to do this more effectively than we know at present.

Many theologians and leaders are saying that this involves more involvement than ever we have imagined. It requires our understanding of the secularity of the contemporary world, and a right relation between sacred and secular. It would seem that this matter will have to exercise the minds of the leaders of the ecumenical movement in the future more than it has done in the past. For the concentration on the doctrine of the Church and allied subjects can betray a recognition that the church is not doing its job as it ought. It is to be hoped that in the future the mind of the ecumenical movement will be given to understanding humanism, materialism and nihilism, for the purpose of God is that we should preach the gospel to every creature, in the situation he actually faces; not in terms of questions which he no longer asks, nor related to situations which no longer apply.

So the mystery of the purpose of God is gradually unfolded to an obedient Church. Only when we have taken the next step does the step beyond that become clear. As Max Thurian says, 'The church cannot guess ahead of time what God intends for the world. It knows that Christ died for all men, and that he wishes them all in the unity of his body'. All that is asked of it is to be itself, the body of Christ; the presence here below of the humanity of our Lord, God and man. (Visible Unity and Tradition, 6).

# Address by Dr. Finis A. Crutchfield DISCIPLESHIP IN THIS AGE

On this programme I seem to represent the pastorate and therefore feel it proper to approach the topic assigned only from the viewpoint of a pastor who daily deals with the spiritual problems and activities of perhaps a typical congregation of American Methodist Christians. As you know, the theme of this conference is 'God In Our World'; my particular subject is 'What Has God to Do With Personal Life and Conduct?', a subject which suggests a personal ethic, morality and individual discipleship. To this broad topic we hope to lift only a few emphases from the gospel.

We speak against a background of two observations.

First, today we must recognize that a new Church is being born. The spontaneous and almost uncoordinated efforts of innumerable pastors, and the existence of groups of renewal and service in many local congregations gives evidence that a new Church is emerging. There is a new mood among people in the congregations. The average churchman today, far from being the smug reactionary that he is often caricatured to be, is alert, and becoming sensitive to the questions and issues confronting Christians who now must live in an almost totally secular society. Despite all that one hears to the contrary, there is more theological study among individual parishioners, and a greater measure of service to humankind organized by local congregations than might be assumed. This is something that analysts of the contemporary church scene may have been slow to detect. Many a churchman inconspicuously embodies 'pre'-scence' in his vocational station, and many a congregations' witness in its community is now in the process of complete overhauling, the task being manned by devout and relatively unknown persons who feel called of God to act. There are perceptive laymen and dedicated clergymen who understand that the world-wide revolution through which we are passing, a technological revolution with its present racial and economic overtones, is one that must be kept free for the service of humankind and the glory of God. The enormous enterprise of renewal and reformation into which God is leading us is in its initial stages of course; a truly staggering task awaits. But the work in the local churches is under way and men in the parishes, rightly weary of the endless passing of resolutions by church bodies and impatient of footdragging in its various forms are willing to follow a leadership that calls them not only to responsible social involvement, but also to personal moral renewal.

God is not done with the people in His Church at all.

Second, we speak in a time when the word 'God' has probably a wider variety of meanings than formerly. The departure of yesterdays' metaphysical assumptions compound a situation in which some of the older images of God have faded and the vocabulary of faith has become antiquated, though God Himself has not faded nor is His word outdated. Nevertheless, we must have care when we use the word God. We speak of Him in personal terms, not only because He is not less than personal, but also because Jesus taught us to speak of Him in this way and to understand Him as one would a person. Yet we would be careful in handling the word God. Perhaps in the past we have been too quick to employ the word. We who have committed our lives to His service should above all others use His name with caution. Sometimes we're too eager to say who God is and what He demands or desires. Neither in casual fashion nor glibly should the word God come from us. And it may be added, there is as much unseemliness in denying Him blithely or dismissing Him as irrelevant as there is in professing to know Him too well. When we talk about who He is or what He wills, the danger of presumption is enormous. So our words about God here are offered in the context of faith, a faith strong enough to claim our being, yet one that even now must be acknowledged as incomplete.

What has He—this God—to do with our personal lives and conduct? An answer may be found in that New Testament epistle that confronts this subject in an age that surely was as confusing and challenging as our own. We move to the First Epistle General of John, written against the background of the docetic controversy, and one, therefore, that deals with God's

participation in human life with the expectation that certain distinctive characteristics will mark the life of a Christian disciple. The author of this epistle is not given to delicate language, is not poetic, employs just a few strong metaphors, has no illustrative material, gives us no lovely vistas. He is hard-hitting and intense. And concerning the doctrine of God, he mentions no thrones, no angels, no pictures of majesty, for he is not concerned with Who God is, but with what God will do, not with how God shall be represented, but with how He acts, not with statements concerning His existence, but with the way He comes to us. The heart of the message is contained in these lines found in the fourth chapter:

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us and His love is perfected in us. Hereby we know that we dwell in Him and He in us, because He hath given us His Spirit. (I John 4<sup>10-13</sup>).

In this passage, the writer reminds us of the cross, he then emphasizes love, and he speaks of the Indwelling Spirit. Let us proceed with these same steps.

П

We are asked to confront the cross. Here in the cross God has acted in a way that forever affects the conduct and personal life of every disciple, for after having lived out the divine life fully on a human plane, God makes a complete identity with our human story by Jesus Christ's death, and in this death He reconciles us to Himself through forgiveness. When men understand the holy concern that brought Jesus Christ to that cross, they know that God has accepted and forgiven them. Every pastor who does extensive counselling knows that the cross provides that important therapeutic truth that he may share with his troubled counselees. (It is the powerful resource that psychiatry seldom uses). The atonement of Jesus Christ tells us of God who releases a man from the past, a man who is now made free to serve his neighbour without embarrassment, without restriction, without having to look back. Thus the cross brings freedom to act. One is free through forgiveness to serve in the present and future. He is released from the binding old ghosts of yesterday and steps into the exhilarating present. Guilt ridden men who look over their shoulders to yesterday seldom make good servants today, but free men, released from yesterday's bondage, may act responsibly and joyfully in all the tasks of society now. All men find freedom and release in the cross, since all men, both those who are aware of sin and those who either reject or do not know the Christian concept of sin, are separated from God and estranged, the latter merely expressing their condition in ways different from the former. God comes to us all in that cross and releases us all for service.

In our release and reconciliation He enlists us in His work of reconciliation. Wherever there are cleavages among His children—broken homes, racial tensions, class divisions, personal misunderstandings, severed communications—His work of reconciliation is called for through us, and we cannot always wait for a blueprinted social programme to begin. We begin as reconciling agents where we are. Our ethical motivation derives from the fact that we ourselves have been forgiven and restored.

There is another aspect of God's act for us at Calvary that is relevant to our concern here. Was it not P. T. Forsyth who once said that the cross

'reconciled men to the goodness they thought was not strong'? Indeed, the cross calls men to look a second time at the qualities of Jesus' inner personal life. It may be the Resurrection that vindicates the moral life of Jesus, but it is the Crucifixion that shows us the strength of that life. His moral stance is seen to have enormous strength as He lives out His life with consistency and endures the cross without panic. One might have thought it weak to turn the other cheek, to go the second mile, to pay more attention to the welfare of little children than to the brute strength of gladiators, to aspire to servanthood rather than greatness, or to enjoy the beauty of a wayside flower more than to enjoy the praise of men. But when we see a man with these qualities of soul bear the cross as did Jesus, we know that what we thought was weakness was His strength, and what we thought was fear in Him was faith, and what we thought was cowardice was true courage. The goodness we thought spineless turned out to be the highest form of moral strength. This places upon us the desire to perform 'acts continuing in quality with the acts of Jesus'.2 In the cross, God commends to us the strength of the sheer goodness of Jesus.

And in the cross the Lord's disciples have discerned one more thing relevant to their moral struggle. The cross suggests that there is no way to enter meaningfully into God's purposes unless one is willing to live in disregard of possible penalty. The society in which we live has painlessness as its goal and convenience as its greatest good; sometimes it seems to regard discomfort and sacrifice as a sure sign of poor planning and inefficiency. But there can be no joyful discipleship until one is willing to risk discomfort and live beyond the anxiety of all the consequences of the life of discipleship. There can be no Christlike love, no clear witness, nor can the mercies of God be enjoyed until one surrenders this fear about possible consequences.

The life of God lived out in its fulness in Jesus Christ included a cross. God deals with us personally in that cross.

#### Ш

But the writer of our text does not leave us at the cross. He offers a message about God's love, saying that God's love for us in Christ is the ground for our love for one another.

Thus we say, God's love in Christ gives me an understanding of how to relate to my neighbour. God's love in Christ tells me how to deal with my enemies. Since God loves me in Christ, I am encouraged to believe that through love and because of love He will eventually lead me to whatever wholeness and maturity He wills for me. God's clear word to me in Jesus Christ is love. And while His love has a greater intensity and depth than the love of which I'm capable, my response in love, like His own, never is obsolete, never is outmoded by advances of man's knowledge, never is inadequate. I am to love in any and all circumstances, in every decision that is made and in every moral judgment. This is saying that love is the final arbiter in any situation calling for decision. Those who urge situational or contextual ethics have reminded us again and again that no codes, no fixed laws finally form a binding obligation in matters of moral decision and that 'lonely, free and responsible' decisions made on the basis of love characterize the role of a Christian today. Presumably we would all agree with this, but some of us would immediately want to ask the question, 'Who can truly act in Christian love today?' What does this love require in a person?

<sup>1</sup> Forsyth, P. T., The Cruciality of the Cross, Independent Press, London, 1909.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sellers, James, A phrase from one of his lectures.

Mr Wesley has a conviction about this. When he spoke of perfection he referred to the 'uninterrupted reign of love in the heart'. His position may not be far from the position of those who say that love must be the total and constant motif, but Mr Wesley was realistic enough to know that such love doesn't come about just by deciding to use love all the time. It comes as the result of an unreserved and comprehensive offering of the whole life to God and through the subsequent action of the Holy Spirit. What but an authentic regeneration will enable a man to love with purity, to love without discouragement, to love when no one else loves, to love as Christ? To go out in this world to love in each situation without having first been inwardly renewed is to invite weariness, disappointment, and failure. God's love in Christ demands regeneration.

And God's love in Christ also calls for discipline. Can anyone act in love who has not first learned the meaning of obedience? One comes to the full maturity that loving decisions require when his life is disciplined by adherence to principles—principles by which responsible moral living has been historically developed and enjoyed. His moral conduct will then be characterized by obedience to self-imposed disciplines that enable him to accept and express godly love in all his relationships, for God's love contains righteousness, justice, and self-restraint, as well as compassion. Can any undisciplined person receive and share that love easily?

Further, this love is illumined by the gathered wisdom of the Church. Whatever mistakes the Church has made, and there have been many, it would still seem that moral guidance has often been given, to borrow a phrase from Professor Moule who wrote in another context, 'through the act of a worshipping community listening critically', and for almost two thousand years the Church has been a worshipping community that sometimes has listened rather critically. The Church has sought in prayer to listen to God, and in scripture and sermon to hear the word of its Lord, and in reflection and service to heed the neighbour in need. And along the way it has been given some wisdom about God's love in Christ. While this love is neither created nor determined by the Church, it is often illumined by the Church's knowledge and wisdom.

When we speak of the love of God we are not talking about a commodity that can be easily acquired and quickly applied. We are talking about a great healing reality, a radical self-denying good-will that is shaped (in our lives) by discipline and commitment, illumined in the common sense wisdom of Christ's Church, and released in a regenerated heart.

It is love that is the final basis for a personal ethic. In the years ahead we shall confront all sorts of fascinating ethical problems and moral decisions. The biological sciences, behavioural engineering, automated and urbanized living, and the space-age culture will present whole sets of new and puzzling questions for the individual. In the New Testament we are given no precise and fixed ethical system, but we are given Jesus Christ and through Him God demands an almost impossible devotion and love. In Jesus Christ we are shown the moral relationships that God wills, and from Jesus' precepts we derive convictions that bring us on our way. Above all, in Him we understand the quality of love that alone will enable us to confront changing circumstances and to make decisions in an environment totally new. God's emphatic word to us through Jesus is this radical love.

#### IV

The text suggests one other way in which God deals with us personally when it reads 'because He hath given us of His Spirit'. God indeed offers Himself to us as Holy Spirit, the Spirit being the dynamic activity of God

in our lives, the personal force that comforts, sustains and warns; the energy that renews and revives; the power that enables faithful men to live free of the compulsion to sin.<sup>1</sup> God the Holy Spirit offers Himself to those who have ears to hear and a will to respond.

We may believe that God will seldom come so directly or act so forcefully as that we may actually describe His movement. There is a sense in which though He is hidden from our sight, He comes to us discreetly, and this is but a way of saying that He is never found by us in that we ferret out sufficient information about Him to put our fingers on Him or to use Him in any way. But He does come.

Not long ago a discerning young business man in our congregation said rather casually, 'The two groups of people in our church who are closest to God are the ones who are quiet and humble, and the ones who ask questions'. He could not have said it much better. He was referring to

those who have crucified pride and those who seek.

Why is the reception of God's Spirit vouchsafed the humble—those plain good folk who are humbled by opportunities to serve their fellowmen—and those learned people who gratefully acknowledge their dependence upon God and others, but never presume on it? Why is it that this experience is granted the humble, those who open up their souls in prayer, demanding nothing, perhaps requesting little, but submissive all the while? Yet they who possess humility detect His presence; they so often seem to hear Him speak and they reveal it with unobtrusive but solid service and devotion. It is the way of the Holy Spirit to move among humble people.

And the spirit of God seems also to come through the questions He bids us ask. We keep on asking questions that lead us to Him. Almost at the moment when we think we have life's meaning well explained without Him, He prompts us to ask a question, and the question itself suggests an answer that leads to Him. One can cite all the elements that seem to deny God's love and power and for a moment it will appear logical to believe that God makes no personal contact, and then He makes us ask a question. Right now many are asking questions such as these:

Why do so many of my fellows find satisfaction only when they have spent themselves for others?

What is this yearning that finds no peace except in some sort of confessing and self-giving?

Why all the dread and anxiety in the world, especially among the socalled liberated souls who try to find relief through liquor, pills, even suicide, and so on . . .

Why this tendency of mine to keep toying with the idea of God? And the inevitable question: Is there an interrelatedness in all things and in all events, and if so, to whom does this point?

There is something about the questions we ask that draws us to Him, and the inner urge to confront such questions may hint His desire for our growth. As long as we ask these questions our lives are open to faith in Him; indeed, we know He is coming to us asking for this faith.

One doesn't have to be a mystic to believe that in the midst of life's most meaningful experiences the Holy Spirit comes, not only when we have hard moral decisions to make, but also in those moments of joy when we know that life is good. In both the beauties and the agonies, in the time of the soul's most joyous exultation as well as in the awful moments of tragedy, or even in the midst of deepest moral concern, we become aware of a Presence. We sense that God the Holy Spirit is there and we listen.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Moule, O. F. D., first article in a series on Morality, *The Expository Times*, Sept. 1963, pp. 378 ff.

In every life there come events that tend to take one away from preoccupation with self and cause him to consider his ways in a larger frame of reference. One wonders if the Holy Spirit is not in these, too. Sometimes, there appears a sense of awful judgment or perhaps there opens a path not previously discerned, and one feels that the Holy Spirit is present, leading, reproving, guiding. Sometimes the goodness of an event makes one want to sing, and as a result, a believing trust is aroused in the soul, and then one knows that God's Spirit is standing before his heart.

When a person is reverent before the reports of courage and unselfishness, when he responds to beauty with awe and tenderness, when he picks up his cross, denies himself and with compassion goes forth to serve regardless of consequences to himself; when he forgives another, truly forgives, without self-righteousness or the expectation of praise, when a person stands open to truth, truly open, and not with prejudices about the sources from which truth can or cannot come—in these experiences is God absent?

God the Holy Spirit speaks not so much out of the mystery that overarches life, but more within that 'depth at the very centre of every soul'.¹ And it is here that He is known in worship and prayer. Oft times He speaks no word of advice or counsel, but when we pause long enough to become aware that He is aware, we know that He is reaching out to us with mercy and love and our souls are renewed. As the author of the Epistle of John says, 'He gives us of His Spirit'.

When one stands near an open grave, when his first child is born, when one makes restitution for an old wrong, when one's son quietly makes a costly but noble decision, who can say that the Spirit of God is not present? It is impossible to interpret life without acknowledging that the mysteries and meanings that cradle it and enrich it are of God. When the profound experiences come, we know that the sum of reality cannot be explained by what learning has established or what science may investigate, and we also know that the Holy Spirit, God in action everywhere, is invading the structure of our corporate living, offering Himself to every relationship between persons, and coming to each individual.

There seem to have been times when the Holy Spirit came as a mighty wind and swept over vast groups of persons, affecting changes among men and nations, and then there have been other times when men of faith have had to be content to hear the quiet word of the Spirit in their hearts, to nourish that word, to keep on loving, to walk the way of the cross, until the day when more guidance comes or when the Spirit breaks forth again with sweeping power. It is possible that now we are on the threshold of a day when God's Spirit will move with power in the hearts of many persons, and each of us must be receptive and ready.

In the days ahead, the Holy Spirit may lead some into unconventional forms of service and witness; others may be led to unique tasks not heretofore seen in the history of faith; while still others will be encouraged to fill the traditional roles of discipleship—but wherever the Spirit leads and whatever He calls men to do, each disciple may be assured that it will be by the way of a cross in a love-filled heart.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Tillich's phrase.

<sup>(</sup>Indebtedness must be acknowledged to Dr. Samuel Miller, dean at Harvard, whose writings have helped me to see the locus of man's receptivity to God.)

# Public Lecture in the Central Hall Friday, 19th August, 1966, 5 p.m. By Professor W. Russell Hindmarsh

# MODERN SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENTS IN THE LIGHT OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

The fundamental question with which science faces the Christian faith may be very simply expressed. In Christian worship we sing with great fervour words such as

I sing the almighty power of God, That made the mountains rise, That spread the flowing seas abroad, And built the lofty skies.

I sing the wisdom that ordained
The sun to rule the day;
The moon shines full at His command,
And all the stars obey.

We sing those words knowing full well that geology and physics have a quite different account of how the mountains rose and the seas spread, that through the studies of astrophysicists we have discovered much about birth, growth and death of stars. At first sight the attribution of natural phenomena to the direct intervention of God seems in flat contradiction to the scientific view of the Universe; and difficulties are increased when we recall that modern science has extended its scope to cover the understanding of living as well as non-living matter.

I have posed the problem in its raw form, and my lecture this evening is an attempt to elucidate the real nature of this question as it meets us in our day, and to present for your consideration some thoughts concerning the theological insights to be gained by taking this question with the utmost seriousness. My remarks fall into three sections. First I wish to trace out for you some of the most recent achievements of scientific enquiry, for it is most often in terms of today's discoveries that the question meets us. Secondly I shall try to indicate the relationship between the scientific and theological views of the world around us; and thirdly I shall, I hope, convince you that this problem, which seems to us to be posed by modern science, is in fact one which has faced men of faith for 3,000 years, and that the theology of both the Old and the New Testaments provides us with a framework in which we can see our 20th century problem in its proper perspective.

We turn, then, to a rehearsal of recently gained knowledge in one or two of the many branches of science. First I wish to discuss my own special interest; the world of inanimate matter, and in particular the science known as physics. The behaviour of non-living matter on a scale of size ranging from one 100-millionth of an inch, which is the size of atoms, to a million million milles, which is the size of stellar galaxies, is well understood in principle; though there are many large gaps in the details of our understanding, we feel that we know the basic laws that govern the behaviour of matter in lumps of between atomic and galactic size. It is on scale of the very small—one-hundred-thousandth of atomic size—and the very large—50,000 times the galactic size—that immense problems of principle remain so far unsolved.

It is the search for the ultimate constituents of matter which has led men to an examination of matter on an ever smaller scale of size. The idea that atoms are the true building blocks of matter broke during the final years of the last century and the first years of this. During that period two small particles, the electron and the proton were discovered. For a brief period it was thought that these two might be the only 'elementary' particles, and that out of them the atoms of all the chemical elements might be built. But in 1932 a third particle, the neutron, was discovered. Since than a whole series of particles, all of which have some claim to be called fundamental, has been discovered, and today there are seventy or so such particles known. At first sight it seems that the whole notion of fundamental particles which are the ultimate building blocks of matter has broken down; and it may indeed be that in the end matter will turn out to be built from an infinite set of particles all interacting with one another according to certain laws. At present the relationships between all these particles are only partly unravelled, but those which are understood reflect features which must be deeply embedded in the structure of the physical world. This story of the elementary particles shows many of the features characteristic of scientific enquiry. When we first look at the world around us it appears complex beyond understanding. Matter exists in all its variety, and to extract simple concepts from natural phenomena seems an impossible task. Yet by patient experimenting and profound thinking physicists often manage to show that apparently complicated phenomena arise from the interactions of a few simple entities, like the proton and the electron. But then further experiment shows that these simple entities do not tell the whole story, and the simplicity vanishes in an altogether new complexity of seventy or more entities. Yet even now, as we have said, some simple relationships between these particles are beginning to emerge. So the cycle goes on-from complexity to simplicity to complexity—but in each cycle we believe that we are penetrating more and more deeply into the structure of the Universe.

Secondly, straying outside the area of my own professional competence, we look briefly at some of the insights recently gained into the behaviour of living matter. Here outstanding progress has been made during the last twenty years. One of the most far reaching observations connected with living things is that children, on the whole, resemble both parents, but are not identical with either of them. The basic laws of inheritance were, of course, worked out long ago by Mendel, as a result of his famous experiments with tall and dwarf peas. But the actual mechanism of inheritance, the way in which the tendency to have, for example, blue eyes is transmitted from one generation to the next, is now understood in terms of the structure of the molecules which constitute the cells out of which our bodies are built up, and in particular it was the discovery of the double spiral structure of the DNA molecule by Crick and Watson in 1953 which lead to this great step forward. The details remain to be filled in, but the principles of the mechanics of inheritance seem to be established. All this has taken us much closer to an understanding of the basic processes of life in terms of physics and chemistry, and in turn we are closer to understanding how life originated on the earth. Immense problems remain. Some of the steps which must have occurred in the development from non-living to living matter on the earth can be discerned, but there are great gaps which as yet we cannot see how to cross. The great question remains: will we, in the end, be able to describe living matter in terms of non-living matter? will all the processes of life be understandable in terms of physics and chemistry? We do not know; but more and more features of living matter are in these times turning out to be describable in such terms. But let us not forget the lesson of the elementary particles of physics; just when we seem to have everything neatly tied up in terms of simple concepts, new and deeper complexities appear. That the same will be true in the life-sciences cannot be doubted.

I hope that this all too short account of two of the growing points of contemporary science has been sufficient to illustrate that the progress of science is a rather erratic and untidy affair. The notion that science progresses steadily and surely towards truth is in marked contrast to the actual experience of scientists. This leads us to ask whether there is any underlying pattern in the procedure by which science advances, whether indeed there is anything which we can legitimately term 'scientific method'. This is not by any means a simple question. Philosophers and scientists have argued about it ever since science as we know it began in the 16th century with the work of Galileo. My own view of this, no doubt much oversimplified, is based on my own understanding of science and my own experience in contributing, in a modest way, to its progress. It is the cycle, which we have already referred to, of apparent complexity—underlying simplicity—deeper complexity, which gives us a clue to the nature of scientific procedure. We shall choose yet another example, this time one in which the underlying concepts are simple enough for us to explain here and now.

One of the most celebrated experiments in the history of science is that supposed to have been performed by Galileo on the leaning tower of Pisa. The fact that most probably this experiment, in which Galileo is said to have dropped objects of various weights from the top of the tower, did not take place, need not deter us from a consideration of Galileo's discussion of the behaviour of falling bodies; there is no doubt that Galileo carried out experiments with falling objects. For centuries men had believed that different objects, when dropped, fall to the ground at different speeds; the heavier the object, it was said, the speedier its fall. And indeed a certain amount of experimental evidence could be brought in support of such a view. A cannon ball falls faster than a feather. But Galileo, probably repeating earlier experiments, discovered that a cannon ball falls no faster than the much smaller musket ball. Here was a complicated situation. Apparently, for more or less heavy objects, we can propose a law that the rate of fall of all objects is the same; but this clearly breaks down when we get to light objects such as feathers. Faced with this problem, Galileo recognized that the really significant feature of his observations on falling objects was that they all take the same time to fall the same distance; light-weight objects such as feathers take longer because of the resistance to their motion caused by the air. So Galileo reached a profound understanding of the dynamics of falling objects; and his assertion that all objects fall equal distances in equal times is now known to be correct to a precision of better than one part in ten million. From an apparently complex situation he had extracted the underlying simplicity, and so made a theoretical assertion. Much later in the history of physics, attention was given to the mechanism of air resistance. This turned out to be itself a complex matter. For example it turned out that provided the pressure of the gas through which the body falls is not too low, the resistance to the motion does not depend on the pressure of the gas—a rather unexpected result, which can only be understood in terms of the atomic nature of matter. Thus we have travelled from complexity to simplicity and back to a more profound complexity.

Now the essential step in this process is the formulation of a theoretical statement, and the subsequent testing of that statement by experiment. In this case the theoretical statement is: 'all objects fall equal distances in equal times'. That statement must stand until it is falsified by experiment. There are two important points to notice here. First, the standard of disproof

required is very high. We do not disprove Galileo's assertion simply by pointing out that feathers fall more slowly than cannon balls. That is taken care of by the recognition that it is merely air resistance which slows the fall of a feather, and that if the experiment is done in the absence of air, in a vacuum that is, feather and cannon ball will fall at the same rate. Further, the most profound theoretical statements are those which are the the most difficult to disprove because they have been so formulated that apparent disproof can often be countered by some extension or qualification of the physical concepts involved. But in principle every scientific statement can be falsified by experiment. The second important point is that we must clearly distinguish between the logical status of the theoretical statements of science and the process of discovery by the scientist. The great creative scientists of every age, from Gallileo, who laid the foundations of mechanics, to Crick and Watson, who first indicated the mechanism of inheritance in terms of molecular structure, have arrived at their bold theoretical innovations, not by any purely logical process, but by a kind of intuitive leap which has so far defied scientific description. Such inspiration bears some relation to the creative processes of the arts and to the ecstatic experiences frequently associated with religious activity. Many of you will be familiar with the story of how the chemist Kekulé had, while sitting by his fireside, a vision which revealed to him the structure of the chemical compound benzene. This compound was known, in 1865 when Kekulé was working on this problem, to consist of six atoms of carbon and six of hydrogen; but the arrangement of these atoms in space was a complete mystery, for none of those proposed could account for the chemical properties of benzene. Kekulé describes how he solved the problem of the structure of benzene: 'I was sitting writing at my text-book; but the work did not progress; my thoughts were elsewhere. I turned my chair to the fire and dozed. Again the atoms were gambolling before my eyes. This time the smaller groups kept modestly in the background. My mental eye, rendered more acute repeated visions of the kind, could now distinguish larger structures of manifold conformation: long rows, sometimes more closely fitted together; all twining and twisting in snake-like motion. But look! What was that? One of the snakes had seized hold of its own tail, and the form whirled mockingly before my eyes. As if by a flash of lightning I awoke; and this time also I spent the rest of the night working out the consequences of the hypothesis. Thus Kekulé arrived at the theory that the benzene molecule has its atoms of carbon and hydrogen arranged in a closed ring, one of the landmarks in the development of the science of organic chemistry. The account of its discovery shows all the symptoms of ecstatic experience, and set beside it Wesley's warmed heart sounds distinctly lame. But Kekulé added a word of warning. 'Let us learn to dream, gentlemen,' he said, 'and then perhaps we shall learn the truth; but let us beware of publishing our dreams before thay have been put to the proof by the waking understanding.' The process of discovery is one thing; the logical character of our discoveries is quite another. And although the experience of the scientist in the moment of discovery may bear some similarities to religious experience, it does not at all follow that the logical character of religious statements is the same as that of scientific statements.

The essential feature of scientific procedure, then, is the attempt to falsify by experiment or observation a theoretical statement. Whenever such a statement is made, whenever a law of nature is propounded or some structural characteristic of the universe postulated, we know exactly what to do. Assuming that there are no errors of logic or of mathematics in the theory, we ask whether the theory is consistent with the available experimental evidence. If it is, then the theory must stand until it has been

falsified by new evidence. It is this method which distinguishes science from other intellectual activities, and it is followed as much in our enquiries into the nature of living matter and into the behaviour of human societies as in the investigation of the fundamental particles of physics. question which this at once raises for Christians is: what is the corresponding method of dealing with the affirmations of the Christian faith? When we assert 'Jesus is the Son of God', what sort of evidence would we require in order to falsify that statement? We must at once recall that the most profound statements of science are set up in such a way as to make them very difficult to falsify, and often the answer to the question of precisely what evidence would be required to falsify a scientific theory is by no means obvious; so we need not expect that the answer should necessarily be easy in the case of the statements of our faith. But in science the answer, however complex, can be given. Can we ever give it in the case of faith? The difficulty is that affirmations of faith have traditionally been formulated without any reference at all as to how they might be either established or falsified. We do not find the assembled Fathers at the Council of Chalcedon discussing this essentially epistemological question; and we must admit that the modern Fathers of the Church have not discussed it very much either. Yet that is the fundamental challenge presented by modern science to the Christian faith. It is, of course, not often articulated in quite that form by the people at large; but there is no doubt that there is a widespread belief that science has shown the tenets of the Christian faith to be irrelevant and meaningless, and that further scientific advance, for example the synthesis of living from non-living matter, will confirm that view. Why do we persist in talking about the power of God that made the mountains rise, when we have a perfectly good physical account of mountain formation? Why do we encourage our children to sing in Sunday School about God who makes the golden corn grow where all was brown when we are steadily gaining new knowledge about the mechanisms of life, and, by the time our children have grown up will almost certainly have acquired even deeper knowledge of life processes?

Too often the real question has been side-stepped. We are continually being told that the conflict between science and Christianity which came to a head in the second half of the 19th century was an unhappy episode caused by grave misunderstandings on both sides, and that now we know better, science and Christianity can live happily together. On the contrary, the real point at issue had by some been seen with great clarity, long before the controversy associated with the name of Darwin. Schleiermacher, in the second of his Speeches on Religion published in 1806 wrote 'You would never grant that our faith is as surely founded, or stands on the same level of certainty as your scientific knowledge. Your accusation against it is just that it does not know how to distinguish between the demonstrable and the probable.' The essence of Hume's objection to miracles, stated three-quarters of a century earlier, was that there is no possible means of determining whether a miracle has or has not occurred. And in the midst of the great controversy over Darwin and his theory of evolution by natural selection, John Fiske, lecturer in philosophy at Harvard, and a enthusiastic supporter of the Darwinian position, put his finger clearly on the spot. He wrote, concerning the opposition to Darwin's views: 'This antagonism has been generated, not so much by the silly sentimentalism which regards the Darwinian theory as derogatory to human dignity; not so much by the knowledge that the theory is incompatible with the ancient Hebrew cosmogony which still fascinates the theological imagination; as by the perception, partly vague and partly definite, that in natural selection there has been assigned an adequate cause for the marvellous phenomena of adaptation, which had formerly been regarded as clear proofs of beneficent creative contrivance.' We cannot here trace the detailed history of the dialogue between science and theology. It had begun in the time of Galileo, and the 19th century work in biology really raised no problems which had not already been raised in the 17th. Nor can we here discuss, even if I had the competence to do so, why the real issue—the question of the logical character of statements of belief was for the most part never dealt with at all. Instead it seemed to be assumed that theological statements were quasi-scientific in character, and that what one had to do was to assemble evidence for Christianity in much the same way as one might assemble evidence for Newton's laws of motion. There were clues in plenty available as to the most fruitful line of attack by the mid 19th century. It is indeed ironic that perhaps the most explicit of them had been provided by the sceptic David Hume; 'Our most holy religion,' he wrote, 'is founded on faith, not on reason; and it is a sure method of exposing it to put it to such a trial as it is, by no means, fitted to endure.' This contrasts oddly with a recent exposition of the relation between theology and science by the Rev. Dr Austin Farrer, who, in his opening remarks, says: 'I propose to approach the being of God, and to approach it calmly, treating it as a matter of knowledge. We will not talk about faith, or anyhow not to begin with.

Here, I fear, all my sympathies are with Hume. For we do not arrive first at a knowledge of God by calm contemplation and then proceed to have faith in Him. Faith is that human activity by which alone we know God: the act of faith is always prior to the knowledge of God. Let us now try to elucidate the logical status of affirmations of faith. To simplify the discussion, we take two statements, both of which are the direct concern of Christians. First: 'Jesus was a man,' and second 'Jesus was the Son of God.' Now the first of these statements is, to all intents and purposes, a scientific statement, for it can, in principle, be falsified by observation or experiment. It would have been possible, had 20th century scientific techniques been available in the 1st century, to subject Jesus of Nazareth to many biological, physiological and psychological tests. When we say 'Jesus was a man' we are stating that these tests would all have shown him to be indistinguishable from one of us, scientifically speaking. The cells of his body would have turned out to have the same number of chromosomes as ours do; his blood could have been placed in one of the human blood groups; he had a measurable intelligence quotient; and so on. The fact that we cannot actually carry out these tests, but have to rely on the rather vague historical evidence concerning Jesus, is quite irrelevant here. In principle they could have been performed, and in principle the statement 'Jesus was a man' is falsifiable in just the same way as a scientific statement.

The statement 'Jesus was the Son of God' is of a radically different character. In the first place, no observational or experimental test of any kind can, even in principle, confirm or deny this statement. This is already implied in our assertion 'Jesus was a man'; for this means that every empirical test leads to that and only that conclusion. Secondly, such a statement conveys meaning only within the whole context of faith. For those who stand outside faith, who look at Jesus as impartial bystanders, there is no meaning at all in the affirmation 'Jesus was the Son of God.' To stand within faith, and thus to grasp the meaning of the assertion 'Jesus was the Son of God', involves personal commitment to the one about whom the statement is made. Statements of this kind I propose to term 'faith statements' to emphasize the fact that they can only be grasped in an act of faith.

Now although faith statements cannot be tested by observation, they

must somehow be connected with observation, since they cannot enter our experience except by observation of some kind, even if that observation is a matter of feeling or emotion; all our experiences are observations in the sense that they are open to investigation by the scientist, and religious experience is no exception. So for any assertion of faith we must be able to answer the question: 'To what observable experience does our faith statement refer?' The statement 'Jesus was the Son of God' is a faith statement which cannot be tested by observation, but there must be some observational or empirical correlate to it, by which it can enter our experience. The empirical correlate of this faith statement is simply 'Jesus was a man'. If Jesus the man had never lived, it is clear that statements about his divine origins would be meaningless. This is the clue which can lead us to a solution of the problem of how, logically, faith is related to the world of experience. Every faith statement must have an empirical correlate; otherwise it is meaningless.

