

THE PROGRESS OF PEOPLES

The Problem: Sharing the World's Goods

By Barbara Ward



The Encyclical "The Progress of Peoples" is full of challenges to the Christian conscience but probably the most specific is Pope Paul's blunt question: Are Christians prepared to tax themselves for the benefit of poor peoples in other lands?

Why taxation? Why not generosity? Why not alms-giving? Why not the traditional works of charity and mercy? The short answer is that these are voluntary, depending on the mood of the donor and in no society has private charity ever done enough or done it without disagreeable overtones of patronage and dependence. But the true answer goes deeper.

In modernized societies, in which vast riches are released and can be accumulated when science and technology, through capital, are applied to the making and selling of goods, the ordinary processes of production and marketing tend to concentrate the new wealth most highly among those who have capital to invest or who are endowed with considerable talents for organization and enterprise.

Taxation is one of the ways in which this natural tendency towards imbalance in the free market is offset by the redistribution of money from the more fortunate to the less fortunate citizens. Thus people with less money, health, talent or opportunity get a chance to prosper as full members of their community.

This is what Oliver Wendell Holmes, the great American jurist, meant when he said: "With my taxes I buy civilization." It is an observable fact in our world today that societies in which rich citizens evade or do not pay taxes—as in parts of

Latin America—social disorder and radical violence tend to take hold.

So what the Pope is proposing is a concerted effort, by way of what one might call a "world tax," to widen the world's distribution of wealth.

At present, the bulk of it tends to pile up in the North Atlantic sector where all the preconditions and advantages of prosperity exist—in temperate climate, rich soil, a skilled and not excessive population and an overwhelming accumulation of capital.

The market itself simply reflects and reinforces the imbalance. There is little "trickle down" into the rest of the economy because the community as a whole still lacks the civilizing institutions of organized sharing—taxation and the public education, health, sanitation and housing which taxes make possible. The world economy, like the Atlantic economy in the early 1900s, confronts a crisis of choice which one English leader in 1909 described in these terms:

"If we carry on in the old happy-go-lucky way, the richer classes ever growing in wealth and in number, the very poor remaining plunged or plunging ever deeper into helplessness, hopeless misery, then I think there is nothing before us but savage strife between class and class and its increasing disorganization with the increasing waste of human strength and human virtue."

The speaker was Winston Churchill and it was in part thanks to his efforts at the Board of Trade that Britain overcame this crisis and began to take seriously the government's improve the health, stabilize the employment and widen the opportunities of all its people.

The fundamental challenge the Pope presents to the Christian conscience is to transmute this liberating and civilizing domestic decision to the world level.

What are the chances of success? At present, Christians have to admit that they are pretty bad. The first reason for discouragement is that the various programs of economic assistance—our first rough sketch of a "world tax"—are all beginning to falter.

For the last 15 years or so, most Atlantic countries have contributed to aid. America's share, as a percentage of national income, has been lower than France's, higher than Germany's, about the same as Britain's. At the beginning of the 1960s, all the Atlantic nations increased their effort. Assistance, in the strict sense of grants and concessional loans, rose to some \$6,000 million a year. There it has more or less stayed.

As a percentage of national income it has fallen, however, from 7 of 1% in 1962 down to about one-half of 1% in 1967—since Atlantic income has gone on rising. And recently, the largest donor, the United States, has started to give less in absolute terms. American aid has fallen from about \$3,600 million in 1964 to less than \$3,000 million in 1967. For 1968, aid of only \$2,500 million is proposed and is already in trouble.

This decline underlines the second reason for discouragement—a general public lack of understanding of the role of assistance programs—a topic to which we must turn next.

ON THE RIGHT SIDE

She Wants to See More of Parish Priests

By Father Paul J. Cuddy



A recent letter from a good, but anxious woman, came to me in Honolulu:

"I read your column every week, and find it helpful and inspiring. Sometimes you write about things I don't understand, but I don't suppose that you are always writing for a 50-year-old housewife who reads only the daily newspaper and the COURIER-JOURNAL. Since you seem to be an understanding priest, I would like to cry a little on your shoulder.

