

# A Tolerable Living for Everybody

(Continued from Page 1)

Ghana, East and West Germany, politicians from Kenya and Puerto Rico, lawyers from Guatemala, the Argentine and Lebanon; a superintendent of prisons from Ceylon; a bank manager from New Haven and a biophysicist from Pittsburgh; engineers from Taiwan and Belgium; university presidents, social workers, architects, journalists, not to forget Mrs. Monica J. Sojawa of Tanzania who described herself simply as "housewife."

An impressive amount of technical knowledge and a vast experience in public affairs were thus available to the Conference on Church and Society and through the conference to the 214 member Churches of the World Council for their own guidance and as background material for the Fourth Assembly of the WCC at Uppsala, Sweden in 1968.

For the Geneva conference was not convened so that the church could speak to the world but precisely in order that the world could inform the churches, explaining the present plight of mankind and suggesting remedies. Thus briefed, the churches would be better placed to remind their membership of the solemn obligation to succor the suffering everywhere by supporting structural changes in national economies and political regimes, by devising strategies of effective and long range aid and by appealing to all mankind for a new sense of human solidarity by reason of its common creation and common destiny.

It is now widely believed that for the first time in history the benefits of civilization and a tolerable standard of living can be made available to the whole human race through the application of man's inventive powers. How to stimulate throughout the world the will to such a prodigious goal was a more than passing challenge to the World Council's Conference on Church and Society.

Thus the first difference between the work of the Geneva conference and the Vatican Council's pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World emerged, though very many of the statements of the two assemblies were remarkably parallel, their stance was

## Prayer Amendment Opposed

(Continued from Page 1)

some shreds, some scraps of piety and that that piety should be encouraged as a most helpful and possibly an indispensable means to inculcate moral and spiritual ideals.

Father Drinan asked the Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Amendments:

"Why is it... that 48 members of the U.S. Senate introduced... a resolution to seek to do that which is directly opposed to the best judgment of virtually all of the religious leaders and denominational groups in the nation,

"Why have these 48 Senators subscribed to a resolution seeking to accomplish an objective which the leading Churches and Synagogues in America have vehemently repudiated as unwise and unconstitutional?"

"For what reason do 48 Senators seek to appear more pious than the Churches and Synagogues than the Supreme Court?"

Father Drinan's reference to opposition from educators was in much the same vein.

"It is also distressing to note," he said, "that I know of no professional organization of educators which would endorse an amendment to the Constitution which would permit the recitation of prayers in public schools.

"By what process of reasoning, therefore, do 48 Senators think that they can or should propose an addition to the curriculum of the schools of this nation which has not been requested and indeed, has been rejected by the vast majority of the public school educators of America?"

Father Drinan said the public schools are falling down in an area which is open to them — "Teaching about religion." He said this "non-treatment of religion" from the objective stance is a "thunderous silence" which he greatly laments, yet which provides a much more effective way to inculcate moral values than through perfunctory prayer exercises in the schools.

He states that the public school has as one of its tasks the advancement of community understanding in the face of serious religious differences.

"But the public school cannot carry out this task," he added, "unless it can teach children to learn to understand, appreciate and respect the religious differences of those around them. Clearly, this respect cannot be developed if there is a blackout of discussion or even of recognition of religious differences in the schools which future American citizens attend for the first 17 years of their lives."

different. The Council declaration was the Church of Rome teaching, offering its modest word of analysis and counsel. The conference posture was one of listening, of learning as against later, more solemn utterance.

It should be promptly noted, moreover, that the Vatican Council's discussions spread over four years. Despite the collaboration of many experts with the under-staffed World Council office in the planning committee since 1962, the reports issued here largely represent two weeks of intense work just concluded.

Documents of the World Council, it must be further recalled, "have only the authority of their inherent wisdom" — to quote the late Archbishop Temple of Canterbury, one of the World Council's founders. The motion for adoption in each instance was: "That this report be received for inclusion in the General Conference report, and that its conclusions be adopted by the conference and transmitted to the World Council of Churches and its member Churches for their study, consideration and appropriate action."

Nevertheless, there is the common conviction, assumed in many reports and articulated in very many speeches, that religion is inevitably related to the world's work, shape and direction; that Christianity has to do with this life also; that ignorance, or worse, apathy in the face of widespread squalor, is treason to the Gospel message of brotherhood.