This notion has two consequences of the utmost importance for our theme. First it implies that faith statements can be falsified by falsifying their empirical correlates. If, for example, it could be shown that Jesus of Nazareth never lived at all, then clearly all statements about an incarnate Son of God who was this Jesus fall too, and, indeed, the whole of the Christian faith as we know it would be falsified. This is a particularly obvious, almost trivial, example of how it is possible, in principle, to falsify faith statements. But in general, the precise points at which faith statements are vulnerable in this way are not at all easy to identify. For example, we have recently been treated to a spate of books which give accounts of the events of the Gospel story which, while certainly not denying that Jesus lived, seem to demolish the Christian interpretation of those events. The best known of these accounts, at least in England, is, I suppose, The Passover Plot, by Schonfield, which puts forward the view that Jesus skilfully manipulated the situation in which he found himself in such a way that he appeared to fulfil the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, even to the extent of arranging things so that he would be alive when he was taken down from the cross and thus able to simulate a resurrection—a scheme foiled only by the spear of the Roman soldier. Supposing that incontrovertible evidence could be adduced to support this account, would it or would it not falsify the Christian claims concerning Jesus? Perhaps Schonfield's account is so unconvincing in any case that a detailed examination of this question seems scarcely worth while, and I mention it only to point out that the answer is far from obvious, and that a comprehensive examination of this type of problem needs to be undertaken. But it cannot be denied that Christianity can, conceivably, be falsified by a combination of historical and scientific studies aimed at falsifying the empirical correlates of affirmations of faith. To maintain, as does Professor Eric Mascall, that we can, as a matter of faith, assert that certain events which would, had they occurred, falsify Christian teaching, could not have occurred, hopelessly confuses the problem which we are trying to solve.

This brings us to the second important consequence of the logical status we have attributed to faith statements. It is a fatal error to elevate empirical, that is observational, or scientific, statements into articles of faith. This is quite as serious an error as that of imagining that faith statements are scientific in character. Much of the apparent incompatibility of science and Christianity arose because assertions which in reality were of a purely scientific character were taken to matters of faith. One of the more dramatic episodes in this connexion was the attack on Galileo by the Church of his day. The history of this famous case is complex, the rights

and wrongs obscure; but there can be no doubt that the failure to distinguish between scientific statements and faith statements was at the root of the dispute. For example the existence or non-existence of Jupiter's moons was held to be a matter of faith. The Church Fathers were not being perverse when they refused to look through Galileo's telescope to see for themselves. They were merely being consistent. For them it was a matter of faith that Jupiter should have no moons, and no empirical test can conceivably falsify a faith statement. There was, therefore, no conceivable point in carrying out a test. Their mistake was to treat a scientific statement as though it had the logical status of a faith statement. In the same way the controversy aroused by Darwin's theory of evolution more than three hundred years later was due to the same fundamental error. The study of biological evolution is a matter for science alone; its results are made the subject of faith at our peril. And in our own day we must take care not to get ourselves into the position where a new scientific advance, for example the solution to the problem of the origin of life on the earth, or the actual synthesis in the laboratory of living from non-living matter, is seen as a challenge to the basis of Christianity. And we must not fear that further investigation of the operation of the central nervous system, including an understanding of emotional experiences in terms of physical processes in the brain, will further erode the area of experience which we had previously thought to be the exclusive preserve of God. There is no area of experience which is exempt from the probings of science, and no scientific statement must ever be allowed to become an article of faith.

We have now narrowed down the area of contact between faith and science to what we have called the empirical correlates of faith statements; even here the connexion is rather a loose one, and the number of points at which faith is observationally falsifiable is clearly small, although considerable work is needed to identify them with any precision. But there is a quite different aspect of the logic of faith. Faith statements remain incomprehensible until we are personally committed to them. Those who view the empirical correlates impartially, as, for example, most of his contemporaries viewed Jesus, cannot at all understand the assertions of faith. Those who stand outside the faith, who try to examine it objectively, and who seek to judge it solely by the criteria of empirical enquiry, see no significance in it. To give meaning to faith statements we must, in addition to showing that they possess empirical correlates which have not, in fact, been falsified, be committed to the one about whom our faith statements revolve, that is, for the Christian, to Jesus. It is of the utmost importance to recognize that this commitment is part of the logical structure of faith. It is not something which, having after much enquiry understood what faith is about, we then add on as a kind of bonus, to satisfy some psychological need of human beings. Without commitment, faith statements cannot be given any meaning at all.

As an illustration of the fruitfulness of this analysis of the nature of faith, and also as an introduction to the final section of this lecture which seeks to show that the problem posed by modern science to Christians is in fact a very old one, we examine one of those stumbling blocks to accepting Christianity so often said to arise from science: miracles. It will make for clarity if we discuss a specific miracle, and for that purpose I have chosen what was for the Hebrews the prototype miracle: the crossing of the Red Sea. Let us agree, for our purposes, that this event actually took place more or less as it is described in the book of the Exodus. In the past the question of whether the throwing back of the waters can be accounted for in terms of winds or tides has often been thought to be decisive in establishing whether or not the event is actually a miracle. If it can be so under-

stood, then we do not have a miracle; if it cannot, then we do. But this is to misunderstand the whole character of miracles. The crossing of the Red Sea becomes, for the Hebrews, a miracle, only when they, as an act of faith, see in it God acting on their behalf. It would not have been any the less a miracle even if the meteorologists of the 13th century B.C. had been able to provide a convincing report of atmospheric conditions. Indeed, the biblical writer himself attempts an explanation when he attributes the phenomenon to a 'strong east wind'. It is the accepting by the Hebrews of this natural event, in faith, as the work of God on their behalf which constitutes it as a miracle. In principle, any event accessible to observation can, when interpreted by faith, become a miracle; in practice, events which give rise to affirmations of faith are normally unusual, and often spectacular. Clearly, the event itself, the actual parting of the water, is the empirical correlate of a faith statement concerning God's care for the Hebrews; and the faith interpretation of this event as a miracle can only survive so long as the people are steadfast in their commitment. As soon as their consciousness of dependence on God wanes, they cease to interpret the crossing of the Red Sea as a miracle, instead they complain: 'Would that we had died in the land of Egypt!'

It is always possible, in faith, to see the hand of God at work in the world. Our ability to understand the events in which we especially see Him in terms of science is of no importance here. Correspondingly, we can never use an apparently miraculous event in order to convince ourselves of God's activity. The impartial observer of the Red Sea may be puzzled when he sees the waters driven back, but he does not, at least if he is wise, try to deduce from his lack of understanding that God is therefore present. God must never be used as an explanation for events which defy scientific explanation; still less must we attempt to use miracles as evidences for our faith. The failure of this last procedure is convincingly demonstrated in the account of Elijah's efforts to persuade the people to follow Yahweh rather than the Ba'al gods by setting up a spectacular demonstration of Yahweh's power on Mount Carmel. Elijah himself, man of faith that he was, saw the presence of God in the falling of the fire upon the offering; but the people, after an initial reaction, failed to make the same interpretation simply because they were faithless, and, far from witnessing a great revival of the worship of Yahweh as a result of Elijah's apparent victory over the prophets of Ba'al, we next find Elijah flying for his life from Jezebel. Taken by itself, the miracle of Carmel proves nothing; it reveals the presence of God only to those who already believe Him to be there; and it can do that whether or not modern science provides us with an explanation. Elijah's subsequent encounter with God on the mountain of the Lord, when the spectacular events—the wind, the earthquake and the fire—no longer speak to him of God's presence, but rather the voice within, not recognizable by impartial or hostile observers, but only by faith, shows that even in the 8th century B.C. our modern problem of the relationship between science and faith, had, in its essentials, been seen and understood.

In the New Testament also, and perhaps especially in St John's Gospel, we find, maybe to our surprise, that the theme we had thought to be so modern, is discussed. The relationship between the miraculous signs, which form the framework of this Gospel, and faith in Jesus as the Word made flesh, is carefully set out. A superficial reading of the Gospel may suggest that the miracles are being presented as evidences for the divine origin of Jesus; but a more profound examination reveals that in fact the miracles are here accorded the status of what we have called the empirical, or observational, correlates of faith statements. When, for example, the

day after Jesus fed the five thousand, the people pursued Him to the other side of the lake, they asked: 'What sign can you give us to see, so that we may believe you? What is the work you do? Our ancestors had manna to eat in the desert; as scripture says "He gave them bread from heaven to eat".' And Jesus answered: 'I tell you this: the truth is, not that Moses gave you bread from heaven, but that my Father gives you the real bread from heaven. The bread which God gives is he who comes down from heaven and brings life to the world.' The people were quite unconvinced by the feeding of the five thousand. That was no more than Moses had done, and was quite insufficient to substantiate the claims which Jesus was making for himself. They wanted a bigger and better sign. But, as Jesus' reply shows, they had misunderstood the nature of the sign altogether. Both the feeding of the five thousand and the manna in the wilderness are events in which only faith can discern the hand of God. They have significance only for those who believe. Only those who in faith recognize Jesus to be the bread of life can rightly interpret the sign of the feeding of the five thousand. Once more we see that scientific explanations of this event are, from the point of view of faith, beside the point. The miracle can still be a sign, even if we understand how it was worked.

Turning from St John's Gospel, we find another clear example of the New Testament approach to our subject in the parable of Lazarus and the rich man. The rich man, condemned to torment, pleads with Abraham to send Lazarus to his relatives to warn them lest they too have to share his fate. Abraham says: 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them listen to them.' 'No, father Abraham,' replies Lazarus, 'but if someone from the dead visits them, they will repent.' Abraham answers: 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets they will pay no heed even if someone should rise from the dead.' In the absence of faith, Jesus is declaring, no miracle, not even a rising from the dead, will carry any conviction. It is impossible to make any deductions about faith from however detailed an examination of observational events.

This brings us to a consideration of the resurrection of Jesus, without which no discussion of the relationship between science and faith can be complete. What are we to make of the assertion of the disciples, and of all the succeeding generations of Christians: The Lord is risen. Is this a faith statement or an observational statement? Is the resurrection of Jesus an empirical event, and, as such, open to investigation and explanation by science? Or is it a matter of faith alone, an event which does not happen in the empirical sphere at all? We have already seen that every faith statement must have an empirical correlate, so that assertions about the resurrection must correspond to something that actually happened in an observational sense. The fact is that in the statement 'The Lord is risen' both the faith statement and its empirical correlate are combined in a single declaration. The New Testament account of the resurrection makes it quite clear that when we affirm that the Lord is risen we are making a declaration of faith as well as describing an empirical event; for only the faithful actually experienced the risen Christ, and even they had some difficulty in recognizing Him. Nevertheless, something in the empirical frame of reference must have happened, something, that is, that the impartial bystander would have noticed, something which is, in principle, open to scientific investigation; and whatever it was that happened was, as an act of faith, interpreted by the disciples in the words 'The Lord is risen'. The precise empirical content of this statement has often been, and still is, the subject of controversy, and it is certainly a legitimate topic for historical and scientific investigation; but for faith.

the result of such detailed investigation is unimportant, and such controversy, together with the possibility that our increasing knowledge of the nature of life may one day lead to a better understanding of what actually happened at the resurrection, can leave our faith unshaken, provided only that we are satisfied that something occurred which evoked from the followers of Jesus the response of faith in His continuing presence with them. The faith content of the statement 'The Lord is risen' can only be grasped by those who are committed to Jesus, who have, in some measure, answered the summons to discipleship. No amount of scientific investigation can lead us either to or away from the point of commitment, unless it reveals that actually nothing at all happened on Easter Day.

My task has been to examine science in the light of faith—not, significantly, faith in the light of science; and if this lecture seems to have been taken up more with an exposition of the nature of faith than with an account of modern science, that is because it seems to me that the problems posed to Christians by science can only be solved if we properly appreciate the character of faith. When we grasp what faith is, then we can perceive the light which it sheds on scientific endeavour and examine with profit the area of contact between them. To do so without such an appreciation of the nature of faith is to court disaster. We have seen that the conflict between science and Christianity has been caused by a persistent tendency to treat faith as though it were a matter of science, and science as though it were a matter of faith; to confuse, that is, world of observation and experiment, with the life of faith; on the one hand to make this world, accessible to observation, divine, and on the other hand to reduce God to observational data. One of the essential insights of the Bible is not to make this confusion, and that is why we find that our supposedly modern problem was recognized long centuries ago. The interpreters of the faith down the ages have varied in their capacity to expound the character of faith, and even more in their knowledge of science. It is doubtful whether John Wesley ever properly understood the scientific revolution wrought by Isaac Newton just one generation before him, and it seems likely that Charles Wesley had even less interest in these matters. But their insight into faith was so profound that we are not surprised to find that in the hymns of Charles Wesley the relationship between the world of sense impressions and the life of faith is often illuminated; and in a lecture at a World Methodist Conference it is surely fitting that we allow Charles Wesley to have the last word. Concerning the things of the faith, and in particular the interpretation which faith places on the life of the man Jesus, he writes:

> The things unknown to feeble sense, Unseen by reason's glimmering ray, With strong commanding evidence Their heavenly origin display.

Faith lends its realizing light,
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly;
The Invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye.

### COUNCIL AND CONFERENCE SESSION

# Saturday, 20th August, 1966 Address by Dr John H. Satterwhite THE CRISIS IN HUMAN RELATIONS

I shall attempt to discuss racism as the crisis in human relations from the point of view of the ecumenical movement. There are many definitions of racism. For my purpose it is necessary to say that racism describes the situation in which various races live side by side and in which no one race holds a privileged place, but, in which one assumes privileged status.

Do the churches realize the full significance of the crisis in human relations? The main reason why the churches are reluctant to face the crisis is that they find it so difficult to give up the ease and comfort of a

society inspired by one group. for all groups working together.

Our world has always experienced racism in the sense of the variety of races and conceptions of life. But until 1954 in our country, the United States of America, when the Supreme Court gave the famous decision banning segregation in the public schools, racism was not the genuine fact of life and experience as today. Numerous persons have in the past delighted in living in communities of one race and many of our churches are self-contained communities of one race. In places where it is necessary for churches to adjust to multi-racial membership, the concept of privileged status often remains the dominating principle.

We must come face to face with racism in our churches and in our total society, and our churches must pioneer in working out the principle of multi-racial membership and leadership in local communities and in local

congregations.

An excellent treatment of the nature of the racist faith is found in Dr Kelsey's Racism and the Christian Understanding of Man:

The fact that racism exists alongside other faiths does not make it any less a faith. Rather, this fact is testimony to the reality of polytheism in the modern age. In its maturity, racism is not a mere ideology that a political demagogue may be expected to affirm or deny depending upon the political situation in which he finds himself. Racism is a search for meaning. The devotee of the racist faith is as certainly seeking self-identity in his acts of self-exaltation and his self-defying pronouncements as he is seeking to nullify the selfhood of members of other races by acts of deprivation and words of vilification. It is this faith character of racism which makes it the final and complete form of human alienation. Racism is human alienation purely and simply; it is the prototype of all human alienation. It is the one form of human conflict that divides human beings as human beings. That which the racist glorifies in himself is his being, and that which he scorns and rejects in members of other races is precisely their human being. Although the racist line of demarcation and hostility inevitably finds expression through the institutions of society, it is not primarily a cultural, political, or economic boundary. Rather, it is a boundary of estrangement in the order of human being as such.'1

The outstanding factors in the creation of the present crisis in human relations are the following:

1. The racist affirmation of superiority and inferiority that is based on the fundamental nature of human beings. A faith that is not supported or cannot be supported by an objective body of facts. The will to believe what one wishes to believe about a race, may not be altered when objective

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Racism and the Christian Understanding of Man, p. 23.

facts are presented, when the character and behaviour are negative racist faith facts. Many devotees of such a faith are convinced that their assertations are reflections of the fundamental order of being. To such persons, found in many sections of our world, Negro virtue is vice because a Negro is believed to be a defective human being. Racial alienation has been and is the only form of human conflict based on the question of human beings. Racism means that the churches must find new freedom and new vigour in achieving freedom. In other words, racism means the emergence of a world situation in which there must be a new theology of fundamental convictions regarding the worth and dignity of human beings.

2. The second factor is closely related to the first. It is the worldwide movement for the recognition and promotion of human rights and particularly of the rights of education, labour, freedom of association, and freedom to advocate social and theological convictions. The movement has been called a revolution and it challenges the conscience of the world and has gained worldwide interest. Our struggle is a reminder of our failures in living up to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Racial segregation and discrimination deny these rights. Our goal is to create the kind of society in which every man is free to express in action his convictions about the worth and dignity of other persons as well as himself.

To mention the worth and dignity of persons is the heart of our desire for a new status and meaning of life. To withold love, freedom, justice, and equality from persons is a denial of dignity and worth and forces us into a status of a lesser breed or a thing. Our task is to achieve freedom to make full and creative use of our God-given abilities and capacities, and to build a society in which every man regardless of colour may have full opportunity to participate. This goal is an expression in a real sense of responsibility to God, to others, and to one's self for having a meaningful part in determining the destiny of one's community as well as that of the world.

The movement in America is characterized by a sense of urgency in solving the problems of human relations. We are rallying around the cry, 'Freedom Now'! One of our leaders, Dr Martin Luther King, Jr has an important book, Why We Can't Wait that expresses our urgency. We acknowledge that changes are occurring but we know that the changes have not gotten to the heart of our problem in local churches. Too many members in local churches are decrying the tensions that our struggles for freedom produce. We consider suffering a factor in our confronting local communities reluctant to change segregated patterns of behaviour in human relations. We know the realities of segregation and discrimination, the deprivations that are upon us and will be upon our children if we do not eliminate this cruel system of human relations. The right to protest against injustice and to convince others of the justice of our cause in human relations is firmly established in traditions and laws. In pursuing our struggle, we use the right to protest; we petition the government to correct grievances; we support legislation that guarantees civil rights; and we use the courts and direct action of picketing, mass marches, boycotts, sit-ins, stand-ins, prayer vigils, freedom rides and civil disobedience.

Nonviolent direct action is the dramatic method used to involve the masses in our struggle. Dr Martin Luther King describes this force in his famous letter from the Birmingham, Alabama City Jail, 'Non-Violent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue.'2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Letter from the Birmingham, Alabama City Jail.

Nonviolent direct action moves beyond the resistance of evil to the acceptance of suffering in the achievement of the solution to reconciliation in establishing brotherhood.

3. The third factor is the tragic realization that devotees of the racist faith are Christians and citizens of Christian civilization. The relationship of the racist faith to Christian practice is our persistent problem. The racist interpretation of Christian morality is described by Kyle Haselden:

The white man takes the positive Christian adjectives for himself: noble, manly, wise, strong, courageous; he recommends the passive and negative Christian adjectives to the Negro: patient, long-suffering, humble, self-effacing, considerate, submissive, childlike, meek. It is easy for the white man to think of the Negro as a Christian; but it is difficult, if not impossible, for the white man to think of the Negro in terms of that still choice phrase, a Christian gentleman. This is not to say that the white man does not practice the gentle, the feminine as well as the masculine, Christian virtues; it is to say that he desires in the Negro not a perfect and complete humanity embracing all the Christian virtues but a limited humanity which includes only those virtues which will keep the negro docile and tractable in a subservient role.<sup>3</sup>

This type of misinterpretation of Christian moral values accounts for the fact that extremes of pietism and racial discrimination are often found in the same person. A dilution of the Christian ethic by churches through the addition of the racist faith impairs the ability of their members to do what is right in human relations.

Democracy as a dynamic concept contains persistent values of freedom, equality, justice, and the dignity of the individual, including the concept of self-realization. As a political system, democracy takes the form of government by consent and participation. All Americans believe in the goals and ideals of democracy, but in the application of these goals to our people, Negroes in America, they are frequently transformed by conflicting requirements from those who practise the racist faith. A form which the transformation of democratic values takes in relating them to Negroes is that of substituting the mass for the individual. In the racist faith a Negro is not a distinct person, rather he is an instance of a homogenized mass. Our present struggle for civil rights in America often uses the slogan, 'Negro rights and the rights of the white man' to show the weakness and failures in American political democracy. When democracy is true, the rights of citizens belong to all citizens. Civil rights are the rights of all persons as citizens. They belong to all citizens in the same way.

Racism is planned and organized discrimination and prejudice. It seems to make the democratic ideal of freedom mean the right to deny freedom to others. It claims for itself freedom to choose jobs, customers, playmates, schoolmates, neighbours, and fellow churchmen. When a society's life is permeated by the spirit of racism, as in American society, it is urgent that changes take place in human relations. To the sinful tyranny of racism inherent in the racist faith is added the blasphemous sanctity by some Christians. There are too many areas of our world where a pattern of racial domination exists that is due to the approval of Christians. Dr. Beach of Duke University describes the relationship which expresses the tragic perversion of Christian love:

The respectable cultured form of racial pride is exactly this paternalistic love, the concern of the superior for the inferior. The negro neighbour is 'loved', is cared for. Thus, in the eyes of the paternalist and churchman the law of Christ is fulfilled in his own behaviour. His very kindness is

<sup>3</sup> Haselden, The Racial Problem in Christian Perspective, pp. 42, 43.

an aid to self-deceit. He is blinded to the corruption at the heart of paternalist love; that the neighbour is loved, not by reference to God the creator, but by reference to the sinful order of white superiority and Negro inferiority. The neighbour is loved only insofar as he understands the terms of the transaction and 'keeps his place'. Thus, the mutual love of the order of creation is poisoned at its fount by self-love. The resultant paternalism is a disorder of God's basic order of created community.<sup>4</sup>

It is impossible for Christian faith to find fulfillment in racism. The racist wants us to meet his criteria and to be related to him on his terms, and then he will love us. His terms are power, wealth and submission, not as members of God's community and the Body of Christ.

There are no gains in racism and those of us who have lived with discrimination and prejudice know the economic cost in maintaining the system. Any society which withholds opportunities for development from any citizen is un-Christian and is the poorer. One may feel certain in the statement that our country, United States of America, would be better prepared for world leadership were the full employment of the scientific imagination and social creativity of its Negro population made in every place. Our world faces a future that has no place for racism. There is the possibility of world destruction from racism. Whether this possibility shall come to pass is a spiritual question to be answered by the churches. If our world continues to choose racism, there will be the judgment of destruction and tyranny. Of central importance is the question, will our churches continue to worship at the altar of racism?

## WHAT CHRISTIANS AND CHURCH MEMBERS SHOULD BRING TO THE CONTEXT OF RACISM

It should be clear that I am not attempting to present the whole range of Christian wisdom that the churches and Christian citizens should bring in racist society. This wisdom includes the acknowledgement in faith that God is the Lord of states and nations and cultures and that the source of distortion is the practice of absolutizing these human realities. Grateful obedience to God which is understood in terms of love for all neighbours, including racists, should be the ultimate determiner of motives in relation to the racist faith. Such love brings its own sensitivities to each situation.

We are all aided by our Christian confession of our sin in racism and weakness to understand our temptations which often distort our minds and we see ourselves and those racists against whom we are arrayed, in the light of a common judgment and the need of a common redemption. Christian awareness of redemption from racism that is embodied in some measure in most of us, gives meaning to what we do in each situation and hope in God's ultimate fulfilment of His purpose for all of us, brings perspective and search for freedom in the most difficult racial situations in the world.

There are at least two types of ethical criteria that Christians should bring as guidance to each social situation. Criteria of a general sort that are relevant to all situations, but do not of themselves determine concrete decisions and actions. These are the broad goals for society: equality, order, freedom, justice, material conditions of welfare. We are forced today to do much thinking in advance about the relation between these criteria or objectives, and about their interdependence. It is important to have clear ideas about order and freedom. Do you believe that there are times when it is justifiable to forsake order for the sake of freedom?

<sup>4</sup> Waldo Beach, A Theological Analysis of Race Relations, Faith and Ethics, p. 213.

Do you recognize that without the hope of a new order such a risk would be impossible? We need to have a clear idea about what constitutes justice before the law and of some of the considerations that go into the determination of justice in relation to economic opportunity. We must have some convictions about the relation of justice to equality. How are these broad criteria related to our churches? Are there ways of spelling out what the good for the neighbour is in the world today? Is it possible to derive from Christian love knowledge concerning the needs of the community of neighbours? What do we gain from Christian teaching concerning man, concerning his relationship to God, his social nature, his depth and freedom as a person, and concerning the relation of man to his racial sins?

Are our thoughts about freedom controlled by such considerations as the following? Man is true to himself only when he makes his decisions freely but in obedience to God; in society man's freedom must quite clearly include his recognition that God transcends all social powers; man's sinful striving for advantages for himself or his group makes it necessary to guard other men against exploitation and tyranny. Whose freedom should concern us? The freedom of all men with special emphasis upon those who cannot defend their own freedom?

These broad criteria should lead us to specific objectives for today. The overcoming of involuntary racial segregation is our immediate guide to action. Desegregation is one of the clearest examples of the kind of objective that needs to be brought to our present-day tension.

Our churches often indulge in a form of self-deception by which they hide their racially exclusivistic membership in affirming the exclusivism of class. This practice is described by Kyle Haselden:

In our day there is a strange and disturbing development particularly among Protestant Christians. The rare Negro who is accepted as an equal in the white Protestant Church must first qualify socially or professionally. He escapes the stigma of race only by achieving the standard of class; or so to speak, he ceases to be the excluded 'Jew' only by becoming the acceptable 'Greek'. It is required of the Negro applicant, not that he prove himself as a Christian, but primarily that he match in his life the cultural stratum which characterizes the particular church to which he applies. Thus the socially stratified Protestant Church violates that catholicity which the Apostles required, even in the seemingly tolerant act of accepting a Negro into its membership.<sup>5</sup>

The self-deception in this practice of tokenism lies in the fact that it sustains both racial and class discrimination.

It is our hope that a stronger statement than the one from the World Council of Churches may be our own. The Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches meeting at New Delhi, having considered the serious and far-reaching implications of racial and ethnic tensions for the mission of the Church in the world, in the light of Christian unity, witness and service:

- 1. Calls attention of the member churches to the mounting racial and ethnic tensions which accompany rapid social change and struggle for social justice in many areas;
- 2. Notes with gratitude:
  - a. the witness of churches and their members in difficult situations, struggling to uphold the unity of the Christian fellowship transcending racial and ethnic divisions;

<sup>5</sup> Kyle, Haselden, The Racial Problem in Christian Perspective, p. 192.

- b. the courage and sacrifice of individuals and groups, both Christian and non-Christian, who in spite of forces urging to violence, are giving leadership in the struggle for human rights in a spirit of forgiveness and nonviolence;
- c. those churches, which though divided by different approaches to the question of race relations, are willing to meet with each other within the unity of the Christian faith, to talk to each other and to discover together the Will of God for their common witness to Christ in society.
- 3. Welcomes the establishment of the W.C.C. Secretariat on Racial and Ethnic Relations and urges the member churches to give support to developing the programme of the secretariat;
- 4. Reminds all the churches of the declaration by the Evanston Assembly on Intergroup Relations that 'any form of segregation based on race, colour or ethnic origin is contrary to the Gospel, and is incompatible with the Christian doctrine of man and with the nature of the Church of Christ, and urges them to act more resolutely than they have heretofore' to renounce all forms of segregation and discrimination and to work for their abolition within their own life and within society.<sup>6</sup>

Our churches are becoming aware that racial hostility is a structured social and political system. For some time the individualistic illusions of Protestantism stood in the way of this awareness. This important growth in understanding is not enough. Our churches must grasp the extent and degree in which the racist faith has permeated cultural institutions and ideas. Racism must be purged from our culture. Our churches must address themselves locally to the task of the transformation of culture and where churches are condemned in their own segregated life, they must be purged of sin before they proclaim the Word of God. A segregated church is not a Church.

Planned desegregation of our churches is one of the clearest examples that I can give of the kind of objective that needs to be brought immediately to our crisis in human relations.

There are several other objectives which have a claim upon us and are ways of expressing ethical criteria for our time which are implied in our Christian faith:

- 1. The prevention of general nuclear war and the working out of moral limits for the conduct of military operations.
- 2. The concern for the maintenance of and the development of societies which are open to all and in which there are protections of spiritual and cultural freedom.
- 3. The acceptance of the responsibility of the nation acting through government to maintain the stability of the economy and to develop the essential conditions of welfare and assistance for the whole population.

There are two dangers to be avoided in desegregating our churches: We may not want to see the issues and opportunities that are involved in desegregating our churches. There are those who have a single track devotion to one ethical principle; churches reflecting the racial pattern of the community; church members apathetic and easily intimidated and manipulated by vociferous racists inside and outside our churches.

The other danger is that if we put all of our emphasis on local churches in the Southern part of the United States of America, we may be determined too much by the limitations that it places upon our vision. Often

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The New Delhi Report, The Third Assembly W.C.C., 1961, pp. 187, 188.

what is most needed is for those who are deeply involved in a particular place to be confronted by experiences and ethical interpretations which come from outside the local community. This makes it very important for the larger units of the Church to bring pressures and guidance to our local communities. This is the value of an ecumenical effort here, in this meeting, in desegregating churches in the Southern States of the United States of America. It is necessary for any group of Christians whose minds and actions are formed by the pressures of their own immediate environment with its distinctive and peculiarly baffling racial problems, to be disturbed by the judgments of those who practice racial equality in other places.

A strong factor in desegregating our churches is the external unification of the world. Does unification in itself produce desegregation? It will, if it is the unification of practices of equality, rather than in the communication of convictions of equality. Too many of our best expressions of multiracial churches are hidden within definite geographical boundaries and should be providing worldwide leadership. Multi-racial churches are the results of our present ecumenical advance. Our sin in the life of our churches has been in describing churches by the racial or ethnic origin of

the members of the congregations.

Our churches are called to lead the new reformation, to represent the convictions and aspirations of a whole people not just a particular race. The deeper convictions of the community as a whole are untenable in most churches. Most of our churches do not extend their pastoral responsibility to the total life of the community. An outstanding contribution in America of churches with predominantly Negro membership is their effective witness in the area of human rights. Many of these churches really mean business in dealing with our racial struggle. They have the courage to act on their Christian convictions in human relations and they are identified with the movements which are working to achieve racial justice. This type of active commitment in human relations led the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America to create a Commission on Religion and Race with the responsibility of involving local churches in action on the race problem. This Commission is motivating church members to become identified with victims of racial discrimination. Numerous church members are participating in voter registration campaigns, conducting adult education and community action programmes. Many militant church members have suffered violence for the cause of human justice and are working to increase the number of churches which have eliminated racial segregation from their services and organizations.

It is apparent that racial churches are failing to relate themselves effectively to the community, and that the present racial structure of many local churches contributes to the disintegration of life in the community. This means that each local church must become multi-racial in leadership and membership. In the past, it has been traditional for local churches to plan according to the limited view of the task of the church in meeting community needs. Planning now means that we look at the needs of all the people of all races and then project our plans to meet the needs. It must be realized in our churches that if we are to minister today, we must follow the dictates of the gospel in meeting human needs.

In order that our local churches may chart concrete steps for our ecumenical advance, it is imperative to know what opportunities now exist.

1. Our present structure of segregated local churches cannot avoid being drawn into competitive tussle with other segregated clubs, seeking advantages for themselves. If a local church is to be reconciling and prophetic in a community, its membership must be inclusive and must feel that the whole of Christ's Church is at work and not a splinter portion of it. We must infuse community responsibility into our churches. Our ministry has been so orientated to particular needs that we do not have neighbourhood, community-orientated churches. We have racial clubs and fellowship.

2. A second serious indictment of our churches is the lack of ecumenical education among our members. Not enough of the new biblical and ecumenical understanding of the Church and the people of God is found in our churches. Many of our members have no clear image of the biblical-theological direction that churches should uphold on social issues. Many of our members are victims of environmental pressures that force our churches to conform to pagan secular concepts.

3. The key to multi-racial churches is a multi-racial ministry and staff. We are at the place in our cities that we cannot go much further without the enlistment, commitment, and devotion of multi-racial leaders and

staffs in our local churches.

The time has come for us to examine in a realistic manner the reasons why more young people are not entering our ministry today. An answer to this question is found in multi-racial members and leaders in local churches. The time has come for all the stratifications and distinctions that divide people inside and outside our churches to be abolished. Local churches must be seen in terms of total ministry representing all races with their variety of gifts contributing to the fullness of Christ's Church.

4. A programme of ecumenical education and participation must be provided in local churches to guard against ecumenical illiteracy, and to inform our membership of issues and how to make our witness more effective.

To make our witness effective, we may consider the indictment:

Our churches have not influenced their members to practice racial justice in housing, education, job opportunity, and public accommodations.

Our churches in their own internal life have practised discrimination and built barriers to prevent open membership in the household of faith.

Our churches preach equality of all before God, but believe the accomplishment of this objective to be a long awaited programme, to be achieved gradually.

Some of us are able to recite forthright positions taken against racism by some churches. There are some excellent exceptions to the general indictment of the responsibility of the churches for the crisis in human relations. But, in general, the churches are dominated by our society's equivocation and forthright evils in the practice of discrimination.

A most tragic evidence visible on our country is the existence of Negro Churches and denominations. We often hear members of so called 'white churches' interpreting our separation as evidence that we prefer to be with our own kind. In their blindness they do not comprehend the depth of the rejection that made it necessary for us to organize our own churches, if we are to worship in freedom and joy. Can anyone here imagine the Head of the Church, the friend of Samaritans, the destroyer of class distinctions of all kinds, accepting separate churches based on affirmations of white superiority as representing the Body of Christ?

The mountain tide of vigorous action to secure full civil rights for all our brothers has at last moved to the centre of the world, and has precipitated a crisis. The crisis involves the entire world with the fundamental concepts of freedom and justice; the crisis involves all churches with the deepest convictions concerning our common humanity and the obligation to act always out of respect and compassion for our fellowmen; the

crisis involves the obedience of the churches to their Lord Jesus Christ as agents of God's reconciling purpose in His world.

Once there seemed to be time for gradual change and modest tokens of progress in racial justice were accepted as the best we could do. But now, in the providence of God, the issue is sharply focussed in every part of the world. Our brothers are moving quickly and with great commitment activity that often means suffering, harassment and death. Words and declarations are no longer useful in our struggle unless accompanied by sacrifice and commitment.

You are invited to share with us in action in the task of desegregating our total society; to interpret to others the seriousness of the present hour; and to become involved in every phase of our struggle for justice—to witness to the fact that this is a world issue.

Our churches could bring strength to our struggle for freedom. They could open channels of communication to our brothers who are isolated in our society. They could give to all the doctrine we need about man and his dignity. How well our churches respond today will decide whether or not our churches will exist.

The last time I was in the midst of brothers in a ghetto who had been burned by tear gas, bandaged and battered, in a state of new hysteria, and singing the songs of freedom, 'We Shall Overcome' and 'Before I'll be a Slave, I'll be buried in my grave, and go home to my Lord and be free'. The words of the Twelfth Chapter of Exodus were with me, 'It was a night of watching by the Lord, to bring them out of the land of Egypt'.

# Summary of the Address by Mrs Renuka Somasekhar THE CRISIS IN HUMAN RELATIONS

Crisis implies a critical state of existence. A state of tension in relationships among human beings. This is nothing new. Ever since the time of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, mankind has lived in a state of tension—tempting, misleading, blaming and murdering each other and worst of all, showing an indifference with 'Am I my brother's keeper!'.

#### Crisis

Today's crisis has arisen, not as a new phenomenon in itself, but because of changes and new developments in the basic understanding of the being that is 'the human being'. Hierarchies have shifted ground and 'beings' which formerly were treated as 'things' are demanding their recognition as 'human'.

Both individuals as well as groups are demanding this recognition. We see the disturbance caused in the home because the wife and mother is emerging now as a 'person in her own right' and not just as wife of so and so and mother of so many children. The child is pressing for a new recognition, the servants, almost obsolete in some parts of the world, are making their claims where they still exist. Laymen are demanding a place in church affairs and the student is clamouring for the right to decide in academic matters along with the teacher.

