

# Concordia Theological Monthly



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## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### CATHOLIC CONTROVERSY ON CHURCH AND STATE

*Theology Today* (January 1959), under this heading, discusses present-day Roman Catholic views on church-state relationships. The article is written by Antonio Márquez, for twelve years a member of the Jesuit Order and now editor of a Spanish journal for cultural studies in Madrid. In our country Father J. C. Murray, S. J., has recently been trying to accommodate the traditional Roman position to the special problems of American religious and political pluralisms. Márquez reaches the conclusion that "the long-accepted and clearly formulated position of the Roman Church has not been changed or modified." On the basis of recent pronouncements by Cardinal Ottaviani, assessor of the Holy Office at the Vatican, he states:

The Roman Catholic doctrine in the light of the teaching of the Church has not changed; the split, therefore, must be taken as purely sectarian in the technical sense of the word. The union of the Church and the state . . . is definitely a matter of the essence of the Roman Church. That essence implies: first, the supremacy of the spiritual over the temporal, meaning the supremacy of the Church over the state; second, the union of the Church and the state; third, a privileged position of the Roman Church when there are other churches within the state; fourth, the toleration of other religions only because of political reason. Any contrary line of reasoning may appear excellent, but is not Roman. Murray's articles are the expression of a Roman Catholic theologian working with non-Roman Catholic presuppositions. His study is, therefore, irrelevant from the point of view of Roman Catholic principles and life. His doctrine cannot be taken as the doctrine of the Church, but is a doctrine of his own and, consequently, a sectarian doctrine."

In his editorial comment Dr. H. T. Kerr, Jr., remarks: "This article will be of special interest at this time as the newly elected Pope begins his ecclesiastical career as John XXIII." JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

### RETURN TO BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

Under this heading Dr. W. F. Albright of Johns Hopkins in the *Christian Century* (November 19, 1958) urges a return to Biblical theology. The general contents of the article have been well summed up editorially as follows: "Archaeology has set the Bible—the whole Bible—once again at the center of history. Let Christianity draw new strength from it!" Dr. Albright does not advocate a return to the

traditional teaching of conservative Christianity. He writes, for example: "It must be emphasized, however, that vindication of the historicity of the Bible and clarification of its meaning do not involve a return to uncritical belief in 'verbal' inspiration and do not support an 'orthodoxy' which insulates the Bible from the real world of today. The Bible must be judged as literature and history by exactly the same canons as we use in studying similar nonbiblical literature, but not by arbitrary standards imposed on it by dogmatic liberals or conservatives. Extreme views are alike unsatisfactory; the truth lies in the middle." But he adds: "In any case the Bible towers in content above all earlier religious literature; and it towers just as impressively over all subsequent literature in the direct simplicity of its message and the catholicity of its appeal to men of all lands and times." Other statements of the author read: "Essential though science is in the life of our world, it cannot suffice: man does not live by bread alone. Besides, few people quite realize how insecure the hold of the scientific method on mankind actually is. Whole areas of psychology and sociology are built on foundations of sand." Again: "In the center of history stands the Bible. The latter has in many respects suffered more from its well-intentioned friends than from its honest foes, but it is now being rediscovered by the labors of archaeologists and philologists. We are rapidly regaining our balance after generations of bitter controversy." There are in the article many other statements that merit quoting, but which we must pass on account of lack of space. While the conservative Bible student cannot agree with many of Dr. Albright's views, yet on the whole he must hail the article as both refreshing and helpful.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

#### BRIEF ITEMS FROM NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL

*Kansas City, Mo.*—Strong Lutheran colleges help build a strong Lutheran Church, a leading educator of the denomination said here.

Speaking at the 45th annual meeting of the National Lutheran Educational Conference, Dr. Evald B. Lawson in a presidential address said that while "many colleges which once were church colleges have veered away . . . the Lutheran Church is very much in the business of higher education today."—Dr. Lawson, president of Upsala College, East Orange, N. J., paid tribute at the three-day meeting, January 4—6, to the pioneer pastor-presidents who established Lutheran colleges in America.