To be sure, religious truths and Gospel insights do not supply ready answers to complicated technical questions nor necessarily assign a single means to an agreed goal. As the final "message of the conference" asserted: "Our Christian faith provides us with a common foundation, basic attitudes and common objectives for our service to society; it does not produce an easy consensus on specific social issues." And yet, the message continued, "we are committed to working for the transformation of society."

The tradition of pietism, of religion as a "world-escaping" mechanism was not present at the Geneva conference, although on occasion an Orthodox spokesman would deplore the activist emphasis, reminding all of the eschatological dimension of the Christian faith, a valuable service but a gesture, one suspects, designed also to cover an unfamiliarity with technical issues.

There was at the conference an awareness that too often and too widely have the churches been identified with the status quo, the defenders of a narrow nationalism or entrenched privilege, as expressed not least in racial superiority. Many, especially Americans, were mindful of William Stringfellow's biting phrase: "Christianity is concerned with religion not with life."

Speaking in place of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., detained in Chicago by race riots, Dr. Benjamin F. Payton, executive director of the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches, described the civil rights struggle as "but one part of the quest for freedom that has developed throughout the world."

In addition to involvement there was at the Conference on Church and Society a public admission of the need of greater communication between theologians and natural and social scientists in an effort to establish, first, a mutually understandable vocabulary and secondly, to acquaint theology with its urgent, contemporary issues of interpretation. "Theology, as a part of its basic task of ex-



ARCHBISHOP ALEXIS voice from Russia

pressing faithfully in our time the meaning of God's revelation, continues to reexamine its own formulations in the light of new social experience which Christians share with all men," one section report asserted.

At Geneva the judgment of R. H. Tawney is now unknown. Speaking of the transition from feudalism to early capitalism, the Anglican Professor of Economic History at the London School of Economics wrote: "The church ceased to count because the church ceased to think."

One minor benefit of the technological revolution (but one of crucial importance for the conference) was the provision of simultaneous translation in five languages to make immediate communication available to people of diverse cultures.

The participants at the Conference on Church and Society opted for (or were assigned to) one of four sections, each considering an aspect of the effects of the world-wide technological revolution. Speaking in most general terms, the scope of the four sections was respectively economics, politics, international relations and fourthly, sociology and culture. The sections, after initial common meetings, were subdivided into smaller groups of about 20 for easier debate.

A suggestion during the preparatory stage of the conference for a separate section on theology and social ethics was rejected as constituting a conference within a conference and in hopes that theological considerations would be present during discussions, aided by a period of common Bible study each morning. From the membership of the four sections a working group of 20 was drawn by invitation to supply the theology apposite for the separate reports and to formulate a statement on the general theological issues of the principal theme to be presented for amendment and adoption by the conference. A similar process was employed for a second working group on Christian Action in Society and a third to assess the potentialities of the Technological and Scientific Revolution.

Early in the conference plenary sessions were devoted to major address on the multiple aspects of the main theme. Presented by the key personalities of the conference, these papers served to explicate and illumine the issues and to provide a catalyst for the preliminary discussions in the sections.

The logic of the program, the efficiency of its operation, the freedom of debate under strict control of parliamentary procedure strongly impressed the former Director-General of UNESCO, Dr. Vittorino Veronesi, one of the Roman Catholic observers, who noted admiringly the Anglo-Saxon inherit-

ance of the World Council. Such a generalization should not be allowed to obscure credit for the Trojan effort over the years of the indefatigable Dr. Paul Abrecht, the most unpublicized leader of the ecumenical movement, who as organizing secretary had the principal responsibility for the conference and deserves the chief applause for its success.

In two weeks of active, sometimes aggressive discussion, continuing until ten o'clock each evening a fast quantity of words were lost, some wise even profound, some novel, some polemical, some simply silly. Eventually the flood of talk had to be summarized and synthesized and put on paper. The result was the section reports, substantial and comprehensive documents of ten to twenty thousand words, whose final literary form is in the hands of an editorial committee.

The Conference on Church and Society was a "terrific pedagogical experience" for the participants, observed Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, the World Council's general secretary in a final interview. The reference was undoubtedly to the shock experienced by the Westerners at the sharp and sometimes sage challenge to their ideologies, structures and practices by spokesmen from the developing countries.

On the evidence of the Geneva Conference, the period of the East-West tension is over. The conflict now involves the have-not peoples of the South of the globe stridently asserting their claims against the prosperous North. Enclaves of the Northern sphere, the human rights and patience, sometimes bordering in masochism, of the Westerners, especially the Americans, under such attacks was admirable.