In group tensions one sees the emancipation and participation of women in the larger world. The rebellion of youth, the demands of nations to rule themselves and the insistence of races to be treated as equals. This is the age of the emergence of the formerly 'second class citizens' (women, youth, subject nations, coloured races, servants, labourers, laymen, etc.) into freedom, full citizenship and responsibility.

#### Obedience

In order to find the right relationships we need to study three key words which have ruled the world and for which the references in the Bible can be put to varied use: Obedience, Service, Responsibility.

Obedience is perhaps the most maligned word because at its lowest scale it is an ugly word. It stands for servility and unquestioning acceptance of someone else's authority. Among human beings if this is exercised unreasonably and insensitively it is an ugly relationship. The dignity of human beings demands that the concept of obedience be redefined in the pattern and example set by our Lord Jesus Christ. He was obedient . . . so that He might save. He was not servile. He took upon himself, willingly and voluntarily, a state in order to accomplish something which could not be achieved any other way. This is the obedience that is the only possible dignified obedience and this obedience is to God and God alone.

# Service and Responsibility

Service is the beautiful word in human relationship, service meaning an offering, a gift given to another. At its highest we have the worship service to God which is completed and fulfilled in service to our fellowmen. Service is a two-way traffic. No one is all the time serving, no one is all the time served. Service is a give-and-take in human relations.

Responsibility is the birthright of every individual. Responsibility for the development of one's abilities and the use of these abilities in the service of others. For some time to come, the emerging groups, women, youth, nations, races, etc., will have to be given responsibility with deliberation. Only responsibility given will develop the potentialities of responsibility in the individual.

The basis of all human relationship is the law of love. Love is the only force which puts people on equal footing, which develops mutual response and which allows the full growth of all individuals.

#### THE PUBLIC WORSHIP

Sunday, 21st August, 1966

EVENING SERVICE, Sunday, 21st August, 1966, 6.30 p.m., the Central Hall, Westminster, London.

Service conducted by Reverend Samuel J. Johnston, President of the Methodist Church in Ireland.

Preacher, Bishop Fred Pierce Corson, President of the World Methodist Council.

Organist, Dr W. S. Lloyd Webber, F.R.C.M., F.R.C.O., F.L.C.M., Hon.R.A.M.

# **CONFERENCE SESSIONS**

Monday, 22nd August, 1966

Address by Dr Jose Miguez Bonino

# CHRISTIAN VALUES IN AN OVERPOPULATED WORLD

Let me begin by sharing with you—as any lecturer who respects himself must do—my doubts concerning the subject that has been entrusted to me. I am particularly baffled by one word: overpopulated. When is a

place overpopulated? When I visited my sweetheart and her mother came into the room where the two of us were talking I always felt that the place was overpopulated. Until recently, my home—three children, my wife and myself, dependent on my salary—was rather overpopulated. Now, there are three more people: my mother, my sister and a friend—each one contributing her salary—and everything is fine.

I am not trying to introduce you to my private life: I am simply trying to illustrate the fact that numbers, in terms of population, can only be meaningful when related to a whole constellation of factors. One person per square mile in southern Algeria (the Sahara desert) may be overpopulation while three hundred in Britain may be quite acceptable. There is much juggling with numbers and all kinds of mathematical possibilities in recent literature on the question of population which tends to be merely impressionistic. At the present rate of growth—it is said—in six hundred years there will not be standing room for the population on the face of the earth. This is very interesting, but just as valuable as to point out, on the other side, that all the population of the earth could stand today on the Isle of Wight, off the southern shores of England.

I

Let us try to avoid the amusing but pointless game of Malthusian mathematics and address ourselves to the task of defining the basic elements in this much debated question of population. Coming myself from the continent with the highest rate of growth in the world, I am not inclined to ignore the problem: the human race is multiplying in geometric ratio. It took it from the beginning of its existence to the year 1650 to reach the 500 million mark. Now, in twelve years—1950 to 1962—it increases by that amount. Projections show that by the end of next century China alone will have to feed as many mouths as the total population of the world today. Population explosion—as it is called—is all the more serious because it is closely related with the problem of underdevelopment. The less developed regions of the world (Africa, Asia and Latin America) shelter today (I admit the verb must not be taken too literally) twice as many people as the more developed areas. But in 40 years the ratio will be 4 to 1. Seventy-five per cent of the world population will be living in countries considered today underdeveloped.

Is this overpopulation? In order to answer the question, other factors must be taken into consideration. One is the distribution, not only in terms of regions—as we have pointed out—but even within one country. Mine, for instance (Argentina), is clearly underpopulated: less than 10 persons per square mile of productive territory and a very slow rate of growth. Nevertheless, there is a clear problem of overpopulation in the crowded shanty towns around Buenos Aires. The same thing happens in Africa, southern China and some other parts of the Far East. The problem is still further complicated when we take into account a third factor; food and economic resources—both actual and potential—and their increase in relation to population growth. Holland will have no problem in feeding and housing 700 people per square mile, while the Island of Mauritius is suffering an almost desperate situation with approximately the same density. Overpopulation must, therefore, be defined in terms of relation of growth, space, distribution and available resources.

While most experts would not quarrel with what has been said so far, they would fiercely disagree as to the meaning of the facts and factors thus mentioned. Optimists (mainly in some Catholic and—mirabile factum—Communist circles) will say that there is no real problem. The resources of the world, they argue, are enough to take care of the rising population:

what is needed is simply a better use of the instruments of technical and scientific exploitation of resources and a more just and adequate distribution. Pessimists, on the other hand, stress the fact that population increase is the cause of poverty, and propose birth control as the only remedy. Neither of the two attitudes seems to me adequate—in fact, both appear dictated by an ideology, whether Roman Catholic, Marxist or capitalist. Both contain, nevertheless, elements of truth which we must take into account.

The basic truth in the first approach we have mentioned is that, as Father McCormack puts it:

The real problem facing the second half of the twentieth century, the central problem of our age, is not population growth, serious as this has been shown to be, but the problem of world hunger and world poverty which is complicated by, but not caused by the population explosion.<sup>1</sup>

This is true, in the first place, because population growth is only one of the complicating factors in the basic problem of world poverty. No doubt a poor country—and let us remember that in 100 countries one billion people live on less than 100 dollars a year—will be taxed by the addition of large numbers of non-producing people, who eat up what should be used to raise up living standards. But it is also true that the slow growth of production, and the resulting poverty are due to a number of other redressable evils: backward agriculture, instability of primary commodity prices, unfair balance of trade, lack of reform of monetary policy and international trade policies, as well as local corruption, military adventures often times stimulated from international centres of power and many other causes. To gloss over these and concentrate on the control of the growth of population is both unrealistic and inhuman.

Moreover, the population explosion is partly due to poverty and not only the other way around. The Brazilian sociologist Josué de Castro, in his world-renowned book The Geopolitics of hunger, has shown evidence that 'specific hunger is the cause of overpopulation'. This assertion does not hang simply on the debatable theory (which de Castro has advanced) that a better diet would directly reduce population growth by cutting down fertility; rather, it is the fact that economic progress alone makes possible the measure of self control, cultural development, rational planning, in short, human existence which must be present in order for a couple to exercise responsible parenthood. The idea that education in birth control in the abject moral, social and cultural conditions of a crowded tin-hut in a shanty town or a tropical village will reverse the trend of population growth in the near future is a 'fantasy' which can only be dreamed up in an air-conditioned office in a New York or London skyscraper. The solution of the problem at short range by means of birth control could only be reached through enforced massive sterilization by a police state. Whoever wants this solution must be ready to pay the price. I, for one, would rather choose some other death for mankind! One fact seems to be clear: granted that population explosion is one factor in the overall picture of poverty and hunger in our world, it is not the only or even the basic one, and in any case, its direct control will not affect the situation considerably in the next twenty or thirty years.

If this trend of thought is valid, one more conclusion ought to be drawn, namely that, in order to make effective a long-range programme of control of the population explosion, it is imperative to step up a minimum crash programme for raising living standards. Unless the number of persons per

<sup>1</sup> The population explosion in perspective, in Do-c (No. 228, p. 6; 1966).

room is reduced from 15 to five or six, calories per person raised from 1,500 to 3,000, illiteracy brought down from 70 per cent or 80 per cent to 20 per cent or 30 per cent in the different sections of the underdeveloped world in the next 15 to 20 years, we will not be able to do anything effective for the reduction of the rate of growth of population. Can this be done? It demands a major concerted effort of the nations of the earth, a combination of resources and imagination and good will such as we have not even begun to envisage. Just for the sake of illustration let us recall a single fact: this minimum programme which would only reduce the disproportion in living standards between developed and underdeveloped nations from 1/10 to 1/6 would require a steady annual increase of 3 per cent in food production. We are barely reaching now,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

Is this not another utopian programme? Technically, one must answer: No! We have the resources to do it. The combined budget of world entities engaged in this fight against poverty and underdevelopment (F.A.O., U.N.E.S.C.O., U.N.I.C.E.F., W.H.O., etc.) reaches the amount of only 200 million dollars per year. But the military budget of the major world powers is estimated in 100 billion dollars per year! If only 15 per cent of this sum were to be invested in the underdeveloped countries, it would suffice to provide the means for the take-off phase of their economic

development.

But now we must also face the truth in the other position: unless we face seriously and intelligently the problem of population growth and create an intelligent and human attitude towards procreation, all our efforts to banish poverty will be of no avail. Re-settling and migration, development of unexploited land and resources and use of new techniques of production are all valuable means of confronting this major challenge to mankind. But none of them, nor all together can give a final, long-range answer, partly because all these adjustments will take too much time, but much more because they are not sufficient. It is not simply the fact that at long range the growth of population would overtax the possibilities of the earth but also, and more immediately, that many countries are facing an urgent problem—Japan, the Caribbean countries, India—and most find it a live question at some point or other.

H

To point out the need for planned parenthood, birth control, an intelligent check of population growth, is to raise immediately a moral question. In order to face it seriously one must understand the ethical meaning of the problem of overpopulation for an understanding of human existence. To this end I would like to invite you to join with me in a brief ethical meditation on the statistics you have just heard—and others which I am certain most of you know. (By the way, the theologians are sometimes wary of statistics, and rightly so as they are usually employed merely as magnitude-measurements; we should rather try to redeem them through ethical and theological reflection—computers are not instruments of revelation, but they can give us plenty of stuff to interpret the 'many', 'few', 'all', 'none', 'each' and 'whoever' which we encounter at every page of biblical revelation.) An ethical meditation on population statistics will perhaps bring home to us the real human dimension of the problem of overpopulation which we have been outlining.

We speak often of the importance of development: do we realize the human price paid for development? Population growth is not due mainly to an increase in births but to a decrease in deaths. Death rates have fallen in the last twenty years from 25 per thousand to 15 per thousand in Mexico, from 23 per thousand to 11 per thousand in British Honduras,

from 23 per thousand to 16 per thousand in Brazil. This means more people, younger people, and therefore greater growth. If we take Brazil as an example, we find that in the next 20 years several forms of death will be practically eliminated. In this country, where two-thirds of the population suffer from hunger, this will mean more hungry people. It will mean more children in school age: if Brazil were to offer a minimum of four years of schooling to each child, it would have to devote to education more than 60 per cent of its total budget. As this is clearly impossible, it is evident that some will have to be excluded. The question of who will be educated and who will not becomes a matter of political decision: will it be those in the city? or shall the effort be dedicated to rural areas? should a government consciously concentrate in developing a middle class? or should Christians embark in a revolution to offer the masses what is now property of a minority? What is the meaning of democracy in such a situation?

Or take the question of employment. In the next few years, the Brazilian government ought to create—or offer the conditions for the creation of—some 1,000,000 new jobs each year in order to give minimum occupation to the growing population. If it does not, structural unemployment will be the consequence. Should a government undertake pharaonic projects which are certain to trigger off inflation and produce national debt? Or should it limit itself to existing resources and thus create a restriction of the market, unemployment—a sound dollar for the rich and growing starvation for the masses? In some African cities we are told that up to 80 per cent are unemployed. Forced labour for the public benefit, as it is or was practised in some communist countries is a frightening thing: but is it really ethically indefensible when the only capitalist alternative in underdeveloped, overpopulated countries seems to be unemployment and hunger?

The question must be pushed a step further (and this touches directly the more developed countries). Modern technology is constantly raising the level of intelligence required from the worker. In developed countries a minimum i.q. of 100 will soon be necessary for the simplest forms of specialized work. And non-specialized jobs are rapidly dwindling. In a rapidly growing population the competition for work becomes harder and harder. What will happen with the weak? Even in the U.S.A. functional illiteracy reaches 11 per cent. This 12 million will find it more and more difficult to find a decent job in a growing technocratic society. In underdeveloped countries, as technology is accelerated in order to overcome poverty, masses of population will be condemned—at least for one or two generations—to a marginal, subhuman life, uprooted from the old society, misfits for the new one. This is no theoretical speculation: a road is open in the Brazilian jungle, and a backwood population which lived in a closed (certainly poor but self-sufficient) community, in a face-to-face relation, still in the barter system of economy, in a primitive but coherent society, is suddenly thrown into the orbit of the large metropolis a hundred miles away: monetary economy impersonal relations, documents, police. The vision of the city becomes an apocalyptic one. Their children will find there a new life—and this is good—but the present generation will be mentally and morally torn to pieces, a sacrificed generation even in our so-called painless 'free' forms of development!

I hope that you see that what is really at stake here is the meaning of human existence in this crowded, underdeveloped, explosive world south of the 30th parallel north—and for the whole mankind as a teeming wave of humanity bursts out of the southern hemisphere and North East Asia and threatens to envelop the whole world at the break of the second

millenium of Christian history. What does it mean to be 'human'? Does it not necessarily include the possibility of taking a step back from oneself and contemplate its own life? Does it not mean to be able to decide? Must not a man in order to be a man be able to plan at least one step ahead into the future? Is it not necessary to love? But these ethical and theological questions must also be translated into the terms of space and time. How much physical room—how much privacy—a man needs in order to think of himself as a person? What is love when a couple's bed is continuous with the one to their right and left? How much food does a man need in order to understand the word 'future'? Can a man be a father who has no protection to offer, no wisdom to give, no tradition to transmit? What piece of time, of things, of land, of human acceptance and influence does a man need in order to be able to say 'yes' and 'no' and attach to these words a human meaning? I know that there is a number of edifying stories of heroism and faith and love in the face of poverty, hunger, disease and fear. But Christians are concerned, not only with the 'few' of these stories, but with the 'many' for whom Christ died. And the stark and merciless statistics of sociology leave us in no doubt as to the destiny of these 'many' in our world.

#### TTT

This is the face of overpopulation—this gives us at least an inkling of what it means. My subject, though, spoke about 'Christian values' in this world. And I must confess my uneasiness at this point. It is not merely the squeamishness of the theologian at the much-questioned word 'value'. The word could, strictly speaking, perhaps be re-interpreted. What worries me is the possibility of approaching Christian responsibility in the world in a detached, intellectualistic way: here is a sore, evil reality—there, are the Christian values to be applied to it. This extrinsic way of looking at reality seems to me so basically anti-biblical and anti-Christian that I hesitate even to use a word which might mislead us in that direction.

The one and only Christian value is Christ Himself, as He works and suffers, intercedes and reigns among and above and within the peoples of the earth. And we create Christian values only as we suffer, pray and work with Him! For this reason, Christian values are not 'there', as entities existing in some world of ideas or theories waiting to be applied. Christian values emerge, are created by Christ. Just as it was in Christ's own ministry on earth: the Kingdom was no programme or blueprint; it was God's sovereign rule of justice and peace which 'happened' when the blind saw, the lepers were healed, the multitude ate bread, sins were forgiven and the Gospel was preached to the poor. When Jesus did these things, men became 'whole'. It is in this way also today that Christian values 'happen' whenever man is opened up, through service, Word and sacrament, to human existence—which in the end means Christ-existence.

But we must not become merely rhetoric! The Christ who creates *His* values in the midst of our history is not a mere symbol of humanity, a profile whose features one may imagine or create at will, a blank order which one may fill out according to the dictates of ideological fashion. It is the Christ of the Gospel. And the fact that it is this Christ and no other points us in a particular direction and away from other directions. (Of course, the question of interpretation becomes here a decisive issue: I can only offer my own interpretation. It is not so important whether you accept or reject it. What is important is that you accept, correct or reject it in obedience to the Christ of the Gospel—and not to your own ideology, eastern or western way of life, cultural background or personal inclination).

The Christ of the Gospel is the Christ of the 'many'—God who became man in order to serve, to die and to rise for all men. Our forefathers in Christ in the Methodist tradition fought for this truth of the Gospel in the realm of soteriology when they spoke of Christ as 'the general Saviour of mankind'. You recall the words of the hymn:

Thy undistinguishing regard
Was cast on Adam's fallen race;
For all Thou hast in Christ prepared
Sufficient, sovereign, saving grace.

We must be able to translate this also into the realm of ethics. (I am not advocating a reduction of the understanding of Christ's work of salvation to the realm of ethics. I simply contend that the facts of our salvation demand from us a triple response of faith: at the liturgical, at the theological and at the ethical level—and that whenever we fail to respond in any one of these dimensions, we radically distort the meaning and purpose of these acts of God.) The fact that Christ is the Christ for all men means, in the ethical sphere, the unity of the human race. And this must be asserted precisely in relation to the population explosion. At Christmas we sing: 'Unto us a child is born, a son is given'. Since the babe of Bethlehem, and because of him, whenever a child is born in this world of ours, each and all of us must say: 'Unto us a child is born, a son is given'. Each child born today in hunger-stricken India or in congested Hong Kong, in a negro home in Alabama or in a shanty town in Lima is given by God to us all—to feed, and protect, and educate and love. This must now be translated in practical terms in programmes and action at the national and international level. No food surplus operation or restricted programme of marginal subsidies will do here. We cannot feed our children abroad with the crumbs that fall from the table of our children at home. The question of the distribution of God's gifts among God's children, both at the local, national and international level, is not a question of charity: it is a question of justice.

Is it an irony of history—or is it God's strange and wonderful work?—that the social and economic implications of this solidarity of man which Christ bought for us is today a great hope and an urgent demand of hundreds of millions of men throughout the world? And is it another coincidence that this great hope and demand have been born in the hearts of men at a time when the streams of cultural and national histories flow into one, and the whole of mankind becomes, willy-nilly, a universal neighbourhood, an interdependent whole? As if God would like to make all the more unbearable the monstrosity of unequal development among His children.

Shall we be able to answer this challenge? A true revolution is required, far more sweeping than the movements afoot in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It is a world encompassing revolution. In order to transform the line of tension between the affluent and the indigent worlds into an edge of growth, a universal conversion, a change of mentality is necessary: worldwide solidarity must displace national self-interest as the basis of political and economic decision. Developed countries must be willing to control their internal markets, to curb the profit of their capitals, to accept political regimés different from their own. World powers must find agreements that will permit them to divert the colossal military effort into this huge task of world revolution. Underdeveloped countries must break through narrow provincialism and create continental and regional units; they must be ready to accept sacrifice, discipline and austerity. Privileged

groups must yield their privileges or be dislodged from power. The whole resources of science, technology and social planning must be harnessed to the work of transforming whole societies and economies.

Is this too fantastic? Perhaps so: but nothing less than this is what is implied today in confessing that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of all men. This is a fruit of redemption which God calls us to harvest in this age. If mankind is going to accept this challenge—nevertheless—a colossal moral and spiritual influence must be brought to bear on all existing centres of power and decision. And this is truly an ecumenical task. In this, as indeed in most other things, unilateral denominational action is both wrong and fruitless. The Christian churches must find one voice to say unequivocally and unambiguously that all the children of men are equally entitled to sit at God's table in this world. And this one voice must have a concrete way of expression. What I am advocating is simply that the Methodist churches will press the functioning of joint (by which I mean Roman Catholic and W.C.C.) Christian study, proclamation and action in the question of hunger, poverty, disease, development and mutual aid. We will not discharge at a lesser cost our witness to Christ's universal redemption.

The Christ of the Gospel is the Christ for each man. He calls man to Himself by name, invites him to talk to Him, and so constitutes him into a person. Again, in our Methodist tradition we have talked frequently of 'experience' or—more evangelically—of the Spirit's witness to our spirit. It meant in Wesley's time—as it means today to thousands of Pentecostals in Latin America—that man is singled out from the crowd, called into a personal relation, given the freedom to hear and to speak—made into a son, shaped in the image of the sovereign freedom, confidence and love of the Son of God. Again, we are called today to translate this truth in ethical terms. And in ethical terms this means the dignity of the human person the fact that man is called to eat, and love and sleep and work as a human being, in a free relation of transcendence to nature, in the realm of community and meaning. We have already said that in order for this to be possible a minimum of material space and stuff are necessary. In this sense, what we are now saying is built on what we have said about the struggle against need.

But we must move beyond this. Modern scientific and technical progress gives us a freedom from the necessity of nature which is so much free room for the expression of human selfhood. But here man needs to be helped in order to move into human maturity in this free space. There is, for instance, the free space created in sexual relations: they are no more blindly subjected to the procreation of the race or to the need for roof and food. Now it is possible to make love for the sake of communion, to have children in free and grateful response to God's love, to shape our family in faithful stewardship of our talents and resources and to put human fecundity to the services and in the discipline of the needs of the whole human race. But it is also possible to mate according to instinct, to avoid procreation for the sake of egoism and to shut oneself off from love for fear of responsibility. We could translate this picture to other areas and illustrate the same dual possibilities: there is the free space of work, there is the free space of recreation, there is the free space of travelling, there is the free space of knowledge. In every one of these a promise of fullness, of plenitude and joy is awaiting for mankind. But none of these promises come true automatically. There is also a threat of alienation, of a new and more terrible servitude, because a servitude of the spirit.

Another task, therefore, as serious and difficult as the struggle against need claims our attention: the task of education. We need an education

for human existence—an education that must begin by the simple fight against illiteracy. Literacy is freedom—it is the possiblity of stretching the limits of one's life to include what happens to other people, in other places, at other times-to transcend the present misery and limitation even through the feats of one's favourite football team or the romance of the movie star. But education must deepen in order to help man to cope with the realities of daily life: to understand himself in his work, to take distance from his sexual life and make it an object of decision—and thus of freedom, joy and responsibility. This requires what nobody has yet attempted on a big scale: continuing education for life and for all walks of life. The Church has here a twofold task: it has to include the call to education in her prophetic ministry to society. And it has to use the unlimited opportunity it has for a teaching ministry of its own. I cannot and need not elaborate these disparate reflections, but I do want to commend this question of continuing education for human life as one of the burning issues in our rapidly multiplying mankind.

Finally, I am afraid at this point I must part company with my secularist friends. I have tried to say as vigorously as I knew that the creation of Christian values in an overpopulated world is not simply a question of birth control but a total approach to the problem of humanity in faithful obedience to the Christ of the Gospel. I have attempted to show that this obedience to the Christ who died for all men and calls every one to Himself has ethical content which may and must be translated into practical programmes and action. But the Christ of the Gospel—at least as I read it—is the Christ of faith and for faith; the man in whom and through whom one may and must say personally and consciously 'Yes' and 'Amen' to God's redemptive love. To follow Christ in this world of ours means—as it has always meant—to proclaim the Gospel. To call man to repentance and faith in Christ and to gather men into the fellowship of Christ's Church.

An overpopulated world is a call to evangelism—and this call confronts us today with a gigantic task. It is not a question of high-pressure selling, it is not spiritual imperialism, it is not cornering man in his need in order to subject him to religious propaganda. It is simply this: that no man has attained his true humanity until he knows personally and consciously Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, until he has shared the fellowship and broken the bread, until he has been freed from himself for worship and service in the Spirit, until he has begun to grow into 'mature manhood, measured by nothing less than the full stature of Christ' (Ephesians 413, EV). Whenever through neglect, indifference or reticence we rob anyone of the hundred and seventy thousand men who are born each day into this world of the possibility of knowing Jesus Christ, we are committing the most criminal and final form of abortion—an abortion to eternal life, to the family of God. 'For it is God's will that all men should find salvation and come to know the truth. For there is one God, and also one Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ, himself man, who sacrificed himself to win freedom for all mankind . . .' (1 Timothy  $2^{4-6}$ , NEV).

# Address by Bishop Gerald Ensley IS CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIFFERENT?

The theme assigned today is the question, Is Christian Education Different? In the strictest sense, the answer is No. The content of Christian education is not basically different from that of a secular school. When Robert Louis Stevenson was informed by his wife that the new maid was

a good Christian girl, he is alleged to have replied, 'Then I'd like some good Christian broth.' Well, just as there is no distinctive Christian broth, so there is no specifically Christian biology or calculus or syntax. The students who attend a church school, in my land at least, are about the same sort of persons to be found in any college or university. The pedagogical methods, good, bad, and otherwise, are about the same. The immediate purposes of Christian education are not greatly different from general education. Few Christian schools in our time exist to transmit dogma. One might easily defend a one-sentence answer to the question propounded to us and say, 'Christian education is not different from secular education.'

My thesis today is that the distinguishing mark of Christian education is not primarily to be found within the process of instruction itself but, rather, in the perspective which a Christian educator brings to his task. He begins with a different set of presuppositions. Christian education starts with the assumption that the Power who rules the world is personal, responsible, and engaged in a vast enterprise of redemption, whose spiritual qualities are best seen in Jesus Christ. It assumes that the pupils assigned to its care are not just animals with clothes on—as one cynic has put it but potentially spiritual beings, capable of both knowledge and likeness to the Being from which they came. It assumes that this world is an arena of life-making, where God will not fail nor be discouraged till He has achieved the end set for Himself. The distinctive Christian contribution is not a set of facts which a student is supposed to see. It is the set of presuppositions with which he sees. It is what the older generation of psychologists used to call 'the apperceptive mass.' The mark of Christian education is the perspective with which the educator and the educated look upon the world.

What we get from life depends ultimately on two factors. First, what is there—which is the subject of all education. Secondly, the mass of meanings with which we greet what is given. Two persons, for instance, sit side by side at a symphony. One is enthralled; for a space of time he dwells in the seventh heaven of musical exaltation. The other is there physically, but that is about all that can be said. He goes out as pedestrian as he came. Or, two men hear an eerie cry in the jungle. One goes into a paroxysm of fear; for his animistic conception of life this sound is uttered by a demon bent on his destruction. The other dismisses it with a shrug: he hears it, too, but it does not matter, for he is a scientist, and there is no place for diabolism in his universe. 'In thy light', says the 36th Psalm, 'shall we see light.' To everyone who has ever taken pictures that sentence evokes analogies. What we have on our photographic plate is not just what was in front of the camera when we tripped the shutter. It depends also on the light which prevailed when we did it. The colour of the scene, the sharpness of form, the warmth and loveliness of the object—they depend on the light brought to the picture-taking. Well, so Christian education is different, not in the sense that it has different objects in front of its lens, or even a different camera. Christian education looks at the world and man and their destiny from the vantage of belief in a God who is like Christ. It sees the world in a different light.

I'd like to think with you today about three consequences which seem to me to occur when we educate from this Christian perspective.

In the first place, if we approach education from a Christian perspective we approach both our object and subject without fear. This is God's world. It is a place where His honour dwelleth and His purposes rule. Truth is but a description of His handiwork. The other day I saw above the door of a great medical school the words, 'Truth above all.' Why place truth

above all? Fundamentally, because truth is good. If this were a world in the hands of demonic powers would we not be justified in postponing our rendezvous with Truth as long as we could? Certainly there would be great incentive to dwell in a world of make-believe and only face Truth when all else had failed. But we can face truth unafraid if the Christian view is valid. It was not a preacher but Alfred North Whitehead, one of the towering scientific minds of our time, who affirmed that the presupposition of scientific investigation is that the world is rational. And he called attention to the fact that the scientific assumption of a rational world is a lineal descendant of the Judeo-Christian notion that the world is rooted in God and can therefore be trusted. The world is put together mind-wise. Its laws keep faith with the conscientious investigator. The Christian world-view legitimizes objective study; it is the Magna Carta of critical inquiry. We may not know what the purpose of the world is, but we can be sure it has a purpose. There may be vast blank latitudes on the map of human thought. But we may trust despite the mysteries; for the God of the light is also the God of the dark.

Only in a meaningful world, such as Christianity assumes, can the educational enterprise succeed. If the universe is a sinking ship, then our colleges and universities are going down with it. If the universe is basically a senseless operation, what sense is there in learning about it? The Russians have a homely proverb which says, 'There is no use of worrying about the hair, when the head is off'. If this cosmos is a brainless organism, then education is combing the hair of a corpse. It has no future. If the intellectual life is to have meaning and authority for earnest men it must be grounded in a spiritual view of the universe such as Christianity envisages. Unless there is something beyond the mortal tides of success and failure our whole human enterprise, including education, will end in bitter defeat. Unless there is light at the end of the tunnel, there is no reason for pressing into the dark. Men act in the long run in accordance with what they suppose reality to be. The Christian view, which regards the world as rooted and grounded in Meaning, is a licence for educational effort.

We may also face the truth about man unafraid. Education requires confidence in the capacities of human nature. Unless there is some seed of rationality in it, education is doomed to failure. This prospect is made the more terrifying by the limitations of human nature disclosed by the best minds of our time. Man, in the view of some, does not have it in him to control his civilization, because according to Karl Marx, he is but a reflection of property relations; because according to Darwin he is first cousin of the apes; because according to Freud his vaunted 'rationality' is at the mercy of a non-rational libido. To all of this scepticism about man's power to control his world, Christianity is unmoved. After all, God, not man, is in control. Further, man, no matter how dark the indictment against him, can repent. Christian education is, thus, education, but education in a setting that causes us to enter upon it with hope.

Mr. John Gunther, one of the enterprising journalists of the United States, reports an interview in one of his books with the former prime minister of Great Britain, Mr. Harold Macmillan. Gunter asked Mr. Macmillan what he believed in most. The reporter had asked the same question of many eminent men and had a vivid anthology of their responses. Gunther notes that there were a number of replies the prime minister might have given. He might have said, 'England, or himself, or the Anglo-Saxon alliance, or change, or standards, or the august routine of the old-style aristocratic life'. or as a political leader he might have replied, 'the people.' Instead, his answer was simply, 'God.' This is the word the Christian educator speaks to his colleagues. The world, man,

history—they all have their rootage in deity. Therefore, we need not fear that if we investigate the world or man we shall be put to shame or end in loss. Because God is, the educational enterprise has meaning.

In the second place, if the Christian perspective be valid, *ideas are to be used*. Knowledge of ideas is not an end in itself. The Damoclean sword above Christian educators does not read on its blade, 'Publish or perish.' The highest product of Christian education is not a bookish individual or a Ph.D. dissertation on an abstruse topic. For Christian education knowledge is not valuable in independence of its use.

Ideas, from the Christian standpoint, are not just to be known or contemplated, they are to be used—used for the upbuilding of life 'The Word became flesh' for our salvation. The term 'flesh' is a symbol of the totality of human nature. The divine Reason does not have just the discursive intellect for its home; it is a Force for the saving of the whole man. Christian education does not quarrel with objectivity; but objectivity is only one facet of its ideal. For the Christian educator regards truth not just as a thing to be discovered but to be acted upon. The Christian educator resembles a doctor. A physician is scientifically objective in his observation, his diagnosis, and his prescription for treatment. But his objectivity is not an end in itself; it is always for the patient's sake. A true doctor is not neutral on the question whether the patient should get well, and he judges his success by the state of his patient's health. His objectivity is in a sense the servant of a more basic subjectivity. So with the Christian educator. He starts with truth but is never content until truth has been used to further goodness. Thomas Huxley, though not a professing Christian, once put the ideal of Christian learning, 'To find what is true in order to do what is right.'

Especially is the world in need of usable Christian ideas in these crucial days on which our lives have fallen. Yes, we must teach in the schools related to the Church the fundamental relations which the formal sciences major in—of logic and mathematics, for instance. We should address our best competence to the dissemination of knowledge of natural scientific and historical fact. But as Christian educators we must be concerned with the relation of fact to value. Christian education should concern itself with the health of the body, which supplies the tallow from which the light draws its sustenance; with efficiency in one's vocation; with the profitable use of leisure, in an age when drudgery is lessening; with social effectiveness-personality-adjustment to change, with homely regard for the rights and feelings of others. But perhaps more than these is the need for civic concern. One of our cynics has said that the world today is governed by lunatics and paralytics. Surely Christian education should speak and act to such a condition. We should aim to supply both the facts and values which can help to guide society, to offer intelligent control for the irrationalism that so often passes for valid, because it has a consensus. Stern things have been written about 'the treason of the intellectuals.' They should be applied to Christian education if it gives ideas priority. Christian education should not only offer the guidance of values but a stimulus to action. In the name of the One who by the pool of Bethesda stood a man upon his feet who had been 30 and 8 years in his infirmity, Christian education has a responsibility to set men to marching.

John Dewey, the American philosopher of education, wrote a generation ago, 'While saints are engaged in introspection, burly sinners run the world.' The saints have diminished in numbers since then, I fear, while the burly sinners have enjoyed a 'population explosion.' Still, the scholars have increased in number, too. And if they have a sense of Christian social involvement we may still triumph over the lunatics and paralytics.

Especially may Christian education serve in teaching the art of decision-making. Four of the great decisions of life are made in student years. The first is the decision as to vocation. The second is the decision as to whom one will marry, the choice of life-companionship, so fraught with weal or woe. In the third place, most students come to their majority in college and begin participation in the decisions of society, of which the ballot is the symbol. And finally there is the decision as to one's central loyalty in life—or religion. One of the greatest needs in the world of the intellect is for a code of principles governing our decision procedure. It is not enough to see that we have to decide; many people treat that as implying that you have a right to be irrational. This is where, so far as I understand it, that existentialism has gone sour. What we need are rules to guide us when we are faced with alternatives and the evidence is inconclusive.

Historic Methodism made a contribution to this problem. It seems naive to us now, but a scientific scholar of the rank of Whitehead calls attention to it. Wesley taught his people—for the most part unlearned, how to make decisions. His method was to study the Scripture, and Wesley was one of the competent Bible scholars of his time. He practised as high a level of objectivity as could be expected in a day that antedated higher criticism. He tried to find out what the Bible had to say about problems. Then, with the Scriptural word as a working hypothesis, he made his classes a laboratory where he verified or modified his hypothesis. Out of it came a body of practical divinity which has stood the wear of more than 200 years. He found a way of making decisions, which he called 'experimental religion,' and much of it is still valid.

No, the Christian college cannot teach science with the state universities, with the taxing power behind them, or with the privately-supported colleges and munificent grants from industry for research. But the great art of decision-making within a Christian context, without which our vaunted science may destroy us—aye, we have almost a monopoly on that. And the first step toward such a contribution is to recognize that ideas are to be used.

Once more, if the Christian perspective is true, then, to use a figure employed in a different context by a contemporary publicist, 'the medium is the message.' If the Incarnation be true, then the flesh in which the word is embodied is of consummate importance. The fact that those branches of Christianity which have held up Christ before men's eyes have been most vital is proof of that.

Generally speaking we are made by our admirations. And the problem of education simmers down in no small part to personnel. A Christian college looks pre-eminently to the character of the persons who make up its community. It is not required as the state institution to take everyone who applies. It need have only upon its boards of direction persons committed to the Christian way of life. At its best its administrators possess a pastoral instinct as well as executive skills. Most of all, a Christian college depends on the character of its faculty for the quality of its instruction. In the broadest sense, Christian education is *Christians educating*. When the faculty is composed of persons who are both intellectually competent and religiously committed, Christian education offers a kind of education that has no real competitor. And that which is mediated is not so much taught as caught through the touch of life upon life.