Dr. Gould Wickey of Washington, D. C., executive director of the conference, reported to the educators that Lutheran liberal arts colleges

are increasing in enrollment more rapidly than any other group of privately supported colleges. Dr. Wickey, who is also executive secretary of the Board of Higher Education of the United Lutheran Church in America, said that Lutheran schools are challenged to maintain their quality education. "In a day when our enrollments are climbing, when mass education is the vogue, we must do two things," he said. "We must give special attention to our admission policy, and we must develop a program of quality education." He asserted that automatic admission on the presentation of a high school diploma is not enough. "Such a policy compels our faculties to deal with mediocrity," he declared.

The education executive said that an intensive education in fewer subjects is to be preferred to an extensive superficial education in many subjects.

Organized in 1910 at Harrisburg, Pa., the NLEC is said to be the oldest inter-Lutheran agency in America. Its membership includes 18 theological seminaries, 29 senior colleges, six junior colleges, two deaconess training schools, five agencies and boards of higher education, and one educational foundation, representing nine Lutheran church bodies. The conference maintains, it was reported, a teacher placement bureau for both colleges and seminaries open to all Lutheran teachers, a graduate fellowship program for prospective teachers, and an educational news bulletin. Special study and research projects are carried on throughout the year.

Succeeding Dr. Lawson as president for 1959 is Dr. J. W. Ylvisaker, president of Luther College, Decorah, Iowa. Dr. Wickey was re-elected secretary-treasurer, a post he holds along with the office of executive director. Dr. Martin Neeb, president of Concordia Senior College, Fort Wayne, Ind., was elected vice-president.

A resolution adopted by the conference expressed the group's "conviction on the importance of the Christian teacher in achieving the desired excellence in Christian education."

"This conviction is prompted by (1) the great need for Christian teachers, (2) the necessity of providing opportunities for the continued personal and professional growth of Christian teachers, and (3) the crucial urgency of immediate financial resources for increasing and developing Christian faculties for today's educational world," the resolution said.

In support of this Dr. Wickey estimated the 1959 fellowship program carried on by the conference will include grants amounting to more than \$40,000.

The Lutheran educators also attended the first annual meeting here of the Council of Protestant Colleges and Universities, of which Dr. Clemens Granskou, president of St. Olaf College at Northfield, Minn., was elected secretary.

Next year's annual meeting of the NLEC is to be held in Boston, Mass., on January 10 and 11.

*Newport, R. I.*—First Lutheran Church here will join with the Lutheran Service Commission in providing a service center for sailors at the Newport Naval Base. The program will begin when the initial phase of a building project is completed sometime in the summer of 1959.

A survey conducted a year ago by Miss Berdella Sheggeby, fieldworker of the National Lutheran Council's Division of American Missions, showed that there were some 1,200 Lutherans in the Newport area. The majority of these were military personnel and their families. In July 1956 Navy Chaplain Oliver K. Olson, who is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, alerted the LSC to the need for some type of off-base program at this second largest naval installation on the East Coast.

The LSC, a joint agency of the National Lutheran Council and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, maintains some 38 centers for servicemen throughout the world.

*New York.*—Bishop Eivind Josef Berggrav, former primate of the State Lutheran Church of Norway, died at his home in Oslo on January 14, according to word received at National Lutheran Council headquarters here. The 74-year-old churchman, who headed the Norwegian Church for 14 years, from 1937 to 1951, had suffered from a heart condition for several years.

As spiritual leader of the resistance movement to the German occupation of Norway during World War II, Bishop Berggrav became known as "a symbol of free Christianity in the world." His stalwart stand against the Nazis led to his imprisonment for three years, from 1942 to 1945.

#### BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

*Bonn.*—A pamphlet written by Dr. Karl Barth of Basel, noted Swiss theologian, in which he suggested that East German Protestants adopt a policy of neutrality concerning Communism was assailed by a leading West German Lutheran minister here. Dean Hans Christian Asmussen of Schleswig-Holstein condemned Dr. Barth's position of the church's fight against Communist oppression as "the worst kind of neutralism."