Nationalism is a heady wine flowing freely in the developing countries. It is deemed the essential means of self-discovery, self-identification, self-assertion. With it goes a determination to overturn, by violence if necessary, the prevailing economic and political structures, considered suffocating remnants of a colonial past.

Especially the Latin Americans voiced this position most shrilly. "The established order is an affront to God and man," declared Dr. Gonzalo Castillo Carreras, executive secretary of the Commission on Presbyterian Cooperation in Latin America, at a plenary meeting. The speaker saw a new function for ecumenism, noting that "the lack of unity makes it impossible for all Christians to take part in the same religious rites" but that "Christians paralytic on both sides of unjust international relations which perpetuate underdevelopment."

Declared Dr. Emilio Castro, head of the Council for Evangelical Unity in Latin America: "In some situations it may be that the church feels obligated to use direct action, such as mobilizing the masses, even direct political pressures, so that certain necessary changes become a reality." Significantly, no mention was made of Chile's President Eduardo Frei, advocate of profound social transformations, but Father Camillo Torres, killed in ambush recently with a guerrilla band, was repeatedly praised. Such language reminded Professor Roger Mehl of Strasbourg of upheavals of the European revolutions of 1848, directed by the intellectuals and workers against the propertied classes in several countries.

Theology is expected to engender and sustain local ideologies useful to effect such social transformations. In the judgment of Dr. Richard Schull, Princeton Theological Seminary, the church should "provide the context in which people are set

free for and encouraged to accept this revolutionary commitment and are helped to work out a theological perspective on and an ethic for revolution."

But perhaps deeper than the tensions between the North and South of the globe, developed versus developing nations, was "the generations gap" as revealed during the conference, a most serious fact since youth constitutes half the world's population today. Gerald A. McWorther, a student from Chicago, told a press conference that he found it impossible to identify himself with his fellow adult Americans, all of whom belonged, he judged, to "the establishment" but that he felt at home with his contemporaries of whatever nationality or language.

Dialogue and cooperation with others, especially with the Roman Catholic Church, was repeatedly called for in the conference. The invitation was accepted and reciprocated in a principal address by Canon Charles Moeller, undersecretary of the Holy See's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and one of the eight Catholic observers at the conference.

Alluding to the highly successful joint discussions on social questions between experts from the World Council and the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, (reported in extenso in the current issue of Study Encounter, a publication of the World Council), Canon Moeller went further, arguing: "Collaboration between the secular community of men of good will and the churches should be based on a certain number of key principles which everyone can accept without being obliged to commit himself definitely for or against God."

Speaking to the topic "Recent Trends in Roman Catholic Social Thought," Msgr. Moeller appealed to the words of Pope Paul in his final address to the Vatican Council: "The Church of the Council is not content with reflecting on its own nature and on the contacts which united it to God. It is equally occupied with man, with man as he is present in the reality of our time."

Following Msgr. Moeller's presentation, the program provided for comments. Professor John C. Bennett, president of Union Theological Seminary in New York, noted the tremendous change in climate of Protestant-Catholic relations in the U.S., a change he attributed to Pope John and the Vatican Council, but a change, it might be noted, in which Dr. Bennett and his publication Christianity and Crisis have played no small part.

There was much expectation in the hall when Metropolitan Nikodim, head of the foreign office of the Moscow Patriarchate, rose to give his comments. They turned out to be an abridged form of a 15-page statement, a carefully drawn position paper, distributed to all.

Earlier Archbishop Vitaly Borovoy, representative of the Moscow Patriarch to the World Council, had recounted the opposition of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Bolshevik revolution: "It was a bitter and open struggle. As a result, the Church lost millions of believers." Nevertheless, "the overwhelming majority of the masses of believers, who remain true to Christianity and the Church... became a constructive element in the building of the new society on the new revolutionary bases, and thus an example to the clergy and hierarchy to write their 'life' and fate with the life of the people and to come to terms with what had happened." To general applause from the audience the archbishop added: "Our Western Christian brethren may and should draw from this a lesson for themselves."

Metropolitan Nikodim, after praising the social encyclicals of

the direction of Dr. Robert S. Bilheimer.

In its conclusion the International Conference on Church and Society called for the assignment of 2 per cent of the gross national product of each of the developed countries to be made available to the developing nations.

The spirit and goals of the Geneva Conference were admirably expressed in the concluding service of worship in a prayer recited by the Rev. Adeola Adegbola of Nigeria: "O God our Father, we pray for Thy church, which is set today amid the perplexities of a changing world, and face to face with new tasks—Ezphize her afresh in the living Spirit of Jesus. Bestow upon her a greater responsiveness to duty, a swifter compassion with suffering, and an utter loyalty to the will of God."

