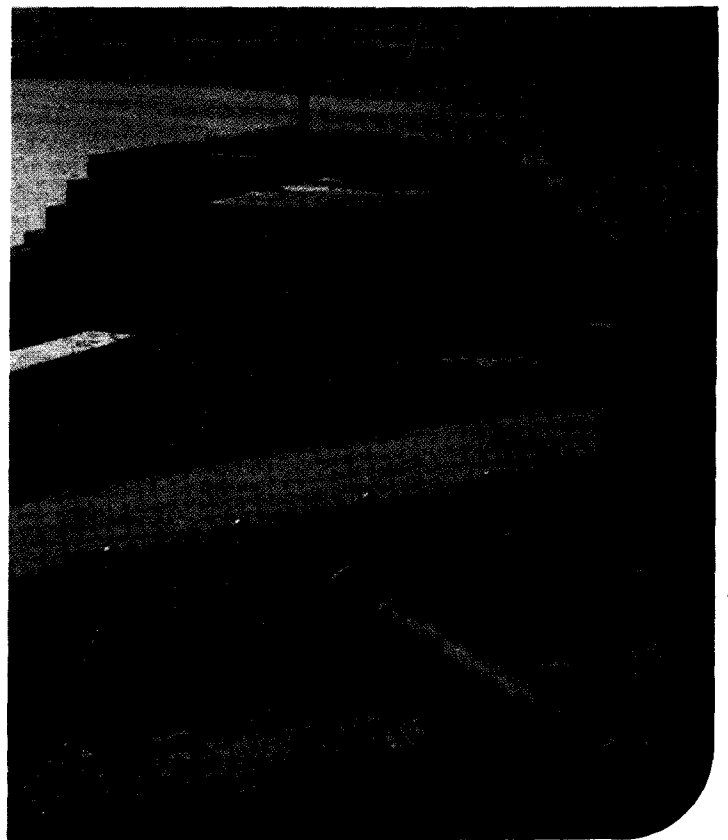


The Presbyterian Guardian

IN THIS ISSUE:

AND . . .



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Letters

Thanks for "Thorns and Firtrees"

Thank you for the heart-moving, soul-exhorting content of each *Guardian* that comes. We missionaries need it. Our thinking often times gets bogged down with the surrounding cultures. I think that of your American readers does too.

We were particularly delighted to read "Thorns and Firtrees in Vietnam" in the November issue. The circumstances related by Harvie Conn and the biblical truth he brings to bear sets forth an understanding that we ought all to have of what has and is going on wherever Communism gets control. Because this monster is a real threat to all our Orthodox Presbyterian and other Christian missions in the Orient, we ought to be in intercessory prayer for all the

thousands of members of our Lord's body, "as though we were bound with them."

I thought that nothing was so deplorable about the Vietnam conflict ending as it did as the aftermath that brought forth the comment that the war was over, so let's get on now with recovery. Some even said, Let's forget it! The blood of the saints cries to the Lord for vengeance. God forbid that the church of Jesus Christ should forget it.

We are both virtually sixty-eight and facing the prospects of retirement from our present situation as missionaries. I say "present," for otherwise we do not expect to retire from the Lord's service. What we do face, however, is a necessary parting from a lot of stuff and even some valuables. So, we thank you too for the editorial on Malachi 3:10. We are so encumbered that we do not think of the blessings our Lord promises but of those that will satisfy the lusts of the flesh.

Pauline O. Gaffin
Taichung, Taiwan

About Christian Government Movement

Possibly others will write about the news item "Christian Government Movement to end" (*Guardian*, December 1975), but a wrong impression is given in the following sentence: "This decision ends a long history of Covenanter activity to advance the 'Crown Rights of King Jesus' in the civil government." This must be prophecy, for, while this particular episode of activity has ended, such activity has been more or less in evidence over the years, at times intermitted and later resumed. A later sentence is more in accord with the facts: "The decision to discontinue synodical support of the CGM . . . does not represent a lessening of Covenanter concern for Christ's rightful authority to be recognized by the civil government."

A matter of misinformation: that discontinuance of direct financial support to CGM "was dictated by budgetary restrictions." Rather, the decision to discontinue such direct financial support came in 1972, with the extra-ecclesiastical nature and purpose of the organization prominent in the discussion.

Lester E. Kilpatrick, pastor
First R. P. Church
Beaver Falls, Penna.

New format New rates

The *Guardian* sports a new look on its cover, its titles, and even in the type style of the copy itself. We thought it was time for a change and we hope you like it.

The *Guardian* is also sporting new subscription rates. Regular subscriptions go up to \$4.25 a year (\$8.00 for a two-year subscription). Subscribers in club groups of ten or more will pay \$3.75 a year. All rates have been increased by 50¢ to cover increased costs of postage, printing, and everything else.

There's no real connection between the new format and the new rates except that both appear at the same time. Along with the new format and the new rates comes a new publishing schedule: eleven issues for the year instead of ten.

The *Guardian* editor does appreciate the interest and support of readers during the past few years. That support has grown enough to keep our rates stable for nearly four years, but finally inflation became too much. Even now, subscription income covers barely half the actual cost; the rest comes from contributions. You are urged to consider this need also.

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The responsibility of THE CHURCH in our new age

J. Gresham Machen

The question of the Church's responsibility in the new age involves two other questions: (1) What is the new age? and (2) What is the Church?

The former question is being answered in a number of different ways; differences of opinion prevail, in particular, with regard to the exact degree of newness to which the new age may justifiably lay claim. There are those who think that the new age is so very new that nothing that approved itself to past ages can conceivably be valid now. There are others, however, who think that human nature remains essentially the same and that two and two still make four. With this latter point of view I am on the whole inclined to agree. In particular, I hold that facts have a most unprogressive habit of staying put, and that if a thing really happened in the first century of our era, the acquisition of new knowledge and the improvement of scientific method can never make it into a thing that did not happen.

Such convictions do not blind me to the fact that we have witnessed astonishing changes in our day. Indeed, the changes have become so rapid as to cause many people to lose not only their breath but also, I fear, their head. They have led many people to think not only that nothing that is old ought by any possibility to remain in the new age, but also that whatever the new age favors

is always really new.

Both these conclusions are erroneous. There are old things which ought to remain in the new age; and many of the things, both good and bad, which the new age regards as new are really as old as the hills.

Old things worth retaining

In the former category are to be put for example, the literary and artistic achievements of past generations. Those are things which the new age ought to retain, at least until the new age can produce something to put in their place, and that it has so far signally failed to do. I am well aware that when I say to the new age that Homer is still worth reading, or that the Cathedral of Amiens is superior to any of the achievements of the *art nouveau*, I am making assertions which it would be difficult for me to prove. There is no disputing about tastes. Yet, after all, until the artistic impulse is eradicated more thoroughly from human life than has so far been done even by the best efforts of the metallic civilization of our day, we cannot get rid of the categories of good and bad or high and low in the field of art. But when we pay attention to those categories, it becomes evident at once that we are living today in a drab and decadent age, and that a really new impulse will probably come, as it has come so many times before, only through a rediscovery of the glories of the past.

Something very similar needs to be said in the realm of political and social science. There, too, something is being lost — something very precious, though very intangible and very difficult of defense before those who have not the

This essay is reprinted from The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, vol. 165, January 1933. Dr. Machen was Professor of New Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary and still a minister of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. at the time. It is republished here because, despite the passage of forty years, it speaks so clearly to our present responsibility in this present age.

love of it in their hearts. I refer to civil and religious liberty, for which our fathers were willing to sacrifice so much.