"It is difficult to believe in the honesty of this neutralism," he wrote in *Christ and the World*, weekly paper published in Stuttgart.

Dr. Asmussen, a prominent theologian now retired, has held a number of important church posts. These include Lutheran provost of Kiel, Germany, chancellor of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID), and membership in the World Council of Churches' Commission on Faith and Order. He is an outspoken opponent of Communism.

Dr. Barth expressed his views in a 45-page pamphlet issued last November by a church house in Basel. Entitled *Letter to a Pastor in the German Democratic Republic*, it was written in answer to a series of questions sent to him by an East German pastor. In the booklet the Swiss theologian wrote that the "American way of life" represents a greater danger to Christians than Communism. He said that trying "to pray away" the East German Communist regime required accepting before God the responsibility for such a prayer.

"Might you not fear that He might grant your prayer in the frightful fashion of letting you awake one morning among the fleshpots of Egypt as a man bounden to the American way of life?" he asked.

Professor Barth also wrote that the East Germans had nothing worse to fear than "liberation in accordance with the ideas of (Chancellor Konrad) Adenauer."

While he denounced life in the West, the theologian did not express any admiration for life under the Communists. He described oppression and persecution as "useful sources" to purify the church of its complacency and self-assurance. He contended that adversity and suffering were "God's tools" with which He bestows salvation and that His "blows" must be endured.

Speaking of "open totalitarianism" in East Germany and "creeping totalitarianism" in the West, Dr. Barth implied that the latter was a greater evil. Some German churchmen have interpreted the pamphlet as being a plea for ending all resistance to Communism, while not urging active support of Communist leaders.

Professor Barth was a leader of Protestant resistance to Hitler and the Nazis while teaching at Bonn University, from which he resigned in 1934. He left Germany in protest against the Nazi regime.

Officials of the Evangelical Church in Germany have announced that there would be no formal protest to Dr. Barth's views, although they had aroused widespread discussion among leading churchmen.

*Northfield, Minn.*—Plans for a new "church arts" magazine were drawn here by a 10-member editorial board of the intersynodical Lutheran Society for Worship, Music, and the Arts. The board, meeting

at St. Olaf College, decided on policy, format, and assignments for the scholarly journal, which will deal with music, art, and liturgy and their combined relationship to the church.

To be known as *Response*, the magazine will be published quarterly for clergymen, church musicians, and educators. The first issue is tentatively scheduled for May. Editor of the magazine will be Dr. Walter E. Buszin, a member of the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

*Buenos Aires, Argentina.*—The motion picture *Martin Luther* was given a "Class 6" (most objectionable) rating here by the cinema criticism service of Argentine Catholic Action. This rating bans the movie for all Roman Catholics in the country. Distributor of the film biography of the 16th-century German Protestant Reformer is Lutheran Church Productions, Inc., New York.

*Toledo, Ohio.*—The Ohio Supreme Court refused to review the case of a woman who sent her child to a public school although her divorce agreement called for sending the girl to a Roman Catholic parochial school. No debatable constitutional question was involved in the case, the Supreme Court ruled and on this ground turned down a request by the father for a ruling on an Eighth District Court of Appeals judgment which also had upheld the mother's action.

John W. Hackett, Jr., an attorney, had initiated the action against his divorced wife, Mrs. Gloria Hackett, in Domestic Relations Court here. He asked the court to hold Mrs. Hackett in contempt for failing to live up to their divorce agreement. Judge Paul W. Alexander rejected the request of Mr. Hackett, a Roman Catholic, on the grounds that the agreement was unenforceable and violated constitutional guarantees of freedom of religion. To require Mrs. Hackett to send their seven-year-old daughter to a Catholic school would be forcing her to support a particular religious faith, Judge Alexander ruled.

After the Court of Appeals upheld Judge Alexander, Mr. Hackett appealed to the State Supreme Court.

Mrs. Hackett had removed her daughter from a Catholic school and entered her in Toledo public school, although her 1956 divorce decree provided that the child should be reared a Catholic. The parents had entered a premarriage agreement in which the mother promised that the child would take Holy Communion, be confirmed, and attend services in the Catholic church.