In Metropolitan Nikodim's paper there followed an interesting analysis of the social character of property — the insistence dating from St. Thomas Aquinas in 13th Century that the goods of the earth are primarily for the use of all mankind — as indicating a Catholic leaning toward a regime of public ownership, a quasi-approval of socialism of the Soviet variety.

In any case, making allowances for denominational differences and varying historical experiences, "one can reasonably expect to achieve in the future far-reaching mutual understanding and agreement with regard to the solution in principle of all these (social and international) problems in a single all-Christian spirit," Metropolitan Nikodim concluded.

Yet after all the talk and editing of reports the gigantic problems of inequality among God's children remain. Indeed, instead of mere stagnation in the global economic situation, there seems to be regression. Charles Weitz, an observer of the U.N.'s Food and Agricultural Organization, confronted the section with the spectre of mass starvation with food production falling behind population increase.

Dr. Paul Prebisch, general secretary of the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development, declared flatly that the development decade "is approaching a real failure" with the developing countries losing more money through drops in the price of their raw materials than they gain through foreign aid. "We have to develop a moral concept, a moral imperative that will result in responsible policies by both the developed and the developing nations," asserted Dr. Prebisch. "Few recognize how short a time we have."

The conference was thrilled by Barbara Ward's call for a church lobby for the world's poor, a project outlined in the Vatican Council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World and advocated also by the Council of the Federation of Protestant Churches of Switzerland on the proposal of Pastor Andre Bieler, a professor of economics at the University of Geneva; and by the British Council of Churches and in a new campaign to be launched by the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. under

"Put upon her lips the Gospel of her Lord. Help her bodily to proclaim the coming of the Kingdom of God. Fill her with the prophetic scorn of tyranny, and with a Christlike tenderness for the heavy-laden and down-trodden, and give her a voice for those who have no one to speak for them. Bid her cease from seeking her own life, lest she lose it. Give her courage to proclaim the word of forgiveness, and faithfully to maintain the ministry of reconciliation. Thou has committed to her, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Police Quash Parish Raffle

Abington, Mass. — (RNS) — Harassment of "my men and their families" followed police action in closing down a church-sponsored raffle. Abington's police chief charged.

According to Chief J. Edward Murphy, a flood of verbal abuse followed department enforcement of the law barring raffles as a form of gambling. Closed down was a car raffle being operated at the fair conducted by St. Bridget's Catholic church. Chief Murphy said his action was "100 per cent right" and chided townspeople for criticizing the police.

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Never underestimate the power of a letter to Citizens for Education (CEF) which for "a fair share pupil" in American got it's start from a letter to the editor years ago.

I picked up the covering of the nation of the CEF's goal for last week. So glad out a St. Louis, Mr. and Mrs. and said:

"This all got started living room."

The Duggans to story in between the two day meeting that they along with friends, reacted to news report of a in May, 1959 by I remember "Shenan of Comm. (He's now C han, and archbishop more.) He'd war speech that a "thing" about it. It was in danger of ed out" of existence.

At Mrs. Duggan's a woman wrote a to the St. Louis Re san newspaper, in e what are we about this?"

An insurance ex cent Corley, answer ter, suggested, a those who wanted "thing" about it. It was in danger of ed out" of existence.

"The first meeti counting," Mrs. call "There's a harmful of us, and like such a huge ta

A second meetir brought more res Anthony Daly, a re mitted the little gro ed starting a which would fight parents' rights in th education for their

In mid June of group, the U.N. for Educational F nounced that it w ence and issued a port. Mail began from all over the c a citizens' moveme

Today, CEF co members in 1,000 throughout the lan

"We had a down address," Martin D ed, but a ver office was May's kit all the mailing was

CEF now has a fice in Washington, to open a bran in City this fall. Will claim a fulltime di mish Buckley, it i volunteer group, v leaders contributing ous amount of tim to the cause.