The word "liberty" has a very archaic sound today; it is often put in quotation marks by those who are obliged to use the ridiculous word at all. Yet, despised though liberty is, there are still those who love it; and unless their love of it can be eradicated from their unprogressive souls, they will never be able to agree, in their estimate of the modern age, with those who do not love it.

To those lovers of civil and religious liberty I confess that I belong; in fact, civil and religious liberty seems to me to be more valuable than any other earthly thing — than any other thing short of that truer and profounder liberty which only God can give.

The loss of liberty

What estimate of the present age can possibly be complete that does not take account of what is so marked a feature

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of it — namely, the loss of those civil liberties for which men formerly were willing to sacrifice all that they possessed? In some countries, such as Russia and Italy, the attack upon liberty has been blatant and extreme; but exactly the same forces which appear there in more consistent form appear also in practically all the countries of the earth. Everywhere we have the substitution of economic considerations for great principles in the conduct of the state; everywhere a centralized state, working as the state necessarily must work, by the use of force, is taking possession of the most intimate fields of

(Continued on page 10.)

MY
COUNTRY,
'TIS OF
THEE?

★
Richard A. Nelson

My country 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the Pilgrim's pride,
From every mountain side,
Let freedom ring.

How often we have sung these words of a favorite national hymn. But is America still the land of the Pilgrim's pride? Would the Pilgrims still be proud of America?

Yes, and no. They would take pride in America because it is bigger and stronger than they ever imagined it would be. Huddled on the coast of Massachusetts, they had little knowledge of the expanse of land and riches that lay to the west and south.

The Pilgrims would be proud to find a land where there is freedom of worship and religion. Their purpose for coming to the "New World" was so that they could be free to worship God according to their convictions, something they could not do in England. What we have today in America is a place where people are free to worship, free to pray, free to promote their beliefs in the streets without fear of arrest or imprisonment.

Yet there are problems with America that might cause some sadness on the Pilgrim's part. These are not just economic problems, or environmental

problems, or social problems, but problems of sin and rebellion against God and his kingdom. There is much disregard for the God who blesses America and, in all probability, there are more people in the land that put their trust in the coins than in the God spoken of on every coin—"In God We Trust."

"Sweet land" of liberalism?

This land of the Pilgrim's pride is changing. There is a new mood being sung. We are fast becoming a nation of special interest groups, each one pressing its own political, moral, or social thinking. We are Afro-Americans, Mexican-Americans, Polish-Americans. We are political liberals or conservatives. We either support or oppose women's liberation, Gay liberation, and a host of other movements.

Perhaps one day Christians will need to stand as a group of Christian-Americans. There was a time when America was predominantly Christian. The founding fathers were—at least nominally—Christian; many were men of faith with reliance on God. Thanks to their wisdom and foresight we have a country where religious freedom is guaranteed by law.

Yet America has lost its Christian majority. Across the land laws of public decency and Christian morality are being struck down to allow for a freer morality and more open standard of behavior. Removal of the death penalty, liberalization of abortion laws, more sexual freedom among "consenting adults," are examples. The change is having profound effects on America's Christians.

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Freedom to hate Christ?

Our Lord tells us that there will be hatred of the Christian by the world (John 15:18ff.). We are told that the Christian is not above his Lord. If the world hates Christ, it will hate Christ's disciples. Here the "world" means that which is opposed to the kingdom of God—the kingdom of Satan, if you will. This world is at odds with the Christian.

The conflict has at times taken quite graphic and often physical terms. We know from church history that it has resulted in suffering, death, and imprisonment for thousands. This is not a pretty picture and Americans who are Christians had best proceed with caution.

Paul tells the Ephesian Christians to walk circumspectly, looking at all sides, paying attention to all that goes on around them (Ephesians 5:15). The devil, we know, is a wily creature and he will use every means at his command to get at the Christian.

We are approaching the point in America where the conflict between the world and the Christian is becoming increasingly evident. There are subtle forms of persecution already going on that can drain the vitality from the Christian life if we do not recognize them for what they are. The hatred of the world does not have to be of the dramatic type in order to be effective. For example:

Where did the Sabbath go?

It used to be in America that Sunday was uniformly the day of rest. The stores were closed and people, Christian and non-Christian, could spend the day with their families or in church.

But this has gone the way of many things and Sunday is now "business as usual," not just for businesses, but for social commitments, and athletic competition. All this places on the Christian a need to decide: How will I spend the Sabbath? My club has an outing planned for Sunday afternoon. My boss says I have to work on Sunday, but only twice a month. I can't make it to the special services because of a conflict in scheduling.

Now all these things—work, athletics, social functions—may have legitimate

meetings that require or attract our attendance. The devil can use these conflicts in our schedules to his advantage, forcing Christians to an either/or decision—Do I forsake the church, or my other obligations? The temptation is real and the persecution subtle.

Enduring today's temptations

Recently a Christian housing cooperative was faced with the problem of having girls sunbathe topless on the shore of the local lake. When they sought to have the girls restrained from further display, they were told the girls were "within their legal and moral right" (as reported by UPI). So the Christians in that cooperative must live with that temptation.

Proper clothing has always been a problem for some Christians. Every Christian woman has asked herself how she could be in style and still maintain Christian decency. Now as the move is toward less and less clothing, the question is becoming critical. Especially in the summer and along the coasts, many Christians simply do not go to the beaches because of the attire (lack of it) found there.

We must realize that in our present society we are doing battle with the devil, and Satan will spring forth where the Christian is least prepared. A society that allows religious freedom often breeds a sluggish Christian, for to confess Christ does not cost us anything. There are no physical dangers facing the American Christian, but the hatred is still there. We need to be Christians who realize the necessity of evaluating our actions more and more and to be aware of what is going on at all times in the political, legal, and social levels of America.

We must remember that our witness is going to stand out more and more if the trend in America continues.

Taking a stand for Christ

We must also remember that our witness is going to stand out more and more if the trend in America continues. We are going to be faced with more decisions concerning our church, our social activities, and our own personal stand for Christ. The world is going to see more and more of our Christianity as melting snow reveals the formerly hidden contours of the land.

Still, we know that all things work together for good to those who love God and are called by him. For this we can give hearty thanks. This hatred we experience will serve to sharpen our focus. It will force us to evaluate our actions more carefully.

Though we do make wrong choices at times, we also do have the sure promise of the Holy Spirit to go with us. We Christians can stand out as lights set upon the hill (Matthew 5:14-16). Our works will more and more show forth to the world around us as the contrast becomes sharper. The choices we make will show our true commitment and strength of faith, and a more distinctive walk before the world in which we live.

Christians need to pray that these conditions will produce a stronger strain of Christians who will stand on their commitment to Christ and the church. It took courage for the apostles to stand up to the officials of Jerusalem and Rome and to confess their Lord. The same will be increasingly true for us.

What of the future?

Need these trends in the "land of the free" continue? No one can predict the future. But we do know that we are to pray for those in authority and that God uses the state for good. We Christians still have some power to influence local laws and even the teaching in the schools. We also need to pray that the Lord will not remove his blessing from America.

At the same time, we need to witness openly against the sins of this country and the need for repentance and faith in Christ. Only a return to God on an individual basis will cause the nation to return to the moral standards that it is rapidly losing.

