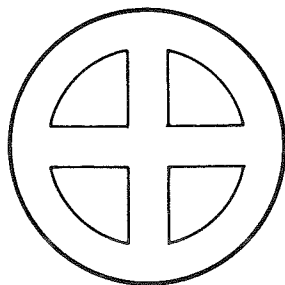


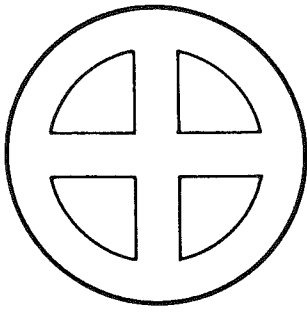
C-1916

KUHF Radio Interview with Robert Jungk



Lutheran Brotherhood Colloquium on the Church in Future Society

The Woodlands Inn, Houston Texas • January 29 - February 2, 1979



Lutheran Brotherhood Colloquium on the Church in Future Society

The Woodlands Inn, Houston Texas • January 29 - February 2, 1979

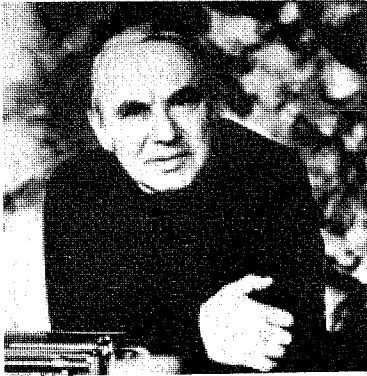
The Lutheran Brotherhood Colloquium on the Church in Future Society was a conference of 250 Lutheran leaders and ten nationally-known futurists. It was the first such event ever held by Lutheran Brotherhood, a fraternal benefit society serving Lutherans nationally, and was the result of consultations with several U.S. Lutheran church bodies. Among the concerns which were expressed by the church bodies in these consultations was the need for more disciplined emphasis on anticipated future changes as they influence congregational life.

The purpose of the Colloquium was to increase awareness of anticipated future change so that appropriate planning can be effected to strengthen the Lutheran church, especially at the congregational level.

All U.S. Lutheran church bodies were invited to take part in the planning, and nine participated by sending representatives, including six national presidents. Ten Lutheran church bodies were represented among the participants in the Colloquium.

The Colloquium was organized around five themes:

	Theme	Presentors
Monday	The Reality of Change	Alvin Toffler
Tuesday	Problems of the Future	John Platt Theodore Gordon Jürgen Moltmann
Wednesday	Human Values & Potential	Willis Harman Jean Houston
Thursday	Defining the Task	Warren Bennis Hazel Henderson Robert Jungk
Friday	The Role of Leadership	Harlan Cleveland



Robert Jungk

Professor of Planning Sciences, Technical University and Berlin Center for Futures Research, Berlin, Germany; Director of Mankind 2000 International, Vienna, Austria

As a teacher, writer and researcher, Dr. Jungk has focused his efforts on establishing grounds for future hope. He states: "What threatens to tear us apart today may soon find a new harmony within a different framework." He has deliberately sought out signs, trends and personal experiences which point away from present discontents toward a better future. While in Hiroshima in 1960 making a film about atomic weapons, a bomb victim told him: "Now you protest against the bomb, but it's too late. You always begin too late." Jungk suddenly realized that he had spent his life protesting against things that had already happened.

This and other experiences influenced a number of future-oriented projects, one of which culminated in the formation of a project known as Mankind 2000. The Quakers and others sponsoring this project organized a conference that brought together a group of international thinkers to look at the future and the problem of developing a favorable vision of a peaceful world. The conference was jointly sponsored by the Peace Research Institute in Oslo and the Institute for the Future which Jungk had founded in Vienna.

He continues to have a deep conviction that ordinary citizens must be involved in planning the future and is interested in using their imagination to develop new social inventions. To do this he has organized a number of "future-creating workshops" to encourage people to think about the desirable future and not just the probable or possible future. Although he worries about the problems of the future, he also reflects optimism when he states: "I believe that there is no problem in the world that is hopeless. If you combine anticipation with imagination and if you don't attack the thing frontally but ecologically, you should be able to devise a possible solution. We must rehabilitate public understanding and appreciation of the visionary. We ought to give him back the prestige and importance he had in classical and ancient times."

