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# Marxist Humanism in Dialogue with Christianity

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MARXIST HUMANISM IN DIALOGUE WITH CHRISTIANITY

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A Research Paper Presented to the Faculty  
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S-505

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by

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

One of the ironies of the technological explosion which has characterized the second half of the twentieth century has been a return to an ancient method of problem-solving: the dialogue. In what strikes us as an overnight phenomenon, we are suddenly surprised to read of two doctrinaire antagonists--one aged, the other youthful--sitting down to rationally discuss, debate, and search for understanding. This survey and evaluation of the conversation between Christians and Marxist humanists will operate under the basic assumption that such a meeting of minds is not only harmless but that it is absolutely necessary.

The dialogue became necessary at that moment in history when man perfected his capacity to destroy the world. The dialogue has become necessary as Christianity and Marxism have begun to recognize the permanence of one another. Marxist-inspired political philosophies govern one third of the world's population. The Christian insistence upon the transitory nature of these regimes is both unconvincing and unrealistic. Marxist philosophy likewise teaches the necessary disintegration of religion in a socialist society, augmenting this philosophical proposition with harassment and persecution. Nevertheless, the permanence of Christianity

presents itself as a fact of life to Communists. The recent Polish millennial celebration of Christianity in that nation must have reinforced the fact of Christian permanence in Communists all over the world.

A dialogue nurtured only by the negative exigencies of the times cannot hope to reach its goals of understanding, intellectual cooperation, and peaceful coexistence. A fruitful dialogue must draw upon the strengths of each participant; Christians and Marxists must be willing to learn from one another. The French Communist, Roger Garaudy, rightly affirms that Marxists and Christians best serve the cause of peace by deleting from the dialogue any pursuit of polemical advantage or proselytism. Cooperation will not be effected by a synthesis of Christianity and Marxism. Rather, they are to maintain fidelity to their official creeds and documents and, in short, they are to strive to be the best possible representatives of their traditions.<sup>1</sup>

The achievement of this kind of fidelity requires ruthless historical honesty which will enable Christians and Marxists to confess all departures from their recorded ideals. Such departures might best be symbolized by two words: Inquisition and Stalinism. Through a kind of mutual confession and historical realism, participants in dialogue will necessarily grow in trust. Christian participants who ask, "What is there to trust in Communism?" would do well to remember John XXIII's counsel in Pacem in Terris:

...One must never confuse error and the person who errs, not even where there is question of error or inadequate knowledge of truth in the moral or religious field. The person who errs is always and above all a human being, and he retains in every case his dignity as a human person.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly, dialogue will not take place between the two monoliths, Christianity and Marxism, but only between Christians and Marxists with certain kinds of commitments and ideals. The dialogue, then, proceeds, not between institutions, but between individuals whose participation may or may not influence official policies. Thus the short-term goal of this initial stage of the dialogue is the creation of an atmosphere of hope and trust. These tentative beginnings may be read on both sides as signs of the encouraging fact that good will among Christians as well as Communists is not yet dead. It is hoped that dialogic participants will return to their universities, churches and positions of responsibility and will attempt, in their spheres of influence, to convey some sense of the hope which they experienced in dialogue.<sup>3</sup>

Dialogue also implies risk. It is constantly assailed by integrism, which Prof. G. Girardi defines as a systematic attitude which makes it impossible to reach agreement on certain values without reaching agreement on all others.<sup>4</sup>

Another obstacle, however, arises when the conversation threatens to freeze at the level of intellectual exercise; within a very short time the Christian-Marxist dialogue has become dangerously fashionable in the non-Communist world.<sup>5</sup>

Harvey Cox, himself a fashionable theologian among Christians and Marxists, has warned of a dialogue devoid of praxis. He urges Christians to escape their speculative deductions from Scripture and to rediscover an operational theology which may be related to social and political action.<sup>6</sup> For, ultimately, all people, and not just the specialists, must become participants. There is yet another danger inherent in conversation and social cooperation. Often when men of good will get together, they reveal a liberal tendency to gloss over qualitative differences by synthesizing them. By definition, dialogue does not eradicate these differences; rather it defines them and moderates their coexistence.<sup>7</sup>