We are threatened with a vast impersonalism in these days. Part of it is the unprecedented masses pressing to invade the limited facilities we have inherited from the past. We are tempted under such conditions to think of learning as a quasi-physical substance that we pump into men's

minds from a central main; inspiration becomes a kind of electric current we literally plug into, as many schools in my land are now teaching by television.

Shortly before this present journey to London I came upon these words from a newspaper in my state. No one will confuse the verse with a Shakespearian sonnet, but they suggest something of the conditions under which education is now conducted.

'In the good old-fashioned school days,
Days of the Golden Rule,
The Teacher said, "Good morning, class,"
And so she started school.
Alas! How different things are now.
The school day can't begin
'Till someone finds the socket
And plugs the teacher in.'

In contrast to this is the type of instruction which is the glory of the Christian school. It makes personal contacts central. And some of us would say from experience that this approach has been validated beyond refutation. I think of a quartette of teachers at my Alma Mater—William Emory Smyser in English, 'Uncle Louie' Westgage in geology,' Eddie' Rice in Zoology, and 'Rollie' Walker in Bible. Although by academic training and ability they could have graced the faculties of the greatest universities in the land, they chose amongst them to give more than a century and a half of teaching in a small church college, because they believed in Christian education. I think of Borden Parker Bowne, professor of philosophy in Boston University who once, when offered a salary twice his own to teach at another university in his homeland, sent a cryptic telegram, using the words of the prophet, 'Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone.' I think of Rufus Jones, a world religious figure, author of a hundred books on philosophy and religion, honoured on both sides of the Atlantic for his studies of mysticism, personally so magnetic that one of his colleagues could say, 'To meet Rufus in the morning is to feel set up for the day,' yet who chose to pour his life into the students of one small Quaker school. I think of a world-renowned scientist like George Washington Carver, who got his start in a small Methodist college in the state of Iowa in the United States and, at the height of his fame, turned down a salary offer in six figures to join Thomas Edison's research-organization, in order to teach needy Negro boys at Tuskegee Institute. You can add names from your Alma Mater of equal lustre. Teachers like these, blending truth with grace, instructing not only with their lips but by the daily posture of their lives and their passionate interest in individuals, these give to Christian education a dimension that no other kind of instruction can give.

The newspapers told us a while ago that the daughter of Nikita Kruschev, the Russian Premier, and her husband had an audience with the late Pope John. When they came to the close of the interview, the Holy Father said to the two Communists, 'They tell me that you are atheists. But surely you will not refuse the blessing of an old man for your children.' The two supposedly flinty Marxists at this point, so we hear, knelt down and wept. A kind of education that majors in a blessing to persons from a Person, and whose medium is its message, despite its manifest identities, so differs from what passes for education in our world as abundantly to justify its continuance.

## Public Lecture in the Central Hall

### Monday, 22nd August, 1966

### By Dr Albert Outler

### THE CURRENT THEOLOGICAL SCENE A VIEW FROM THE BEACH AT EBB TIDE

It goes without saying that I deem this lecture assignment as a great honour; to have you for an audience is also a great compliment, and I'm duly grateful. I hope, therefore, that you will not be too badly disappointed if I begin with the blunt, honest confession that I've simply not yet been vouchsafed a properly apocalyptic answer to the improperly apocalyptic question put to me by the Programme Committee, which has been advertized as the title of the lecture: 'What Is God Saying to Us in Contemporary Theology?' There were times, of course, when there were inklings of an epiphany, as the week in which I read Robinson's Honest to God, Edwards', The Honest to God Debate, Cox's Secular City, Altizer's Gospel of Christian Atheism in one nearly continuous stretch. Toward the end there was an inner voice repeating that bit from Psalm 46: 'Be still—and know that I am God.' Or, again, when lost in the labyrinthine ways of 'the new hermeneutic' (e.g., New Frontiers in Theology, vols. 1 and 2), it was more than mere annoyance that prompted the mutter: 'Quit faking and talk plainly!' Last month, when the new prophets at Geneva had finished their tirades against practically everybody, it was more than my prejudices that wondered where they got their credentials to omniscience. Even when working through more responsible and edifying stuff (of which there is a helpful abundance, thank God!) there is always the quiet reminder of St. Paul's that we have all these treasures in impermanent earthen vessels—so that the credit for them, and our gratitude, should go to God and not to ourselves.

But my 'voices' and intuitions do not add up to a clear word from heaven. And so, when it came time when the lecture had to be written, it seemed much the wiser part to substitute analysis for apocalypse and to undertake an overview of the current theological scene with the unflatter-

ing caption, 'A View From the Beach at Ebb Tide.'

Let us agree, at the outset, (1) that such an overview is bound to be partial and impressionistic, (2) that I have never been accused of any special expertise in this particular field and (3) that we want to be out of here by 6.00 p.m.! Let us further agree that there are three wrong ways to do such a survey and that I should try to avoid them. First, there would be the cataloguing of the significant literature from Barth's Römerbrief to Altizer's Gospel (which, one enthusiast assured me the other day, is the current counterpart to the Rômerbrief!)—and then pretend to distill 'the essence' from such a mass. Second, one could hover over all the options and then pick one of them as paragon. The third unhelpful way would be to expound the manifest faults in one's peers and rivals and then come up with what the parliamentarians call 'a substitute for all that is before us.' The weakness here is that it misrepresents theological enterprise as more of a competition than an exercise in critical insight.

What I do propose—which is pretentious enough!—is a barebone sketch of the theological scene as I see it, with passing references to a few of the more interesting people in it and comments on the beach parties now rollicking on the strand. Such impudence will be justified if it involves you as participant observers of the current situation or if it provokes you

to an alternative synopsis on your own.

All ages are ages of transition—as Adam sagely remarked to Eve—but some are more so than others, and ours is one of those. We are at the end of an exciting epoch, at the point of the passing of a whole galaxy of great stars: Barth, Brunner, Bultmann, the brothers Niebuhr, Tillich, Temple. Their labours were monumental but they are accomplished—and none has left a comparable epigone. One of the clues to the current scene is the striking absence of titans. This is one reason for speaking of an ebb tide. The theological flats are exposed; it is not a high moment in the history of Protestant theology. And yet this is all the more reason for pondering it, as prelude to the future.

Briefly, here's what happened, as it seems to me. The last age of overbelief in Protestantism generally was the 18th century. And then the mind-set of that orthodoxy was slowly transformed by the temper of the Enlightenment—with its reverence for critical analysis, its passion for autonomy, its confidence in reason and the scientific method, its scorn of credulity and mystery, its pitiless anti-clericalism. 'Mankind will not be truly free,' intoned Voltaire, 'until the last king is throttled with a noose

made from the entrails of the last priest.'

From its side, Roman Catholicism reacted negatively to this whole venture of modern-man-in-revolt-against-his-Christian-past, and so began a century and a half of resolute anti-modernism. The Protestant progressives, however, undertook to come to terms with the Enlightenment and so began the evolution of 'Liberal Protestantism,' from Schleiermacher to Ritschl and Hermann, to Rauschenbusch and Fosdick. It was an audacious venture and a splendid achievement—paralleled, of course, by the persistent aggregates of 18th century orthodoxy which came to be called 'fundamentalism.'

Then, in 1914, there began that series of relentless disasters that have become the staple of 20th century existence, each with its progeny of technological and social revolution. The progress of technology has been well-nigh continuous, since science and technology feed on catastrophe as happily as on the boons of peace. But the net effect of the social and psychological revolution, that still proceed with no end in sight, has been the demoralization of Western man as he has not been since the chaos

that spawned the feudal system (9th and 10th centuries).

The response of Protestantism to the first three or four of these convulsions (1918-45) was the resurgence of a Reformation faith now mingled, however, with one or another of the great Enlightenment motifs. The emphasis of this synthesis of 16th and 19th century notions was theocentric and fideistic, its orientation chiefly Lutheran and Calvinist. It picked up a common label-neo-orthodoxy-not because it was homogeneous (far from it!) but because of one common tendency in all its variety: it withdrew the primordial issues of revelation and faith from the forum of natural reason and handed man's destiny back to God. The rationalists had asked for logical demonstration; the romantics had urged the 'empirical' evidence of 'religious experience.' The neo-orthodox insisted that salvation is a matter of God's initiative in revelation and man's response in faith. It is, as they taught us to say, 'existential'! They rejected moral exemplarism out of hand and with it all synergism. 'Kerygma' and 'eschatology' came to dominate their jargon. But they were children of the Enlightenment to this extent: their ecclesiologies were all shadowthin. Not one of their titans was a notable churchman. Like their prototype, Karl Barth, they were typically anti-bourgeois, anti-establishment, contemptuous of popular Christianity in all its forms. They were giants in the earth but their contributions to the survival power of the institutional church was negligible. It begins to look as if their principal achievement was to buy us time until the following tidal wave of the Enlightenment spirit came sweeping over the Christian island once again. And this is where we are now and this is why, when the titans passed, their aurae went with them. Their wisdom and piety remain to nourish us but their special brand of fideism is no longer persuasive to 'modern man.'

This transition has been unexpectedly abrupt (since 1945 or '50) and its effects uncommonly confusing. 'Contemporary' theology is still a lively business, but there are now few fixed positions and no broad consensus as to method and rhetoric. A favourite indoor sport among theologians today is the game, 'disclaimer'—and any number can play. You start by stating an extreme or novel notion in which the key terms are neologisms or old words in new usages. Then the rest pounce on you and your move is blandly to deny that they understood your real meaning. The one who enlists the largest number of friends and foes in the effort to explain what he really meant is the winner—until the next brouhaha begins! You can't quote a man against himself today if the quote is older than yesterday. There is the early Barth and the later Barth, the early Heidegger and the later Heidegger, the early Robinson and the later Robinson—and each prosopon has its partisans.

Given revolution as normal and disaster as ingredient in human existence, modern theology—and churchmanship!—has naturally developed a schizoid temper of overconfidence and despair, of frustration and overreactivity. We tend to talk and act in italics! The deepening crisis of morale in the ministry has put the ecclesiastical managers on the defensive and driven their critics to the brink of futile mutiny. There is an appalling tension in the air, fed by the false solemnities of the immobilists and the

phony self-righteousness of the rebels.

What strikes me most forcibly about it all is the coterie character of most current theologizing—the prevalence of a sectarian temper despite the fact that everybody who is anybody stoutly disavows sectarianism. And this suggests at least one way to recognize a pattern in the scene: the pattern I now propose to sketch out hastily and, perforce, impressionistically. We shall then pause to notice the countervailing tendencies in the ecumenical dialogue about 'faith and order', and then round off our survey with two concluding comments: one on the place of Methodism in the theological forum, the other on the import for us all of the theological ferment lately set off by the Second Vatican Council.

There are seven coteries that I think I can distinguish, each with subspecies and eccentrics. None is a pure type, of course—and there are theologians who seem to hold plural membership in more than one group. The seven: (1) the old orthodoxy; (2) the old neo-orthodoxy; (3) the new neo-orthodoxy; (4) the old liberalism; (5) the new liberalism; (6) the language worshippers (a triplex cult) and finally (7) the new humanism (also triplex: Christian, half-Christian and Epicurean!). Now, having ticked off such a catalogue, I offer you a few interpretative comments on each coterie, thus risking what slight reputation I may have had that 'I know a hawk from a handsaw.'

The funny thing about the old orthodoxy ('fundamentalism') is that it should have vanished long since or turned fossil—and yet it's still about, unaccountably lively. This is 'a world come of age,' as all sophisticates know. Supernaturalism has had it; modern man is radically secular, having jettisoned his cargo of overbelief. And yet these anachronistic children of the 18th century refuse to roll over and play dead. Indeed, they are flourishing, and this seems to some of us insufferable! Billy Graham has made at least as much of a dent on modern London ('the swinging city') as the Bishop of Woolwich. Christianity Today lags behind The

Christian Century in sophistication and tops it in circulation. What's worse, these people are raising their academic standards (Fuller Seminary is a match for many more prestigious places; there are Gerritt Berkhouwer and Herman Dooyewerd at the Free University of Amsterdam). And so it goes.

God forbid that I should be mistaken for an advocate of even the best of this old orthodoxy. I was born into it, educated out of it and want no part of it back again. Still, there is a dangerous self-deception in the myth that Christian supernaturalism is intrinsically incredible to modern men in the secular city. The plain fact is that there are enough 'orthodox' Christians and churches in any technopolis to falsify most of Harvey Cox's theses about it. Their world views are hopelessly archaic and yet they seem to manage the servo-mechanisms of an industrial civilization at least well enough to survive. There is, for example, a strange thing in Tulsa (Oklahoma) called The Oral Roberts University (militantly fundamentalist!) with 'a retrieval centre' (called a 'library' where Cox teaches) that is technologically more advanced than anything we've even thought about at S.M.U. I know all the reasons why such people need not be taken seriously—save only that they simply don't exemplify our theories about them

The *old* neo-orthodoxy still survives also, though no longer flourishing. There are, for example, Thomas Torrance and Wilhelm Niesel, A. C. Cochrane and Alexander McKelway—and they are respectable spokesmen for a third-generation Barthianism. There are some unimaginative Niebuhrians, who should go unnamed, and a few epigones of Tillich who tend merely to repeat the master.

Much more interesting are the newer neo-orthodox theologians, experimenting with new permutations in the combination of Reformation and modern motifs. Roger Shinn and Paul Lehmann carry on for Reinhold Niebuhr at Union, James Gustafson for Richard Niebuhr at Yale. But who is Tillich's trustee? He put his mark on us all, but raised up no successor. Bultman is still a living force but his notions of causality—and consequently of what 'modern' man does and does not find credible—are increasingly quaint. The curious thing in this whole movement is that its motifs that are now outmoded are not the 16th century residues but the 19th century ones (Barth's neo-Kantian scepticism, Niebuhr's Marxism, Bultmann's historiography, Tillich's Schelling-esque idealism)! What this suggests, of course, is that the method of combinations needs continual updating, season by season. There is, for example, the mixture of Luther, Wesley and C. H. Dodd that one sees in men like Rupp, Watson and Davies. Or one might imagine an Anglican who could synthesize Hooker, Beauduin and Soundings! My own programme—Chalcedon, Aquinas, Wesley, Freud and Lonergan—is not as weird as it sounds and I've sometimes regretted the distractions that have deferred the test as to whether or not it could be brought off.

Next we may notice the persistent patterns of old-fashioned evangelical liberalism. This, too, was once thought doomed by the whelming flood of neo-orthodoxy but it still hangs on and is doing rather well. It is easily identified by its exponents—such men as DeWolf and Muelder among the Methodists, John Bennett and Truman Douglas in the so-called United Church of Christ, van Holk and Adams for the World Association of Liberal Christianity. As far as a seminary professor has a right to judge such things, this would seem the dominant position in our Council of Bishops and the church-school literature of The Methodist Church (American and . . .).

More exciting for the future, I should think, are the newer liberal ventures which are currently in a vigorous upsurge. Here the 'liberal spirit' of the 19th century (minus its Pelagian substance) is experimenting with various mixtures of the old Enlightenment and the new. The old was an enchanted anthropocentrism, the new a disenchanted anthropocentrism! There is, for example, a lively and spreading interest in new versions of natural theology and natural law as in Soundings, in the 'neo-classical theism' of Schubert Ogden and John Cobb, in the post-Diltheyan historiography of Van Harvey, in 'the new quest of the historical Jesus' (Bornkamm), in neo-classical ethics (Paul Ramsey) and the new versions of 'the social Gospel' (Albrecht, Thomas, Winter, Carney). This syndrome is variegated but it has a common chord: synergism between God and man, the paradigm for which is Jesus Christ. In all its diversity, it is explicitly theistic, Christ-oriented (if not Christocentric) and focused on human salvation as the interaction of man's need and God's grace.

There is yet another flourishing coterie which is still exotic to many of us but of prime importance. Its exponents have a cultic concern with religious language ('God-talk,' they call it). Like Gaul, their territory is divided into three parts, differentiated by the temper of the natives in each part. On the left are the logical positivists—hard-nosed and blunt—who see words as indicators and operators and who wave the magic wand of 'verifiability' at every turn. By their lights, the operative terms in religious statements are non-referential and therefore 'non-sens' and the statements themselves unverifiable and therefore neither true nor false. I was a callow graduate student when A. J. Ayer's Language, Truth and Logic first outraged the traditionalists (like my beloved teacher, Percy Urban). The early Ayer invoked the mystical authority of the early Wittgenstein, whose Tractatus I had to read in order to keep up with my philosopher friends who only suspected that I didn't really understand it and never betraved the fact that they were bluffing too. In the generation since then, even the logical positivists have come to wonder if language (any language) is as univocal as they once thought. The later Wittgenstein made some strange concessions both to common sense and faith and the later Ayer is now talking earnestly with the Oxford theologians. Then there is the young Van Buren who belongs in this camp rather than with the 'God-is-dead' boys. His point, in The Secular Message of the Gospel, is that historic Christian rhetoric is hopelessly unverifiable, hence meaningless. His project is to salvage its truth in a secularized (i.e., 'verifiable!') rhetoric. His effort amounts to an instructive failure, I think—an erstwhile Barthian turned positivist, trying to eat his linguistic cake and have it, too.

The centre group of our language-coterie have taken their cue from the later Wittgenstein (he of the *Philosophical Investigations*) and are less concerned with the demonstrable truth of propositions (religious and otherwise) than with their human interest—their 'cash-value,' as they say. They allow for plural roles for language in human communication and in the expression of basic insight (what Ian Ramsey calls 'cosmic disclosures'). The people in this group who have impressed me most (besides Bishop Ramsey) are Fred Ferré in America, Alastair Mackinnon in Canada, G. F. Woods in England. They have come up with the oldest convention of all in biblical hermeneutics—viz., that the language of faith is not to be taken literally (not any of it!) but that it is to be taken seriously (all of it!). Now they are about the endless business of reducing the appalling logical confusion that has resulted from theologizing that has taken faith-affirmations (e.g., . . . 'underneath are the everlasting arms') literally—which is to say, not seriously enough!

The third sub-specie in this genre are the new hermeneuts— Ernst Fuchs, Gerhard Ebeling, James Robinson and the late (and sorely missed) Carl Michalson. They are all vivid individualists and romantics and they all agree in regarding religious language as incantation, with the power to cast spells and loosen them. This, I take it, is the gist of their distinctive notion of Sprachereignis. As they use it, its meaning skids a lot, but it always has something to do with the  $\partial \kappa \partial \hat{\eta}_S \pi \iota \sigma \tau \epsilon \omega_S$  of Galatians  $3^2$ , 5— 'the hearing of faith.' Revelation is a happening (ein Geschehen, as they love to say) and faith is man's appropriate response to such an occurrence. Moreover, there is a discontinuous history of such occurrences and reoccurrences, and the analysis of this history is the domain of 'the new hermeneutic' (never plural, please!).

That the new hermeneutic is important is obvious. Insight is the primal mode of all religious knowledge; its stimulus is the proper goal of all valid exegesis. What troubles me about this particular venture is that it is neither as new as its partisans claim nor does it require the sort of arcane priesthood they pretend. It is coterie theology with a vengeance, and with top-lofty condescension toward dissent; the sort of thing that lights a bright but brief candle. Actually it seems to me more baroque than modern; it puts me in mind of fugues and counterpoint.

Who is now the object of demythologizing? Neither God, nor Jesus, nor the world, nor even language oriented toward walking, but rather man caught in a distorted relation to himself, at a standstill, indeed in collapse, who thinks either too highly or too lowly of himself, indeed who does not even know that he lives from a movement that is terribly obscured by his common understanding of space as stationary and of time as only seeming to move. It is not valid to subject the revelation to a stationary space and to a time that only seems to move. Rather one must let oneself be drawn by the gospel back to where space and time make sense in terms of a movement, in terms of a path and walking, as space for others and time for us. For this reason I have in this course replaced Bultmann's programme and method of demythologizing with what seems to me a more radical existentialist interpretation, so as to bring the text anew on the road and put it in motion. What resulted was at least an analysis of Jesus' love. It should confirm itself as a movement of our own existence. What in all of this is theory should be brought to an end for now, in order that love itself can begin to speak. What does love say? 'Arise, let us leave theory!'1

Yes, by all means—but is it merely philistine of me to wonder what the theory was that we leave so readily? There was the joke in Rome that in heaven, beyond the staging area, there are two doors: one marked visio Dei, the other Das Problem. Most people turn instinctively to visio Dei, but the Germans are bound to enter by Das Problem!

At last we come to the noisiest beach-party on the strand—the new humanists. There are not as many of them as you might think but they're having a ball. The journalists keep pounding out misleading stories about them—and the ecclesiastical beach-wardens are rushing up and down with life-jackets and sun-tan lotion! Here, again, we have three parties in one, all with a common hero: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the happy martyr who updated the disjunction the fundamentalists had always made between religion (no good!) and Christianity (O.K.!) and never had to face the consequences of the fact that disaffected church folk put more store by such a disjunction than real secularists (e.g., Sidney Hook, Julian Huxley)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>James M. Robinson and John B. Cobb, Jr. (eds.), New Frontiers in Theology (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), II, pp. 52-53.

ever will. At any rate, Bonhoeffer's scorn of institutional religion and its seneschals has inspired a whole generation of ecclesiastical malcontents.

The new humanists can be divided into three sub-species: reformers, revolutionaries, radicals. The reformers are churchmen of sorts—many of them converted animists who have discovered late in life (like, after their consecration as bishops!) that God is not a spook, that prayer is not magical, that Christian love is more versatile than the merciless rules of 'moralism.' They've been joyously freed from their childhood superstitions and wish the same joy for everyone. There is something touching about such emancipations but a mite depressing that they should come so late in life to men who grew up in church—and that their positive replacements for their cast-off overbeliefs are so patently defective. Their two defects that matter most are in the areas of epistemology and ethics. As to the first, one soon notices that their theological statements can be converted into psychological ones without remainder, including their crucial one, denying God's transcendence. For if the logic of this denial were applied to the human self, it would entail a denial of its existence, too which men like Robinson and Pike would be the last to do. As to their moral demands on the ecclesiastical status quo, one could applaud them the more heartily if they were willing to start with outright disestablishment and proceed thence to voluntary dispossession of funded church property (like the new 'Community of John XXIII' in Oklahoma City) and thereafter to a renewal of Christian discipline, personal and corporate. There's a lot of caterwauling about the bankruptcy of the institutional church by people who are still making a good thing of the fact that it's not literally bankrupt—yet!

My second sub-species (the revolutionaries) are at least willing to talk about shattering the status quo and remoulding it nearer to their hearts' desires. It's an exciting lot (Van Leeuwen, Van Peursen, Harvey Cox, Colin Williams, et al.) but they are rather more the theoreticians of a revolution that yet may come than leaders of one actually happening. They must have read Fustel de Coulanges' The Ancient City (and not Pareto's demolition of it!)—and they've been turned on by the fact that technology is remaking the face of our planet (and presently our solar system?). Naturally, they want Christianity to get with it—to regain its competitive vis-a-vis with the Beatles! So what are we to do? Go urban. that's what—as if the city had not been Christianity's natural habitat from the start (as the terms 'pagan' and 'heathen' remind us). To these men, urbanization amounts to secularization (even though it does not to the fundamentalists); secularization entails desacralization (even though it does not to the Roman Catholics); desacralization implies the dismantling of all religious institutions (even though it does not to the old-line Quaker). There are profound and useful insights in this new sociologism but its doctrinaire prejudices (anti-clerical, anti-sacramentarian, anti-catholic) suggest their orientation: this is 'Anabaptism' updated!

Out on the fringe and raising the greatest fuss with the least resources are the 'death-of-God' morticians. Our interest in them is out of all proportion to their intrinsic importance because they have rudely wakened us from our dogmatic slumbers and have forced us to re-establish our primary warrants for belief in God, and they have made it all too plain that we've been running far too long on very thin margins of funded and resilient faith. They have done us the service—one of God's backhand volleys!—of raising the question as to what, if anything, we mean when we sing out: 'I believe in one God, Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things, visible and invisible!' To Professor Vahanian, this is an unbiblical and idolatrous way to speak of God—which is to say

that the God of the creeds, and their popular interpretation, is 'dead' because he never 'lived.' To Professor Hamilton, the God of the creeds is a ghost-in-the-machine, a psychological crutch men must abandon if they are to walk erect. To Professor Altizer, the God of the creeds is the enemy—the Christian church the original heresy (The Gospel of Christian Atheism, p. 132).

Christianity and Christianity alone has reduced human existence to sin and guilt, confronting a broken humanity with a wholly other God who demands total submission to his numinous and judgmental power. Religion assumes its most repressive form in the Christian religious tradition because only here—and in its historical antecedent, the Book of Job—may one find a God of naked and absolutely sovereign power, a God who was evolved out of a reversal of the movement of the Spirit into flesh and who now for the first time becomes abstract, alien, lifeless and alone.<sup>1</sup>

That is a fairly long quotation but I've put it down intact because, for Altizer, it is fairly clear and not at all untypical. Altizer's self-designated key is William Blake and the key to Blake is his hatred of the Christianity he knew as the spoliator of the humanity he loved. The Christian God was Blake's Satan:

The purest religion is the most refined Epicurism. He, who in the smallest given time enjoys the most of what he never shall repent, and what furnishes enjoyments, still more unexhausted, still less changeable—is the most religious and the most voluptuous of men.

True Christian philosophy.<sup>2</sup>

What makes all this important is not its meagre coterie. It is, rather, the hue-and-cry it has raised among people who are alarmed by what harm it may do to other people's faith! Faith that is undone by such idle tales of God's demise was never that 'living faith' of which Wesley made so much. And when such a heresy prompts an outburst of generalized anti-intellectualism among church leaders—who've small affinity for intellectuals anyway!—it gives one cause for wonder as to the depth and security of their own faith and theological competence.

So what is there to do? Here the answer is clear, though not easy to manage: untrammeled academic *freedom*, relentless *academic* criticism. Christian truth deserves a fair fight in a free field—nothing more, but nothing less, either. Christianity never wins by burning the misbelievers nor by cuffing them about.

Over against this coterie-character of contemporary theology is the countervailing force of the ecumenical dialogue in which everybody worth his salt is involved, one way or another. There is not, and there is no prospect of, any such thing as 'an ecumenical theology', to which all partisans could subscribe and so transcend their partisanship—no single, consented system of harmonized doctrine. Ecumenism works differently. It engages men and women of diverse traditions in serious, candid study, debate and drafting—ah, ecumenical drafting: there's where you learn to love your theological neighbour as yourself, or else! And, by contrast to most coterie theology, ecumenism has put ecclesiology back into the centre and crossfire of discussion, as a theological problem. Three major consequences have followed: (1) theological differences no longer correlate with denominational affiliations; (2) interest is burgeoning in a new kind of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Thomas J. J. Altizer, *The Gospel of Christian Atheism* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966) p. 45.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> William Blake, Marginalia. Quoted in Philip Rieff, The Triumph of the Therapeutic (London: Chatto and Windus, 1966), p. 189.

church history—what I have called 'ecumenical historiography': church history concerned with our common Christian history even in our divided churches; (3) the recognition that the source and bearer of the Christian tradition is not theology itself but the ongoing life of Christian worship, witness and service—to which theology contributes.

The final item I shall mention in the current scene is quite the most surprising to those acquainted with church history over the past two centuries: the transformation begun in the Roman Catholic Church by Vatican II. A whole course of lectures would scarcely plumb this remarkable phenomenon and a lot of us are going to have to spend more time than we had budgeted in trying to comprehend it. But we should notice even here the way the reforms and renewal of Vatican II were prepared for by a theological minority (Moehler, Scheeben, Adam, Bouillard, Rahner, Congar, Gustave Weigel, et al.) who had to work within the limits imposed on them by an immobilist, anti-modernist church (Syllabus Errorum (1864), Pascendi Gregis (1908), Humani Generis (1950)).

Errorum (1864), Pascendi Gregis (1908), Humani Generis (1950)).

Now, Vatican II has given the old 'new theology' a legitimate, even preferred, status and there is a rising crop of new 'new theologians'-Küng, Schmits, Ahearn, McSorley, Dewart, Moeller (now in what used to be the old Holy Office!)—who no longer conceal their revisionist aims. Lodestar to many of them—an authentic titan—is Bernard Lonergan. S.J., a man whose work is unfinished and whose health is so poor it may never get finished but whose seminal importance is coming to be widely recognized. It consists chiefly in the fact that his work represents the Thomist enterprise in 'the *modern* world.' For Lonergan, neither sense nor logic constitute the uniquely human mode of response to our environment, immediate or ultimate. Animals are as sensitive, computers are more 'logical.' What makes us truly human is *insight* (the title of his only book in English, London, 1957). Insight is not a mystical event but rather the product of the whole psyche in response to its perceptions of being, in all its modes and levels. Insights are our windows opening onto the real world—they have ontological surfaces. We know what there is to know because it is there to know; in knowing we acknowledge reality. This mode of analysis leads us, so Lonergan argues, to the eventual acknowledgement of an ultimate environing Mystery whose Christian name is God the Father and whose saving revelation has been vouchsafed us in Jesus Christ.

Our overview is overlong and we must conclude in haste with a veritable skein of loose ends. But I feel compelled to comment on Methodism in this passing parade and then append a moral or two, for a peroration. It is, of course, a commonplace to say that the Methodists never have rated the theological enterprise as a top priority. We have had a smallish cadre of good to great theologians along and our theological faculties are generally competent. But on the whole, we've readily agreed to rank most of the other items on the church's agenda ahead of professional theology. The result: we have never supplied our quota of ranking scholars in the theological community and we've done far less than our share in training the faculties who teach in our colleges and seminaries. Moreover, the theologians we do have scatter over the entire theological spectrum—with advocates of every known position, and some that aren't. You name it and we've got it somewhere—good, bad and indifferent. something old, something new, something borrowed, something piu! When we mislaid our Wesleyan heritage (which was itself eclectic enough) we began to be a sort of theological cafeteria. Knowing that a man is a Methodist will tell you very little about his beliefs-until you know his seminary, his vintage, his major; or, if he's a layman, the succession of ministers he's had.

This, certainly, is better than its opposite: lock step confessional consensus. But why do we go on ignoring the better way: of reclaiming the substance of our Wesleyan heritage as our common treasure and working together at the several ways in which that tradition can be updated and oriented toward the Christian future? Granted, of course, that the lifeblood of the church is Christian living; granted, of course, that church administration is our sovereign practical concern—but when will we learn how practical it would be if we had a full complement of well-furnished professional theologians or if we were disposed to profit from the ones we have?

It is bad form in a Methodist gathering to sound 'pessimistic' and I'm much aware that the scene I have described for you is not overly inspiring. But let's face it: modern theology has to go forward in an appalling and systematically baffling setting—the endtime of the long deconversion process that's been going on for two centuries, the dissolving of the social elements that held the 'old world' together, the vast demoralization of the bourgeoisie, the strange polarizations of the intellectuals and the bohemians, the shift from 'the age of anxiety' to 'the age of outrage.' We live in an old world in protracted death-throes and in a new one being born in agony. The Western 'world' is in tragic disarray; the communist 'world' is an even worse way; the tiers monde, for all its self-righteous outrage against the rest of us, is still a cauldron of irresponsibility.

It is *this* world, of swirl and see-saw, of nerve-stretching tensions and nerve-aching crises without end, that contemporary theology is called on to give an account of the church's faith. It is in *this* world that the church must minister to the human spirit in convulsions—not passively, nor scornfully, not pliantly (and above all, not hysterically!)—with the saving truth of God's love in Christ: man's hope and redemption in every conceivable outcome of his self-defeating unbelief.

Indeed, it is for (the human family) that all things are being ordered, so that, as the abounding grace of God is shared by more and more, the greater may be the chorus of thanksgiving that ascends to the glory of God.

No wonder, then, that we do not lose heart!

(II Corinthians 415, 16. NEB)

There are signs that the deconversion of the West is approaching a term. There are not many more surviving sacred cows for sacrifice, not many more conventions to overturn, not many more repudiations of historic Christianity to be made. The time may be 'at hand' when men with an honest word of lived and graced witness to Christ will be heard and heeded. The tides of faith are gathering in the deeps of man's disillusionments with the prophets of a brave new world—with their failure to deliver on their promises of recovered innocence and the return to Eden. What will come is not likely to be a replication of earlier ages of faith—and many of us may find 'renewal' not much to our expectations and liking. There is a preliminary question from heaven that confronts us in advance of any real revival:

When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith upon the earth (and in his *church*)?

(Luke 188)

These are difficult days, pregnant days—days of disaster and hope, days between the aeons. We used to talk about 'Christ or chaos?' Now our only live option is 'Christ in the chaos!' But Christians ought by now to be accustomed to something like this: the church was born in crisis and

has survived a hundred. And so also in our time, on the brink of doom or a new dawn, we must be found standing at the ready—doom or dawn—with courage and faith born of our memories, our hopes and of God's unfailing grace.

He who stands steadfast and continues to the end in my mission for him, to him I will give the power of salvation among the Gentiles . . . and I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear to hear, let him listen . . .

(Revelation 2<sup>26</sup>–<sup>29</sup>)

The point to this, of course, is that is the morning star!

# COUNCIL AND CONFERENCE SESSIONS IN CENTRAL HALL

Tuesday, 23rd August, 1966 Address by the Rev. C. F. Gribble

# THE METHODIST CHURCH AND THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

This is a large subject which I have been invited to open up before this Conference. To speak on either of the topics—World Methodism or the great Ecumenical Movement of our day—would be to me a sufficiently frightening prospect. To speak on them together fills me with terror.

As my ministry has been associated almost entirely with the missionary work of the church I will be speaking largely out of this experience and also out of an Australian background generally in these things.

While it is true, as John Wesley said in his last letter to the Society in America—'the Methodists are one people in all the world' there are differences of national approach, of organization and order and even of sacramental practice which should be noted if we are to speak of World Methodism.

Methodist Churches in the world can be divided into certain main groups, each of which has its own strong tradition and ethos. There is British Methodism, whose missionary endeavour from the beginning makes one of the most stirring stories of Church History over the past 150 years and has made her the mother church of us all. The Methodist Churches within the Commonwealth and South Africa have in the main followed this tradition. There is the great American church whose early history of evangelical penetration from east to west of the Continent is regarded by historians as one of the inspiring facts which must be taken into account in any reckoning of the forces that made the United States of America what she is today. We would all acknowledge our indebtedness to the generous help we have received in so many ways from this Methodist Church. The group with which I am most familiar is the one which brings together the Methodist Churches of the Pacific area-Australia, New Zealand and the Conferences of the Pacific communities, Fiji (where among the Fijians the proportion of Methodists is higher than anywhere else in the world), Tonga (the oldest Pacific Island Conference) and Samoa. These churches had their origin in British Methodism and those with any sense of history have always been profoundly grateful for it. The first Methodists in Australia belonged to a mission area of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. As President-General of the Methodist Church of Australasia and speaking here in London for the more than one million Methodists of my country, I would recall the fact that our first Methodist ministers in Australia, Samuel Leigh, Walter Lawry, Joseph Orton and the others, were sent by the Wesleyan Missionary Committee of London. The Pacific Methodists too acknowledge their indebtedness to the early English missionaries. Some of us remember the Rev. Dr. John Havea, Secretary of the Methodist Conference of Tonga, and Chairman of the newly formed Pacific Conference of Churches, telling us that when he arrived in Southampton a few years ago he went ashore, took off his sandals and put his feet on the soil of England with a prayer of gratitude for the country that sent John Thomas, Hutchinson, William Cross and the others to Tonga in the 1820's of the last century.