We need not lose hope, for God is still

Only a return to God on an individual basis will cause the nation to return to the moral standards that it is rapidly losing.

on the throne. In many cases the shift in American morality is making honest sinners of some people and exposing those hypocrites who have taken refuge in Christ's church. Our Lord promised us persecution, and he promised us that the world would hate us. We need to stop thinking of persecution as something that happened in "olden times" and not today. We also need to seek the Lord more earnestly than ever before.

The lines are being drawn in America. It is still the land of the brave and the free, and it is still the best form of government in which Christianity can freely operate. Yet within the freedom guaranteed to us are the means the devil and his hosts will use to get to the follower of Christ. But in this freedom are also the means whereby the people of God can express their faith through the choices and decisions that confront them.

Don't be afraid to be a Christian! The future is exciting, and the Lord who saved you will enable you to serve in whatever condition you find yourself. As Paul says,

"Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:11-13).

The Rev. Mr. Nelson is pastor of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Caney, Kansas.

The biblical concept of work and American industry in 1975

FAITH ON THE JOB

Richard P. Sears

What is the relationship between one's job or profession and his profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord?

Crucial to a man's sense of fulfillment is an awareness of the relationship existing between his daily work and the kingdom of God—a discernment of God's blessing on his life as he does what God has called him to do.

Prosperity, according to the Scripture, is simply growing in spiritual matters. A person can expect this prosperity if he is where God wants him and doing what God put him there to do. All of life is service to God. Christianity cannot be properly expressed unless one's life of faith is significantly related to his daily work. Isolation of our "spiritual experience" from the workaday world results in a fragmented life experience. The integrated view of life is biblical.

The breakdown of life into a number of self-substantiating, independent compartments is not biblical. The lordship of Jesus Christ reigns over all of life, including one's daily work situation. Christian workers must learn to do their daily work under the banner of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible does not relinquish the idea of meaningful work for the people of

God, even after the fall into sin. In the New Testament, *all of life* is viewed in the perspective of the great redeeming action of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Christian man, however lowly his position may be, is called to look upon his work as a service he can perform for his Redeemer.

Sin, work, and toil

The fall of man in Genesis 3 and the curse that followed greatly changed the complexion of man's work experience. Though work as such was never cursed, the material with which man worked after the fall was contaminated by the curse of God. Because of man's fall into sin, his work has been surrounded by numerous problems.

Instead of work always being a jubilant, hallelujah response to God's grace, it is often simply toil and little more. In addition to the natural hardships that surround the conduct of work, the worker himself is frequently the object of gross exploitation and heartless abuse. Some of the exploitation and abuse is most apparent, but often it is not.

The following terms describe some of the less apparent exploitation and abuse in modern industry: job dissatisfaction; boredom on the job; alienation from work; thwarted desire to participate; rebellion against anonymity; dehumanization of the worker's personality; meaninglessness; disenchantment; deep-seated frustration; apathy; cynical indifference; complete despair; working conditions that dehumanize, brutalize, and desensitize workers.

In spite of such distortions of work, *we must not abandon the Bible's concept*

We must not abandon the Bible's concept of work as a wholesome expression of the image and likeness of God in man.

of work as a wholesome expression of the image and likeness of God in man—as a jubilant, hallelujah response to God's grace.

Stewards of creation

Labor leaders and management officials are stewards of the natural resources of God's creation. Stewardship is accepting authority from God's hand, exercising it in the awareness that we must answer to him for what we do with his creation, and using it to serve our fellow men.

Both labor and management must be exhorted to earnestly create circumstances in which people may work meaningfully before the face of their Redeemer. There is more to the welfare and security of workers than excellent wages and fringe benefits, safe and healthy working conditions, and the protection afforded by the grievance procedure and arbitration mechanism.

Labor and management must be involved in developing working conditions that increase the workers' ability to find meaning and satisfaction in their daily work. The very nature and structure of work itself must be analyzed and necessary changes must be made, bearing in mind that the machine should be the servant of man and not vice versa.

Need for Christ in labor

The enriching, enlarging and restructuring of the work itself has not been readily accepted by American union leaders. Some of them see these concepts as "phony" or superficial; others see that the answer instead lies in higher wages, earlier retirement, and the shorter work week.

Historically, unions have attacked management for their preoccupation with money and profit at the expense of human beings. However, unions are often obsessed with the idea of obtaining welfare and security in terms of material possession, and they too adhere to a narrowed-down view of man and work.

But man is something much more important than a mere factor of production. All men are created in the image and likeness of God. Christian workers have been liberated from the evil consequences and power of sin through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus

Christ. The Savior restored broken relationships between God and man, between man and man—and even in labor-management relations.

The biblical concept of work is not something that is inferior or distasteful or a routine drudgery interrupted by rest periods. It is a divinely given task, provided it is in harmony with God's commandments. All honorable occupations can be, and indeed must be, performed in service to God.

Professor John M. Frame of Westminster Theological Seminary states the matter as follows:

God is Lord over all, and demands our allegiance in all areas of life. There is no compartment of life where we may assert our autonomy, where we may serve ourselves. We must do *all* to the glory of God. *All* of life, therefore, not just formal worship, is "religion"—service to God. In all our decisions, we decide either for Christ or against Him. These principles reaffirm the Reformation emphasis that every lawful occupation may and should be a "vocation"—a calling of God. All useful work is kingdom work. No one need feel left out of the kingdom program simply because he has been called to be a farmer rather than a preacher. God still cares about the replenishing and subduing of the earth. And God wants us to do our farming, our carpentry, our homemaking, our musical, medical, business work—all our labor—in ways pleasing to Him. [Page 4, *The Amsterdam Philosophy: A Preliminary Critique*, by Frame and Leonard J. Coppes; Harmony Press, Phillipsburg, N. J., 1974.]

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The early men of the Reformation emphasized the all-encompassing biblical world-and-life view—a view that relates man's life of faith to his daily work. For example, the Second Helvetic Confession (1580s) contains the following comments about the rearing of children:

But especially they [parents] should teach their children honest trades or professions by which they may support themselves. They should keep them from idleness and in all these things instill in them true faith in God, lest through a lack of confidence or too much security or filthy greed they become dissolute and achieve no success. And, it is most certain that those works which are done by parents in true faith by way of domestic duties and the management of their households are in God's sight holy and truly good works. They are no less pleasing to God than prayers, fasting and almsgiving. For thus the Apostle Paul has taught in all his epistles....

Given the biblical view of man and his daily work, labor and management have a duty to see that work does not become unworthy of man. It is essential that the stewards of industry, labor and management, get their priorities right.

The priorities

What are these priorities? These priorities are the acknowledgement of Almighty God and his eternal decrees, to which are annexed infallible and utterly reliable promises—promises not only for the individual but also for the nation in *every* aspect of its life.

Modern industrial processes, automation, engineering—these are wonderful discoveries and can be mighty blessings to mankind. But they will be a curse to the human race unless they too are put in subjection to the Creator and Sustainer of the very order, materials and forces upon which human intervention entirely depends.*

Mr. Sears is a lawyer who serves with the United Steelworkers of America. He has been a Christian for about five years and was introduced to the Reformed faith through the ministry of the Rev. Al Martin of Trinity Reformed Baptist Church in Essex Fells, New Jersey. Mr. Sears is presently a member of Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Sewickley, Pennsylvania.