Dr. Jungk has written numerous articles and books which have been published in English and twenty-three other languages. His books include: *Tomorrow is Already Here*; *Children of the Ashes: The Story of a Rebirth*; *The Big Machine*; *Mankind Two Thousand*, 2nd ed.; *China and the West: Mankind Evolving*, Jungk et al; *Brighter Than a Thousand Suns*; *The Millennium Man*; editor, *Models for a New World* (16 volumes); *The Everyman Project*. His most recent book, *The New Tyranny: How Nuclear Power Enslaves Us* (to be published in Spring, 1979) discusses the political implications of the use of nuclear energy.

KUHF Radio (Houston) Interview with Dr. Robert Jungk

Professor of Planning Sciences, Technical University, Berlin, Germany; Director, Mankind 2000 International, Vienna, Austria.

Interviewed at the Lutheran Brotherhood Colloquium on the Church in Future Society, January 29 - February 2, 1979.

INTERVIEWER: I'm Chris Dede, a member of the Futures Research faculty at the University of Houston at Clear Lake City. I'm at the Lutheran Brotherhood Colloquium on the Church in Future Society and with me is Professor Robert Jungk, Professor of Planning Sciences at the Technical University of Berlin and Director of Mankind 2000 International in Austria.

I would like to begin by asking what the essential message is in the presentation that you're planning to make later today to Lutheran Brotherhood, or perhaps, in a larger sense, what the essential message is right now that you're attempting to take to people around the world about the future.

JUNGK: Before I came here I thought that my essential message would be to talk about human development as something necessary after an era of technological development. A number of speakers have done that in the last two days and I don't want to be repetitious. I will put it in my message but it will no longer be the center of my message. Therefore, I will shift the center of my message a little bit because I have listened to quite a number of participants here and I'll try to do something different, try to encourage them. I feel that we need encouragement more than anything else, encouragement in showing that there are signs of hope in the midst of crisis, that there is not a big chance, but still a chance, that we may be able to cope with all these crises coming up. I will try, if I can, in contrast to most of the other speakers, to speak less as an academician and somebody who's trying to repeat a message which has been written up in books. I would rather try to convey the impression of personal experience because, after all, before becoming a professor I was a journalist. I still am a journalist: I'm an observer. I try to go to the scene to meet the people and I hope that I can somehow bring this feeling of personal experience, how the world is today, how it afflicts you, and what the hopes of people are. I would like to bring that to the audience here because it needs it very badly. I have the feeling that they really are suffering right now from an information overload and maybe not enough humanness.

INTERVIEWER: Is it your feeling then, perhaps, that even those who are concerned about the future and who talk about

crisis are overwhelming the audience that they're addressing with feelings of despair, feelings of hopelessness and the feeling that it takes an expert to understand these situations and only by relying on experts can we get out of these situations?

JUNGK: Yes, that's exactly what I try to convey and also what I try to do in my work. I try less and less to give talks, and more and more to encourage people to give expression to their own hopes, their own fears and their own concepts. I would rather be like Socrates than Plato. I feel that's extremely important. Quite often I have found that one of the reasons why people feel they can't cope anymore with things, is that they don't get the opportunities to come even to the stage before you can cope with things -- before you can do anything -- to state their opinion and to speak about their hopes. There is so much bottled up in most people, they have become so passive. The mass media like this one where we are, here -- they have contributed to it. Many people who listen to us now have to listen and they don't have enough opportunities to talk back. Sure, we have some "talk back" programs but this is not the real thing. You would have to talk back to your friends, you would have to look into the eyes of people and have living communication. These places where you can communicate become less and less. Only yesterday, I heard on a talk show (Dick Cavett) how at the time when Sinclair Lewis was in his heyday (in the '20s), in the evenings people didn't go to movies, they seldom went to the theater, they didn't look at television, but they had a party almost every day. We have had an erosion of personal communication and we have had erosion of the opportunity to express your hopes, to share and discuss them with others. I try to re-establish that.

INTERVIEWER: If your message were to be heard and if we were more creative about using the media, how would you see the future changing if things really began to go right, if people let out these feelings inside of themselves, if people began to feel hope? Can you talk a little bit about which directions you think the world might then go?