We in the Pacific recognize with gratitude our origins, but because of our distance from Europe and proximity to Asia, and our comparative isolation from the older centres of European thought, have developed our own tradition in the church and our own way of life in the community.

I say these things to emphasize the fact that we cannot speak of a World Methodist Church, although the Wesley Hymns and a common tradition in worship, service and evangelism does bring a unity of spirit which allows us to recognize each other as members of one family and be thankful together that God has used these branches of His Church to build up the Body of Christ over such wide geographical areas of His World.

When we speak of ecumenism today we must see it not as a movement within certain groups of churches with congenial theological and doctrinal affiliation, but as a movement of the Holy Spirit which is calling the whole church in the whole world to new and radical self examination and renewal. Dr. Harold Roberts will tell us what this movement has meant within the Roman Catholic Church. We in Australia, like you all, have found a new understanding with this church. We are speaking to each other and listening to each other as brethren. In the missionary areas of the Pacific swift changes in attitude and strategy followed Pope Paul's decree on Ecumenism. In New Guinea's first University at Port Moresby the churches were told by the University authorities that if they could speak with one voice provision would be made for religious studies in the curriculum. We discussed this with the Roman Catholic leaders and found friendly cooperation which led to a completely united approach which will probably bring a Department of Religious Studies in which the whole Church will share. A recent announcement of the formation of an ecumenical commission of the Roman Catholic Church in Papua-New Guinea is an indication of the desire for on-going development of joint discussion and action with the other churches.

The Ecumenical Movement too has influenced the Christian groups outside the main denominational divisions—those who have been described as standing 'theologically on the right and ecclesiologically on the left.' Lesslie Newbigin has said—'It is a truncated picture of the Ecumenical Movement which does not take seriously what is happening in the name of Pentecostal renewal. The Pentecostal churches are almost certainly the fastest growing Christian community in the world.' The non-denominational missions bear a large part of the world's missionary endeavour. Some of these groups are being linked together in world alliances and setting up forms of ecumenical organization of their own. Many of them are in dialogue with older established churches. In New Guinea the Methodist Church depends greatly on the Christian Radio Fellowship Mission, and the Missionary Aviation Fellowship is a lifeline to us. While theologically we differ at many points, we recognize the outstanding work of these groups in evangelism and service and must make

every effort to find fellowship and understanding with them in the interests of total unity. As Eugene Smith wrote in the Ecumenical Review 'the very existence of these groups is a sign of spiritual failure in the old established churches we represent—they have something to teach us about missionary zeal, about the invasive power of the Holy Spirit, about some areas of Christian stewardship, about the practice of expectant evangelism, about communal prayer, as well as other elements of Christian discipleship.'

We will be thinking now of the relationship of the Methodist churches with that part of the Ecumenical Movement which links us all to the wide fellowship of churches within the World Council of Churches. But it is well to remember the universal nature of this great movement today. Methodist churches, while standing within the World Council of Churches should be sensitive to any and all opportunities which will bring them into closer unity with every part of the whole Body of Christ.

#### Methodism and the Universal Church

The Methodist Church has always committed itself to the family of churches within the Ecumenical Movement. Some others have hesitated. Stephen Neill in his own inimitable and humorous, and perhaps exaggerated way speaks of his own communion as performing 'endless manoeuvres of advance and retreat with all the dextrous intricacy of a minuet.' Other branches of the church are partly in and partly out. We have always seen in the movement the clear manifestations of the Holy Spirit for the churches. John R. Mott, a great Methodist layman, of whom it was said that probably no single person since Paul has done so much towards the rapprochement of the Christian world, was a great architect under God in our day of Christian unity. Since Amsterdam there has always been one from our communion in the Presidential panel of the World Council of Churches. In the recent issue of the International Review of Missions Tracey Jones reminds readers that the three great regional ecumenical movements in Asia, Africa, Latin America (and now the Pacific can be included) have Methodist executive leaders. We make these statements not boastfully but objectively and indicating our involvement in the ecumenical movement as a church. We know of no branch of our confession that is not in sympathy with the aims and purposes of the World Council of Churches.

We have as a church always stood in the catholic tradition. While we have had our Methodist traditions we have always enjoyed a certain freedom within them. They have not chained us to entrenched theological positions. Wesley always thought of his followers as of the church universal. In the year of his death the question was asked in the minutes— 'What may be reasonably believed to be God's design in raising up the preachers called Methodists'. The answer was 'Not to form any new sect, but to reform the nation, particularly the church and to spread scriptural holiness over the land'. Again he said 'My doctrines are simply the fundamental principles of Christianity'. He recovered certain theological emphases which had been largely forgotten, but as Fitchett said 'he slew no heresy, he invented no new and startling doctrine'. Today these emphases -justification by faith, perfection, assurance, holiness are part of the doctrinal possession of the whole church. We cannot neglect them, but we must re-interpret them for our day and time and not always be expounding them in the concepts, language of even the experience of the 19th century. Evangelism, the proclaiming of the good news of the Lord and Saviour of the church and the world, is still the reason for our existence, but let us never forget that the total activity of the church—its preaching, worship. service and fellowship—is evangelical. Through these we are participating in Christ's mission to the world. Our Book of Offices makes our position plain within the tradition of the Church Universal. So we are committed to the wider fellowship within the Ecumenical Movement. We must always be the friends of all and the enemies of none.

Gathered here representing a global Methodism we give thanks for the ecumenical experience that has come to us as a family. It has disturbed us and put upon us the concern for unity. It has enlarged our missionary vision through the Division of World Mission and Evangelism. It has opened channels for wider service in the world's need through Division of Inter-Church Aid and Refugee World Service. From it we have gained a great deal and lost nothing. To its thought and work we should be totally committed.

#### The Ecumenical Movement

The Ecumenical Movement as we have seen and known it through the World Council of Churches has been a renewing influence to churches within its membership and indeed has stirred in varying ways those outside its membership. It has brought together, as we saw at New Delhi, 'members of the Christian family of eastern and western tradition, ancient churches and younger churches, men and women, old and young of every race and every nation. As we come into this wide fellowship of Christians we have been given larger views of the task Christ has for His Church in this revolutionary age and have discovered that unity has deepened the call to mission and mission has led us on to greater unity in Christ'.

In our part of the world the churches have made rich discoveries together, as I am sure they have in yours also. The island communities of the Pacific, for example, have for over a century been related to denominational Mission Boards and have developed a pattern of life in separation from and sometimes even suspicion of each other. Under the aegis of the World Council of Churches a Conference in Samoa in 1961 brought together Christians of all churches and Missions of the Pacific. For the first time the Pacific Islanders came out of their confessional segregation and eighty representatives of different races and traditions worshipped, prayed and thought and lived together finding a new, and to them thrilling experience of the unity that is in Christ. There has been no looking back. The Pacific United Theological College was opened this year in Suva, Fiji. The Pacific Conference of Churches was established in May at an Assembly held in Lifou, New Caledonia.

The Executive Secretaries of six denominational Mission Boards in Australia visited New Guinea together last year as an experiment in Joint Action for Mission and as an adventure in ecumenical understanding. We had all been many times before, but always visiting our own areas. Now we visited each other's mission, Anglican, Methodists, London Missionary Society, Lutheran, Baptist, Church of Christ. We shared the strength and the weaknesses of each other's work, in a land where there are some 35 Christian orders, denominations and sects, with confusion in the people's minds about the Christian presence in their country and where there has developed a kind of religious tribalism with feuding and active competition in Christian work generally. Here too the ecumenical way has been opened and for the first time the church is speaking with one voice in important matters of social and political significance and striving to see what God is requiring of them through the newly founded Melanesian Council of Churches.

We are familiar with the arguments of those who are lukewarm about ecumenical involvement. Some points to those who 'go it alone' who are

against co-operation and who say 'let's get on with the job', as the most rapidly growing of the Christian groups. There are those too, who believe that loyalty to a family group can mean a great deal more than to wide global associations. The answer to this is that the two are not mutually exclusive. Then there is the super-church argument, the fear of the W.C.C. becoming a great centralized bureaucratic institution, a position which could only arise if the parts of the body allowed it to become so; and we Methodists are a part of the body. All such points of view must be tested under the white light of the New Testament. In it the separateness we sometimes prefer shames us and our disunity is made intolerable; for the word of the Lord in Gospel and Epistle is clear. Lukas Vischer wrote recently this to me impressive word in the Ecumenical Review-'The Ecumenical Movement has repeatedly shamed us, shamed us because our hopes and expectations were too small and were transcended by God's action. The event of the Vatican Council has also brought to shame some hopes which were too small. This experience must strengthen us in hope that we shall yet be led beyond the present state of affairs perhaps or paths which none of us is at this point able to make out. The only requirement is that we shall travel the path marked for us with no concern for the renown of our own person, Church or organization, but glorify that name in which all things are already united.'

#### The Ecumenical Movement and World Confessional Bodies

We cannot avoid looking in this paper at the place of the World Confessions within the Ecumenical Movement. The World Confessional families are part of the facts of life in our day and will be for some time to come. Their significance and role in the Ecumenical Movement is continually under discussion both within the families themselves and within the World Council of Churches. The Geneva statement of the Joint Consultation concerning them of October last is important for us all. The statement says 'We believe that to think and act as if the historic confessional church families represent the only spiritual reality to be taken seriously is to live in the pre-ecumenical age. In that sense the statement of a Lutheran theologian that the confessional era is at an end is true. On the other hand, we believe that to think and act as though the fully ecumenical age has been reached in which confessional disagreements have been overcome and in which it is possible to think only in terms of an integrated worldwide Christian community is premature and therefore unrealistic. It is characteristic of the present period of history that the church lives 'between the times', when the confessions remain the main expressions of its life, but in which these confessions have all to answer the ecumenical questions—what is the relevance of the faith that all confessions hold in common for their relationship to each other and for the unity and mission of the church of Christ today? And how can they express in common witness and new ecclesiastical structures the unity in Christ which exists already and for which they are responsible to our Lord for the state of the world?

These are crucial questions for us all. We know the advantages of these world gatherings. For ourselves the Council provides a loosely knit fellowship where across national, racial and geographical boundaries we can get to know each other, help each other and discuss common aspects of our life and work, giving to and receiving much from each other. But as today in the realm of international affairs we can't play the nationalist game in a world concerned with global problems, so in the life of the churches we must look beyond the limits of our denominational life and witness if we are to discover what God requires of His Church in this needy world of our day. If this meeting is an opportunity on a world scale for

mere Methodist drum-beating, for looking inwards, for glorying in our history and traditions with attempts at renewing our own denominational life for its own sake, then its justification is doubtful. If this gathering will make for the renewal of the part for what it can bring to the whole then it is very important. We should together be able to scotch the theory that somewhere, somehow, consciously or unconsciously we make for fragmentation of ecumenicity, we stand in the way of fuller unity and hinder the work of the Ecumenical Movement. If, on the other hand, we see ourselves as a forum where the great issues of the church can be frankly discussed so that Methodist churches throughout the world can see these issues more clearly and discuss them in an informal way these Conferences could be powerful tributaries to the stream of ecumenical advance. If we can help to clarify for ourselves and the Ecumenical Movement the particular insights which God is bringing to His Church in our time we will be used of Him. It is sometimes said that the World Council speaks with power and authority through its Executive and Central Committees, but that the constituent churches are not able to discuss its pronouncements and decisions in a constructive and critical way. If this is so, the fault is not with the World Council, but with the churches, and we would think that one opportunity for looking at these things is when we are around the family table. Our aim and purpose here should be mostly to help our Methodist churches throughout the world to take a more informed and more responsible role in the Ecumenical Movement. If there is anywhere in our thinking the idea of denominational competition with the Ecumenical Movement we will be sharers in a sad theological aberration.

#### The Asian Churches

In Australia we live and work in the environment of Asia. As a Methodist Church we feel privileged in membership of the East Asia Christian Conference and in its committees and consultations. We are close to the Asian churches and share their thoughts and hopes and fears. These churches whose missionary origins tie them closely to parent churches of the West never cease to express gratitude for what God has done for them in their early years of growth and for the continued fellowship which they enjoy with the churches of the West. They have, however, found through the Ecumenical Movement, the World Council of Churches and the East Asia Christian Conference new maturity and selfhood. To read the minutes of the Bangalore, Bangkok and Kandy Conferences is to appreciate their fear that the World Confessional groups may hinder their longing for unity and their yearning to break through the divisions which we have imposed upon them from their early history. They plead with us to help them to proclaim a Gospel that will not divide men in Christ, but one which will in its oneness and universality lead the non-Christian world all about them to take this Gospel seriously. They recognize the world confessional organizations, their importance and their value for the western churches. But they point out to us the particular difficulties that face them in the Asian situation, and we as a Methodist family must respect their judgement, surround them with continuing fellowship and help, giving to them the assurance of complete freedom as adult and equal members of the family to follow whatever course God opens to them in the witness of the church through co-operation, unity and joint action for mission. Today history is taking us as Methodist churches within the Universal church into a situation of ferment and complexity which is both exciting and disturbing. We cannot find the way alone. We will only discover the way of the Spirit as we act together. We believe that the life and death question for the Church today is the question of Christian unity. Basic Christian positions are being widely questioned. Men claim to find life satisfying without God. The great historic non-Christian faiths are in a process of renewal and reformation. Large areas in our own countries and in the pagan world are without the witness of the church while in so many places we often compete with each other and, whether knowing it or not, undercut each other's work. Men cannot see God because we hide Him in so much that we do.

We thank God together for what has come to us in Jesus Christ through the Methodist Church. Today we are seeing more clearly the nature of the church and the centrality of its mission, because as communions and confessions we are learning from each other and sharing more and more in the things God has given to each of the members of His great family. There can now be no looking back. The Church's Mission must be fulfilled in unity, the witnessing to the oneness of the Church's Lord to the world. We are all under judgement and must constantly examine ourselves, the denominations and the ecumenical bodies and seek the cleansing of our common Lord. There is no blueprint for the future. The wind of the Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and if we are ready with flexible minds and open and expectant spirits we will be sure that under the leadership of God and obedient to His direction we will discover His way towards the great Church which we believe is His Will for all His people.

# Address by Dr. Harold Roberts

#### METHODISM IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

Mr. Chairman, I should like to begin by continuing the emphasis of the last speaker on the importance of ecumenicity.

Ecumenicity is not a recent addition to the Christian faith: it is of its essence. It is well for us to remember that gathering as we are here, as Methodists, that Methodism itself, historic Methodism, is the result of the ecumenical movement which had not begun officially in Wesley's time. As soon as we study the theology of Methodism we begin to recognise and to identify the varying strands that are in it, Catholic and Protestant. It is sometimes said that John Wesley was not an original thinker. When I read the books of some original thinkers I thank the Lord that John Wesley wasn't an original thinker, but what he did was to hold together positions that are so often regarded as incompatible. That is, while he had a deep understanding of the Protestant reformation, he also had as deep an understanding of the great witness of the Catholic Church. For him religion was subjective and objective, never a matter of feeling alone. There were the objective facts of our redemption which themselves evoked a specific emotional response. He stressed the importance of individual salvation as many of the pietists did, but he also stressed the importance of the Church for he recognised that to respond to the call of God in Christ was to be in Christ and to be in Christ is not just an individual experience: it is a corporate fact. There are those who were in Christ before you came and others will follow you. And if you read the sermons of John Wesley and ponder his words you will find that his theology is remarkably balanced, and you might write as a sub-title of the sermons: What God has joined let not man put asunder.

How necessary it is that we, as Methodists, should be loyal to our great tradition and be ecumenically minded. And yet it is true as Dr. Gribble has said that there are very many who are not specially concerned about the

ecumenical movement and hardly regard it as of the essence of the faith. We are, of course, not born 'ecumenical'. To become 'ecumenical' is the result of the activity of the manifold grace of God which is singularly absent in some parts of the Church one would imagine. Some time ago two members of the World Council of Churches' staff in Geneva, husband and wife, had a child and it was announced in the papers as an ecumenical baby. Believe me, there is no such thing as an ecumenical baby. It's an understandable overstatement, but it is an overstatement. We are born sectarians and there's nothing quite so sectarian as a baby. A baby holds on to his parents, holds on to his home, holds on to things that pertain to himself. Now the theologians give that tendency a particular name. I'm not concerned about that issue this morning, but it is true that we are born with a sectarian emphasis, and it's very difficult to become ecumenical—a fact we should remember when we criticise those who have not the same concern about ecumenicity as we ourselves have. And yet it is imperative that the manifold grace of God should be free to operate in your hearts and mine. You find that there is a certain suspicion of ecumenicity in churches that are flourishing and that can boast of large numbers as well as in minority churches. The minority churches feel that they have to hold on to what they have and they are afraid of the larger church lest by union they should lose their identity. And many of the more flourishing churches are quite happy as they are. They don't want to be disturbed and they wonder what the ecumenical movement has to offer which they do not already possess.

In the old Wesleyan Church in this country there were those who often spoke of it as a 'bridge' church. One was never quite sure what they meant by the phrase because it was not at all clear who used the bridge. But it was claimed that it was a bridge church between the Free Churches and the Church of England. Nobody from the Free Churches or from the Church of England seemed to avail themselves of its services. In fact we all like to think of our churches as 'bridge' churches. We have all the virtues apparently of most churches from which we are divided with none of their defects and their weaknesses. So we are all right and we don't need the ecumenical movement. I think in this matter what we need is a spiritual revolution, a vision of ourselves as God sees us and a deeper understanding of His purpose for the world. If a church becomes unecumenical or if it ignores the pressure of the ecumenical movement, it is simply digging its own grave and it will fall a victim to pride and self-complacency.

Let us remember that we are talking this morning about something that is of the essence of the Christian faith and not just a hobby of the few. You have often heard quoted words of the late Archbishop of Canterbury that the coming together of churches into the ecumenical movement is the most significant fact of our time. And when he said that, people thought he was being carried away by ecumenical emotion—whatever that may be. But, as a matter of fact, the years that have passed have borne out that courageous statement. At the present time there are between 30 and 40 schemes of reunion under consideration in Christendom and Dr. Gribble this morning could have told us of what has been happening in recent years in Australia. Others here could speak as Mr. Parlin was doing when I came into the Hall on what is happening in other parts of the world. We think of the Anglican/ Methodist conversations in this country and the Vatican Council which is itself partly the result of the ecumenical movement. Those decrees and constitutions which are among the most precious of all ecclesiastical documents could not have appeared at this time but for the ecumenical spirit, of which Pope John was a living embodiment.

Now I was asked originally to speak about the Vatican Council, but yesterday I was given also another text and I was requested to speak about

the Anglican/Methodist conversations in addition to the Vatican Council.

Both these subjects represent in different ways the ecumenical movement which is a movement of the Holy Spirit. First, may I say a word about the Anglican/Methodist conversations for the benefit of those who know nothing, or hardly anything, about them.

We in British Methodism have endeavoured in different ways to keep World Methodism in touch with what we are doing, and members of the Executive Committee and others know a good deal about these conversations. The information, however, that some of us have received is somewhat confused, and they will be glad to hear perhaps in the briefest outline what the main proposals are.

The suggestions that there should be conversations between the Church of England and the Methodist Church in Great Britain came as a result of a sermon preached by Archbishop Fisher in Cambridge in which in effect he asked the churches in England whether they meant business in the matter of Christian unity or whether Christian unity was just a delightful topic of conversation. As a result, representatives of the Free Churches met with representatives of the Anglican Church to work out the implications of the sermon that he preached, and it was agreed that if any further progress was to be made, the conversations should take place between the Church of England and the individual Free churches. It so happens that the Methodist Church said that it was willing, given certain conditions, to have conversations with the Church of England and so the dialogue began. The main proposals of the report that was eventually published were given general approval subject to clarification of important points by the Methodist Conference in 1965, and by the Convocations of Canterbury and York to which the report was submitted by the Archbishops. It was believed by both authorities that there was sufficient agreement for the report to provide a basis for further negotiation.

Now what were the proposals? First of all it was proposed that we should come together as churches in two stages, not in one. The first stage is called by the term 'full communion', which means first inter-communion or the freedom of the members in good standing of the one church to communicate at the church of the other. Secondly inter-celebration or the freedom of the priests and ministers of each church to celebrate in the church of the other if invited to do so. That's the first stage. Then it was proposed that stage one should be followed by stage two. No specified time for the intervening period was or could be given. Stage two is described as organic union. It is very difficult indeed to define organic union, but it does mean a common constitution that is nevertheless sufficiently flexible to allow for the many-sided character of the Gospel and also the variety of human nature and of the Church's traditions. We did not attempt in submitting these proposals to offer a blue print of organic union. Who could? Who could say in fact, what is a perfect order of society? We go a step at a time and one step at this time is enough. The first proposal is that there should be a mutual recognition of ministries and sacraments and then that we should learn to grow together and to live together and to witness together until such time as we could enter the closer fellowship of organic union. The second proposal was that Methodism should take episcopacy into its system in order that there might be a unified ministry at the beginning. We considered the possibility of the South India scheme, but came to the conclusion that for this country it was not possible for us to pursue it. And so we urged that there should be a unified ministry at the start and by common consent in the conversations that are taking place in different parts of the world it is not possible to secure such a ministry without a common acceptance of what is sometimes called the historic episcopate, and there our difficulties begin as you can well understand. For some they are almost insuperable, but we should emphasize that it is laid down quite plainly that there is to be liberty of interpretation about the meaning of the historic episcopate, of the kind that at present prevails in the Church of England. We may well be asked whether liberty of interpretation means that we are just accepting the historic episcopate for the sake of unity? Far from it. There are obviously limits to liberty of interpretation and we should be very unwilling, in fact, to accept the historic episcopate simply on grounds of expediency or as an agent of government. It seems to me that the theology of episcopacy should be a matter of major concern. It was made abundantly clear in the conversations that we could not accept any doctrine of the episcopacy which involved a reflection on our past ministries or sacraments. If the Holy Spirit has blessed our sacraments and our ministries, who would dare to impugn their reality? For many of us the acceptance of the episcopacy meant the confirmation of convictions we already held. That is, the episcopacy for us stood for one element in the life of the Church as a whole, one expression of the unity and continuity of the Church, and of the authority of the apostolic tradition. It is in the light of that understanding that many of us accept the historic episcopate. It is not a denial of what we already believe, but rather a confirmation, a strengthening of a belief we already have in the unity and continuity of the Church, the Church as a fellowship across the world and down the centuries.

Thirdly, it was agreed that we should come together in a service of reconciliation in which each church offered to the other what it believed it had under God to give, and it was for God to determine what particular gift or blessing either church required for the service of his Holy Church. And in that service of reconciliation, the laity and the ministry are received into a fellowship created by two Churches that desire to enter into full communion with each other. In the service there is a time for silence before the ministry is received by the laying on of hands. The primary element in the reception is not the laying on of hands, but rather the prayer that precedes it, followed by the moment of silence in which we ask God to give to each what God wills that he should receive. We don't prescribe, we pray that God will act in accordance with His wisdom. Following that service there will be a consecration of bishops from the Methodist Church and nominated by the Conference who will constitute a parallel episcopate which will be of a temporary nature. This part of the scheme is not without its difficulties although parallel episcopates are not unknown, certainly not in the Roman Church. Further it was agreed that existing fellowships should not be disturbed. That our fellowship, for instance, with non-episcopal churches should not be disturbed either at stage one or at stage two. There are very many of course who wonder whether if the fellowship based on intercommunion and on mutual recognition of ministries is unimpaired at Stage 1, it will survive in Stage 2. I hope very much that the authorities in Methodism at Stage 2 will firmly decline to accept any scheme which involves the dissociation of the Methodist Church from those churches with which it is at present in full communion. Such a lamentable severance would not serve the cause of Christian unity. It would nullify it. But let us remember that by Stage 2 there will be few churches in any part of the world that will not be treading the path of Christian Unity.

Now these proposals, they were submitted as I say and accepted by the authorities of both churches on condition that a new joint committee was appointed to examine points that required clarification. Let us realise that there was a good deal of criticism of the reports. Some of the criticism you will find in the published report and what is said there is being taken very

seriously by the new joint committee that is meeting at the present time. We hope that when a report is published in 1968 the clarifications required will be presented and that they will go a long way to remove the apprehensions and fears of those who have not felt too happy about certain aspects of the 1965 report, even though they are concerned like ourselves for Christian unity.

Now may I pass to say a word about the Vatican Council which I was privileged to attend. The Council will go down into history as one of the most significant events of our time. In the few minutes that remain I will say a word about the constitutions on the Church and ecumenism.

It was inevitable that a good deal of attention should be given in that council to the nature of the Church. So very many non-Romans, when they think of the Church as Rome sees it, think of an imposing institution and a hierarchy that imposes rules and regulations that must be obeyed. But the Vatican Council began at the other end. It began with the Church as a mystery, as a sacrament focussed in the worship of the Mass. The institution, magnificent and overwhelming as it is, is intended to set forth the nature of the Church as the sacrament of the real presence of God in Christ. This body, the Church, is we are told the setting in which the communication of Christ's life to believers takes place; the sacraments are the means of their union with Christ in His suffering and in His glory. When we come to conversations with the Church of Rome about different issues no doubt the sacraments will loom large—it is right and proper that they should. But what a fine thing it is to be able to begin with the conception of the Church as the sacrament of the presence of Christ focussed in the Eucharist; Christ in you and you in Christ offering yourself to God and being renewed day by day.

It was rather significant that the Church was also interpreted in the light of many Biblical images and not only as the body of Christ. There are some who are a little afraid of the preoccupation with one image of the Church—the body of Christ—because they feel it perhaps tends to lay undue emphasis upon structure. Of course, the body of Christ was central to the thinking of the Vatican Council, but so was the Church as 'the people of God'. That phrase is not a metaphor but a simple description of the Church and it belongs to the Old Testament and the New. It was made plain that the ministry is separate from the laity and that the difference between them is a difference in kind. Nevertheless we were often reminded that members of the hierarchy, priests and laity were servants of Christ. They were His ministers, sharing in His priesthood.

Those of you who followed an account of the Council will remember the discussions about the liturgy, about the use of the vernacular and the importance of sharing in eucharistic worship so that the Mass is seen to be not only the action of the priest offering a sacrifice, but of the whole congregation with the priest offering itself to God in the light of and by the power of the sacrifice of Christ. And that sacrifice is not a repetition of the sacrifice of Christ but a renewal of it as Rome teaches. And so the sacrifice of the congregation is renewed as it becomes a part of the offering of Christ to the Father in obedience and in love. The question of the vernacular had a far deeper theological significance than we sometimes imagine. It wasn't simply that the Mass should be made intelligible but that the whole congregation should recognise that it belonged to God and could speak to Him in its own language. Then again much of great significance was said about the role of the bishops and their relation to the Pope, the conception of collegiality and the extension of that principle to the local church so that the priest and the people may have a more effective part in the life and witness of the Church. All these things indicate not a change of doctrine. but a change of emphasis which makes it possible for us to draw nearer to one another.

Then we need to note the language that is used in describing the 'separated brethren' as they were called. There was no talk of schismatics or heretics, but brethren in the Lord and by baptism members of the body of Christ. I sometimes wondered whether some of the fathers realised the full implications of the statements that they felt bound under God to make about the separated brethren because every sentence seemed to have in it the possibility of a revolution in thought and practice.

And so in that same constitution you had a reference to those who were outside the Church and it was pointed out that in some sense they also belonged to the Church because they belonged to Christ and what was said about atheism and atheistic communism was free from bitterness. There was a genuine attempt to understand on the part of many of the fathers the gulf between the Church and those who are without. And further the sense of mission was there for it was recognised that the Church exists to be the servant of God in the world. How refreshing it was to hear that the laymen did not exist simply to do work that priests didn't want to do in the Church. Laymen were reminded that they were the ministers of God in the secular world.

In the document on ecumenism, it was urged that there were certain ways which might promote the cause of Christian unity. First of all it was recommended that we should not use words or phrases that mis-represented the views of other communions, that we should try to learn what others believe and if possible learn at first-hand, and not perpetuate statements and accusations that could not be maintained. And what a good thing it would be if we could resolve here never to say an unkind word about any Christian who belongs to another Church. A church that is spiritually renewed and that is truly penitent—and those words were often used at the Vatican Council—is delivered from the sin of bitterness and selfrighteousness. Then it was urged that we should engage in dialogue. Of course we may expect dialogue at high levels. It is inevitable of course that you should have what are sometimes called these high-powered commissions. I think there are too many of them myself, and it is not always clear how much they achieve. While they are necessary—sometimes I think a regrettable necessity—it is in the local parishes and churches that the battle for Christian unity will be lost or won. And how good a thing it is to hear that all over this country in local councils and elsewhere you have representatives of the Roman Catholic Church and there is joint social witness, joint prayer and joint worship within the existing disciplines. And let us remember that we need to witness together to Christ in the world. It is as we witness together that many of our difficulties will be seen in their right proportion. If we spend all our available time in joint study and in discussing various difficulties in the way of unity we shall not make great progress. But if we work together and bear witness to Christ in the secular world as His servants, while our difficulties will not disappear, we shall see them in a new light and approach them as things to be overcome and not things to separate us from one another. But may I say that if dialogues take place, there must be absolute candour and absolute honesty. Churches that have been separated from one another for centuries cannot too easily come together and they have to recognise that progress must be slow. And we know that in these dialogues there will be very many important problems that will have to be faced, not emotionally, but calmly and honestly. I think of the nature of authority, the relation of scripture and tradition. Mariology, the priesthood, and indeed, mixed marriages. And I hope the question of mixed marriages will continue to receive the careful attention of the authorities in the Roman Church. Nothing would so ease our dialogue as a solution of this problem. For if those of us who are baptised members of churches outside Rome are to be regarded as brothers in the Lord and as part of the body of Christ, then it seems unthinkable that the present practice should continue whereby an undertaking is required that the children of the mixed marriage should be nurtured in the Roman faith. If we work out the implications of what we find in these documents, it seems to me we shall find a solution to this problem, but the present injunctions involve a reflection upon the solemn ordinance of Christian marriage as that is observed in our churches. The reflection is deplored by many of our Roman friends but it is there and recent concessions do not greatly ease the situation. Indeed, it is not the concessions that we desire but in effect a recognition of the full validity of our ordinance.

The stage is set for the greater things which our Lord promised. He calls for obedience and in our common obedience as we fulfil our mission, we shall find the unity which is in accordance with the divine will.

# CONFERENCE SESSIONS Wednesday, 24th August, 1966 Address by Rev. Colin M. Morris

#### THE RULE OF GOD OVER THE WORLD OF NATIONS

Nothing infuriates the non-Christian more than the apparent inability of the Christians to speak a truly Biblical word on national or international affairs which does not abound in paradox. Neither is the Christian allowed, apparently, to commit himself without reservation to any political position or ideology, or grant more than churlish recognition to even the most laudable of the world's achievements.

It seems to men of goodwill, struggling manfully to realize mankind's great goals of a just social order and true world community that whenever some progress has been made and a brick or two has been firmly planted, along will come the Christian, bearing in his hands a bucket of cold water, whose effect is to dissolve the cement and erase the ink on the blueprint. We are those who seem always to cry 'Woe!' in the day of joy and who refuse to dance when others pipe. Yet is not the other half of our Lord's couplet also true—that we refuse to mourn when others weep and wail. When men's hearts fail them, their dreams dissolve and their world lies in ruins, behold the Christian with a cheery word of confidence in God's purposes for the very world, about whose future prospects the same Christian was sadly shaking his head in more optimistic times! How justified is the world's irritation with us!

And yet the truth is surely not that we Christians are all spiritual Yorkshiremen, cantankerous by nature and happiest only when swimming against the stream? Our quixotic behaviour is rooted much deeper in a Biblical faith which will allow us to place little confidence in the institutions which the world has evolved to solve the problems of historical existence—for we expect our salvation to come from outside. And if we appear remote and abstracted in the time of feverish plan-making it is because none of the goals which might result from the working out of an ideology or philosophy within history has the slightest appeal for us—no Utopia or Shangri-La, no Proletariat Revolution or Great Society.

Cynics are entitled to claim that we Christians want it both ways. We reserve the right to engage ourselves, on our own terms, in the political tasks of the moment, and should success follow, we ascribe the glory to God as a vindication of His providence. But when they fail, we wag the finger and say 'We are not in the least bit surprised. That's just what the Bible told us to expect!' Maddening! In fact, of course, did the cynic but know it, far from any consciousness of having it both ways, it seems in our disillusioned moments that we get it neither way. We can see no vindication yet within history of the Lordship of Christ upon whom all our hope is laid and also we are denied the satisfaction of any earthly hope in the lasting value of the tasks we have to hand in the Here and Now.

We certainly don't choose to be such ill-humoured travelling companions for our fellow pilgrims through history. What wouldn't we give for the Bible to sanction some political ideology so that we could throw ourselves into the task of shaping the world around it and die content in the knowledge that we have wrought something of lasting worth? If only we could share that secular optimism which sees Man's progress as a golden arrow, cleanly cutting the air on its way to some target worthy of his stature and potentialities; instead of that tragic spiral as Man, under the impetus of ever-increasing knowledge, soars higher and higher but always circles the same point, locked within the gravitational field of personal limitation he cannot break out of!

Instead, when we seek the Bible's word for our time, we find ouselves sitting down to a banquet of paradoxes, garnished with dilemmas when we hoped for imperatives. How can a Christian evolve a political philosophy out of the contradictory and enigmatic material of the Bible? Unequivocal committal to the world, which is the essential condition of true political action, seems to be endorsed by the proclamation that God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that it might not be condemned but saved. But turn the page and we are confronted by a stern warning not to love the world and the assurance that friendship with the world will earn us God's undying emnity. How do you make practical politics out of that paradox? Or this. Our confidence in political institutions is bolstered by the assertion in Romans 13 that the State is of Divine ordinance and then totally demolished in Revelations 13 by the flat statement that the State is the Beast from Abyss. Where do we go from there? Or take the problems of the handling of power, central to every political issue, and apparently a legitimate Christian activity according to the Biblical affirmation that we have been given 'dominion!' Behold, we are confronted with a Jesus who, according to Luke, endorses the handling of power by advising His disciples to buy swords, whilst Matthew trumpets at us that the same Jesus assured those who live by the sword that they would perish by it.

So massive and central are these Biblical contradictions that only one of two explanations is possible. Either we must adopt the most mechanical view of the progressive revelation of God's truth in the Bible and assume that what is said chronologically later is to be preferred to what is said earlier as a clearer reflection of God's unfolding will, or else, we face a possibility which is terrifying in its implications. It is that the Bible confronts us as a great slab of history with God's footprints engrossed upon it—a vast, untidy, messy picture of a world at whose heart are ambiguities so deep seated that it is impossible to address oneself to them except in paradox; that this is the world as it is and will continue to be through historical time—utterly resistant to all the attempts of the philosophers, priests and kings to make sense of it; that trying to expose any ultimate meaning in history is like attempting to free your hands of a sticky flypaper—you release a finger only to entangle a thumb.

But if we take the Christian doctrine of Redemption seriously, by what right could we expect any simpler, more rational explanation? If history had been a triumphant procession of cause and effect, transparent in meaning but swung slightly off course by the failure of men and nations to realize their destinies, then God's necessary action would have been limited to the letting loose of a Redemptive Idea which would have checked the drift and got the world back on track. Instead, the very rigorousness of God's action—the Incarnation—indicates the centrality of ambiguity and the desperate difficulty in dealing with it within the limitations He has imposed upon Himself. The total picture—the Biblical picture—is of a universe rocked about its foundations, a cosmic upheaval, a widening circle of consequences, both good and bad, flowing from the demonic actions of men and societies. What political philosophy could make sense of that?