*The concluding paragraphs are an adapted paraphrase of a statement on work in British industry on the Lord's Day that appears in a pamphlet, "Industry and Society," published by The Lord's Day Observance Society (p. 17).



Groen van Prinsterer:

What does it mean to be a CHRISTIAN IN THE WORLD

McKendree R. Langley

What does it mean to be a Christian in this world? The question is often asked as Christians seek to be in the world and yet not of it. Scripture tells us to love God and our neighbor; to cling to God's truth as we are sent into the world with the gospel; and spiritually to discern the scoffers who deny it (Matthew 22:36-40; John 17:14-19; 2 Peter 3:1-12). Yet each generation must apply the truth of Scripture to the changing circumstances of the world—a difficult task!

One classic answer to this most vital question was given by Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer (1801-1876), an important Christian statesman in the Netherlands. Through the work of the Christian emancipator Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), Groen's answer has influenced a significant number of Christians in Europe, the United States,

Canada and elsewhere. Some important spokesmen for this viewpoint have been the theologian Herman Bavinck, former Dutch senator Hendrik Algra, Cornelius Van Til, Francis Schaeffer, and art historian Hans Rookmaaker.

19th century background

In order to understand more clearly Groen's answer to the question of Christians being in the world, a word of explanation must be given of the four main factors influencing Groen and European life in the nineteenth century.

The first factor was the almost overwhelming impact of the French Revolution of 1789 on European life. Just think of the conquests of Napoleon after the bloodbath of Robespierre's Reign of Terror! Here we see the birth of an on-going revolutionary movement. While most people in Holland opposed these revolutionary shocks, the most influential circles agreed with Prime Minister Johan Thorbecke (1798-1872) that a moderate secularist or "neutral" approach to life and politics was best.

Poverty was the second factor, caused by the Napoleonic occupation of the Netherlands, the Napoleonic wars, and the rise of the post-war *laissez-faire* factory system. The results were low wages, child labor abuse, bad working conditions, and significant unemployment. The cities had ghettos of poverty causing many people to become alarmed about the serious consequences of the "Social Question."

The Evangelical Awakening, which flowered in Europe between 1800 and 1865, was the third factor. Some representatives of this spiritual awakening were William Wilberforce's socially concerned Clapham Group in England, the free churches of Switzerland centering around Reformation historian J. H. Merle d'Aubigné (1794-1872), the confessional element in the Dutch Reformed Church, and Groen's Anti-Revolutionary or Christian Historical political movement.

The final influence was the general social reform movement that grew up in the 1840s. Many individuals recognized that poverty was a serious problem throughout the continent. Various



solutions had been proposed by socialists, anarchists, pre-Marxian communists, liberals, nationalists, pietists and Christian democrats. England provided the example of social reform legislation with the Reform Bill of 1832, based upon the findings of royal investigative commissions and establishing legal limits on who can work where and for how long per day or week. Private groups, such as the Salvation Army, also tried to minister to the down and out. It was during this period that the beginnings were made of organized political parties, labor unions, protest committees and even radical conspiracies.

Groen's career

Groen van Prinsterer grew up in aristocratic circles in The Hague. His father had been the personal physician of King Louis Napoleon during the French occupation of the country and later served as the first Dutch Inspector of Public Health.

Groen's youthful belief was that of a moderate rationalistic liberalism. While at Leiden University from 1817 to 1822, he came under the influence of the Reformed poet-historian Willem Bilderdijk (1756-1831), who ran a L'Abri-type discussion group near the campus. The young scholar had shown promise at Leiden and several years later he was appointed the personal secretary to King Willem I (reigned 1813-1840). It was during this period

that Groen was led to an evangelical conversion under the ministry of the Court preacher, the Rev. J. H. Merle d'Aubigné.

The Belgian Revolution of 1830 had a great impact on Groen and helped him to clarify his life-task, the development of a Christian analysis of revolution and secularism. A life-long journalist, he edited *Netherlands Reflections* and *The Netherlander* at various times. In 1831 he was appointed the Archivist of the Netherlands. He edited and published, in many volumes, the papers of the House of Orange for the Reformation period. He thus gained an international reputation and was in professional contact with such important historians as François Guizot (1787-1874) and Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886).

Working for his Christian principles as a member of the Dutch parliament for several terms from the 1840s to the 1860s was a task to which Groen dedicated much of his time. The national anti-slavery committee was also under his chairmanship.

Some of Groen's most important

Revolution and social turmoil swept over nineteenth-century Europe. Almost alone among Christian thinkers, Groen van Prinsterer analysed the upheavals as basically a matter of unbelief and challenged Christians to take the power of the gospel of Christ into every area of life.

tasks were: giving leadership to confessional orthodoxy and opposing the modernism of influential segments of the Dutch Reformed Church; calling for the establishment of Christian schools and Christian scholarship; and the founding of the Anti-Revolutionary or Christian Historical political movement. Abraham Kuyper, as Groen's successor, then developed a Reformed mass movement in church and society between 1872 and 1920 that significantly influenced the course of Dutch history. Thus a viable Christian witness was begun that is still of importance today.

"Unbelief and Revolution"

It is in his most important book, *Unbelief and Revolution* (1847), that Groen articulated his Anti-Revolutionary or Christian Historical world view. His Christian faith was strengthened by Bible study, the theology of John Calvin and the Heidelberg Catechism. In all his writings Groen stressed the themes of God's sovereignty, human depravity, the need for personal conversion, the gracious character of Christ's atoning work, the life of Christian obedience, and the infallibility of the Bible.

Notice that *Unbelief and Revolution* was published just a year before Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto* in 1848. What a contrast between the two! Only two small installments of *Unbelief and Revolution* are now available in English dealing with unbelief in religion, thought and politics (Groen van Prinsterer Fund, Hoofgebouw 13A-31, Free University, P. O. Box 7161, Amsterdam, The Netherlands).

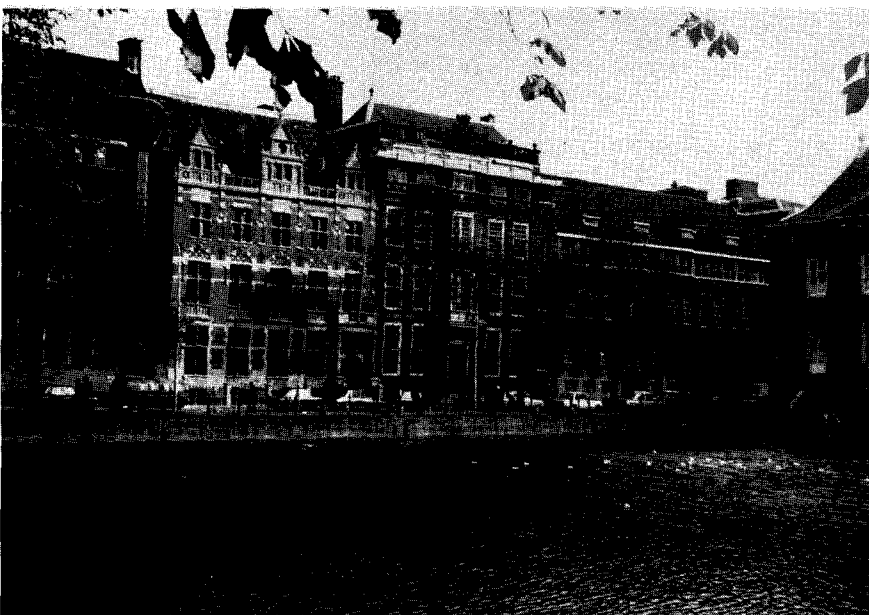
Groen's basic viewpoint

It is in the very important (and untranslated) first chapter of *Unbelief and Revolution* that the whole history of this movement of thought can be seen in a nutshell. Here Groen has two concerns: (1) defining the basic problem of our age, and (2) evaluating the obligations of the Christian toward this problem.