JUNGK: I feel that it is not enough to talk, it's not enough to develop your own concepts and it's not enough to activate people in a mental sense (that they talk and bring out in words what they are doing). I feel that we need more and more what I call "social experimentation" on a smaller scale. We say that China is a social experiment. That is not a social experiment because experimenting means that you can change things -- if you make a mistake, that you can revise. It's very difficult to revise (and we see it now)

with 900,000,000 people. You can try to do it but this becomes a kind of revolution or counter-revolution. What I would like to see in this age of crisis would be more and more social experiments by the people themselves. That is to say that they try to start new schools, that they try at their place of work to find new relationships, goals and new ways to do business, that they would do something in their communities where they're cut off from each other. What I try to foster is not only social imagination but also social experimentation. Experimentation has one big advantage: you can revise, you can dare to do something that hasn't yet been done. Maybe the basis of your experiment is partly or entirely wrong, but still it is a learning experience and you can revise it.

We know from industry that you have to have prototypes first and if you have these prototypes, you then only develop slowly what might happen. I feel that the transition period that we're in (we certainly are in it and this has been expressed very forcefully here by most of the speakers) would become more real if the transition would not be the work of some intellectuals who impose their programs and concepts for transition, but the people themselves would work it out piecemeal -- that you would have a pluralism of new attitudes and new experiments. Out of this mix of many group and even individual experiments, something new would come up. I really want to see this change coming from below rather than from above. As long as it comes from above, there's always a danger of totalitarianism. I would also like it to be diverse rather than unique, after one pattern.

I feel this is actually happening already nowadays. As I visit many countries, I see again and again that people just start doing things. Very often what they try to do becomes a failure first, because they don't get enough support. They have to fight an accomplished state of affairs. They have to fight institutions which have worked for a long time and who know their methods and have enough financing. After some time, they fail. Still, the experience will be important. What I try to do now is to encourage institutions (like the Lutheran churches here) to give their support to such experiments so that they have a possibility of surviving. It doesn't mean that they would actually have to agree with all of the experiments, but they should see them as experiments which are not only done for the people themselves who do them, but for the institutions too, because these people who try experiments stick their necks out. They're willing to risk something. I just hope there will be more and more support for all kinds of new things being started. I feel, if you ask me about the media, that the

media can help immensely in supporting new things rather than running them down, rather than ridiculing them, rather than sensationalizing them. Many experiments fail because too much is expected of them too early. They are lionized, and this doesn't work out. Here again, the media might help if they really want to, and not profit from it just to make a story.

INTERVIEWER: Are there some areas now in the world where there are some particularly interesting social experiments going on or some creative ways that the media are being used, that you think might serve as models?

JUNGK: Yes, I would say that there are some areas in the world which are especially fertile. Probably the country where the most interesting experiments are tried all the time is Holland. This may have to do with the tolerance of the Dutch. The Dutch are willing to let all people try their own thing and they do it. You also get support there. For instance, the royal family in Holland supports one of the alternative technology communities, The Little Earth. You have very interesting social experiments. For instance, I recently met people in Haarlem who are taking care of runaway children. They don't give their names to the parents, but they let the parents know that their children are in good hands. They try to find out why these children run away and give them a purpose, a new kind of life. They try to give them a new goal.

Another area where you find many social experiments is in the Scandinavian countries, especially Denmark. It's very interesting that you now have a country where you have many social experiments beginning: France. This is remarkable because it's a break with French tradition. French tradition is Cartesian -- it is from the center to the rest of the country. We see now in France as a kind of a counter-movement, even more than in other countries, all kinds of new things being tried. Because there were so many social experiments and social innovations, there was even a meeting last year in Metz. The French have a very interesting magazine called "Autrement" which publicizes these things.

Naturally, the country that has always been in the forefront of social innovation and social experimentation is England. You have in England quite a number of experiments, or at least plans for experiments. For me, one of the most exciting ones is the one that has been formulated by the shop stewards and the workers of Lucas Industry (a big defense industry). Business began to decline because the armaments race (at least for England) couldn't keep pace anymore, so they couldn't spend so much on armaments. The

shop stewards and workers said, "Why don't we produce things which are helping people, rather than possibly destroying people?" They have developed a magnificent plan of technology in the service of humanity, of sick people, and of trying to get better traffic conditions. It's a big program. It's one of the many programs that started in England. I don't know how much of that exists in the States. I've read a little bit about it but I haven't seen enough of it. Germany is not very good at it, which is unfortunate. Germany has a very bad climate at this moment. Austria is a little bit better. We had a one-week meeting in Graz in November and there were 140 different alternative communities having a kind of bazaar, telling what they're doing, sharing experiences, and trying to help each other. It's a growing movement there.