"When you write about priests and pastors you always write as if they were the Good Shepherd, anxious about their sheep. I wish this were true.

"All the time I was a girl growing up in a small town, we had only one priest. Maybe he spoiled me because, as I look back, he really was a father of his flock. He knew everyone in the town, whether they were Catholics or Protestants. He was nice to everyone. He was very attentive to the sick, but he also would call on the well.

"Since I married nearly 30 years ago, I have moved several times, and always to big cities. Perhaps the size of the city parishes makes the difference. But I have been nearly 10 years in my present parish and active enough in the church, and we have had two pastors and many assistants.

"The assistants usually are young. Some of them come out with some pretty strange things in their sermons, but they are good with the young people and I am glad for this. But, most of them don't seem to know that people over 35 years exist unless we are a help in their programs.

"Both pastors have been good men who give us the routine services. We have Mass and confessions on schedule. The church properties are kept up and the finances are reasonable.

"But, in the 10 years we have lived here, only one priest has visited our home. That was when my husband had an attack and the doctor advised anointing. The assistant came promptly, and gave my husband the sacraments. But even though my husband was laid up for months, not one of the priests ever called or even inquired about him. Maybe I'm being petty in feeling hurt, but I am.

"Why don't more priests call on their flock? We call you 'Father' and we want to do so. But, I should think that a good father would know his flock, and care enough to take a personal interest in the people. I know priests are busy. But I think that if half the time our own parish priests give to TV and their own pastime were given to their parishioners, we'd be a happier parish.

"If I do mail this letter, I will

probably have an uneasy conscience. Forgive me if I seem so uncharitable."

We priests must be honest, and not try to gloss over what is often-times a real problem. So, after mulling over the letter, I sent this reply:

"Thank you for your letter. You don't sound like one who has an axe to grind, and no priest pretends there are not faults in our ministrations.

"I suppose one weakness of the pastoral setup in our diocese is that, unlike employees of Kodak or Xerox or Dav's Drug Stores, if we produce the minimum service for our people there is no higher-up who is likely to threaten our security.

"Thirty years ago I read in the METHODIST ADVOCATE: 'A home-visiting parson makes a church-going people.' Thirty-seven years ago Monsignor Francis Burns, our ethics teacher at St. Bernard's Seminary, remarked in class: 'Know all you can about your people. The more you know about them, the more you can help them.'

"Let's face the fact that TV and recreation—bowling, golf, etc.—are a double-hazard in parochial care. Sometimes priests become so immersed

in TV, golf, bowling, etc. that we neglect our people.

"On the other hand, visitation of the parishioners is doubly difficult because many parishioners are so hypnotized by the TV programs that a pastoral visit during a TV program is so unwelcome that the visited parishioners will not turn off the TV. Such a call becomes a frustrating frost, both for the priest visitor and the parishioners visited.

"The solution is simple: for priests to take time to visit their parishioners and for the parishioners to welcome them. While the solution is simple, the execution of it is not, so let's hit on something that may be helpful.

"Have you ever thought of joining the Legion of Mary or some such helping organization, and do hospital and home visitation? Many pastors I know are so burdened with administration and parish meetings, and assistants are so involved in youth-work, motion and communion, that they are less conscious of the need for family visitation.

"The Legion of Mary calls can do a lot to fill in the gap that parishioners deeply feel. Do think it over—and I hope you will act upon it."

Heart Transplant Morality Questioned by Theologian

Vatican City — (NC) — A Roman moral theologian, speaking in the Holy See's press hall but emphasizing that he spoke in a "purely personal capacity," has questioned the morality of Dr. Christian Barnard's heart transplants.

The theologian, Msgr. Ferdinando Lambruschini, said that a question revolves around whether the "donor"—and Msgr. Lambruschini himself put the word in quotes for reasons he was careful to explain—was really dead.

"The history of reanimation presents many cases of the reversibility of life in the cerebral cells hours and even days after an encephalogram is level," he said, referring to a commonly accepted indication of death based upon lack of activity in the brain.