Why did Holland suffer decline during the period 1795-1845? The social fabric, he declares, was greatly damaged by scepticism in religion, ethics,

(Continued on page 12.)

Groen van Prinsterer's impressive home in The Hague.



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The institute is open to laymen and ministers. Information may be obtained from Bill Robinson, Director of Development, Reformed Theological Seminary, 5422 Clinton Blvd., Jackson, MS 39209.

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The Church in our new age (Continued from page 3.)

individual and family life.

These tendencies have proceeded more rapidly in America than in most other countries in the world; for if they have not progressed so far here as elsewhere, that is only because in America they had a greater handicap to overcome. Thirty years ago we hated bureaucracy and pitied those countries in Europe that were under bureaucratic control; today we are rapidly becoming one of the most bureaucratic countries of the world. Setbacks to this movement, such as the defeat, for the present at least, of the misnamed "child-labor amendment," the repeal of the Lusk laws in New York placing private teachers under state supervision and control, the invalidation of the Nebraska language law making literary education even in private schools a crime, the prevention so far of the establishment of a Federal department of education — these setbacks to the attack on liberty are, I am afraid, but temporary unless the present temper of the people changes.

The international situation, moreover, is hardly such as to give encouragement to lovers of liberty, especially in view of the recent proposal of Premier Herriot that a policy of conscription, inimical as it is to liberty as well as to peace, shall be made general and permanent. Everywhere is the world we have centralization of power, the ticketing and cataloguing of the individual by irresponsible and doctrinaire bureaus, and, worst of all, in many places we have monopolistic control of education by the state.

But is all that new? In principle it is not. Something very much like it was

*Everywhere in the world we
have centralization of power,
... and worst of all, in many
places we have monopolistic
control of education by the state.*

advocated in Plato's *Republic* over two thousand years ago. The battle between collectivism and liberty is an age-long

battle; and even the materialistic paternalism of the modern state is by no means altogether new. The technique of tyranny has, indeed, been enormously improved; a state-controlled compulsory education has proved far more effective in crushing out liberty than the older and cruder weapons of fire and sword, and modern experts have proved to be more efficient than the dilettante tyrants of the past. But such differences are differences of degree and not of kind, and essentially the battle for freedom is the same as it always has been.

Society and the soul

If that battle is lost, if collectivism finally triumphs, if we come to live in a world where recreation as well as labor is prescribed for us by experts appointed by the state, if the sweetness and the sorrows of family relationships are alike eliminated and liberty becomes a thing of the past, we ought to place the blame for this sad denouement — for this sad result of all the pathetic strivings of the human race — exactly where it belongs. And it does not belong to the external conditions of modern life. I know that there are those who say that it does belong there; I know that there are those who tell us that individualism is impossible in an industrial age. But I do not believe them for one moment. Unquestionably, industrialism, with the accompanying achievements of modern science in both the physical and social realm, does constitute a great temptation to destroy freedom; but temptation is not compulsion, and of real compulsion there is none.

No, my friends, there is no real reason for mankind to surrender to the machine. If liberty is crushed out, if standardization has its perfect work, if the worst of all tyrannies, the tyranny of the expert, becomes universal, if the finer aspirations of humanity give way to drab efficiency, do not blame the external conditions in the world today. If human life becomes mechanized, do not blame the machine. Put the blame exactly where it belongs — upon the soul of man.

Is it not in general within that realm of the soul of man that the evils of society have their origin today? We have developed a vast and rather wonderful machinery — the machinery of our modern life. For some reason, it has recently ceased to function. The experts are busily cranking the engine, as I used to do with my Ford car in the heroic days when a Ford was still a Ford. They are wondering why the engine does not start. They

are giving learned explanations of its failure to do so; they are adducing the most intricate principles of dynamics. It is all very instructive, no doubt. But the real explanation is much simpler. It is simply that the driver of the car has forgotten to turn the switch. The real trouble with the engine of modern society is that it is not producing a spark. The real trouble lies in that unseen realm which is found within the soul of man.

That realm cannot be neglected even in a time of immediate physical distress like the present. I do not know in detail how this physical distress is to be relieved. I would to God that I did. But one thing I do know; it will never be relieved if, in our eagerness to relieve it, we neglect the unseen things. It is not practical to be merely practical men; man cannot successfully be treated as a machine; even the physical welfare of humanity cannot be attained if we make that the supreme object of our pursuit; even in a day when so many material problems are pressing for our attention,

The primitive church

But if that be so, if the real trouble with the world lies in the soul of man, we may perhaps turn for help to an agency which is generally thought to have the soul of man as its special province. I mean the Christian Church. That brings us to our second question: What is the Church?

About nineteen hundred years ago, there came forth from Palestine a remarkable movement. At first it was obscure; but within a generation it was firmly planted in the great cities of the Roman Empire, and within three centuries it had conquered the Empire itself. It has since then gone forth to the ends of the earth. That movement is called the Christian Church.

What was it like in the all-important initial period, when the impulse which gave rise to it was fresh and pure? With regard to the answer to that question, there may be a certain amount of agreement among all serious historians, whether they are themselves Christians or not. Certain characteristics of the Christian Church at the beginning stand out clear in the eyes both of friends and of foes.

Doctrinal—

It may clearly be observed, for example, that the Christian Church at the beginning was radically doctrinal. Doctrine was not the mere expression of Christian life, as it is in the pragmatist

skepticism of the present day, but — just the other way around — the doctrine, logically though not temporally, came first and the life afterward. The life was founded upon the message, and not the message upon the life.

That becomes clear everywhere in the primary documents. It appears, for example, in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, which is admitted by all serious historians, Christian and non-Christian, to have been really written by a man of the first Christian generation — the man whose name it bears. The Apostle Paul there gives us a summary of his missionary preaching in Thessalonica — that missionary preaching which in Thessalonica and elsewhere did, it must be admitted, turn the world upside down. What was the missionary preaching like? Well, it contained a whole system of theology. "Ye turned to God," says Paul, "from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivereth us from the wrath to come." Christian doctrine, ac-

The Christian life, according to Paul, was founded upon a message.

cording to Paul, was not something that came after salvation, as an expression of Christian experience, but it was something necessary to salvation. The Christian life, according to Paul, was founded upon a message.

The same thing appears when we turn from Paul to the very first church in Jerusalem. That too was radically doctrinal. In the First Epistle to the Corinthians — again one of the universally accepted Epistles — Paul gives us a summary of what he had received from the primitive Jerusalem Church. What was it that he had received; what was it that the primitive Jerusalem Church delivered over unto him? Was it a mere exhortation; was it the mere presentation of a program of life; did the first Christians in Jerusalem say merely: "Jesus has lived a noble life of self-sacrifice; we have been inspired by Him to live that life, and we call upon you our hearers to share it with us"? Not at all. Here is what those first Christians said: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; He was

buried; He has been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." That is not an exhortation, but a rehearsal of facts; it is couched not in the imperative but in the indicative mood; it is not a program, but a doctrine.