INTERVIEWER: Are there ways that people who are interested in studying the future could act to encourage a climate for more social experimentation? Are there things that people who professionally identify themselves as concerned about the future could do to improve the chances of this occurring in the United States, in Germany or in any of the countries where it isn't yet happening?

JUNGK: Yes, I think that should be one of the main tasks for futurists -- to create a climate where the future is open and not closed, where the future is not dominated either by industrial interests, state power interests or ideological interests; but that the future is open, that futurists wherever they are could and should encourage invention and innovation. They should encourage imagination, but not only imagination in finding new concepts. Where I think imagination is most needed now is in the strategy -- how you can make these projects, these new approaches, real. I feel that politicians and people who actually have to make things happen have a deficit in imagination. The decision-makers do not only need facts, but they need also "imagination help" because they have their noses to the ground. They are looking from one thing to the next. They don't have the time to sit back and dream things up or develop new concepts. Not only the appointed planners should help, but also the people themselves and that's the potential that I'm trying to tap. I'm trying to tap the immense potential which I think is one of the biggest unused potentials in today's world: the imagination potential in common people, in non-academics. I find they are often more imaginative than the academics because they are less brainwashed. When I run one of my future workshops, where I try this out in the university, I'm sure that

somebody will come up with a new idea. And they say, "Well, I've recently read about it. This has been said before." Or, "That didn't work." Many people don't even let out a new idea because they wonder, "Am I original enough?" Whereas people who are naive don't ask. They let it pour out and by letting it pour out, very original and un-thought-of new ideas come out. I would like to see this kind of avalanche of ideas from below coming up to the decision-makers so that they have a valid choice.

The other thing is that the decision-makers who are always talking to the same group of people can get only ideas of these people, who are conditioned by their style of life, by their aims and their way of thinking. They have to reach to other people. I feel one of the biggest sources for new ideas would be the Third World. I feel that many new ideas could come from other cultures because we, in our culture, are in a kind of jail. We are in the jail of our conceptions, our ideas, our ways of thinking. We look at other cultures as something strange. Anthropology is mainly historical. You are interested in the history and you want to know about it, but you never think of grafting some of the ideas in other cultures on your culture. By looking at other cultures we somehow can evade this jail of our own conceptions and look to other cultures.

I remember the late E. F. Schumacher. He always said, "How is it that Indians (who are so poor) can have three festivities a week, despite being poor? They're much richer. They're poor in food but they have so much joy and pleasure in having these festivities." I wonder, why don't we look to the Indian and adopt certain things?

So what I also try to do is more and more to develop the following lines: we have had now, since the end of World War II, decades of help from the First World to the Third World. I feel that we are coming into times when we'll need the help of the Third World to the First World. That is, they have to show us again the necessity of beauty, the necessity of joys and the necessity of leisure. After all, these are older cultures than our civilizations, and we have imagined that our civilization (which we brought to them and which was taken up eagerly because it was something new) was the best thing that had ever happened. But I feel that by trying to import attitudes and ideas from Third World cultures into our culture, our culture can become more humane, warmer and more effective again. This would have another effect: it would give back to the people of the Third World the feeling of self-esteem. By giving them things all the time and teaching them all the time, we have destroyed their self-esteem. They felt as if they were backwards. We have

told them often enough that they needed our help. If we give them back their self-esteem, then they may again be willing to accept our help. What you see now, such as in Iran, has nothing to do with economics. It has to do with reassertion of their own values, the intrinsic values of the nation with a need for self-esteem. You will see that there are many cultures of the Third World who are now westernized and who are beginning to revolt against our style of life, against the export of our ways of life, and reasserting their own way of life.

We see this only in a destructive way. We will see the destruction of factories which have been built, the destruction of office buildings. This is not the only side -- we have to see what comes behind that. These are the birth pangs of a newly born culture which has been suppressed, put in the background for many years. I know some people revolt against it -- yesterday I had a discussion with John Platt and he said, "I wouldn't like to have Islamic values." We don't have to take over wholesale these other attitudes, but we could marry them, we could graft them on our culture. The best and most interesting development in agriculture has been the grafting of different plants to each other. The famous French wine comes from American grapes; very few Americans know that. The best champagne is grown from American grapes which were imported in 1909. And it's still French wine! We can still have American or western European products but we may need the help of other grapes -- other strains from other parts of the world.