CEF can also ch role in recent leg has provided bus students in Ohio and Pennsylvania, loans in New Yor lege tuition grants sin and of course federal education was geared to hel garless of the sch

Non-Sectarian

From the "star leaders made it cl organization would sectarian one. Will ly, Catholic schools the largest segmen tion's independent were far from alon church-related sch the Lutheran, C formed, Episcopal, Adventist and othe well as many Jewis schools. Nor were t ful of the plight of pendent, private sc

The broad base port was well dem last week's conven

Keynote speaker tulate Lutheran n South Bend, Ind., bert E. Kabeitz. A speaker was Rabbi er, executive vice-national Ortho group, Agudath list

Main speaker at evening banquet Michigan Jurist an exponent, Judge J kees, who belongs tian Reformed chu Judge Felkens di serious obstacle to assistance to par pupils on the fede

Federal F

Said Wel

Ann Arbor — (F ernal movement education is "only ning," a Lutheran dent said here as educators to welco and actively assist and clarifying the proper role.

Dr. Martin Koeh cordia Teachers C River Forest, Ill. 600 delegates to se Lutheran Educat and National Lut Teacher League th cent surge of activi ernal government only because of its inadequate involve past."

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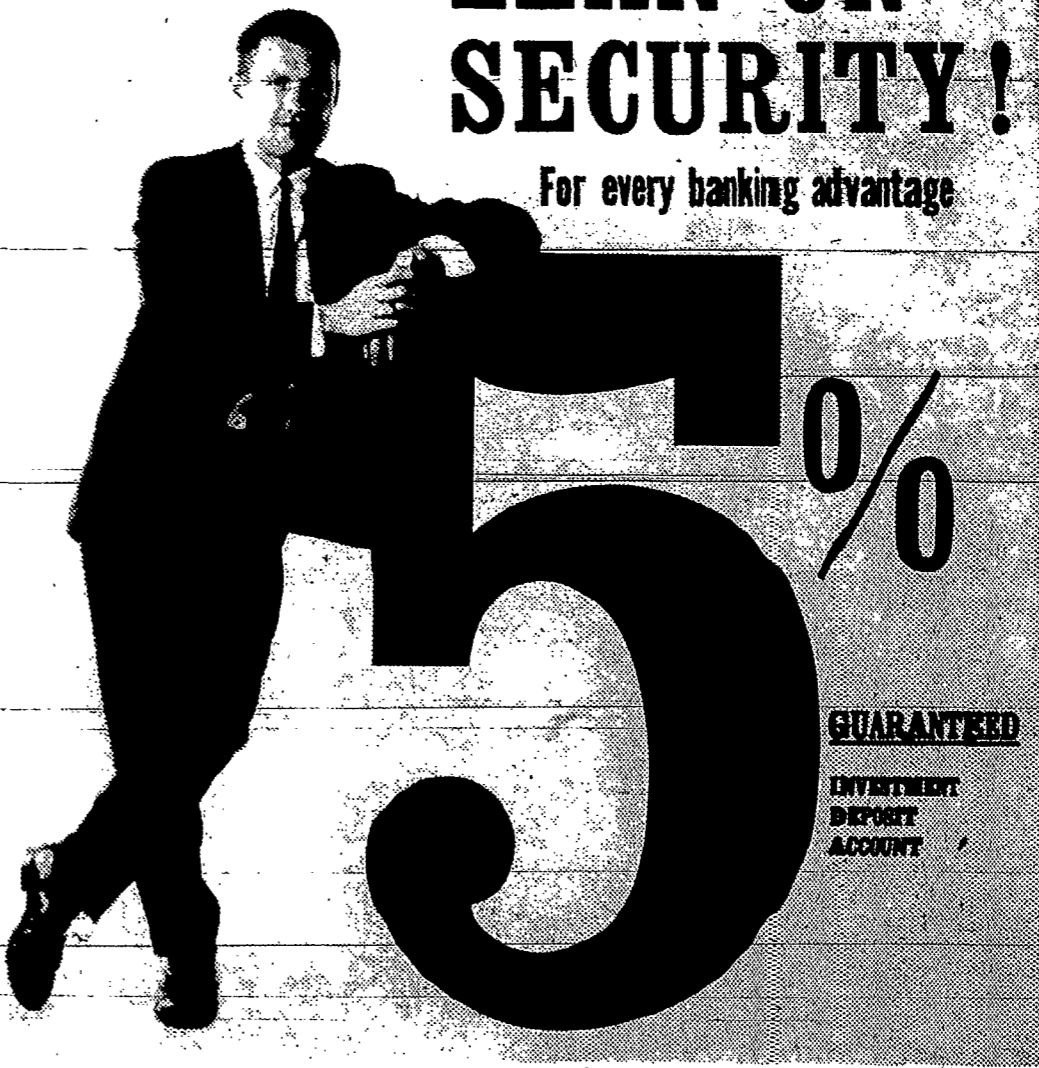
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