We must never underestimate the miraculous element in the current dialogue. The dialogue has grown, not out of a convergence of world views, but out of a profound divergence. The dialogue proceeds in spite of a bitter heritage: From 1917 to 1959 in Russia and Russian occupied countries, 55 bishops and 12,800 priests were executed; in the same period of time, 199 bishops and 32,000 priests were imprisoned or deported.<sup>8</sup> The dialogue exists in spite of books of similar statistics and the scars of living men, and therein lies the miracle.<sup>9</sup>

Having established a few guidelines and presuppositions concerning the dialogue, the next chapter will present a history of the dialogue and a survey of its current development



in Europe. (In America the dialogue is a totally academic affair). Chapter III will contain a summary of the humanism of Karl Marx. Special attention will be given to the following topics: man as worker, alienation, and the new man in a new society. In chapter IV I will analyze the current conversation built around the central point of contact between Christians and Marxists: the problem of man. Descriptions of Marxist and Christian positions will be limited to those of the European participants in the dialogue. In a final chapter I will outline some tentative steps which have been taken in Europe toward practical cooperation.

In different senses Christianity and Marxism contain undercurrents of humanism. This humanism should not be confused with the historical, Renaissance movement, for, in present usage, it connotes all that tends to render man more truly human. True humanism recalls his original greatness by causing him to participate in all that can enrich him in nature and in history.<sup>10</sup>

In this paper I will attempt to follow Garaudy's suggestion, mentioned above, and retain my own Christian perspective. With that factor in mind, plus an obvious limitation of space, much of the Christian doctrine of man will be presupposed as I investigate Marxist humanism. The goal of this paper is not the isolation of two humanistic concerns but the description and analysis of their intersection.

Many of the illustrations and examples in all chapters

will be drawn from Czechoslovakia for the following reasons:

- (1) Any attempt at description must employ sampling techniques.
- (2) The Czechs are at the most mature stage of dialogue of any country in the world.<sup>11</sup>
- (3) I have some acquaintance with the situation in Czechoslovakia through conversations with Czech participants in a formal dialogue.
- (4) The existence of dialogue in Czechoslovakia for the past twenty years refutes the allegation that Communists only enter into a dialogue of this sort when they lack controlling political power.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORY OF THE DIALOGUE AND CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE

#### Origins

No historian will ever be able to identify the first participants in the Christian-Marxist dialogue. We will never know the identities of those first Christians and Communists who cautiously looked over their shoulders, perhaps in the factory or in the university, and in surprise recognized one another's humanity. This grass-roots origin and development differentiates the European dialogue from its American offspring. Largely comprised of middle-aged, arm-chair revolutionaries, the American Communist Party holds no position of importance in American life. In Europe, however, the dialogue was born of expediency.<sup>1</sup> In Russia it is limited to informal dialogue; in Poland and Czechoslovakia it has continued on a formal and informal basis for twenty years. In France and Spain formal dialogue is more than thirty years old.<sup>2</sup> Dialogue takes place on all levels, sometimes over the strenuous opposition of majority interests on both sides.

Communist leaders initiated formal dialogue as early as 1936 when French Communist chairman Maurice Thorez invited Catholic priests to join in the struggle for workers' rights. Party membership was offered to Catholics, not as

Catholics, but as workers.<sup>3</sup> A short-lived journal, Terre Nouvelle, grew out of a brief intellectual exchange between Christians and Communists. In 1938 a group of French Christians, including Francois Mauriac, Pere Ducattillon, Daniel-Rops, Dennis Rougemont, and Nicholas Berdyaev, published a book entitled Communism and Christianity. Their desire for dialogue was rebuffed by the Communists, and a full-scale conversation did not materialize.<sup>4</sup>

During the same period in Italy, the Communists appealed to Roman Catholics to join in the fight against fascism. In 1945 the Fifth Party Congress went on record in favor of freedom of religion, worship and religious propaganda. It offered party membership to all, regardless of religious affiliation. But the Church felt no need to build a relationship of good will with the Communist Party, and, in 1948, the Church virulently opposed a Communist-Socialist coalition. The following year (July 1949) Pius XII excommunicated all Communists and Communist supporters.<sup>5</sup>