And if we are brutally frank, we must confess that at any given moment of time in the area of life with which we are dealing—mankind's collective relations—God's Redemptive Action and Event, Jesus Christ, far from resolving the ambiguities of history, appears to deepen them. Well might we cast a longing, if fleeting glance at a Marxism which sees the end of history from the beginning as a great monolithic structure within which even catastrophe is predictable and usable; where men need not wait for perfection to evolve from the working out of historical processes but can carry it forward with them, justified in using any degree of guile or force against those who will not or cannot see what they see.

But it is not to be. No simple dogmatic assertions can really speak to the moral precariousness and ultimate tragedy of the whole human enterprise. The Christian is denied the luxury of being able to treat history as a series of problems and answers. Indeed, whenever we talk in terms of the 'Christian' answer to a political problem, we have strayed far from Biblical Faith and are almost certainly reading into the situation our own ideological biases. We are compounding the error of the Marxist and the secular idealist by assuming that history itself is redemptive—as though hitting on the right course of action at the right time will clear a little ground from which we can begin the assault upon the next level of confusion until finally we arrive at some summit of icy clarity from which we shall see the pattern and meaning of all things spread out before us.

The Bible addresses the world in paradox in order to define the limits within which the Divine and demonic operate in historical situations. It recognizes, with ruthless realism, that no human institution is likely to exist either in the pure form of an Ordinance of God or as an utterly diabolic perversion of it, but will oscillate between these two poles. So the Christian finds himself speaking to the world a paradoxical word, the apparent contradictions of which serve both to encourage it in well doing and act as a corrective to contemporary error and sinfulness. In other words we speak not to offer a blueprint or lay down a policy so much as to respond to a mood.

What, then, is the contemporary mood of the world of nations to which Biblical Faith must speak and testify of God's rule? I would describe it as Apocalyptic Utopianism. The title of one of Peter Seller's recent films put it much better and less pretentiously—'How I Learned to Love the H Bomb and Stop Worrying!' Our post-war world has quickly learned to transmute its fear of atomic extinction into a strange hope. Because the unthinkable has not happened, hope grows of a world community flourishing in the shadow of the H Bomb's mushroom cloud, its unity assured by a balance of terror, its optimism vested in a gigantic paradox—the possibility of the instrument of our destruction becoming the guarantee of our

security. Over the imposing entrances to our multiplying international institutions might be graven those words of Winston Churchill 'Peace

shall be the Sturdy Child of Terror!'

Certainly there is little of the old liberal Utopianism about. Two wars have purged the world of any expectation that universal brotherhood can issue from the conquest of the darker side of Man's nature and the expression of his innate selflessness and goodwill. Ours is truly an apocalyptic utopianism because it is based upon the blinding perception that in the Nuclear Age the whole world is the smallest possible unit of survival. The appropriate image of our time is not the Greek one of Man as Apollo, the charioteer of the sun, rising ever higher, untrammelled in achievement, but an African one of Man welded into one tribe by the fear of a Common Enemy, huddled round the fire, friend and foe alike, driven together by terror of the nameless things in the dark beyond the flickering light.

Yet there is impressive evidence that the world has succeeded in making law out of its necessity. The dogged survival, against all odds, of the United Nations Organization; the international agencies which testify to the fact that there are certain elemental things such as food and education and health which the whole world owes to any part of it; the evolution of a sketchy international morality, whose existence nations acknowledge, even in their breach of it, by their attempts at self-justification—all these symbolize the struggle for world community. Thanks be to Hiroshima and Nagasaki for their wonderful gift—fear more potent than love and more durable than goodwill!

This strange hope is also bolstered by another great reality of our time which is partly a by-product of the balance of power which the nuclear age has made inevitable—the collapse of the old empires and the rapid spread of nationhood. Willingly or unwillingly, the right of peoples to become nations has been conceded and has found expression in the appearance of hundreds of new sovereign states, many with unpronounceable names, all desirous of expressing their peculiar genius through political institutions they have created, borrowed or inherited. Rich new content has been poured into the concept of the Nation as men of many races, for the first time, sayour the strange pride of patriotism and the rich, heady wine of selfhood. And the technology which has made one world a scientific miracle has been harnessed to guarantee the viability of these new nations, spawning highways, bridges, universities, dams, modern cities, industrial complexes where once was desert, jungle, silence, darkness. It is as though some giant hand has scooped up the amorphous sands of mankind and moulded them into the hard national bricks from which the structure of world community can be built.

So men have emerged from their deep shelters and are making yet another attempt to build a tower up to heaven, which this time, thanks to modern communications, need be no Babel. And in many areas of the world, the Church has been caught up in this intoxication. For the first time since the end of the liberal era it is possible to hear Christian prophets talking about a historical Kingdom of God as a Biblical skeleton, fleshed out into the shape of existing or hoped-for international institutions. In the most unlikely quarters, men are succumbing to the old Marxist heresy that history has a political goal, and ignored is the sombre Biblical truth that the meaning of history is found only beyond itself; that the New Heaven and Earth are not the final shapes wrought out of the material of history but are the gifts of God from Beyond.

Upon this scene of frenetic activity, the Christian bursts with a word which sounds as appropriate as the choir singing 'Sheep may safely graze' at the butcher's funeral. It is the paradoxical word which God speaks,

according to Genesis, as He surveys the original Tower of Babel—'You have done well. Therefore I will bring your efforts to nought!' A word which sounds to the world and possibly the Christian charged to deliver it both monstrously unjust and utterly opaque—a word which combines both blessing and curse; a riddle; a lifting of one hand in benediction whilst the other fist crashes down in anathema.

God's word to the nations is one of blessing for every effort of mankind to win a little more order from chaos; for every political arrangement within which men can be more truly human; for every evidence of responsible stewardship of God-given resources; for every sign of national transcendence in the willingness of powerful nations to allow the moral claims of the weaker against the stronger; for painstaking negotiation and cool-nerved statesmanship which have enabled the world to skirt the brink of disaster.

You have done well, says God. Therefore I will bring your efforts to nought. Why? cries the politician, the humanitarian, the man of goodwill. In God's name, Why? Can we do better than our best? We are men not gods!

And Jesus answers that heart-cry with a parable which describes the paradox of God's blessing and curse upon history. It is the Parable of the Wheat and Tares which tells how good and evil, nourished from the same source, exist together, grow together, are often indistinguishable and certainly inextricable until the Harvest. Here the ambiguity at the heart of history is pitilessly exposed. Man's dream of the gradual extension of good and the slow suppression of evil can never be realized. Increasing order does not diminish the area of chaos; the possibilities of evil grow with each extension of good. The very best action of which we are capable, twisted out of shape in a flawed Creation lets loose a flood of consequences, both good and bad, upon the world.

That parable spells the death of apocalyptic or any other Utopianism for it demonstrates that we have put our trust in that which cannot save when we expect unalloyed good to issue from any human institution, and especially those institutions which constitute the highest degree of man's togetherness—the nation and the world of nations. Ill-received though it might be, we are required to administer a large dose of Biblical deflation to man's trust in the power, authority and status of the nation. We must expose it as theologically defective, morally blind and transcient and therefore unable to bear the weight of all the hope men have placed upon it.

When we hear it claimed for a nation that it is enlightened, responsible and generous, we are forced to retort with Paul 'Your nation is separated from Christ, alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel, a stranger to the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world!' (Ephesians 2<sup>12</sup>). When national leaders and statesmen are prone to pride themselves on their realism, percipience, and clear-sightedness, we must echo Paul's flat statement—the nations are blind—to God, to themselves and to all men. (Romans 1<sup>24</sup>, <sup>29</sup>).

These rigorous, pessimistic Biblical judgments upon the nation must be clearly sounded because, as Reinhold Niebuhr has eloquently demonstrated in his epoch-making *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, the nation, by virtue of the fact that it embodies the largest concentration of earthly power, is prone to a monstrous egotism and idolatry, claiming universality for its values and seeking a pseudo-immortality.

Because it is the contemporary mood for nations to pride themselves on their scientific achievements, their enlightened laws, their foreign aid appropriations—to measure themselves approvingly against their rivals it is necessary to point out that God shows a massive indifference towards national achievement. At the level at which His judgment operates, the distinction between righteous and unrighteous nations is obscured, and a coming to terms with this truth is the only possible source of humility in nations which are tempted to regard their good fortune as proof of their virtue.

So our tendency to assume that our democratic system is of God and that of the communists is of the Devil is a blasphemy and any belief that our nation is closer to the Kingdom of God than theirs is a delusion. Democrats and totalitarians, advanced and under-developed nations, civilized and backward societies are all unceremoniously lumped together by God and constitute that 'mere drop in the bucket' of which Isaiah speaks. China with her 600 million people, the U.S.A. with her trillions of dollars, Britain with her thousand years of democracy all share 'the gross darkness that covers the peoples' with those nations they regard as enemies of their national survival and threats to world peace.

Indeed, I find myself more and more reluctant to think in terms of God having a special will for the particular nation as opposed to the nations. That evocative juxtaposition of Bible and National flag central to civic ceremonial seems to me productive of an identification of national policy with the Divine will which reinforces that monstrous egotism of which Niebuhr has written. Quite apart from the ever present danger of fascism, there seems to be little Biblical ground for the assumption that God finds any value in our national particularities or desires to use those elements of nationality which mark us off from other peoples to further His purposes. It must surely have been in one of those rare moments when Victorian fervour overwhelmed profound Biblical insight that the great F. D. Maurice declaimed 'We cannot attain Christ's likeness if we do not care for England as He cared for Palestine. We have as much right to call England a Holy Nation as the prophets had to call Judaea a Holy Nation!' It is truly ironic that Maurice's proclamation of England and the Holy Nation should coincide with the opening of the intensive phase of her Imperialist policy, the consequences of which, in Asia and Africa, have demonstrated that inextricable mixture of good and evil of which Jesus talked and have revealed how morally ambiguous are the actions of even the most civilized of nations.

There is one exception to this stricture on placing too much weight upon the idea of God's will for the nation as opposed to the world of nations. We have New Testament warrant for distinguishing one nation from the nations in the sense that its peculiar identity is part of God's purpose and its separateness a testimony to the world. That Holy Nation is not, alas, Great Britain, but the New Israel, whose citizens are drawn from every nation under heaven, and which is marked off from the world of nations in several important ways. Her citizens, unlike those of the nations, are called and chosen rather than thrown together by biological accident. The Christ who is hidden within the nations, is manifest in and reigns over the New Israel. Where the nations are agglomerations of great power and maintain themselves by the exercise of it, the New Israel glories in her powerlessness, choosing suffering rather than self-assertion as her keysignature. And the conflicts of colour, class and special interest groups which are resolved by compromise within the nations are totally transcended in the New Israel by reconciliation, the destruction of all particularities through and in Jesus Christ.

It might well be legitimately charged that the endorsement of this harsh Biblical view of the status of the nations robs the Christian of any ground from which he can speak or act in a politically relevant manner, for we seem to have written off the entire problem assumed in the title by consigning the world of nations to an outer darkness beyond hope and lost from God. In fact, it would be my claim that truly relevant political action as testimony to God's rule over the world of nations can only issue from the abandonment of any secular hope for them. And that the clear distinction drawn between God's will for the Nation—the New Israel—and the nations, provides the essential base from which this testimony can be offered.

The New Israel testifies to the rule of God over the world of nations by three dimensions of action, the Evangelical, the Prophetic and the Eschatological, each of which takes historical ambiguity seriously, the first in the human heart, the second in the sphere of immediate political action and the third in the total meaning of history. And in order to be faithful to my whole thesis about Biblical truth, it must be pointed out that each of these three modes of action involves a wrestling with paradox.

What is the testimony of the evangelical dimension of the life of the New Israel? It is clear that from the earliest times the Church has never been allowed to regard the plight of the nations with either contempt or complacency for they have treasure to bring into the New Jerusalem. She has lived always under a powerful missionary compulsion to preach the Gospel to all nations so that, against Christ's return, there should be found in every land the first fruits of the Harvest He will accomplish. The New Israel exists as a Mission to and in the nation within which it is set, testifying to God's claim upon it and presenting a living picture of what Redemption could mean to its life—for this New Israel is made of the same material as the world, but it is the world shot through with the Redemptive power of God. Within the nation, the New Israel testifies to God's rule by proclamation of Christ's Lordship, by the office of Intercession and by a quality of witness which is a steadfast refusal to allow the commands of God to take second place to those of men; a witness which reminds the nation that its primary engagement is with God.

The evangelical imperative serves too, to offer the nation proof that God graciously acts within history. This proof is a matter not of philosophical speculation but of personal encounter—the humility, true repentance, creativity and lack of pride which are characteristics of those who have been with Jesus. By enabling a man to respond to the New Commandment, the Gospel strikes at a three-fold ambiguity in the human heart. His relationship towards God is clarified (Thou shalt love the Lord thy God); inner harmony is restored (With all thy heart and soul and mind and strength); and his relationship with other men is purged (And thy neighbour as thyself).

Unless the Gospel offer occupies the forefront of the life of the New Israel, the other dimensions of her activity are bound to degenerate into a vapid moralizing, eloquently described in Richard Niebuhr's epigram as testifying to a 'God without wrath, who brings men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through a Christ without a Cross!' It must never be forgotten that the first outpost of God's rule over the nations is the human heart; that whatever may be the social and political implications of Jesus' teaching, He is first and foremost concerned with the quality of the personal life of His subjects. Though all the ills of the body politic cannot be ascribed to human sinfulness, many can, and therefore this personal source of evil intent must be radically dealt with.

But the evangelical concern of the New Israel must not be interpreted narrowly as spiritualizing men out of concrete human situations. It is not merely the person within the nation who needs to be redeemed but also those elements of nationality which divide him from other men, within which he hides and which are expressions of his egotism and self-assertiveness. The frontiers crossed by the Gospel are not only those on the maps but also those in the human mind. Truly evangelical proclamation always strikes at a pressure point in conduct; it is never confined to the welfare of the soul in the abstract. The validity of our conversion is attested by the power to deal with our most persistent and characteristic social sins. I would challenge the adequacy of any Gospel proclamation which allowed a man to come to Christ in South Africa or the Southern States of the U.S. but left his racial attitudes unchanged; or did not affect tribal prejudices in Africa; or jingoism in China; materialism in the West; Xenophobia in Asia, and so on. Though it is always dangerous to talk about national sins, since the detection of them is more often symptomatic of the observer's envy than anything else, nevertheless our history, tradition, experiences, characteristic power-structures do predispose us to certain moral weaknesses of nationality which need to be redeemed. In this sense, it is part of the evangelical role of the New Israel to elevate the mind and purify the heart of the nation. And that is a politically relevant contribution.

But here we must grapple with a paradox which cannot be evaded in considering the evangelical dimension of the New Israel's testimony to God's rule over the nations. I would express it as follows. The particular fruit of the evangelical experience which Christians seek conscientiously to apply in the fields of political and international affairs is the love-ethic. And there is no doubt that Jesus enjoined the law of love upon His followers—whatever else in the Gospels is obscure, that most certainly is not. Yet the paradox is this. The love-ethic we are commanded to make the law of our being is, by definition, impossible of fulfilment within history. And further, if we attempt to carry it through too rigorously we forfeit any possibility of relevant political judgement and action, and indeed, pressed to its limit it becomes self-defeating and destructive.

It could of course be retorted that the paradox I am stating is a false one; that the love-ethic only seems impossible of fulfilment because no group or nation has yet had the courage to test it. And no doubt you could also quote G. K. Chesterton's aphorism that it is not that Christianity has been tried and found wanting but that it has been found hard and not tried. But I would maintain that this paradox is a genuine one in the sense that the Bible itself furnishes proof of it. The heart of Biblical truth—the Cross—is at one and the same time the utter vindication of the love-ethic and also proof positive that this ethic is beyond fulfilment within history and certainly in the area of political action.

The Classical theory of the Atonement depicts a struggle between the crucified Christ and the legions of Hell which is cosmic in its significance. Though defeated in principle, these powers in fact still operate to extend the area of chaos not solely in the human heart and in the realm of interpersonal relations but also within the collective institutions of society. It is all too clear that in concrete historical situations the only barrier against the onset of this chaos is the use of a degree of constructive power, involving compulsion, which the pure love-ethic must rule out of court. Indeed, it is good Reformation theology that the State as Sword Bearer has its origins in the Fall of Man, where the break up of the original pattern of Divine Order resulted in the necessity of a degree of compulsion to impose order and social cohesion upon the life of man.

Or if you expose the moral meaning of the Cross at its simplest, which demonstrates the truth that love can only be fully realized at the expense of life itself, it is obvious that whereas an individual can choose the way of the Cross, no larger grouping such as a nation ever has or ever will. For

according to the love-ethic, the way of sacrifice must be personally and freely chosen, no one can either enjoin it upon others or choose it for them without destroying the basis of the ethic. One could go further and claim that if any degree of validity is accorded to the State as a Divine Ordinance it exists for purposes which are the precise opposite of the way of love unto death. It is the purpose of the State to preserve life, to shield its members from extinction whether threatened by outside enemy, internal chaos or natural hazard. That is what the State is for, and therefore it has a divine function which, within the ambiguities of history, is the precise contrary of the ultimate logic of the love-ethic—fulfilment at the expense of life itself. So the attempt to enjoin the love-ethic upon the State is to invite it to deny the law of its being.

The truth is that the love-ethic in its pure form cannot come to terms with the compulsion which is a necessary feature of all organized life. And it obscures political problems when it causes Christians to seek an ideal possibility in situations which offer only a number of realistic alternatives, none ideal, few satisfactory, all morally relative. Follow the love-ethic through to its limit and it will deny the Christian any participation in political life at all because he will seek in vain for a political system pure enough to deserve his devotion.

Unless the Christian is to retire to the mountain top and pray his life away, he must operate within society as a responsible man, which means that in certain fields he must make decisions on behalf of others—in industry, through the ballot box, within the family circle. He is perfectly entitled to follow the love-ethic in sacrificing his own interests without hope of reward but he cannot justify the sacrifice of interests other than his own. He cannot compel those for whom he is responsible to choose sacrifice. Hence, willingly or unwillingly, he must follow the hard law of collective relations and choose the only kind of justice that society has ever known—that which issues from the harmonizing of legitimate conflicts of interest, if necessary by the imposition of superior power. And when he has got that far, he is thinking politically. He has faced up to the unpalatable fact that all collective relations are so morally obtuse as to make a strategy of pure disinterestedness impossible.

The unwillingness to accept the tensions which this paradox sets up results in the prevalent political heresy of evangelical Christianity. It is the belief that if only men would love one another all political problems would disappear since the necessity for politics at all stems from a selfishness which men could easily transcend if they had the will. Its stable-mate in the realm of international affairs is the assumption that the fervent preaching of the Gospel leading to the conversion of sufficient citizens of sufficient countries will bring to pass a Christian world government. So will the Christmas Angel's prophecy be fulfilled—peace on earth will

result from the actions of men of goodwill.

The fallacy of this majestically simple theological position can easily be exposed by examining the life of the Christian Church, whose members, by definition, are committed to the law of love and are, or ought to be, converted men, yet within which conflicts of interest, problems of power and authority occur which must often be settled (dare one say it?) by political means. How much more the State and the world of nations who make for themselves no impressive claims to a knowledge of Divine truth or the power to live it out in community?

Most serious of all, this lofty indifference to the complexity of political problems and the insistence on attributing all national and international tensions to simple unbelief leads to monstrous parodies of the true evangelical role of the New Israel. It enables the most effective mass evangelist

of our time to wash his hands, in a public statement, of the Vietnam tragedy as the responsibility of the politician because his job is to preach the Gospel. It provides thousands of Christians, all devout and sincere, with justification for blinding themselves to the stark injustices of racial discrimination in their land, city or street because their business is to offer all men Christ but only some of them a seat in their parlour or a vote in their elections.

It provided many missionaries in Africa and Asia with a pseudo-Biblical warrant for resisting the claims of subject peoples for freedom and self-determination, marking off the New Israel from the political arena so absolutely that young nationalist Christians were forced to make a straight choice—their political allegiance or their Church membership.

Is it possible to take to ourselves the tensions involved in both attempting to obey the law of love and yet recognizing the impossibility of its fulfilment within history? Certainly there is no way forward in striking such a paradox asunder and cleaving to the half which it is least painful to come to terms with. Neither in a personal pietism which is too naive to recognize that in refusing to make political decisions one is making a political decision with terrifying implications, nor in a worldly cynicism which abandons altogether the attempt to make relevant the impossible law of love and accepts the power-structures of this world on their own terms, is there any possibility of achieving that truly Biblical stance which describes the New Israel as being in the world but not of it.

The very possibility of the prophetic role of the New Israel rests upon a paradox. The only way we can act prophetically within the world of nations is to grant them a status which, in our evangelical role, we must categorically deny. In evangelism, we must offer Christ to a lost world, to warn men to 'flee from the wrath to come . . .'. In prophecy we are seeking to encounter what Niebuhr calls the 'Hidden Christ' within history; to search Him out where He is doing some good thing in an area beyond hope. Obviously therefore, however pessimistic may be the ultimate theological judgment upon the nations, there are still in the Here and Now proximate goals, various levels of achievement, morally significant situations which demand a response from us.

Here of course is the point at which our abandonment of any secular hope for the nations allows us a freedom to operate within specific political situations, to accept the immediate task as worthy of our very best efforts. For the great danger of all political action is that it tends to absolutize itself—to project itself forwards into the future toward some great historical denouement. Every political ideology incorporates its own eschatologya doctrine of Last Things in terms of which the past and the present are given meaning. It is of the nature of truth in the political realm that if it is carried through too consistently it becomes falsehood. (It is the great merit of democracy that it rarely allows any political ideology to be worked out to its logical conclusion without modifying it by the flux of public opinion through the ballot box.) The Christian is able to bear his share of responsibility for the good order and justice of the community, free to seek the truth of the moment, accepting the limits of the possible. He need fall prey to no political messiah, inerrant ideological Word, inner voice of fanaticism—all inviting him to leap from the pinnacle of the Temple in order to inherit the kingdoms of this world.

The most important of all the prophetic gifts of the New Israel is political realism—a freedom both from utopian optimism and fanatical despair. We above all men recognize that the effectiveness of politics lies in its harnessing to constructive purposes morally dangerous forces. The self-regard and national pride which Christians are required to shun like

the Devil are the forces which the politician must use to motivate men for socially beneficial ends. Listen to a debate in the House of Commons or the Senate of the United States on aid to under-developed countries. The moralist delivers a fervent oration on the reality of the one world family and the responsibility of the well endowed for the weak and poor. But it is the politician who gets the Bill through by pointing out that communism feeds upon poverty and that if we do not do something for Africa and Asia the Chinese will. So the end result is an act of political morality, achieved by the beguiling of deadly dangerous sentiments.

To condemn this hard truth about political motivation as evidence that politics is 'a dirty game' is a pious hypocrisy and to pretend that there is some other more enlightened, noble means of accomplishing political ends is a delusion. You might charge that this is a very cynical view of politics, vet surely the God who maketh the wrath of men to praise Him can also use their prudent self-interest to induce them to accept larger claims and wider responsibilities. The ambiguities of political morality cannot be evaded. The suggestion that in politics, the Christian alone can march confidently forward through the murk, guided by heavenly radar, speaking what is true and doing what is good whilst others wallow in confusion and compromise is a piece of gratuitious nonsense which will survive neither the realism of the Bible nor the experience of history. The Christian politician is not wrong less often than others—though he may tend to be wrong about different things. All politicians are limited by the material they must use. The sculptor may have a soul as pure as driven snow but he must still get his hands dirty if he wishes to model in clay. If we wish to speak and act in political terms we are forced to deal in power in order to get a rough approximation of justice in any area where interests clash. And the truth about power is that it always exacts too high a price for its services. We may proclaim the theological truth that it is utterly futile to attempt to organize life around the self—personal or collective—yet we shall discover that often and again the dynamic energy released by this egotism is the only force available to motivate men towards good ends.

Thus it is part of the prophetic role of the New Israel to free Christians from illusions about what is possible and not possible in politics—to get those who are committed to the Great Absolute—God—to see value in the relative . . . tentative harmonies, provisional equalities, proximate justice . . . for nothing grander, more sublime is likely to emerge from

political action within history.

But to heap paradox upon paradox, the New Israel as Prophet must sacrifice a degree of relevance in order to be truly relevant to the life of the world of nations. Take, for example, the question of justice. The Bible's view of justice, as thundered forth by the prophets, is nothing like so simple, sublime and cogent as Aristotle's majestic 'To each his due!' The prophets would have none of this business of equal justice. They declaimed that God was angry with princes and kings because they turned the poor away from their doors. Biblical justice always has a built-in bias towards the little people of the Earth—'He has torn imperial powers from their thrones, but the humble have been lifted high. The hungry he has satisfied with good things, the rich sent empty away.' The Bible is certainly not a politically impartial book. It announces that God is against all concentrations of power and wealth and influence, however legitimately obtained and benevolently used.

Or take the power of imagination through which God enables the Christian to identify himself with others, 'put himself in their shoes', sense how they are feeling. The political value of this gift is beyond question for it enables us to penetrate the barriers of perception and get some idea of what our policy looks like from the other side of the Iron Curtain or East of Suez or South of the Equator or on the wrong side of the bread line or from the Negro side of the town.

Or consider the highest exercise of earthly love—the love of one's enemies and the forgiveness of wrong-doers. Without doubt there are socially redemptive possibilities, in the strictest political sense, from the discriminating exercise of this degree of forbearance, not to mention the embarrassment we would be saved whenever we have got to stop punishing former enemy nations in order to build them up militarily so that they can form part of our defence bloc against our former ally, the new enemy.

Now none of these political qualities, to which the New Israel testifies, is relevant in the sense that it is an accepted value of politics, a logical outworking of any forces operating within the concrete situation. Yet each of these qualities is supremely relevant because it testifies to the truth that the nation's main engagement is with God, not with an economic crisis, a strategic problem, a political dilemma. We are required to sacrifice relevance in the sense of speaking solely in terms of what is given in order to be relevant in the sense of identifying the true seat of ambiguity and exposing it before God.

So far we have been speaking of the prophetic insights which the New Israel offers her members from the treasures of her faith and her Biblical understanding of the world as they testify to God's rule over the nations. But is there any corporate action open to her when the world of nations is heedless of her admonition and blind to the political witness of her saints? One and one only—the vocation of suffering, with its three fold stages of protest, disobedience and martyrdom. The Church qua Church cannot match power with power in order to restore, when it is disturbed, that equilibrium we call justice. The only power she possesses is the power to receive the full brunt of power and transform the pain and hardship of it into suffering. In the words of Theodore Beza, the Church is an anvil which has worn out many hammers. Her only initiative, in the limiting situation, is to exhaust the capacity of the powerful to use their power against her—to use the pain inflicted by others to alter relationships and shame men into changing their policies.

The political significance of this time-honoured stratagem of the Church has been rediscovered in our century by a Hindu saint, Mahatma Gandhi who neutralized the power of an Empire with his ragged legions of hungry, fanatical, sad-eyed men. In our own time, the martyrdom of the Kenya African Christians during the Mau Mau uprising, the slaughter of missionaries in the Congo counter-revolution, the casualties of the U.S. civil rights marches are examples of the political power as well as spiritual significance of suffering. Things have changed because men have suffered. Things always change when the New Israel invites the world to do its worst. This is the time when the 'littleness' of all political events is seen in its true context. The suffering Church is a testimony to the world that all earthly forms of power, from the most benevolent to the most despotic, are only permitted to persist 'Till He come . . .'

'Till He come . . .' a challenging phrase which leads us straight into the heart of the third dimension of the action of the New Israel in testifying to God's rule over the world of nations—the eschatological. The paradox is easily stated but virtually impossible to discuss. The New Israel is called to live out its life in the midst of the world of nations as though something utterly beyond human comprehension had actually occurred; to testify to that which cannot be put into words—to point the nations to an Utterly-Beyond-History in the midst of history.

How does this whole business of the human enterprise end? What form will the grand finale of this glorious, tragic pageant of history take? Anyone who can rise above his own immediate interests and project himself beyond his own life span must wrestle with this question. And if he is reasonably intelligent he will be seeking not so much an answer as a reassurance. He will not delude himself that this great sprawling thing we call history can be summarized in a simple, intelligible statement—an original, luminous truth. But he does want to know that the end result is not an end without an end, utter futility, aimlessness, as though humanity were adrift on some raft in a limitless ocean, carried now this way and that but never getting any closer to land. He would like to feel that all that has been nobly and well wrought by mankind will not be as evanescent as the sculpting of elaborate shapes in the sand, destined to be washed away by the next tide.

Whether the Bible's answer to his heart-cry will nourish hope or despair depends upon his faith. Certainly we are not permitted to treat history like some detective story, where, in the last chapter and the last paragraph the significance of the obscure becomes plain, every enigmatic word and gesture and action falls into a pattern we ought to have been able to trace all the way through had we been clever enough. The last page, paragraph and sentence of history will be a record of the same old order and chaos, ambiguity and meaning, good and evil.

For Biblical faith, the meaning of history is seen as being beyond itself. We are not waiting for something to happen *in* history but for something to happen *to* history. We can grasp this much; that for mankind the Kingdom whose seed is hidden within history will be perfected, and history must end before it is fully revealed, even as the seed of eternal life in the heart of the individual believer needs death to make it manifest. And we know that Christ will do this thing; that what He has accomplished through the total Redemptive Event will become fully plain. His Return in clouds of Glory is a metaphor of the bringing of transparent clarity to all the affairs of men and nations, the tearing away of all veils, the restoration of everything that has been destroyed—the gift of a New Heaven and Earth which will render both Church and State null and void, for the New Jerusalem has neither temple nor sword.

Now since by definition, what happens beyond history can be neither described nor comprehended, we could well pigeon-hole the whole area of Christian eschatology, claiming that it is pointless our worrying about what we cannot be expected to understand. But it is not to be. The New Israel is commanded to live with the End as a present reality rather than a tentative hope. It is made clear to us that the End is not what comes after everything else but what has been inaugurated by the Christ-Event, and since we cannot possibly claim ignorance of the fact that the Christ-Event has taken place, we must also take seriously the implications of Christian eschatology for our life and conduct.

The apparent contradictions in the New Testament between the Kingdom of God as a present reality and as an imminent event do not trouble us too much as an intellectual problem, for having swallowed the camel of the presence of the End from beyond history, we do not have too much difficulty in digesting the gnat of the weird concept of time this must involve. So we can face up manfully to paradoxes such as Christ both saying 'The Kingdom is come upon you . . .' and 'Pray . . . thy kingdom come on earth . . .' But the question which is more daunting is this. What are the political implications of eschatology? What is the significance for the world of nations of the presence within history of the Utterly-Beyond-History?

Albert Schweitzer once wrote an influential book whose title could be translated into English *The Secret of the Kingly Rule of God*. It speaks of the Jesus who, whenever He had performed one of the miracles which were signs of the Kingdom warned those who had eyes to understand the significance of what had happened that they should 'tell no man!' The kingly rule of God over the nations is a secret. It is not to be spoken of lightly nor can its relationship to specific political and international events be announced with any degree of confidence. Why? Because the open proclamation of it to those who cannot understand will do little more than add one more area of ambiguity to already confused situations. Indeed, to designate a concrete historical happening as an outworking of God's will is to subject Him to the relativities of good and evil within time.

The wisdom of this diffidence is reinforced by the nature of political truth itself. It is characteristic of political decisions that they can rarely be described in principle as right or wrong. They are only proved to be right or wrong by their consequences. Should Britain enter the Common Market? Even after a full and careful analysis of all the facts has been made, no answer in principle is possible. The decision to enter or stay out of the Common Market will only be revealed to have been right or wrong in the light of its consequences. Hence, the 'crunch' of a political decision may only come in five or ten or twenty-five years' time. What did Jesus say? 'God's wisdom is proved right by its results' (Matthew 19<sup>11</sup>). Confident declarations in principle that God's will is embodied in a political policy or the general stance of the nation in an international crisis are less likely to be prophetic than foolhardy. The kingly rule of God is a secret because we must not 'use' Him—enlist Him to our schemes, seek His sanction for policies which are shot through with our national selfassertiveness and therefore doomed. God's will is both so simple that a single fallible human being can respond to it, and yet so majestic that it bursts out of any attempt to contain it within a national policy or an international situation.

Certainly a prophet called Isaiah could put into the mouth of God the words 'Ho, Assyria, the rod of my anger and the staff of my fury!' But in the modern world, judgments of this order are more likely to issue from our partisanship and subtle political analysis than from any confidence of speaking a divine truth. Ask a group of Christians from two contending nations to interpret into modern dress a slice of Bible history like this passage from Isaiah and it will be too clear that Assyria is the nation that oppresses us, resists our will, challenges our supremacy. We will go so far as to grant it the status of a scourge in God's hands, but we are in no doubt who represents Israel. We do!

So though the New Israel is ever conscious of God's rule over the nations, she is reverently agnostic about the concrete political events which are revealed as bearers of it. The world may cry 'Thank God!' when some miraculous deliverance is received or curse God when a disaster occurs, in no doubt that the extraordinary is God's doing, but the New Israel keeps her secret well. She is too conscious of the imminence of the End to attempt to usurp the role of her Lord as Judge of all the earth. His finger, and His alone, points to what will be established and what cast down; what in history has borne God's will and what has been smashed by it.

Only in one way can the New Israel be sure that her proclamation of God's kingly rule is not in error and that is when, by the power of Christ, she performs those miracles which are the Signs of the Kingdom—and they can rarely be translated into the material of political policies with any close degree of relevance.

It might be thought that this attitude of agnosticism about the concrete evidences of God's rule must restrict the Church to an other-worldly pietism, dumb and paralysed before the events of our time. But it is the very fact that God's kingly rule is a secret within the world that lends moral urgency to our actions in the political realm. For if we could proclaim with utter confidence that God's will demanded this or that course of action, then the result would be complacency and arrogance, a nonchalant reliance upon God to vindicate His own plans. Instead, we are those who must see every political issue as demanding knife-edge moral application and prophetic insight lest, when all things are made plain, we are revealed as having confused the trivial and the important, and discarded as of no great significance the fulcrum about which God was to move the nations. Because the world is prone to make facile distinctions between what are called major and minor political issues, the seeds of catastrophe and war often drop unnoticed in some obscure corner and germinate in darkness until they burst forth in a poisonous growth that desolates the earth. The Christian who is vigilant to enter into the mystery of the Kingdom and seek out the evidence of God's rule ought to be the one least likely to overlook the tiny hinges upon which great things move. Put in political terms, his gifts to the dialogue of our time ought to be subtlety, sensitivity and keen moral perception, for his search for the Secret will make a politician out of him.

That word vigilance reminds me of another aspect of the eschatological dimension of the action of the New Israel. It is right that we should thrill to the rich imagery of the Return of Our Lord in the vision captured in verse by Charles Wesley:

Lo, He comes with clouds descending . . . Once for ransomed sinners slain,
Thousand, Thousand saints attending
Swell the triumph of His train!