"These cases were given as objections to Barnard, who admitted he did not know of them."

Msgr. Lambruschini, a professor at Rome's Lateran University and a regular contributor to the Vatican City weekly, L'Osservatore della Domenica, described the determination of the moment of death as "the biggest problem in the question of human heart transplants."

He said: "When Barnard was challenged by objections stemming from experiments of the reversibility of life in cerebral cells held dead for months, he said he was sure that heart excisions for his transplants were carried out on donors who were already dead. He added that he had acted according to his conscience.

"The first affirmation is of a strictly medical order and we leave its assessment to science. The second is of a moral order and does not seem to us convincing. We all must act according to conscience, but that must not be confused with arbitrariness."

'War Never Again'

New York — (NC)—In bowing out as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Arthur J. Goldberg has urged UN members to adopt the peace slogan of Pope Paul VI: "War never again."

Goldberg made the comment in a toast at a farewell lunch given in his honor. He said UN Secretary General U Thant is the "greatest exponent" of the Pope's slogan.

A LAYMAN'S VIEW

A Canary by Any Name Is Still a Bird

By Joseph Breig



After saying "Hi bird!" to our canary the other morning, the thought struck me that maybe my readers are getting a badly mistaken notion of what kind of chap I am.

Let me try to set the image straight.

I hold firmly that violence—sometimes even war—can be necessary at times in defense of justice. I reject the idea that nations should lie down and let aggressors walk all over them.

Personally, however, I am about the most non-violent person you will ever meet. Which brings me back to the canary.

The current canary is the successor of one we called Toppie, but has never been given a name—probably because our children are now grown up. That's why I call him simply "Bird."

Just about a year ago, Toppie fell ill. My wife, who has an inexhaustible fund of affection for all creatures, tried to doctor him, but he pined away to the point at which he couldn't even balance on a perch.

I took a look at poor Toppie and told Mary that to keep him any longer was mistaken kindness. He should be dispatched to bird heaven.

She asked wistfully whether the deed couldn't be postponed but at this point I knew what had to be done. I said firmly, "No; it's not fair to Toppie to wait any longer."

She went out in the backyard, and

I got Toppie into a box and took him to a pet hospital, where I said to the veterinarian:

"Look, my family and I have an emotional problem about this canary. Could you take over?"

He looked at me with sympathy and understanding, accepted the box, and said, "Certainly; just leave it with me."

He declined to be paid, and I was unable even to buy a new canary from him because he didn't sell them. But he directed me to a store that did.

I went there and consulted a young man in the bird department. "We have just two canaries that I know are singers," he told me, and pointed them out.

I went eemie-meemie and selected one.

The young man put the canary in a perforated box, rang up the sale, gave me my change, and cautioned:

Gary Mac Eoin

Genocide Threatens Africa

Although many nations of Africa have won at least nominal political autonomy in recent years, black Africans continue to suffer grave wrongs, mostly not of their own making. Such is the lesson of an appeal to the conscience of humanity by the executive committee of the conference of Catholic bishops of French-speaking West Africa.

"The unleashing of violence and hatred is," they assert, "escalating into genocide in the territories controlled by Portugal, in Rhodesia, in South Africa, in the Sudan, and in Nigeria." It is noteworthy that only in one instance is the group which threatens genocide black, while in all the victim is black.

For Catholics the world over, the situation in the Portuguese territories is becoming increasingly embarrassing. The recent condemnation by the Archbishop of Conakry of the Portuguese Catholic authorities for their participation in the regime's acts of repression has been renewed by a group of African priests in Paris.

Another disturbing development is the withdrawal from Angola of most of the missionaries of the United Church of Canada and the Church of Christ (U.S.). The reason given by a spokesman of the United Church is that the Portuguese government policy "is clearly directed to the elimination of all Protestant mission activity in Angola." Connivance or silence on the part of Catholics can only have a grave negative impact on the ecumenical movement.

The Catholic authorities in Rhodesia went clearly on the record, as did those of the Anglican and Presbyterian communions, against the decision of the break-away regime to hang a number of African nationalists. The reaction of members of the Catholic Youth Movement in neighboring South Africa seems, however, to be more typical of white Catholic sentiment. They demonstrated in

"That bird probably won't sing for maybe a week, until he gets accustomed to his new environment."