Contact was renewed in 1954 when Italian Communist chief Palmiro Togliatti initiated his program of the "outstretched hand" to Roman Catholics. The posthumously published "Testament of Togliatti" contained these words:

The very problem of the religious conscience,...of its roots among the masses,...must be posed in a different way....If not, our outstretched hand to the Catholics will be regarded as a pure expedient and almost as hypocrisy.<sup>6</sup>

In 1965 a number of important books appeared on the subject of Christian-Marxist relations. In the spring of that year a group of Christian theologians and Marxist professors published a collection of essays entitled The Dialogue Put to the Test. Several months later, the French Marxist, Roger Garaudy, a professor at the University of Potiers, the director of the Center for Marxist Study at Paris, and a former senator and vice-president of the French National Assembly, published a seminal work, From Anathema to Dialogue. A lecture tour led by Garaudy introduced the issues of the dialogue to the United States in 1965.<sup>7</sup> In Czechošlovakia Marxist professor Milan Machovec challenged his fellow Communists to recognize the contributions of Christianity. The book, Marxismus und Dialektische Theologie, encourages Communists to forget the 18th century rationalistic arguments against religion and to affirm the freedom, creativity, and love in man.<sup>8</sup> In the August 1, 1965 issue of España Republicana, the monthly organ of the Spanish Communist Party, Santiago Alvarez wrote, "In ideas of goodness, equality, and fraternity...that religion speaks of, there are elements capable of contributing to an emancipating struggle."<sup>9</sup>

From the Christian side, the first response to the many Communist invitations came from an earlier rejector of dialogue, the Roman Catholic Church. In 1963 Pope John XXIII

officially declared a thaw in Pacem in Terris. In a message directed, not only to the faithful, but to all men of good will, the Pontiff said,

Catholics have...a vast field in which they can meet and come to an understanding both with Christians separated from this Apostolic See, and also with human beings who are not enlightened by Jesus Christ, but who are endowed with the light of reason and with a natural and operative honesty. On such occasions, those who profess Catholicism must take special care to be consistent and not compromise in matters wherein the integrity of religion and morals would suffer harm. Likewise, in their conduct they should weigh the opinions of others with fitting courtesy and not measure everything in the light of their own interests. They should be prepared to join sincerely in doing whatever is naturally good or conducive to good.<sup>10</sup>

A year before he became Pope, Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, patriarch Cardinal of Venice, promoted the thirty-second congress of the Socialist Party of Italy. Notices posted on walls read,

I welcome the exceptional significance of this event which is so important for the future of our country. I should like to believe that the decisive motive for your assembly is to understand contemporary conditions and to devote yourselves to doing everything possible to improve living conditions and social well-being.<sup>11</sup>

He asked the faithful and all those who lived in Venice to "meet together with their many brothers from other parts of Italy" who share "the ideals of truth, welfare, justice and peace and to shape them into as fruitful a reality as possible." To his critics he said, "Don't be disturbed by my initiative. One day all those people I addressed will

come to church too."<sup>12</sup>

John's successor, Paul VI, encouraged the continuation of the dialogue in his encyclical Ecclesiam Suam (1964). He pursued this theme a year later in establishing a Vatican Secretariat for Relations with Non-Believers.<sup>13</sup> These steps toward rapprochement were accompanied by an interesting series of events. (1) The Second Vatican Council, responsible to Pope Paul, declined to act on a petition of 450 bishops for a clear condemnation of Communism. (2) The gigantic Catholic charities organization, Caritas, International, having poured 80 millions of dollars into South Viet Nam, has since contributed 1.5 millions to North Viet Nam.<sup>14</sup> (3) By resuming diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia, the Vatican has "for the first time...signed an international agreement which recognizes the validity of a socialist law code."<sup>15</sup>

The most controversial of the papal encyclicals proved to be Paul's Populorum Progressio, issued in 1967. It contained a direct condemnation of capitalism and the proposal of a world tax for the needy.

It is unfortunate that a system has been constructed which considers profit as the key motive for economic progress, competition as the supreme law of economics, and private ownership of the means of production as an absolute right that has no limits and carries no corresponding social obligation.