I know that modern men have appealed sometimes at this point from the primitive Church to Jesus Himself. The primitive Church, it is admitted, was doctrinal; but Jesus of Nazareth, it is said, proclaimed a simple gospel of divine Fatherhood and human brotherhood, and believed in the essential goodness of man. Such an appeal from the primitive Church to Jesus used to be expressed in the cry of the so-called "Liberal" Church, "Back to Christ!" But that cry is somewhat antiquated today. It has become increasingly clear to the historians that the only Jesus whom we find attested for us in our sources of information is the supernatural Redeemer presented in the four Gospels as well as in the Epistles of Paul. If there was, back of this supernatural figure, a real, non-doctrinal, purely human prophet of Nazareth, his portrait must probably lie forever hidden from us. Such, indeed, is exactly the skeptical conclusion which is being reached by some of those who stand in the van of what is called progress in New Testament criticism today.

There are others, however — and to them the present writer belongs — who think that the supernatural Jesus presented in all of our sources of information was the real Jesus who walked and talked in Palestine, and that it is not necessary for us to have recourse to the truly extraordinary hypothesis that the intimate friends of Jesus, who were the leaders of the primitive Church, completely misunderstood their Master's person and work.

Be that as it may, there is, at any rate, not a trace of any non-doctrinal preaching that possessed one bit of power in those early days of the Christian Church. It is perfectly clear that that strangely powerful movement which emerged from the obscurity of Palestine in the first century of our era was doctrinal from the very beginning and to the very core. It was totally unlike the ethical preaching of the Stoic and Cynic philosophers. Unlike those philosophers, it had a very clear-cut message; and at the center of that message was the doctrine that set forth the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Intolerant—

That brings us to our second point. The primitive Church, we have just seen,

was radically doctrinal. In the second place, it was radically intolerant. In being radically intolerant, as in being radically doctrinal, it placed itself squarely in opposition to the spirit of that age. That was an age of syncretism and tolerance in religion; it was an age of what J. S. Phillimore has called "the courtly polygamies of the soul." But with that tolerance, with those courtly polygamies of the soul, the primitive Christian Church would have nothing to do. It demanded a completely exclusive devotion. A man could not be a worshiper of the God of the Christians and at the same time be a worshiper of other gods; he could not accept the salvation offered by

The primitive Church was radically intolerant. It demanded a completely exclusive devotion.

Christ and at the same time admit that for other people there might be some other way of salvation; he could not agree to refrain from proselytizing among men of other faiths, but came forward, no matter what it might cost, with a universal appeal. That is what I mean by saying that the primitive Christian Church was radically intolerant.

Ethical—

In the third place, the primitive Church was radically ethical. Religion in those days, save among the Jews, was by no means closely connected with goodness. But with such a non-ethical religion the primitive Christian Church would have nothing whatever to do. God, according to the primitive Christians, is holy; and in His presence no unclean thing can stand. Jesus Christ presented a life of perfect goodness upon earth; and only they can belong to Him who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Christians were, indeed, by no means perfect; they stood before God only in the merit of Christ their Saviour, not in their own merit; but they had been saved for holiness, and even in this life that holiness must begin to appear. A salvation which permitted a man to continue in sin was, according to the primitive Church, no matter what profession of faith it might make, nothing but a sham.

To be continued next month.

A Christian in the world

(Continued from page 9.)

and law. Radical government experiments were unable to deal with social problems. The influence of the captains of industry was almost irresistible, causing exploitation and failing to solve the social question. The church was also in a state of confusion with various rationalistic views of the Bible being freely preached.

Groen's question is *very* practical: What caused all these problems? Was it merely riots in the streets, defects in the character of the people, and bad leaders? Or was it caused by something deeper? Groen remarks, "The history of Europe, for more than half a century, is the inevitable result of the errors which have made themselves master of the dominant point of view."

The argument then turns to the Cause behind the causes of the disorders: the almost overwhelming secularization process that had been sweeping through the world since the eighteenth century. The statesman asserts that *The Revolution* is this "reversal of thought patterns and attitudes which is apparent in all of Christendom."

Today Groen's concept of *The Revolution* can be more clearly defined as the secularization process. This basically religious trend is rooted in a rejection of the gospel and has often led to a series of miseries in public life. Thus "events are the boundaries and forms in which the constant outworking of the spirit of the age manifests itself." Moreover, "The Revolution ideas are the application of unbelief in the area of state-law." Just think of the damage done to millions of citizens in the name of political enlightenment!

The great dividing line in all of life, including politics, is between those who base their view, in faith, on the gospel of Jesus Christ and those who do not. Thus Groen worked for a Christian, democratic pluralism in government. He opposed the notion of the absolutely normative character of reason, for example, in the humanistic understanding of liberty, equality, the "social contract," and centralized government by decree.

As can be imagined, Groen found himself at odds with the prevailing ideas and policies of the governing

circles in The Hague. The Anti-Revolutionary statesman knew he was in a minority position, yet he did not give up his systematic dissent. He believed that the religious clash between secularization in its many forms and the Christian faith touched the heart of the gospel. He saw the danger of any man-centered stance, whether revolutionary or democratic neutralist. Modernism in theology and Liberalism and Conservatism in politics were all objects of his criticism because they all claimed that the Christian faith was only relevant for the private aspects of life.

The Christian's task

Groen then turned his attention to the obligations of the Christian. It is as sinners, he begins, that we seek to be saved. The truth—the good news—is the atoning sacrifice of our Savior, the gift of free grace that saves those who believe. Groen stood by the scandal of the cross. Heart-felt belief in this truth requires the Christian to keep his obligations where he is, as seen in the light of Scripture.

Christians, Groen declared, are to be "preachers of the Gospel that brings healing to every aspect of life." We are to witness to the truth of God as contrasted with the wisdom of this age. Gospel truth is the leaven, but we must apply it to our lives in the world. "Our slowness [to act] finds no deceptive pretext in the all-sufficiency of God's Word." We must fight with the weapons of spiritual light. As a true patriot, Groen then called for constitutional and social reform.

Commenting on the importance of the Christian's task, Groen declares, "The Revolution in relation to world history is opposite in meaning to what the Reformation is for Christendom. Just as the Reformation brought Europe out of superstition, so has the Revolution thrown the cultured world into the abyss of unbelief. Like the Reformation, the Revolution has implications for every aspect of practical and scholarly life. Formerly the principle was subjection to God, but now the revolt against God is the most basic principle. Thus there is a single holy struggle in the church, in the state, in scholarship. The one great question concerns the unconditional subjection to God's law. More than ever before, this viewpoint toward the Revolution is needed in order to understand our age."

Listen to Groen's fervent appeal for the Christian presence in the world: "Let us all, in so far as we have placed our faith in Christ, remain mindful of what is required of Christians. The characteristics of the dominant frame of mind are uncertainty, scepticism, despondency, lazy unconcern and passive or selfish resignation. The Christian acknowledges a principle that gives stability to knowledge. This principle, when followed, should be sufficient to restore the tottering state-structure to the unmovable foundation. It is not permissible for Christians to sleep in the defense of law and truth when their own self-interests are not directly touched. Heavy are the obligations which the darkness and decay of the times impose on them who are called to be the light and the salt of the earth."

Conclusions:

In summarizing Groen's importance, the following three conclusions must be made: (1) The Christian is called to consistent, biblical living in all areas of life, including politics. (2) Christians must be concerned to develop a

basic social and political critique and not merely try to fight certain isolated "issues." (3) Christians must begin to apply biblical norms to political problems in order to work for Christian social justice and thus witness to the total character of the gospel's power.