But we must not be so carried away by it all that we fall into the trap of assuming that this explosive bursting into history of God's reality will be the first inkling we shall have that the consummation of History is upon us. Nor should we be so seduced by that phrase 'The Second Coming of Our Lord' that we imagine that in the meantime He is somewhere else, in Heaven perhaps, preparing for His triumphal entry into history for the second and last time. There are New Testament images which describe Our Lord sneaking back into history like a burglar at night or like the unannounced return of our boss when we thought he was safely away on holiday. In other words, it is a Biblical insight that the One who will come again is always coming, imperceptibly, silently, persistently. How the concept of His constant entering into specific historical situations can be reconciled with the vision of a final consummation I really wouldn't know unless it is to be seen as a problem of the inability of spatial language to describe what is both timeless and timely. However . . . the problem is not the concept but the reality—Christ confronting us as the End in the midst of history in imperceptible ways. But how?

Well, if the personality of Christ the Judge bears any relationship to that of the historical Jesus we can be sure that the One who is always coming encounters us in the form of the casualties of this world, the lonely, broken, outcast, imprisoned, defeated, dying. He slips into history and confronts us with the End in shape of those, right under our noses who are easiest ignored, or whose plight is too painful or costly for us to ameliorate.

Translate this eschatological truth into political terms and it means that the members of the New Israel engage in the battle against poverty,

disease, racial discrimination, injustice and oppression not as a humanitarian concern but as an acknowledgement of the presence of the One who always Comes in a hungry child, a despised man of another skin pigmentation, an oppressed minority. And the judgment upon us if we should be careless and complacent is correspondingly severe. It is a theological judgment, not merely a failure of human concern or lack of benevolence. We have been found wanting at the End. The New Israel as Watchman has failed in vigilance and not noticed that the thief in the night has slipped past us as we strutted proudly in our lofty perches. Charles Peguy once said that everything begins in mysticism and ends in politics. Certainly the mystical vision of our Lord's glorious Return ought to be the inspiration of a political radicalism which makes most current expressions of political radicalism seem pallidly conservative. We can never ever be sure whether the next person we meet on the street, colour, race and class apart, who has a claim upon us, confronts us as a casual encounter or an ultimate judgment.

Christian eschatology presents us with the vision of a world of nations haunted by the presence of the one who is the object of all national policies and political programmes—the Son of Man—man who is the goal of history, not man as he is, but whose true being is revealed in Christ.

Now I have finished, except to add one final word. The greatest proof of God's rule over the world of nations consists not in any of the dimensions of the action of the New Israel I have described, but in her very survival. Against all odds, assaulted from without and sapped from within, lifted up and cast down, never permitted to rest but always on the move, the story of the New Israel has been one of sudden ends and strange new beginnings, of decay and restoration, of death and resurrection, of humiliation and glory. To what end? To the end simply that in every time and place, in a thousand accents, she can cry in the midst of the world of nations 'Fear God and give Him glory, ye who dwell upon the face of the earth, of every nation and tribe and tongue and people, for the hour of judgment has come...'

## Wednesday, 24th August, 1966 Address by Dr Randolph Nugent

#### GOD AT WORK IN AN INDUSTRIALIZED SOCIETY

My credentials for this assignment are more in the way of being clinical than ecclesiological, or for that matter even academic. I bring the work-aday tools of a graduate student in sociology, and presently urban planning, and the theological insights of a pastor. But principally they present the experience of working in what I believe to be one of the most exciting and vital sectors of church ministry today. M.U.S.T. Metropolitan Urban Service Training is an attempt by our Methodist Church to provide training for our pastors and lay people that they might be better equipped for Ministry in the urban industrial society of our today.

In terms of what the issues of today are, what handles might one use to

speak clearly to the social, economic and religious issues.

Metropolitan Urban Service Training is a programme by the National Board of Missions. Having provided the necessary financial support, M.U.S.T. became an ecumenical programme when other denominations were asked to share its direction.

It is a fact that we are right now in the midst of the second industrial revolution. It is the age of change. In the United States, for example,

75 per cent of the population lives on one per cent of the land.

Within 15 years the computer has evolved from an experimental gadget to a tool utilized by the offices, factories, schools, and laboratories of our nation. Only 11 years ago U.S. industry bought its first computer, and from the start of less than 100 in 1951 there are now over 30,000 in use, valued at more than \$7.8 million. Projections indicate that this investment will increase \$18 billion by 1975 when an estimated 85,000 computers will be on the job.

From a relatively unsophisticated start—helping with payrolls, billing, check processing, and simple, yet time consuming bookkeeping tasks—the computer has evolved a sophisticated problem solving tool for every activity of industry. It prepares weather forecasts, helps control the flow of electric current for a good part of the nation, routes long distance telephone calls, sets newspaper type, navigates ships and planes, prepares cakes and cement, and directs city traffic.

John Diebold predicts that by 1970 the telephone company will earn more from communications between computers than from communications between people. John Froomkin, an IBM economist, feels that auto-

mation will eventually bring about a 20 hour work week.

Some of the more visionary prophets even foresee the time when as little as two per cent of the work-force will be employed with people having to adjust to lives of leisure. But today, jobs are still the measure of men. Men need jobs.

A prominent characteristic of the coming years will be the increase in the speed of change. We already have great difficulty maintaining our perspective regarding the change which has taken place during the last eight to ten years. That rate of change is like a tortoise's pace compared with what is coming.

The increase in the speed of change leads to the corollary development of increase in the rate of obsolescence. Such a change, and particularly the speed at which it takes place is a major characteristic of a dynamic society.

Technically and industrially, the society which disposes of physical equipment and facilities well before they are worn out surpasses by a wide margin the efficiency of that industrial segment of that society which uses things long after they are worn out. This also applies to the overly-long retention of outmoded and ineffectual ideas.

It is very likely, therefore, that the technological ability to solve or control many of our industrial processes, will outdistance our ability to

solve the various human problems which arise.

For example, who will authorize what tomorrows weather should be, were we to achieve the capability to control weather. There might even be conflict between those wanting flood control and water conservation on the one hand with those favouring better skiing or fishing conditions. Technology and industrialization have given us a certain capability but not, presently, a smooth or equitable use of it.

I should like to read an article from a newspaper of Tuesday, 23rd

August, 1966.

'A subsidiary of Britain's second-largest industrial complex announced today that one out of every nine employees is being dismissed as a result of the government's deflationary policy.

I.C.I. Fabrics, part of the \$2.8 billion Imperial Chemical Industries group, said it will have to fire about 1,000 of the 9,300 workers in its three nylon fabric-producing factories.

The company also said the government's deflationary measures would subject industry and commerce to a period of considerable

financial stringency.

Another of Britain's biggest companies, the \$784 million Bowater Paper Corp., has stopped production of pitch-fiber pipes at one of its factories because the effect of government measures on the building industry—one of its biggest customers—has led to a reduced demand.

The corporation is hoping to find alternative work for the 125 workers

affected.

The layoffs are expected to provoke a new storm of criticism from labor unions, which assert that the government's measures—including the controversial wage-price freeze—are ultimately designed to double the unemployment level to 500,000 . . .

According to the annual report of the Council of the Trades Union Congress, Mr. Wilson said that failure of the government to act would have precipitated an international crisis, with unemployment reaching

to "perhaps" two million.

Mr. Wilson told the T.U.C. that the government rejected mass unemployment as a deliberate instrument of policy, and that its measures would raise the level of unemployment only to about 450,000.'

What does our Church have to say to the 1,000 men or for that matter, the 450,000 men who are soon to be unemployed. Or to the 3.7 per cent or the four million of the American population who are unemployed.

Major social problems of the world are already being worked on by the application of space-developed methods, managerial techniques, and systems and biological engineering. The range of such problems to which technology and industry are directed will include air pollution, waste disposal, traffic safety, urban planning, population control and distribution, efficient use of water, and other national resources, protection of property and enforcement of law. In the face of this, what do you have to say to the world?

More and more, the process of industrialization is becoming the dominant force shaping our culture. We are more mobile, more industrial, more anonymous, more secularized, and much more technological.

Our forms of work and our places of work have changed. Therefore, we have had corresponding changes in our relationship to our work and our families, and our church.

The Rev. Donald Shaw writes: 'The largest industrial communities no longer coincide with parochial or civic communities. The world in which the worker lives is not his home, nor his parish, but the vast yard or workshop. There is his community, his culture, his pattern of thought and the gulf between it and all that is done in the local church is enormous.'

The rise of industrial society without a corresponding increase in traditional religion and its effect upon men has constituted a massive change in the way men live together and think about their problems. The result of this change has been that we have inherited an industrial society which is changing, but which is sterile and without higher purpose, and a church which has somehow managed to remain aloof from the growth of this new economic society, and which is in need of learning how to address the society of our day.

Unfortunately, this has led to the fact that people have been compelled to live in the hazardous and complicated world of industrial society without the sense of sacred calling. So accepted has the difficulty of engaging the industrial society become, that the suggestion that there can be a significant relationship between Methodism and our industrial society immediately raises to some a mute issue.

Let it be clear, that historically our church is to be first of all a responding community, a people whose task it is to discern the action of God in the world and to join His work. The action of God occurs through what theologians have sometimes called 'historical events' but what might better be called social change.

This means that Methodism must respond constantly to social change, but this is just the difficulty. If Methodism's life and faith is to be defined by what God is now doing in the World, it must not be imprisoned. Our church must allow itself to be broken and reshaped continuously by God's continuous action.

When, for example, Will Herberg, the eminent sociology of religion scholar, describes Protestantism in America today, he says that it is a movement which has been able to sweep across the face of America, stopping periodically to regroup into denominations, until it comes face to face with what so far has proven to be an insurmountable barrier, the urban industrial order of our day.

But the notion of a separation between the sacred and the secular aspects of life is clearly foreign to the Biblical perspective, though not to some periods of its religious history.

You may recall that the Israelites looked upon all aspects of life with a vivid consciousness of living in a covenant community under a sovereign God. They lived in a sacramental world; that is, a world in which all things were holy unto God, and man responsible to God for the proper use of all things. They also lived in a theocratic society, in which a compartmentalization of familial, political, economic, and religious life was abhorred.

Economic life was not factored out and dealt with as an unrelated aspect. It was all an integral part of life in God's world, lived in relation to Him. Likewise, we in our day must meet our industrial society in the same manner.

So, when our technical age would coax us to believe that success consists in the economic growth which can be accomplished, Jesus reminds us that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth.

When we refuse to be identified with such just but often unpopular causes as the movement to end all poverty, and to cast our destiny with those who are impoverished, which demands a radical redistribution of power, but which industrialization makes practical, and when we choose to continue the game on the side of those who are now in power rather than follow our convictions we hear Jesus say: 'Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

When Methodism through indifference or individualism fails to respond to the needs of the underprivileged for whatever reason, the Master says: 'Insomuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.'

In thirty short but graphic words, Sophie Jewett pictures our industrial society, which is not unlike that of Wesley's 'Wrong and want and woe, cry in the city's streets, and love is slow, and sin is swift and sleek and housed and fed, dear Lord, our faith is faint.'

Thus, the technical industrial society of our day has created the issues which confront us as churchmen, and call us to responsibility.

In the early stages of a nation's life, for example the United States, the majority of people live in small villages or on isolated farms, thinly spread across the countryside. In such a rural society, human beings live in intimate identification and association in local communities and neighbourhoods. Their lives and their activities are not compartmentalized: religion,

occupation, and community overlap and are common concerns. The sacred is not confined to the church, but is applied to the planting and harvesting of crops, to concern for neighbours who encounter misfortune, to mutual trust and honour in economic transactions. In such a society there are no strict lines of demarcation between economic life, religious life, and community life.

In our Western Industrialized society the change in the ways of thinking of rural persons has virtually extinguished what has been referred to as a rural society. This dissolution is a new and unchallengable characteristic of industrial society.

In the United States we are devoting more and more of our time and resources to attaining higher education levels, but there seems to be little enthusiasm for genuine learning and discovery. Education seems to be increasingly geared to job preparation, under a glorified trade school orientation

Productive capacity and wealth as measured in Gross national product is the highest in history, yet there still seems to be a heavy sense of anxiety and fear in the business community.

The standard of living is soaring to new heights, and more and more people join the expanding middle class that can afford the new benefits of technology. Yet, we have become, in many respects an impoverished, anxious, and neurotic people.

Employment is high, although we cannot overlook the millions of unemployed and underemployed (four million), whose lot is particularly demoralizing in the midst of plenty, yet large numbers in all classes find little satisfaction in their work. There seems to be a more widespread status anxiety and sense of frustration and failure. A common problem of our suburban communities.

More people are living in families than ever before, but family breakup and tragic marital conflict is increasing under the massive pressures of an industrial urbanized society.

Life expectancy is longer, under vastly improved health services, yet more and more of our people live longer to endure lonely and disturbed lives.

To increasing numbers, there is more leisure time available to cultivate knowledge, personal growth, and richer human relationships, but much of it is wasted in jading distractions and artificial stimulations.

The technical breakthrough into the atomic age has opened up unbelievable ranges of energy to substitute for gruelling hand power, but so far it has been turned largely into instruments for human annihilation.

Miracles of mass communication have been achieved with instantaneous news that opens a wide window into the whole world, but it has become largely a cheap medicine show, filled with what one social scientist calls trash.

The one thing that must be rejected by those of us who stand in the basic Christian perspective is the notion that social change through industrialization carries with it an automatic moral progress so that human beings become more sensitive and responsible simply by virtue of gaining greater technical knowledge. Knowledge, or the mastery of facts, is as ambitious as social change. Every new person who enters the world has to acquire his own commitments and learn his own hard lessons. And every new generation has to reshape its own ethos and modes of responsibility in relation to new kinds of decisions.

Changes in technology produce changes in social institutions, and changes in institutions produce changes in technology. In the enormously complex world of social interrelations we cannot say in any simple way than one change produces the other, only that they are interrelated and both aspects of human life change together.

However, technology is the villain in Aldous Huxley's 'Brave, New World'. It was the villain in Karl Capek's R.U.R., which gave us the word 'robot'. It was the enemy in Charlie Chaplin's 'Our Times'.

The revolutionary principle of industrial society is thought to be to a new technique, a new machine or a new way to utilize machines, a new arrangement of physical, inanimate forces. The very slogan of much conversation about industrial society is the subordination of men to machines.

Nevertheless, when we, especially those of us who represent the church, seek to understand industrialization, we find that it is not a technology; it is not an arrangement of physical forces. It is a principle of social order. It is a concept of human organization for work. Industrialization is the culmination of a major change in the social order, a new principle of social organization.

This thus explains the shattering impact of the new principle on traditional cultures, and on the relationship between man and society, and man and work, and in addition it should prepare us for the task which our Methodist Church faces.

The separation of the worker from the product and the means of production is an absolutely essential characteristic of industrial society.

Some of us have become accustomed to the very visible impact of the divorce of the worker from the product and the means of production. The vision of empty men moving without purpose on an assembly line because they are not sure when they will be laid off, or sitting in an office signing papers, the import of which affects thousands of lives, but doing so without any seeming concern for meaning. Or, even the large numbers of men who can be seen standing on the street corner of almost every ghetto community.

Often, in fact, the worker no longer produces, even in the plant, he works. But the product is not being turned out by any one worker or any one group of workers. The individual worker usually is not even capable of defining his own contribution to the productive organization and to the product. Often he cannot even point to a part of a process and say: 'This is my work'.

This holds true wherever the principle of industrialization is applied. Indeed, industrialization is the access to a highly complex organization of men and machines.

It has been a long time since the individual soldier armed with his own equipment could go out and gain a kingdom all by himself as he does in fairy tales. It is also true that there have always been trades and occupations where access to the organization was necessary if the individual was to be effective and productive.

For his substance, the individual, in all but a few societies is dependent upon an exchange of products with his neighbour—that is, co-operation of some sort. But while not able to subsist independently, the overwhelming majority of the people living in any traditional society have always been able to produce independently, commanding not much more than the equipment they were born with, or that they could make themselves.

Methodism has historically challenged individuals to action and this is good. There is always the need to find those persons who will commit themselves to strict discipline for service and for action. And we have always called upon our people to be willing to give a cup of water when necessary.

But the time has come for our Methodist Church to recognize that the fires of industrialization cannot be controlled by individual cups of water. And in an age in which we have the technology, the money and the ability to build a dam of righteousness and justice, to provide sufficient water so that no man need thirst, let us build that dam.

Thus the divorce of worker and means of production threatens the status and prestige system of traditional society, whether of West or East, it dissolves traditional community and uproots the individual and threatens the basis of our present approach to man.

It also makes unemployment and the threat of unemployment unbearable—not only because of its economic consequences, but also because of the corresponding social consequences and in addition, it makes the ageless problem of the concentration of power infinitely more urgent because it makes possible an altogether new total tyranny.

In a changing industrial society a responsibility which we have is in the area of the use of power which is available through the industrial society,

and the effect of the use of that power on men.

Growth in economic power is the almost inescapable consequence of the rapid improvement of technology. Such growth has been widely trusted as the yardstick of the well being of the society, with too little attention given to the quality of the growth. Growth can include parasitic and malignant processes, as well as those that are healthy and productive. The essential question to which our church must turn is not the fact of power, but to its use. How much is healthy and how much is parasitic? Which parts add to the level of living and to further production, and which parts deplete the quality of life? What are we producing? How is it being produced? Who is doing the producing? Entirely too much has been said in most churches about the stewardship of money, and this is important, but too little about the stewardship of power. The modern equivalent of repentance may well be the responsible use of power. Power may corrupt, the lust for power may corrupt, and the effort to retain power improperly gained may corrupt most of all.

It is important to bear in mind that power is not the same thing as wisdom and understanding. To those of us who are part of a church which itself represents power in our industrial society, God asks 'Are we growing in the understanding, the wisdom, and the self-restraint to make

proper and moral use of our power, and to avoid its abuse?"

The coming of industrialization provides the new occasion for the acceptance of responsibility to use the power which we have. In the face of its coming, attitudes which have been brought along from yesterday must be discarded, and a new orientation which is in keeping with the new social reality must be initiated. Today God summons us to frame with our neighbours a common life suitable to industrial society. We must respond by leaving behind familiar patterns of life that are no longer apropos and by setting out to invent new ones.

The summons in no sense requires a thoughtless novelism, a scurrying after the new simply because it is new. It means rather that antiquity is no longer per se a mark of authenticity. Old ideas and practices must compete on an equal basis with new ones. What one has accepted must be constantly tested in the light of a world which never stops changing. Thus the past celebrated and appreciated, but it can never be allowed by itself to determine the present or the future.

For example, our preaching today seems to be powerless to our industrial society, because it does not confront people with the new reality which has occurred and because the summons is issued in general rather than in specific terms. It is very doubtful, however, whether proclamation which

is not highly specific can be thought of as preaching in the biblical sense at all.

Industrialization, though it is a human action, represents the objective reality, the new era in which we find ourselves. It has happened to us. We have been uprooted from traditional sources of meaning and value.

The well-being of a community is not automatically to be measured by expanding output or increased profits, by growing congregations or new buildings. These are not valid ends in themselves, but only indicators and

tools that may, properly applied, serve valid ends.

Responsibility in terms of Christian stewardship is an obligation which extends to every person who may be affected by the choice or decision. In an industrial society, therefore, responsibility extends to the whole community involved in the decision, not merely that part of the community which may possess some power of correction or reprisal. Moreover, responsibility is not only to the present, but to the future. To accept responsibility totally, Methodism must see beyond today to the meaning for the unnumbered tomorrows of each choice that is made. And when we are faced by industrialization which makes possible the question of whether we are to cry out against the disintegration of humanity which often takes place in the factories of our cities or in executive suites of our large corporations, or in the segregated communities of the world, or against the foxholes or bomb craters which industrialization makes so plentiful, we have no choice but to meet it head on. We have no choice but to place our money, our energy, our best thought, our prayers, and to give our life to those actions which are to increase the health, the welfare, and the peace of all mankind, not just today's privileged few, of which we may be part.

An industrial society needs the Church to raise the issue of accountability which involves an evaluation of the fruits, not just of intent. No person or group of persons escapes accountability. To the extent that we have the power to act competently in any situation, we are responsible. There is no neutral ground. Either we master and manage our industrial

society, or we are mastered and managed by it.

The call of God to be the Church is the call to responsibility. In terms of modern industrial life, this means that we should never ask seriously whether our society is manageable. Or whether we can govern the use of nuclear power for peaceful means. Or whether racial justice can be achieved especially in our northern industrial cities, or whether poverty can be eliminated, or whether the kind of things which happen to individuals in corporations may be allowed to continue. The fact is that we are placed in an environment of problems over which we are called to be master.

To believe our kerigma is to believe that man not only should, but can have dominion over the earth. In the Bible there are no powers anywhere which are *not* finally conquerable and ultimately humanizable. To deny this, in word and deed is to worship the creature rather than the creator.

The same thing is to be said of the question of poverty, in an affluent society. What is clear is that most of us who say that a man is poor imply that he should not be. Statements about the existence and extent of poverty are actually statements about the existence, extent, and distributions of wealth and its unique problems, reflecting a specific posture of social as well as economic policy. This does not mean that there is a single definition of need, because poverty is not a single thing. There is no single definition of poverty, because poverty is not a single condition.

The author of one well known survey of poverty analyses the different means used to estimate the extent of poverty found in our American industrial society, and observes that 'there is no point in getting involved in an endless methodological controversy over the precise point at which a family becomes impoverished'. While there is ground for disagreement, he says, 'Whatever the precise calibrations, it is obvious that the statistics about poverty in our affluent industrial society represent an enormous and unconscionable amount of human suffering.

These calculations should be received with a sense of outrage, for indignation is a necessary starting point if anything useful is to be done about eliminating or even minimizing poverty. For us to be concerned about poverty is not enough. We must deal with the specifics of the situation,

the results of which even reflect our structures.

Unlike the collective poverty of entire societies and the individual poverty of some, contemporary poverty in our American industrial society seems to be predominantly the poverty of specific groups. If one belongs to certain groups—characterized by, for instance, sex, place of residence, age, race—the chance of poverty is increased.

There is not an equal distribution of employment opportunities. It is apparent that there is a significant degree of poverty among Negroes and some whites. It is also quite clear that the problems of housing, the level of education, the level of health, are all related to the economic process.

Individual responsibility holds fast, but in our complex and rapidly expanding culture, forces of technology, of population growth, of immense and anonymous institutions make the prosperity of the majority become more evident and the poverty of the minority becomes more unbearable. When people who have been denied basic human rights begin to demand a share in the society, the gap between what they want, what they have, and what it is possible to provide for all of us, is boldly revealed. It is here then that the proud and bold assertions and proclamations which we make are challenged.

Unfortunately, to too many fortunate people, the call of the poor

minority for justice is the occasion for fear.

It was Pope John 23rd who said 'One may not take as the ultimate criteria in economic life the interests of individuals or organized groups, nor unregulated competition, nor excessive power on the part of wealth, nor the vain honour of the nation or its demand for domination, or anything of this sort. Rather, it is necessary that economic undertakings be governed by justice as the principal laws of social life. And justice demands that economic responsibilities be accepted. None of us who enjoy the benefits of our culture and society can truthfully say that we have done enough to answer the collective demands so clearly sounding.

Whether poverty is viewed as social condition or as economic idea, insufficiency or inequality, objective economic conditions influence human thought and action. To be aware that life for many white, Negro, and Spanish speaking poor in the United States has improved, does not keep

the mob from resisting in Cleveland or Chicago, or Jersey City.

The realization that a wealthy country does not require the same massive economic reconstruction as a poor one does not advance wisdom or policy. We have done much in the past, our church has done much more recently. but industrialization indicates that we must be willing to do much more. This means that a major goal must be to secure the dignity of social justice for all people and for us to allow these people to help us to become what God has made it possible to become. It is our destiny to succeed or to fail as a single people, and not as separate economic classes. What is required is the use of all of our power in such a way that the world and we ourselves leave no question as to what is meant by the brotherhood of man. God has given us every clear opportunity, and we as a Church must have the commitment to put our resources and ourselves to the task of remedy.

Speaking about God in our industrial society requires first of all that we place ourselves at those points where the restoring, reconciling activity of God is occurring, where the proper relationship between man and man is appearing—on the streets, in the factory, in the mine and the mill, by example teaching, preaching, and working. For those whose life is impoverished it means being something with them, not giving them something. To speak of God in an industrial society means that we must speak at work to people about their own lives, their children, their job, their hopes or disappointments. It must be a word to the bewildering crisis within which our own destiny is involved. A word which contributes to justice in an age stalked by injustice, which hastens the day of freedom in a society stifled by segregation, which provides plenty for all especially those in abject poverty, in a time of affluence. And if the word does not arise from a concrete involvement of the speaker in these realities, then it is not a Word of God but an empty symbol.

To speak of God in our industrial society is to speak about a man whom we recognize as steward of creation and a partner. It entails our discerning where God is working and then joining His work. To speak of God in an industrial society is to participate in the changing society so as to move from words to action.

In any case, the Church's responsibility in an industrial society is to be the servant of the society, who bends himself to struggle for its wholeness and health. It must be remembered that the sickness of our society comes from the poisons manifest in the bloodstream of the total society and not just a part, and if the Church is to speak to such a society, it must speak where there is the need for justice to roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever flowing stream. The issues of industrialized society are the issues of justice, peace, racial relationships, truth, reconciliation, work, meaning, power and money. And because these issues are the issues of industry and commerce and economics and politics they affect laymen. Our church work in this area should be aimed to train laymen to seriously encounter these issues.

Horst Symanowski says that the estrangement of the Church from the world constitutes first and foremost a challenge to the Church to open itself up to radical renewal through fresh encounter with the living word, the Servant Lord, in the midst of the secular world. It is not a matter of smuggling Christ into a world to which He is essentially foreign, nor of bringing a wayward world back to Him, for fishing individuals out of a sea of perdition and hauling them aboard a holy ship. It is rather a matter of opening our eyes to His self-sacrificing, life-giving presence in the midst of this world and to our becoming His faithful and obedient fellow workers. This means at least in regard to industrial society that the task of the local church is primarily to inspire and train its members to carry out the ministry of Christ in their places of worldly responsibility, which are primarily within the economic and social structures of business and industry. It is as important for a man to be in his union, or his avocation as it is for him to be in church. We say I go to church on Sunday, unfortunately I have to work on Monday. There should be no difference. Therefore the ministers as well as laymen need to understand what secularization and industrialization mean in terms of their pressures upon human

Industrialization necessitates lay training. We must teach the laity how to become the church in the world.

Rather than cling stubbornly to old customs and forms, or anxiously synthesize new ones, perhaps like what Moses began and Jesus raised, we must simply take up the work of liberating the captives, confident that this

work in the present will sufficiently serve to carry us through this new day to a future in which the name of our urban industrial society shall be, as Ezekiel says, The Lord is There. And when that day arrives, let us not view our industrial society as being composed of machines and technical devices; but one in which we know that our revolutionary gospel demands that industrialization stands for people. A new day for which the prophetic thinking for the next step of this future society shall have begun even now. God, grant our church the vision that we may begin to understand and to lay out and to plan for an adequate method for dealing with the pressures of industry on the social patterns and practices of men.

Thank you very much.

#### FESTIVAL OF PRAISE

held in the Central Hall, Westminster Wednesday, 24th August, 1966 Chairman, Bishop W. Angie Smith

Led by the London Methodist Choir, Conductor: Mr Clifford Harman, B.A., F.R.C.O., Organist: Dr W. S. Lloyd Webber, F.R.C.O., Commentator: Rev. Dr Francis B. Westbrook

# CONFERENCE SESSION Thursday, 25th August, 1966 Address by Mr Rudolf Schiele THE CALLING OF THE CHRISTIAN LAYMAN

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

First of all I wish to thank God, our Lord and Master, that I am permitted to serve here as His feeble and unworthy servant. But it is a great pleasure for me that, in this hour, I am privileged to testify to my experiences as a lay worker of my Church, although it is difficult to do it in the English language. For this reason, I must ask you to kindly have patience with me, particularly with my pronunciation. However, in this matter too, I may be full of faith that the Lord who is in our midst, through His Holy Ghost, may grant that our hearts find one another, and that in the last instance, He will prove to be the perfect translater.

May I now read a few verses from The Holy Scriptures: Please hear the seventeenth verse from the twenty-first chapter of the Gospel of Saint John:

'He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus said unto him, Feed my sheep.' and

in The Acts of the Apostles 1st chapter, verse 8:

'But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.'

And in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we read about the election of Stephen and other six men as co-workers, men full of the Holy Ghost, full of faith, and of honest report.

My dear Brethren and Sisters, these verses which we have just read deeply move me again and again. Of course, we know of many examples of callings in the Holy Scriptures, but here, at the beginning of the formation of the COMMUNITY, we find in rapid sequence the decisive characteristics of the calling.

Simon Jonah lovest thou me? Yes, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee! Ye shall receive the power of the Holy Spirit, ye shall be my witnesses unto the uttermost part of the earth.

The decision for Jesus Christ, which means: Jesus First, is followed by the reception of the power of the Holy Ghost.

It is not my intention, at this time, to start an investigation of the question what a layman is, or what he is not. The only point that matters is the spiritual origin of our mission. My mission differs in no way from the mission of my Bishop, of the preacher of my congregation, or of a Sunday School assistant. My responsibility is the same. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

But it is true that in our walks of life we receive different tasks.

There is an English interpretation of the service in the Church which talks of a so-called 'fulltimer and halftimer'. This description has only the appearance of being correct, for the Christian who has no full-time office, under no circumstances will be released from the responsibility of his original calling by the Holy Spirit, merely by having chosen another vocation.

And thus, my friends, we have come to one of the most decisive problems of Christian Churches and Communities. The community of the New Testament recognizes only the man or woman who is born again as a member of the community. Seen from this point of view, the division of the tasks is not so difficult any more, for then nobody can refrain any more from bearing witness to what he has heard, seen and EXPERIENCED in the Imitation of Christ.

When we cast a retrospective glance at our Methodist Church history, we may state with a thankful heart and with joy that there is no difference in the fundamentals.

In John Wesley's diary we read:

'At three o'clock in the morning of January 1st, 1739, the Holy Spirit came upon us so forcefully that many of us, in their effusive joy, cried out loud and threw themselves on the floor. After we had recovered a little from the holy awe and the surprise of the divine presence of grace, we burst out, with one mouth, into the profession: We praise thee, God. We acknowledge that thou art the Lord!'

This wonderful event constituted the mighty prelude to the greatest year of Methodist history.

My dear Brethren and Sisters, I am far from considering Wesley and his friends as Pentecostal fanatics, but just because such fanatics still exist even at the present time, we cannot deny the Descent of the Holy Spirit. It looks to me that for sheer fear of fanaticism we talk and teach more about the Holy Spirit than ask ourselves, each one of us, even here and today: Have I received the power and the gifts of the Holy Spirit? I deliberately call these problems to the attention of this great conference. I find it simply impossible to speak about the co-operation of laymen in whichever form, without first drawing from those sources that are given us freely in the Bible. From that direction only we may take our bearings about the present time.

In the course of this orientation, we arrive at once at a rather sore point. Within the scope of this division of tasks, there are also teachers. They are of great importance, for we, the co-workers, expect of them and of the Pastors educated by them that further development, particularly further introduction to the Bible, and thus the mediation in the attainment of knowledge and understanding. In this case, a differentiation between laymen and experts will be fully justified. I expect of no Preacher that, in addition to his theological special education, he should possess detailed knowledge in other professions.

However, my dear professor and teacher brethren, notwithstanding the great merits of theological-scientific dialogues and research, please keep in mind also the effect upon us, the co-workers. It is my personal experience as a lay-leader in my Church that the general receptivity for new research accomplishments or for findings of the so-called modern theology is not only limited, but rather causes confusion. I now hope that it will be profitable when, in this connexion, I deal with the praxis of the co-operation in the Church. In this case, I naturally base my considerations mainly on the experiences in Germany, I might also say, Europe, more particularly Continental Europe, because our legal status in Europe is that of a 'free church', in contrast to the State Church. Hence, our experiences, even including the ecumenical aspects, are not always the same, as for instance in the United States where there is no State Church at all.

I do not wish to complain here about certain conditions in Europe, where it is still partly rather difficult—also considering the minorities—to have a really ecumenical way of thinking, but we must not withold these facts from this convention. We appreciate very much that our European Bishops, Preachers and Laymen have done their best in order to serve the alliance among brethren and sisters in Jesus Christ. But the fundamental problem is the basic understanding of what it means to be a Christian. There are many hundred millions of Christians, but only a small proportion of them are called to the discipleship in that sense as demonstrated in the beginning, particularly in the words of the Holy Scriptures. It is my daily distress that we must seek for Sunday School teachers, Youth Leaders and active co-workers in the men-service. The demand is very much higher than the supply. The co-operation of laymen in our Church—and now I mean the world-wide Methodist Church—is in danger because there are no longer enough people who become converted. For instance in Germany we have tried during the last five years to give all our strength and devotion, only to find that although much can be achieved with well functioning organizations in the most different fields and also with large donations of funds, basically we belong to the 30,000 soldiers of Gideon's time, whereas the Lord needed those 300 to be victorious.

Our Church is of world-wide importance. Through the grace of God, it has brought forth great men who have beome pillars in church history. There are numerous examples, right into our own time, of devotedness and courage of faith. All that is wonderful. Through the strength of the past we obtain encouragement. The heritage from our fathers is not injured, though I would rather cry out loudly: let us look ahead! It is not enough to erect a statue of colour and marble of John Wesley. He would tell us: It was not I, John Wesley, but Jesus Christ who died for you on the cross of Golgotha, who died for my sins and who is risen from the dead and who according to His promise is in our midst.

Since the days of our fathers, only one thing has changed. The world has become larger in all dimensions. The people still live under the rule of Satan. The people, also in the so-called Christian nations, are blind to the bright light of the Gospel. They get lost if they are not saved by Jesus Christ.

But how are they to believe in him, of whom they have not heard, says the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Romans. Herein lies our responsibility even today as in the past. God did not let The Methodist Movement come into existence merely to increase the number of churches. We have to remain a revivalist movement or die. I love my church. This Methodist Church brought me to Jesus my Lord and Saviour, but I must repeat it! However, a revivalist movement today means much more than just doing the first steps in helping a person to become converted. Body, soul and mind are one in God's eyes, but also all social work in our field can only be blessed if it is the Lord who sends each individual to his own place. Sometimes I am under the impression that the borderlines between Humanism and Christianity become blurred even among us. It is the foremost task of the Church of Jesus Christ to bring the word of God, that word which became flesh in Jesus Christ. And it was Jesus who gave us the commandment: 'Love thy neighbour as thyself'. On some days, we sin against this commandment, even oftener than once. We must all ask ourselves the question again:

When was it the last time that I told another person who Jesus Christ is and what He means to me? The great word of neighbourliness has Christian value only after the testimony to His love and mercy has preceded.

The Methodist Church must be a living testimony of Jesus Christ's love, now and always.

The *laymen* must be a living testimony of Jesus Christ's love, and I testify our experiences in Germany especially in the work of evangelisations groups that God gives His Blessing also today to the Methodist Church.

The Church, of course, must attentively observe and help to perform the growth of human beings. Church must remain united with man as far as he is world-minded, not in order to dominate the world as this is not its task, but to help the world. This is the starting point of all Mission work.

The open-mindedness of the Methodist Church as to questions of social justness has its origin in the Gospel. Here we are told that Christ lived among us, He joined people and made their situation His own. As a servant He lived among the people, came in close touch with the human society and attended to their distresses as if they were His own. Christ, Christ, must be our example in all things. The penetrating power and perfection of the order of temporal things can only be blessed with the spirit of the Gospel.