INTERVIEWER: For those of us who are, perhaps, trapped in the jail of western perceptions or overtrained in certain aspects of perceiving society, are there some books or articles, some experiences that you would recommend for people who are interested in learning more about social experimentation and in learning more about the different types of cultural hybrids that may be able to be formed?

JUNGK: Yes, but I couldn't quote them right out of my memory right now. It comes not so much out of books, it comes out more in magazine articles, because books are always too late. I mean, I will have a book out in May here and it has taken 2½ years of translation and change -- then it's not topical enough any more, so you have to add to it. Most books suffer from a time lag -- at least the books which are topical. Sure there are the eternal books, but these are very few. Naturally the books by Schumacher had a great impact on Europe and you know them here already (like Small is Beautiful). I feel that much of what I have been talking about is not yet so much put down in print. It is in the area of talking, of letters, of people meeting. It is not yet codified. I would hesitate to codify it too early.

That's another thing. You asked, "Could you give us models and advice?" Sure, models and advice are always good. I said before that we need advice from the Third World. But advice is only good as long as it triggers your own creativity. I'm afraid that if you take wholesale what other people are telling you, this will always be wrong. What I say here, I only use to trigger new ideas in those who listen, even to provoke resistance to it if I say something that is exaggerated. I feel the most important thing we have to do nowadays is to encourage people to trust their own ideas, imagination, creativity, and their own power of expression -- to give up trying to teach them, give up trying to form them, give up seeing them only as consumers, as receptacles. This is really a change in attitude.

Like most of us, for many years when I didn't feel well or felt weak, I tried to mask it. I gave the impression of false perfection. I've given that up because I have found that it is not honest, that it is not good to pretend, it's not good to run around with a mask. It is much better if you talk to other people to show your imperfection because that gives them the opportunity to help you to perfect yourself. You must give the person with whom you talk a chance to add to what you are doing, and not just admire, or stand there and be stunned. In mass media, I would like to have new speakers who sometimes stutter and correct themselves. People who are watching television expect perfection, but at the same time the perfection they see there (of people who talk fluently, very intelligently, who rarely miss a word, who always seem to be sure of themselves) takes away from them the courage to do something for themselves because they say, "How can I ever reach such perfection? How can I ever even try to emulate such people?"

As I said at the beginning, I see my own task more and more as an encourager of the potential in other people rather than as a persuader, rather than as a prophet, rather than as a visionary. I feel (and this may be a vision) that the biggest power source which is largely untapped is the power in literally hundreds of millions of people who have become listeners instead of doers, followers instead of autonomous persons. This trend should reverse and I think it will reverse because the uneasiness of people, the frustrations of people come partly because they chafe under this condition, they want to do something themselves, they want more self-administration, self-expression. What are we going to do to liberate them from the oppression of the experts, the knowledgeable people, the leaders? How are we going to have a second revolution? I feel, and I said it in 1976 when we presented our reports of the Club of Rome in Philadelphia,

that actually this kind of revolution that I'm talking about started in the States (in Berkeley) in the '60s and has been disowned by the Americans more or less. It has spread all over the world and is still spreading. I hope the Americans will one day recognize that this trend toward more self-expression and fighting against being mutilated and led, may be the one big contribution by America in the end of the 20th century.

INTERVIEWER: So your advice to the listeners would be to turn off the radio, to look inside themselves, to feel some pride and self-worth, some belief in their own creativity and to go out and begin to build, on a small scale in their own community through experimentation, the kind of future they want. Is this a fair statement?

JUNGK: Exactly. Only I would add one thing: not only look inside themselves, but also talk about what they have seen inside themselves and what they feel. I don't want this to become a kind of narcissistic enterprise, but a kind of communal enterprise where you can share yourself with others again, where you have the courage to go the person whom you never dared to talk to and say, "What do you thing about that?" Where people are not only allowed but encouraged to break through the self-imposed frontiers of decorum.

There've a very interesting experiment going on in Paris. The end of the new buses are done in such a way that people don't sit separated, but they sit in a half circle. Since that has started, people have begun to talk. It's a kind of a seminar and there are thousands of seminars rolling through the streets of Paris when the people go to work in the morning and when they come back from work, just by a new arrangement in seating. It's as simple as that.

INTERVIEWER: Hopefully we'll be creative enough to find some simple approaches that will help us to do much the same kind of thing in the United States.

JUNGK: Well, you're one of the most inventive nations in the world and I'm sure if you shift some of the ingenuity which has gone into technological innovations to social innovation and social invention, then you certainly have a great century ahead of you.