At this point in the life of Christianity in America, we should not become overly concerned about tactics (protest group, information agency, Christian political party, etc.). Rather we must begin to talk to each other as to what the basic problem of our age is. From prayerful discussion, fellowship and study, a Christian political consensus could develop.

If this should develop into something big, that would be fine. But even if we witness to the total power of the gospel and that is all God allows us to do, it will be more than enough. Many young people in America and Europe are crying out for the witness of this gospel that relates to all of life!

With J. Gresham Machen, Groen taught that Christianity and Modernism are two antithetical religious life-views (as in Machen's *Christianity and Liberalism*). With Cornelius Van Til

(*In Defense of the Faith*) Groen believed that we must present and defend the Reformed faith as the most consistent expression of Christianity. With Francis Schaeffer (in his *The Church at the End of the Twentieth Century*), Groen was concerned to develop a Christian critique of the secularization of culture.

Today Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* and the problems of Watergate point to the deeper decay to which Christians must address themselves. With Groen, we must also discern the crisis of our age and consider "the extent of our responsibility" to think and act in ways that reflect our faith in the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Mr. Langley is presently completing work as a Ph.D. candidate at the Free University of Amsterdam, working on a thesis dealing with the formation of Abraham Kuypers's Anti-Revolutionary Party in the 1870s. He received his B.A. degree from Gordon College, an M.A. from Northeastern University in Boston, and the M.Div. from Westminster Seminary in 1970.

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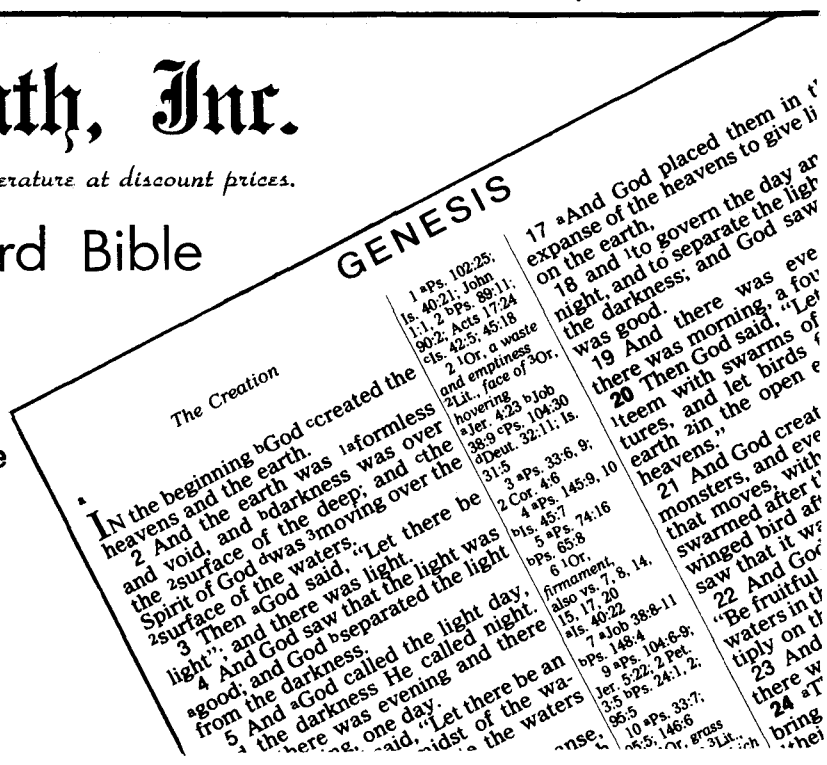
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HONEY with a pinch of SALT

Jean Shaw

Vincent and Margaret Crossett made the two-and-a-half-hour drive from Alto Pass, Illinois to St. Louis in their trusty Volkswagen, spent two days at presbytery, and then drove up to Chicago. Vincent preached two sermons on Sunday, as well as speaking to a Sunday school class. Monday the Crossetts sped back to Alto Pass because they had a Bible class that evening. Margaret wrote that they were somewhat tired on Tuesday.

Well, a little fatigue is to be expected with a schedule like that, but when you're young and hardy you can snap

Genesis 2:22

back. Except that the Crossetts, while admittedly hardy, might not be considered young by too many people. Born just this side of 1900, they can easily qualify for a restful retirement!

To Vincent and Margaret this would be unthinkable. From the time they were graduated from Wheaton College in 1929, they have been involved in sharing the gospel — as missionaries to China under the China Inland Mission until the Communists drove them out, as pastor and wife in the Kapahulu Bible Church for thirteen years, and as missionaries to Taiwan with the Overseas Missionary Fellowship. During their last term there they prepared Bible lessons on cassette tapes. These were translated into six tribal languages for distribution to isolated areas where no Bible teaching was

available. They were well past the retirement schedule when they left Taiwan to settle in Alto Pass, a town of 300 on the edge of the Shawnee National Forest.

Their search for a Reformed church home led them to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Carbondale, Illinois, where Pastor Wyatt George saw their potential as presbytery evangelists. There was one slight problem, however. The Crossetts were Orthodox Presbyterians! Would their denomination allow them to be missionaries under yet another "board" — the RPCES presbytery? The matter was considered and approved. Fear of innovation was not to stand in the way of spreading the gospel. The Crossetts were off and running, literally, to three Bible classes a week and the prospect of more to come.

Bible classes require preparation, even when you've been teaching them for fifty years. Each group is different, with different levels of background and understanding. There are personal questions to be answered with some people requiring individual teaching. Much time must be spent in prayer. No Bible study class operates without Satan's perfidious attention. The many supporters who have loyally stood by the Crossetts during their half century of service still receive prayer letters. Margaret, who has written one book about their experiences in China, is working on another "when she can find the time!"

Had her heart not needed the attention of American doctors, the Crossetts would have stayed on in Taiwan. It beats steadily, however, in time with Vincent who shares a passion to make Christ known among the heathen. Some of them are in southern Illinois, waiting to be instructed in sound doctrine.

If you're over thirty and feel you're too old to be a missionary, you might give the matter some more thought.

The Rev. Vincent Crossett was recently given permission by the O.P. Presbytery of the Midwest to labor "outside the bounds of presbytery" for the Illiana Presbytery of the RPCES. Mrs. Shaw, contrary to a previous note [apologies, all!], is a member of the Lafayette Church (RPCES) in Ellisville, Missouri.

If there is a MILLION, Lord

Rosemarie Malroy

A recent four-month visit to Washington, D.C., left its indelible impression. I cannot help rejoicing in the delights of new Christian friends, American history made alive by landmarks and historical sites, and all the marvelous enrichments in museums and art centers.

Yet underneath all the enjoyment, there is unmistakable a current of grief—grief for my country. One can no longer hide the bunglings of our government, the graft and corruption in high places, the shallowness of many of our leaders, as well as the crime and discontentment of our people. Things no longer "get done"; there is marked confusion at all levels in our government; and a common thought, especially among those most deeply involved—"How long?" How long

will our country survive?

How long will we enjoy freedom? In the Old Testament, God blessed his people as long as they put him first. Even long after they had ceased to put God first, he continued many times to bless them. But eventually, in spite of and in the midst of his mercy, there came a time of reckoning.

Christians are his people today. How many Christians really put God first? How many Christians keep his Sabbaths, delight in him more than their houses? Will God say of us, "As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them" (Isaiah 3:12)?