Which just goes to show you that heredity isn't everything.

Or is it?—because 10 minutes after I put him in Toppie's cage (after sterilizing it) the new canary was singing like the Metropolitan Opera.

Do you suppose it was because he sensed that he was in the home of the most peace-loving folks on earth—folks who even had to get a veterinarian to take care of Toppie?

Whatever the answer, young Anon: When I take the cover off his cage in the morning and say "Hi bird," he replies with a couple of special chirps which sound like "Hi, boss."

And even at 10 or 11 at night, if company comes in, he goes into a concert like a symphony orchestra in the Hollywood Bowl at dawn on Easter.

front of the Apostolic Delegation in Pretoria to protest Pope Paul's "interference," namely, his appeal for mercy for the condemned.

Against this backdrop of continuing discrimination by whites identified as Christians, one can better appreciate the tortured confusion of the parties to the conflict in Nigeria and of their neighbors. The gulf between the Moslem north and the Christian east has so widened that a continuance of the northern advance spells the genocidal extermination of the people of the east (Biafra).

It is tragic that Christianity, rooted in Africa since apostolic times, should be identified as an intruder religion because of its associations with colonialism, while Islam projects the image of an indigenous force.

The identification hurts not only the Biafrans but the black inhabitants of southern Sudan. The continuing pressures of the Khartoum government to make Sudan a completely Islamic state have been greatly facilitated by this climate of opinion both in Africa and in world sentiment. Here we have an absolutely clear violation of the most basic human rights, and the nations of the world, with an unanimity they lack on all other issues, turn the blind eye.

The absence, however, of a world reaction to the excesses of Moslems in Nigeria and the Sudan should surprise us no more than the absence of Christian reaction to the white racism of professed Christians in southern Africa.

The joint plea of the World Council of Churches and the Vatican for Biafra was an ecumenical first. And that was a pity. Had they earlier managed to express their common concern in situations in which specifically Christian interests were not threatened the impact of the appeal for Biafra would have been far greater.

A Gracious Place to Retire . . . THE Valley Manor
A Great Way to Live . . .

THE VALLEY MANOR
A new non sectarian retirement community, is being developed for those 62 and over who desire a more meaningful way of life. VALLEY MANOR offers one hundred and fifty modern, sound-conditioned apartments, each with full bath, kitchenette, spacious rooms air conditioned and heated for your comfort. . . . Feel secure twenty-four hours every day with on-premises nursing service with two call stations in your own apartment. A complete thirty-seven bed infirmary is also located in the building. A weekly maid service frees you from heavy cleaning, they even provide the linens, towels and pillow cases.

THE VALLEY MANOR
location offers you privacy, but not isolation. There is complete freedom to come and go as you wish. Downtown Rochester is only minutes away by bus, the eastern expressway two blocks. Inclement weather will not encroach on your visiting friends or enjoying the many activities of your choice right in VALLEY MANOR. There are many extra conveniences too: Twenty-four hour building security, in building parking, modern laundry room, plentiful storage, rooms for private entertaining, library, a chapel for services and meditation.

OCCUPANCY
of VALLEY MANOR is by purchase of a "Life Lease" with a "Monthly Maintenance Charge." The "Monthly Maintenance Charge" includes: Rent All utilities -- telephone -- two meals per day -- twenty four hour emergency nurse service -- infirmary care (details on request) -- weekly maid service plus linens, towels, pillow cases -- extensive hobby and crafts -- central TV antenna -- intercom -- parking -- wall-to-wall carpeting and drapes of your choice.

RESERVATIONS NOW BEING TAKEN

FOR BROCHURE WRITE: **The VALLEY MANOR**
Presbyterian Residence Center Corp.
1775 East Ave. — Rochester, N.Y. 14610

SALES OFFICE LOCATED AT:
Brighton Presbyterian Church
1775 East Ave. (near Winton Road South)
Call for Information — 442-6450