Church, if hierarchial or not, is not to create the world or the temporal order. The layman remains himself responsible in his positive acting and decision, and independent of all orders of all ever so clever and wise church administrations. This will not mean that he can be outside of all order, but it means that he will be prepared to serve exclusively out of the spiritual power. If he is not appealed by the Holy Spirit, all organized tasks and perfect campaigns are vain. The work in the church is no handicraft, it is a holy duty. Church, primarily, is not organization but must above all be the body of Christ.

We read in the first Epistle General of Peter, Chapter 2, verse 9:

'But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light,'

and then we read in the Epistle to the Ephesians, Chapter 5, verse 16

'Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.'

We, therefore, much more than up to the present, must be a praying Church. May I refer to the beginning of my considerations. Prior to the descent of the Holy Spirit, the disciples were united in prayer for days. Think of the New Year's Eve of 1739 which was followed by the greatest year of revivals in Methodist history. It has always be unchanged till today that all blessed works and services of the church have had their origin in prayer.

This great Conference will achieve nothing special, and no ever so well constituted resolution will accomplish what the Lord God has promised

us if we do not meet Him in prayer.

There are probably many fathers and mothers among us who, on account of some kind of sorrow for their children, have spent hours and days in prayer. How much room, and how many words of prayer do we dedicate to our personal affairs? We come into the presence of God because of internal and external distress. Is this not the very Conference to be called upon to end up in one united appeal to God in one great community of prayer? Here we have the opportunity to unite in the community of prayer in the various groups. Our Church has grown through the calling and the grace of God and through the prayers of the members of His body. The most inspired speech and all enthusiasm will be empty without the authority of the Holy Spirit and the power of prayer.

Only in this way can our Church keep moving; oh no, it must get moving even more and more. Ecumenicity yes—union with other churches, which go the same way for example the union with the United Brethren Church, yes—but don't forget our order from the Lord: and ye shall be

witnesses unto the uttermost part of the world.

Then the calling of the Christian layman will find its confirmation. It is not of so much importance which job or office he has. He must be an operational tool. The clay in the potters hand can become the vessel only when the prepared mass of clay is completely in his hand. May God give us still more of such people. It is true that nearly right from the beginning; the Methodist Church has been a Church of layman co-operation. Other churches have arrived much later at the point to see in the lay-brother a tool prepared by God. But we have no reason to be proud of it. There is a great task ahead of us to equip our lay-workers for the service in a world which has never been so much out of joint. Those who will be prepared, whatever the future may hold for us, can come forth only from a community in which every one is prepared to carry the burden of his fellow-creature.

My Brethren and Sisters.

We may praise and glorify God that He again and again gives us time to lead people to Him whatever the way may be. It solely will be decisive that we do it in full devotedness to Jesus Christ. We must be a Salvation Army without uniform. No other purpose can grant to the Christian Layman that power, that spontaneous readiness to put on all the armour which God has promised. With that we once more refer to the beginning of my testimony, and we again hear the question of Jesus at the Lake of Gennesareth: 'Simon Jonah, lovest thou me?' Is there anybody among us who is not deeply moved when he feels himself appealed to anew by this question? Must we not anew do penitence under this question, each of us and our whole Church, that we may confess: 'Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee', but that we are well aware how poor our devotedness really is. Only the love of God, poured out in our hearts will bring us to the full readiness to be co-workers of God. He who wants to come to honour, cannot be a servant of Christ. Saint Paul speaks as of the most wonderful when he calls himself a slave of Christ. It is therefore that we must pray that we may be such co-workers, and that God may give us still more of such co-workers. Then we will have new Promises as only then we will really see that there is power in our Church and it is solely this power that matters. Also this great Conference would have been in vain if we cannot return home and give testimony: We have faced our Lord, He has new put His hand on my shoulder and has given me a mighty push in my back in order to make me go ahead—to gain the aim. Then we can join singing from the depth of our hearts with Charles Wesley:

A charge to keep I have, A God to glorify, A never-dying soul to save, And fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age, My calling to fulfil; O may it all my powers engage To do my Master's will!

Arm me with jealous care, As in Thy sight to live, And, oh, Thy servant, Lord prepare A strict account to give!

Help me to watch and pray, And on Thyself rely, Assured, if I my trust betray, I shall for ever die. Amen.

## Address by Dr D. T. Niles THE FINALITY OF CHRIST

The great commission, as found in St. Matthew's gospel, is the natural text with which to begin a consideration of the experience of Christian witness. New Testament scholars tell us that the form of this text is the result of welding the words of Jesus in which He issued the commission with the experience of the disciples as they sought to carry it out. How does the great commission run? 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples, baptize and teach. Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age' (Matthew 28, <sup>18–20</sup>). The command to go and to do is set within the context of a declaration and a promise. The disciples are told that, wherever they go and to whomsoever they go, there Jesus was already Lord. They would go representing His authority. And, precisely because He was Lord, Lord already, they would not go alone nor would they ever be left alone.

The disciples would go to do what? They would go to disciple the nations. Their task would be to make His sovereignty known and effective in the various forms of human community within which men lived. But there was also a second part to the commission. It was that they were to bring into one community, across the many boundaries that divide human communities all those who acknowledged Him. And both these things were to be done knowing that, wherever the disciples went and whatever they did, the Lord would be there with them and with those to whom they went in His name.

The Church's work and witness is bounded by His authority and the ways in which He will exercise it, as well as by the promise of His presence and the ways in which He will be there. To put it in another way, the great commission does not spell out a task to be performed, a work to be done, the ways of doing which can be devised by those who do it; nor is the promise, 'I am with you always,' simply a promise of supporting grace and empowering companionship. Rather, the authority would continue to remain His, and He would be there wherever His disciples went, so that whatever they did and how they did it would be subject constantly both to the affirmation and negation of what He himself would be doing and how He was doing it.

In this experience the mystery is the result of the fact that we never do know fully in what manner He is where He is, or how He is doing what He is doing. We know so little of the forms in which He exercises His Lordship or the immediate ends towards which, in any particular situation, He is working. Indeed, the promise, 'I am with you always and everywhere, and I shall be with you to the end,' is not altogether a comfort. We know only too well that it is His presence with us which is the basic cause of many of our problems. No one who has taken part in any contemporary discussion of the missionary enterprise of the Church, whether in its classical form as missions or according to its most inclusive definition as mission, can be unaware of the fact that the Church has been overtaken by a crisis in understanding of what the mission of the Church really is and how it is to be fulfilled. This crisis in understanding is the result of many factors, but primarily it stems from a fresh awareness of the ways in which the mission of the Church is involved in the mysteries of the Kingdom. What we do as His disciples is conditioned so constantly by who He is and the ways in which He maintains His identity.

These mysteries I would enumerate as the mystery of His presence, the mystery of His demand, the mystery of His purpose, the mystery of His tokens and the mystery of His grace. We shall consider these one by one.

#### The Mystery of His Presence

The first part of the great commission is to disciple the nations. This is an impossible task, except as Jesus himself is present and actively at work within the various forms of human community. As is well known, the word 'nation' in the Bible does not refer to a nation-state in the modern sense of the word, but rather to any form of human association in which

people together accept a common life.

This presence of Jesus within community life has, in large measure, to be a presence incognito. In the Old Testament, it is this presence which the prophets interpret when they assume that the one God whom Israel acknowledged and worshipped is the God of all the nations, too. It is His rule which they declare to be effective in all the world. But not only is Christ thus present within the common forms of community life, He is present also in the life that people live within the various religions. In seeking to discern this presence, account must be taken of the fact that each man is both more than and less than the religion he professes. He is less than the religion he professes because he never lives up to its highest teachings in faith or morals. However, he is also more than the religion he professes, because in every man's life there are those experiences and intuitions of God which transcend his religious profession. They constitute an overspill in his religious life. This overspill exists in the life of Christians also; for Christianity, as a religious system, is never adequate to include or express every aspect of a person's experience of the Triune God. In religious dialogue, it is when men speak out of this overspill that they really begin to speak helpfully to one another.

The basic question, in speaking of the presence of Christ incognito, is not whether we can always discern Him when He is thus present, but whether it is part of His will that He should thus be present in community as well as in personal life. I can witness to the fact, and I am sure many others can, to the perception of His presence among persons and situations where He was neither known nor acknowledged. Indeed, the clear teaching of Jesus was that this would be so. Not only did He imply this in all that He said concerning the nature of God's Kingdom and His own Lordship, but He also made it explicit in such a parable as that of the sheep and the goats, in which the central issue turns on His presence in anonymity.

Side by side with the commission to disciple the nations, goes the command to baptize those who believe. In the Christian community, thus constituted, is the sacrament of His known presence—His presence in the breaking of bread, His presence where two or three gathered in His name, His presence where His disciples go in mission, His presence where the Gospel is proclaimed. This complex life of the Christian community, composed of persons from every nation, is the basis of the reply that always must be given when the response of someone to the impact of the gospel is—What must I do? St. Peter said on the day of Pentecost, 'Repent and be baptized.' St. Paul gave the same reply to the jailer at Philippi. (Acts 2<sup>37</sup>, 16<sup>33</sup>).

The two parts of the great commission, then, belong together and, in their relation to each other, lead those who undertake them into the experience of the mystery of Christ's presence. For the mystery lies here, that we can never be sure where He is content to be incognito and where He demands to be acknowledged; nor are we certain of what the specific form is of the acknowledgement which, in any particular situation, He demands.

In spite of our inability, then, to probe the mystery of His presence, can we still set out for ourselves what the consequence may be of this mystery for the Christian mission? I think we can, and that we can formulate this consequence in terms of three obligations. There is, first of all, the obligation to spread Christian influence and to distribute the Christian presence in such a way as to help acceptance of Jesus and His will even where He is present incognito. How often have we heard people, who are not themselves Christians, say in some particular situation—'Let us do the Christian thing, for that is the only right thing to do.' To make this kind of reaction more and more possible must increasingly determine the strategy of the Christian Mission. Secondly, there is the obligation to discern and identify Christ's presence, as far as we are able to do it, wherever that presence is, so that with increasing sureness we may be able to point to Him in such a way that others may see. This obligation to discern and identify can never be fulfilled except as those who are engaged in the Christian mission learn to listen to what is actually being said by those of other beliefs than Christian, by the other religions themselves, and by the cultures which are the fruits of these religions. Often, we are so concerned to tell the good news that we miss hearing it. And, thirdly, there is the obligation, as opportunity arises, to press the question—will you follow Him, will you acknowledge Him, will you become His disciple, will you join the company of those who not only believe but also are seeking to elicit faith? The issue is, whether in a world where there are so many names that people can bear and by which they can be identified, one is prepared to bear Christ's name and to be known among others as one of His men. Of course the problem remains as to how to engage in this kind of questioning of others without violating their personality. The dividing line between persuasion and propaganda is a very difficult line to keep.

#### The Mystery of His Demand

To use a term that has been common in discussion for many years, Jesus seems never to have been a believer in indirect evangelism. In fact, His practice makes any talk of indirect evangelism sound quite stupid. The mercies of God to men and women in their several needs are mercies pure and simple.

However, this was not His only way with people. When the woman with a haemorrhage wanted to remain anonymous, He would not allow her to do so. He identified her and made her meet Him in Person. After the blind man was cured, who washed himself in the pool of Siloam, Jesus met him and asked him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' He then revealed His identity to the man, eliciting faith. In the case of the man who had been ill for thirty-eight years, who was cured at the pool of Bethzatha, Jesus met him again and admonished him to sin no more. In these examples, and others like them, we see how Jesus went beyond the actual deed of kindness performed to effect a personal meeting between himself and those whom He had helped.

Is it not obvious, then, that as we review these many and different ways of Jesus with people, we find ourselves at the heart of a mystery? The issue again is not what it is that we must do as we go to men in His name, but what it is that we find Him doing and what His demands of them are. Some consequences of this mystery for our discipleship, however, are clear. It is clear, first of all, that it is never permissible to use the meeting of human need as an occasion for pressing the claims of Christ for discipleship, neither is there any reason why the work of meeting human need should not be done together by those who bear His name and those who do not. Here is a common area where those who acknowledge Him and those who serve Him in His incognito can work together. It is clear also that if the commission is a double one—to disciple the nations as well as to baptize disciples—we should be willing to allow, even some of those who are prepared to acknowledge Christ, to take Him into their own cultures and perhaps even into their own religions. One of the difficult problems which has become theologically acute today is how to define the penumbra of the Christian community. This problem is all the more urgent, because everywhere the Christian community, being a minority community, is constantly tempted by this minority position to become a communal group. How Christians may be not a communality but a true community, in responsive and responsible relation to other human communities and to the human community as a whole, has become an insistent question. However, having raised these questions, let it still be quite clear that none of them are truly faced unless they are faced in relation to the unchanging demand of the Gospel that it be proclaimed in season and out of season. and that the acceptance of it be always pressed with urgency. When the Word is proclaimed and the demand for discipleship is made explicit, there can be no blurring of the issues involved.

To put the matter simply, the life of any Church must represent the actual life that the members of that Church live in their particular world, which world will always have its own culture, its own forms of religious plurality, its own inter-dependent social structures and its own financial base. Only so, can the Church bring to the service of the Kingdom, the 'all things' that are to be reconstituted in Christ.

Indeed the implication of God's double purpose goes even beyond this. For, if the inclusive purpose of God is this purpose of reconciliation by which unity is created of all things, then the reconciling power of Christ must be the chief characteristic of life of the Church.

The accent falls on going into all the world and discerning the presence and ways of grace. Since God is the mystery we have to live with, the way to live with Him is to go with Him wherever He goes and to be available to Him for whatever He is working at. The mystery of God is not so much a mystery to be understood as to be encompassed by. We do not resolve it, we are upheld by it. He puts us to work, enabling us, by the work we do to grapple with the consequences of the mystery, even though the mystery itself remains. We collect the straw, we bake the bricks, we mix the cement, but He is the builder. We do not do His work, we serve it.

And, what is He building? What is He doing? He is not building a Church but a Kingdom. He is not collecting Christians, He is redeeming creation.

### COUNCIL AND CONFERENCE SESSION IN CENTRAL HALL

#### SERVICE OF INDUCTION

Friday, 26th August, 1966

#### Presidential Address

# By Bishop Odd Hagen, President of the World Methodist Council THE SPIRIT OF METHODISM

It is a great honour to address representatives of World Methodism at the end of this Conference as we are ready to face our future problems and possibilities. Being aware that three of the past presidents of our World Council are listening, I almost hesitate to speak. I assure these outstanding leaders of Methodism however of my high appreciation. I also know that I am included in their prayers and that I can count on their advice and help when I try to carry on the work they have promoted so well. Because I know this, and because you, outstanding leaders of Methodism in different parts of the world, are highly interested in our movement, I dare to speak to you, though I am a single voice from one of the smaller churches in our fellowship. I speak as a Methodist to fellow Methodists.

I also want to say that we think and act in an all-inclusive Christian fellowship. We are members of the Methodist community, but we do not live alone. We also belong to the communion of saints, to the church universal. I heard a Lutheran bishop who came back from the United States of America tell about his experiences and how he had enjoyed the wider fellowship of other churches. He concluded his message by saying that after all he loved his own church and would continue to 'play his Lutheran cello'. He mentioned also the Salvation Army and thought they should continue to beat their drums.

I have always liked to think of Methodism not as a single instrument, but as an orchestra. This idea was expressed by a friend of mine, Dr. Peder Borgen, in the charge given to the candidates in an ordination service last spring: We should as Methodist ministers be servants of the whole gospel, and not representatives of a religious specialty. This concept of

Methodism may be selfish thinking. Maybe we cannot be 'complete' without the rest of the instruments used by the Lord. But we at least have our part to play, and the other groups cannot be complete without us.

Is there something special or typical about Methodism? If so, is it our theology, liturgy, ecclesiastical thinking or organization? I think I know some of the answers. As to theology some of you will say that we have no special Methodist emphasis. Both opinions may be right. The answer to a large degree depends upon whether you look upon Methodism as a movement in church history, beginning with the Wesleys, or whether you try to trace the spirit of Methodism. It is true that 'our main lines lie, not in continental Protestantism, but within the English Protestant tradition—that pattern of life, thought and devotion, which has sprung from within the Church of England and the Historic Free Churches, and from the tension, always fruitful, always tragic, between them.' Gordon Rupp.) It is also obvious that the Methodist emphasis, or whatever name we give it, was and is an emphasis revealed in a certain situation. Its theological arguments are arguments related to movements, scholars and ideas in the time of John Wesley. I do not say that 'Methodist' ideas were unknown to the church of earlier days, but they were weakened and sometimes forgotten. Nor do I say that the doctrines and ideas typical of the first Methodists have become irrelevant in later times and situations. Varieties of the Methodist emphasis have developed and always will develop in other situations. German Methodism surely will not feel the same about the Anglican Church as British Methodism. American Methodism related itself to a society built on the idea of freedom. South American Methodism had to find its way on a continent dominated by a nominal Catholicism. Methodism in the Far East was coloured by the stand it had to take toward a colonial society with a totally different religious background. And Scandinavian Methodism cannot be understood if we forget that it came to a part of the world where the Established Church was a real power structure.

What I am trying to say is this: Methodism was historically born in England, but it is not English. It has a stronghold in the United States, but it has not become American. We believe in sanctification, but Methodism has not become a holiness movement. We surely dissent very often

from established religion, but we never want to be sectarian.

It is impossible to understand Methodism if one does not catch what has been called the spirit of Methodism, a spirit which did not start with the Wesleys or the Church of England, nor with Luther or John Huss. As a matter of fact Methodism is a movement which identifies itself with basic principles in New Testament Christianity. This may be a weakness, because we do not have any sectarian doctrine for which to fight. It is, however, our strength, because as far and as long as we represent this spirit, Methodism will survive, yes, and it will contribute in a fruitful way to the growth of Christianity.

The spirit of Methodism then represents no specialty but that of the whole gospel. 'Our main doctrines, which include all the rest, are three—that of Repentance, of Faith, and of Holiness,' said John Wesley. Though most people know what was considered to be the Methodist emphasis, maybe a few words should be said about what it meant to the first followers in the Wesleyan tradition. Usually the doctrine of sanctification is mentioned as typical of Methodism. It was considered so by John Wesley himself. But we should not forget that it was a part of a message which, in the light of experience and reason, represented the whole gospel. When Wesley spoke of the necessity of repentance he did so because he believed in universal sin and the total depravity of man. Conversion was necessary.

By reason and by experience it could be proved as scriptural. Likewise, when Wesley spoke about faith, it was something more than intellectual acceptance of certain dogmas; it was personal, and it involved decision. It was to put one's trust in God's mercy revealed in Jesus Christ, and therefore it could also lead to assurance. 'Religion itself' was holiness, a new way of life. It may be that Methodists as well as other believers have interpreted this holiness in a legalistic way, but is is basically love to God and love to man, a love which destroys evil temper and is the spring of every good thought, word and work. Holiness was in one way inward religion, but it was also social and it was to be revealed in good neighbourliness and good citizenship. True religion should not be an inward life only; it should also be an outward activity.

The practical approach of John Wesley to the Christian life brought forth the General Rules, in which the Methodist people were taught, not only to do all the good they could and to abstain from all kinds of evil, but also to attend to the means of grace. The outlook is biblical and practical when Wesley speaks about the church and the ministry. When he tries to clarify his views he has much to say about the church and its nature. He does not differ greatly from the Anglican or Protestant tradition. But Wesley's practical approach is different. Methodists are people who sincerely try to 'flee from the wrath to come and to be saved from their sins.' A Methodist society is a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness. It is obvious that the societies, class meetings and 'bands' were organized for the sake of spiritual and moral counselling and care. There is a New Testament background to Wesley's concept of the church, the sacraments and the ministry. But he had to learn by experience. By experience he started to use lay preachers. But at the same time he was convinced that with regard to the ministry of the whole church ministers should be 'set aside' for special service.

The spirit of Methodism also means mission. 'You have nothing to do but to save souls' was not a slogan with John Wesley. That spirit brought the message to the cities and the countryside, to coal mines and cotton mills. Also, it brought the Word of God to other countries and continents. The famous words of Wesley, 'The World is my Parish,' were rooted in the commandment of Jesus, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' Methodism has been a movement. Will it be today 'forever beginning?'

To summarize: The cornerstones in Methodism are Scripture, experience and common sense spiritual reason, with a single aim, 'To serve the present age.' But as Methodism has been central in theology and practical in purpose, it has been able to appeal to people in different countries, of different races, and in different social settings. We have been liberal in things not essential and conservative in things vital to the Christian faith. This has given Methodism a flexibility necessary to meet new situations, and steadfastness so that we can always tell what we stand for. Our movement became a religion of personal decision, social involvement, and missionary action, always ready to serve in new situations, according to the will of God.

This spirit of Methodism has brought us to the place we have in the world today. We still think we represent this spirit, and with the essential insight and power of this spirit we are called to face the future. The future confronts us with several problems and difficulties, but it is my sincere conviction that if the spirit of Methodism is still alive among us, we can turn these difficulties into great possibilities. The true spirit of Methodism also is creative and it can go into new situations and make them opportunities for the kingdom of God.

One of the great concerns of John Wesley was the future of Methodism. Would it be able to renew itself in such a way that it could fulfil its mission in the days to come? This ought to be our special concern today, not only because our situation is new, but also because it is in accordance with the flexibility and the central and missionary spirit of Methodism. In a time of secularization our first task should be to revitalize religion. Where religion has become more or less formal because it has become official or because it is proof of good citizenship, we should stress personal religion and decision, as in early Methodism. The great message should not be left to the movements we call the sects. Faith and assurance should be preached in a world of disbelief and uncertainty. We ought to regain the strength Methodism had in its personal care of souls, and at the same time enrich Methodism with the wider experience we have learned from modern psychology. The doctrine of sanctification has often been misunderstood, but worse yet it has been forgotten. The situation in which we live urges us to reclaim it, not as a sort of pious inward feeling, but as the spring of love which forces us to practise love and seek righteousness in all human relationships. Holiness should be revealed in social concern in all fields. This will be a new variety of an old Methodist emphasis. Do we hear the call from God to true discipleship? We should tell our people that conversion, faith and sanctification are what we need, and enable them—by the power of the Holy Spirit—to make true religion, as John Wesley called it, known to all men.

If this renewal is to come surely we must have a revival in our biblical and theological thinking. Many people ask what Methodism stands for, and the reason may be that the emphasis we had has disappeared. In a time of ecumenical ideas and work we need to understand our own traditions. If we want to contribute to a greater unity, we ought to come as Methodists and not as 'what-is-its.' But also for our own sake we need a biblical and theological renewal. I think the Oxford Institute made a good contribution in that direction, and so did the Conference of Seminary Professors held this year and in 1961 prior to the World Methodist Conference. New movements in theology and biblical research should be studied, evaluated and related to our Methodist traditions, with our liberal attitude in things non-essential and with steadfastness in things vital to our faith.

Then we should observe the rapidly changing world and society of today. There is no need to go into details. The time of colonialism and the white man's supremacy is gone. New states and nations make their voices heard. Society is changing. Economy and education are different in our day. This may be obvious especially in the western world, but the same changes are also coming rapidly in the younger nations. Mission some years ago was to send missionaries to certain countries which we referred to as the mission field. With modern materialism and secularization we find the mission field just outside our own doors. How shall we fulfil our calling in this new situation? The question is asked not only by Methodism but by all the churches. The whole Church, local and universal, is under the divine imperative and should bring its witness. This is the background to the discussions about new structures within our Church. Methodism with its flexibility, missionary spirit and centrality in message ought to take the lead here, and we are trying. Two tendencies are evident. The first is found mainly in the British branch of Methodism. It is a tendency to autonomy and to stress local responsibility. The other tendency is toward in International Methodist Church, and there is no doubt that here the idea of the Church Universal is to some degree dominating. I am not trying to give an evaluation of these two tendencies, but it is obvious that both are parallels to similar movements in other fields of life. It should also be said that on both sides we know there should be no real contradiction between these two ideas, especially since both of them are supported by biblical thinking. There is no doubt that the Church 'which is his body,' according to the second chapter of Ephesians, as well as the Church triumphant in the Book of Revelation, is the Church Universal. On the other hand, we hear about the Church in Rome, Corinth and other places. In practical life we also find that the idea that all believers in one place or one country should belong to one Church, wants to cross the borders and have fellowship with believers in other countries. Also, the man who almost always likes to think of the Church on a universal scale, has to come down to some place and some country where fellowship can be manifested and experienced. In any event, Methodism will continue to exist and we will be one people.

I have mentioned several times that in this day of ecumenism we have come to a new era in the history of the Church. If we are to save ecumenism from being a problem amd make it a possibility, we must take a realistic view of it. Let it be said first that according to biblical teaching we are already one in Christ. (John 17 and 1. Corinthians 12<sup>12-26</sup>). This means that ecumenism in itself does not include organized union, but organic unity, mutual recognition, co-operation and witnessing. But it should also be said that ecumenism can lead to organized union. When and where organized union is to come should be decided by the situation and the circumstances. The spirit of Methodism with its centrality and flexibility will guide us. But one thing more should be said, and I think it is vital. We should be guided by the plain biblical ideas which from the very beginning belonged to the Methodist tradition. We shall be willing to compromise or yield regarding details and 'opinions,' as Wesley said. But I am sure that the spirit of Methodism will not allow us to give up central New Testament teaching. My personal conviction is that some of these ideas, about the church, its ministry, ordained and lay, as an expression of the total ministry of the Church, are well expressed, both in the Articles of Religion of the American Church and in the Deed of Union in the British Church. If I am to change my mind in regard to these matters, I can do so only after having been strongly convinced by the Word of God, which The Methodist Church acknowledges, 'as the supreme rule of faith and practice.'

I would also like to say that any kind of union which means new divisions in the already divided Church of Christ should be avoided. Let us think and take the time needed to come to real ecumenical understanding and then possibly union can be effected. On the other hand, let it be said that no kind of stubborn dogmatism in regard to details should prevent

our active and creative participation in a wider fellowship.

Finally, my brethren, I think that we should continue to tell our people that conversion, faith and sanctification are what we need. We should enable them—by leading them back to a fresh religious experience—to make true religion, as John Wesley called it, known to all men. This means that we should proclaim and prove again what Christian faith means both to individuals and to society. John Wesley wrote once to an American these words, 'Lose no opportunity to tell all men that the Methodists are one people in all the world, and that it is their full determination so to continue.' Henry Carter, commenting on that statement, said, 'This far visioned saying leads fittingly to our task, to recognize anew and with sureness the essential message of Methodism, in face of the renewal call for spiritual unity and the desperate need of our world for spiritual deliverance.'

It is my sincere hope that Methodism will make its greatest contribution to the world by working with all its powers and by all means for that spiritual deliverance.

## PART FIVE

# COUNCIL MESSAGE TO THE METHODISTS OF THE WORLD

# 18th-26th August, 1966

The theme of the Eleventh World Methodist Conference, meeting in London, England from 18th to 26th August, 1966, was 'God In Our World'. Immediately preceded by intensive study by the World Federation of Methodist Women, by a Youth Conference and by a Family Life Conference, the theme was expounded in notable addresses and sharpened by debate in fourteen study groups.

We so begin to make it clear that our message is based on wide-ranging thinking from representatives of the whole Methodist community. It was suggested at the beginning of our Conference that the theme should have been 'God In His World'. But the title we chose was not a theological mistake. What we really had in mind is best seen by putting the two

phrases together.

We live in a world of hostility, suspicion, unnecessary poverty, and war because human beings think and behave as if it were 'our world'. Our dreams of a nobler world can become realities only when we realize that it is His. We know that God was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world to Himself. By the mercy of God we who are in His Church are members in the Body of Christ. Our theme means: how in these days does Methodism pursue in Christ that ministry of service and reconciliation?

We are saddened that, by barriers which governments erect, we are cut off from fellow Christians, especially in China, some of whom came to their faith, as we came to ours, through the Wesleyan tradition. We call upon our Churches to engage in a ministry of reconciliation and openness

towards China and the people of all other nations.

It is a healthy sign of the times that we are being compelled to think in a new way about the world. We know that we are no longer watching the turmoil of its rapid changes from the sidelines. We are caught in the turmoil ourselves; meeting, resisting, or welcoming the pressures of change. We should not be worried because we are being buffeted by economic, social and political revolution. This is God's world. He spoke to the Conference through the young people who are growing up in the atmosphere of these revolutions, and take it for granted. He is speaking to us all in the drama of our generation . . . if we have ears to hear.

The breath of God is in the wind of change. Have we the faith to spread our sails to catch the wind, and to journey forward with confident hope under His direction? Or shall we waste our energies and miss our opportunities, by striving to beat our way back to familiar havens? The Church of the children of John Wesley and the itinerant preachers should know the answer.

Another healthy sign of the times is that all sections of the Church Universal are recognizing the importance of the laity in their life and mission. The ministry of the laity in the world is vital to the total ministry of the Church. We urge our constituent bodies to equip the laity for this ministry.

In the brief five years since our last Conference amazing progress has been made in courtesy and co-operation between Christian denominations. The most remarkable is the lowering of the barriers of suspicion and ignorance that have divided us from our brethren in the Roman Catholic Church, and them from us. The Commission on Methodist Ecumenical Relations is to give particular attention to exploratory talks with representatives of the Vatican Secretariat on Christian Unity. The roads to unity in Christ begin to converge. The evidence of growing fellowship and partnership at the local level is impressive. Plans for closer communion, involving Methodism and other communions, become more precise all over the world with every year that passes. We long for the same progress towards partnership between different branches of the great Methodist family where, as in so many nations, they are in the same place but separate.

To give effect to the imperative call for commitment to the needs of the the world, undertaken in full ecumenical fellowship, the Council adopted what may prove to be the most important resolution of our sessions. An energetic and continuous programme of research, study, and experiment, complementing and furthering the study programme of the W.C.C., regional ecumenical agencies and other Christian communions and carried on by competent regional working parties, is to be put into operation immediately. This programme will for the time being be the principal way in which the Council will seek to interpret and implement its declared purposes. It will add its own knowledge to all available ecumenical study material in order to provide an informed basis for debate and action by the Council and its member Churchers, so that the full resources of World Methodism, theological as well as material, may be devoted to making a substantial contribution to the total mission of the Christian Church to the contemporary world.

If we see in all this no more than a process of merger and absorption, or of a huddling together of companions in misfortune, we may well fear for Methodism. But the Conference has no such fear. We look rather to an enrichment of us all; to a sharing, a mutual giving and receiving, of the precious gifts that God has given to His divided Church.

The enrichment will be an endowment for service; not for our boasting, but that we may be better servants of the Servant Lord. In 'our world' millions die each year of hunger and hundreds of millions are inadequately fed. Yet in a world where poverty, hunger and disease are the common enemies—and grow in power—material resources, intelligence and courage are lavishly poured out in the devastation of war.

No world Christian assembly could meet in 1966 without expressing its deep sorrow over the continuing tragedy of Vietnam. We commend to all our member Churches and local congregations urgent study of the statement approved by the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, and ask them to act on that statement within their national situation. (See appendix).

We support the strong stand taken by British Methodism over Rhodesia, insisting that independence should not be granted until there is agreement on, and guarantee of, the advance of the African population to full political and social responsibility by rapid stages.

We have seen these things in sharper focus as we have looked at particular issues. If we would serve as stewards of God's bounty, man has knowledge enough and there are resources enough to give the opportunity of a decent life to every human being on this planet; but this means deliberately using trade, commerce and finance for the general welfare. Yet in the near future there may no longer be adequate resources, however wisely they are used, if the growth in world population continues to accelerate. The abolition of war on a planet made small by science

demands the acceptance of interdependence, which means abandoning the sinful claim to absolute national sovereignty. It is a fundamental Christian truth that there can be neither peace nor welfare if the dignity of man is denied. Honest acceptance that truth involves the uncompromizing rejection, locally, nationally, and internationally, of racism. Civil rights are the rights of all human beings. Political systems based on apartheid and segregation must be condemned.

In secular terms, the way to a solution of our problems is through conscious acceptance of the just demands of human dignity. This, in our judgment, immediately requires that the doors of educational opportunity must be opened widely throughout the world, and much hard, new thinking given to the purposes of education. It also means a deeper understanding of the 'status of women'. Equality is not necessarily achieved merely by allowing a woman to do a man's job in a man's way in a masculine world.

There are no easy solutions to the problems of poverty or population or peace. Those who grapple with them must understand the tough realities of economics and politics and sociology. But it is our business, for they are human problems. Continuing failure means continuing human tragedy. It is our business because poverty and war cripple and destroy God's children. It is our business because there can be no solution until intelligent understanding is integrated with the compassion of love. We have sought to do our business more efficiently in the future by setting up a Commission on International and Social Affairs which will, at the appropriate times, present proposals to the Council or to the Executive Committee on vital contemporary issues.

It is easy enough to write words. We remind ourselves, and we would remind you, that without the dedication of discipleship the words are empty. Truly to serve the present tumultuous age involves a resolution, heartache, and sacrificial devotion that can be called forth only by love. We have briefly summarized our deep and anxious concern for the people of our world. We welcome the candid and constructive criticism of those engaged in industry or politics or education, and pledge our willingness to serve as partners with them in easing the heavy burdens of mankind. We rejoice that in these days we may serve as partners with our fellow-Christians. We plead with our Methodist people to catch the vision and to serve in faith.

But we must not end with our own resolves and high intentions. We do not serve in our own strength. He who died for all and is the general Saviour of mankind is the One who girded Himself with a towel and shows us the way.

# APPENDIX

(Resolution on Vietnam passed by the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches.)

In order to keep human suffering to a minimum and to contribute to a climate more conducive to negotiation, we set forth the following measures which we believe should be undertaken as promptly as possible:

- (i) That the United States and South Vietnam stop the bombing of the North and North Vietnam stop military infiltration of the South.
- (ii) That the United States now announce its commitment to a withdrawal of its troops phased in accordance with provisions for peacekeeping machinery under international auspices and deemed adequate in the judgment of an international authority.

- (iii) That all parties recognize the necessity of according a place in negotiations both to the government of South Vietnam and to the National Liberation Front (Viet Cong), in proportions to be determined, and that arrangements be encouraged for negotiation between the government of South Vietnam and the National Liberation Front in the hope that there may be found a negotiating authority representative of all South Vietnam.
- (iv) That North and South Vietnam develop greater flexibility in the initiation and response to negotiation proposals.
- (v) That all parties give every possible protection to non-combatants and relieve the plight of those suffering from the fighting.
- (vi) That all parties recognize the extent to which what is happening is part of a social revolution and that, freed from foreign intervention, Vietnam, both North and South, ought to be in a position to determine its own future, with due consideration of the demands of peace and security in South East Asia.
- (vii) That all parties recognize the futility of military action for the solution of underlying political, social and economic problems of Vietnam and the necessity of massive and generous development programmes.
- (viii) That in order to relieve present international tension, the United States review and modify its policy of 'containment' of communism, and communist countries supporting 'wars of liberation' review and modify their policy.
- (ix) That every effort be made to bring the 700 million people of China through the government in power, The Peoples' Republic of China, into the world community of nations in order that they may assume their reasonable responsibility and avail themselves of legitimate opportunity—to provide an essential ingredient for peace and security, not only in South East Asia, but throughout the entire world.
- (x) That another cease fire be mutually and promptly agreed upon, of sufficient duration to serve as a cooling off period and as an opportunity for testing possibilities of negotiation—with a considerable enlarged unit of the International Control Commission (India, Canada and Poland) to ensure that cease fire commitments are honoured.

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While the Editors have endeavoured by all available means to secure a complete and accurate record, they are aware that some unavoidable or inadvertent errors or omissions will almost certainly be found, and for these they offer their sincere apologies.

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