Have we come to the point in American history like the time that Abraham viewed Sodom and Gomorrah. How many dedicated Christians will it take to stay God's judgment? Have we, like Lot, compromised and vexed our righteous souls?

If the survival of our country depends on godly men and women, where do I stand? Would I be counted as one of the righteous—one who puts God first in all things?

Would you?

Mrs. Malroy has written before in the pages of the Guardian. She is back home in Ronan, Montana, and active in the new home mission chapel there.

Getting to know THE NEW PASTOR

Polly Edwards

A "changing of the guard" is surely a time of adjustment both for a church, and its new pastor. Speaking as a pastor's wife who has recently been through this change, and admittedly had a struggle to adjust, I would like to share a wonderfully helpful experience made possible by our new church family.

Within two weeks of our arrival here at Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Westfield, N.J., one of the ladies, Mrs. Blossom Crum, had arranged small group get-togethers in different neighborhoods where members of the church live. Every Monday and Tuesday night for six weeks, from 7:30 until 9 or 9:30, about ten or twelve people gathered to get acquainted with us and we with them. What a delightfully relaxed way to get to tie together faces and names just a few at a time!

As the weeks went by, all those faces streaming by us on Sunday morning at church began to be names connected to personalities, not just profiles. They became people who had children, people who were alone, people who had similar interests, people who were full of ideas, people who had problems, but most of all people who had become our friends in a very short time. Now as we pray for them one by one we know *something* about each one to remember before God. And in a short time we have come to feel a very real part of our new church and feel that we are truly loved. The adjustment period has been a blessing from God.

The blessing was not all one-sided, as the church also benefited in its desire to help us. Some of those who got together for these meetings barely knew one another. Now more members of the body of believers are much closer to each other and caring about one another.

If you really want to help your new pastor and his wife, and show them your love and your concern for their becoming a part of your church family quickly, try this idea. Even in the middle of the summer with families away on vacation we got to meet and know a large majority of the members.

If you try it, be sure and keep the get-togethers simple and convenient. Mrs. Crum planned each meeting in geographical locations so it was easy to get to, specified that refreshments be no more than a beverage and simple cookies, and urged informality of dress. (Even my always tied-and-jacketed husband wore sport shirts and no tie!) The bulletin each week told where the meetings were to be held and anyone who knew he couldn't make it when it was meeting in his area could feel free to go wherever it was. Talk was the getting-to-know-you kind the first part of the evening and usually wound up with each one in turn telling something about himself, where he came from, children, job, interests, and often how he had come to know the Lord and become a part of this church.

We *always* left each get-together with a warm and happy feeling. And only two months after arriving in a church with a membership of over two hundred, both of us not only are able to call almost everyone by the right name the first time, but we feel as though we have been a part of the church for a long while.

Satan tried to make our transition difficult in various ways, but God's love as demonstrated through his people was, as always, triumphant. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Rev. and Mrs. Albert G. Edwards moved last July, "bags, beetles, and boat," from Portland, Oregon to their new east coast place of service.

IT'S TIME TO SPEAK UP!

Christine Bachman

In today's society, we Christians can fall into spiritual depression as we see crime rates increase, pornography abounding, and the abuse of drugs and alcohol on the rise. Now in California, a shocking new law has been passed by the state legislature (S.B. No. 395). It allows girls under 18 to buy contraceptives without their parents' permission.

I wonder how many parents truly realize the devastating effect this will have on their young children? or, how our God-given rights as parents have been abused and ignored? It strikes at the very heart of the family and certainly many families will begin to "reap what has been sown" as promiscuity and venereal disease run rampant.

What can Christians do? In our South San Francisco area, we flooded the office of our local assemblyman with phone calls stating our opposition while this bill was pending. We asked our friends to join us; we wrote letters to the governor — we felt a moral obligation as Christians to fight this bill with all our might! Our assemblyman *did* oppose it. We do not know for certain his stand on the matter before, but representatives *do listen* to the "voice of the people" if only we will speak up!

In California we have seen bills passed by the influence of "minority pressure groups" — and they are both dedicated and *vocal*. The homosexual law, the marijuana initiative, and the abortion law are examples. What far-reaching effect will their passage have on the morals of the community?

As Christians, we are a minority. But as Christians, let us unite to oppose the evils of our day that we may say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7).

Mrs. Bachman is a member of the Brentwood Orthodox Presbyterian Church in South San Francisco, Calif.

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LOVE CHINA '75

On September 7 through 11, a gathering of concerned Christians from around the world, 450 persons from twenty-two countries, met in the Philippine Village Hotel in Manila. The largest group was from South Africa and over a third were young Chinese Christians. This Mainland China Evangelism Study Seminar met for the purpose of generating massive prayer and action and to study ways and means to communicate the love of Christ to the 800 million or more people in mainland China. The dark and heavy curtain, tightly drawn over this land for many

Speakers' platform with enlarged photograph of visitors at the "Forbidden City" in Peking. The banner at the top reads, in Chinese and English, "Lord Jesus, through us, let the people feel your love."



years, is now beginning to open slightly. Keys in locked doors are turning. It is fitting that those who have prayed and longed for this day should meet together in a fellowship of rejoicing in anticipation of the future.

The Seminar was convened by a number of evangelical groups, all of which have ministries and a common burden to reach China effectively for Christ. All recognize our spiritual identity with the still living church so long hidden behind the bamboo curtain but now becoming visible. The four full days of meetings were begun with rich Bible studies conducted by Philip T'eng, one of the leading Chinese Bible teachers and preachers from Hong Kong. Informative and inspiring messages relating the conditions and the work already being done in China were heard during the day and evening. A prayer hour closed each day when all delegates met in prayer cells to which they had been assigned upon registration.

An outstanding address was delivered by Hong Kong based, *Time* correspondent, David Aikman (see *Time*, Sept. 22, religion section). He gave a step by step analysis of Communism as set forth by its prominent protagonists from Marx through Lenin and Stalin down to Mao. His conclusion was this terse statement: "Communism is a diabolical parody of the Christian faith." Only the Christian gospel of Christ can break down this diabolical system. Only the Sword of the Spirit can reach China's millions and cut down the rulers of the darkness of this world.

What impressed me most about "Love China '75" was the large number of zealous young Chinese who came from lands around the globe to express their love for their people. Some gave stirring testimony of what they had actually done. One young woman from South Africa related her efforts to reach Red Chinese laborers in railroad construction crews in Zambia and Tanzania. Hong Kong Chinese told how they went regularly into mainland China and were able to carry Scripture portions in their luggage. Such efforts at witnessing had to be done with great care.

We must pray much for this new

Brother Andrew, "God's Smuggler," was presiding chairman of "Love China '75."



method of evangelization in China and for those who carry it out. We must praise God that there is evidence that indeed "the Word of God is not bound" and that "the Lord knoweth them that are his." Pray that you and others with us may have a part in this new effort to reach one-fourth of the human race with the gospel. Pray for those who are being reached with the gospel for the first time and for God's keeping and sustaining power, and for the edification of the little groups of believers throughout all China.

The Rev. Richard B. Gaffin, Sr., who kindly furnished this report, is a veteran China missionary, having labored on the mainland until the Communists forced all missionaries out and now continuing to work on Taiwan. He is a missionary of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

The purpose of "Love China '75" was to generate massive prayer and action to communicate the love of Christ to the 800 millions in mainland China.