The western world's outraged response included savant William Buckley's charge of "perfumed Marxism." <sup>16</sup>

Although most of the early participants in the conversation were Roman Catholics, it is interesting to note that much of the theological basis for dialogue came from Protestant theology, especially the work of Bonhoeffer, Barth, and, lately, Cox. Some Protestants were active in the dialogue, and the World Council of Churches soon took a major role in planning and participating in many of the European meetings. The following selection from the Report of the World Conference on Church and Society illustrates the Council's stance over|against socialist methodology in the transformation of society:

As Christians, we are committed to working for the transformation of society. In the past, we have usually done this through quiet efforts at social renewal, working in and through the established institutions according to their rules. Today, a significant number of those who are dedicated to the service of Christ and their neighbour assume a more radical or revolutionary position. They do not deny the value of tradition nor of social order, but they are searching for a new strategy by which to bring about basic changes in society without too much delay.... At the present moment, it is important for us to recognize that this radical position has a solid foundation in Christian tradition and should have its rightful place in the life of the Church and in the ongoing discussion of social responsibility.<sup>17</sup>

More recently (April 1968) the World Council of Churches sponsored a meeting of Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants with a group of Marxist philosophers and scientists. The theme of the meeting held in Geneva was "Trends in Christian and Marxist Thinking about the Humanization of Technical and Economic Development."<sup>18</sup>



In any consideration of the modern dialogue's origins, we cannot underestimate the impact of the Vietnamese War. Suddenly the "men of good will" to whom John XXIII had addressed his encyclical were possessed by an issue around which they could orient themselves. Although an obstacle to mutual trust between East and West, the War continues to serve as a rallying point for non-Christian humanism, Communism, the New Left, and an enormous segment of the European and American Church.

#### Formal Attempts at Dialogue

Dialogue is occurring at all levels in every European country in which the Communist Party is represented. In Europe, due to the general populace's interest in Christian-Communist relations, many of the dialogues are held in public.<sup>19</sup> The most thoroughly organized dialogues have been sponsored by the Paulus Gesellschaft, a free association of Catholic scientists, philosophers and theologians, founded in the German Republic (West Germany) in 1955. Its purpose is to maintain contact between ideologies and disciplines through dialogue. The following is a chronological list of its significant conferences and the most notable participants:

1963, Munich: Sociologist Helmut Schelsky spoke on the function of man in society. Spring, 1964 Munich: Marxist philosopher Ernst Bloch attacked Marxism's lack of transcendence. Also present was Karl Rahner, who outlined a

crude materialistic world model which characterizes much of popular Christianity. Autumn, 1964 Cologne: This meeting was dominated by the Polish Marxist philosopher, Adam Schaff, and Münster theologian, Johannes B. Metz; they debated the place of man in Marxist and Christian thought. Spring, 1965 Salzburg: Rahner and Garaudy led topic discussions on the future of man.<sup>20</sup> This paper will elaborate upon their comments in chapter IV. 1966 and continued in 1967, Herrenchiemsee, Bavaria, and continued at Mariánské Lázně (Marienbad), Czechoslovakia: This was a joint venture of the Paulus-Gesellschaft and the Sociological Institute of Prague. The most notable participants were J. B. Metz, Karl Rahner, H. Thielicke and the Marxists, R. Garaudy and J. Szigeti.<sup>21</sup>

The dialogues seldom function smoothly, and few reach anything more than tentative resolutions. Some of the dialogues have been disrupted or cancelled at the last minute due to visa problems, political repression or tensions over the Vietnamese War.<sup>22</sup>

Nevertheless, the number of discussions is growing. In Yugoslavia a first public dialogue between Christians and Communists was reported in late Spring, 1967 at Zagreb. The talks consisted of round-table discussions at Zagreb University with about three thousand people attending. Speakers included Branko Bosnjak, of the Faculty of Arts, and Father Michael Skvorc, S.J. Using Dr. Bosnjak's book,

Christianity and Philosophy, as a starting point, the discussion eventually turned to "fundamental religious questions."<sup>23</sup> In England dialogues were reported in 1967 in Alford and in London. Representing the Marxists was James Klugmann, editor of Marxism Today, a British journal. A Catholic priest, Father Charles Lowe, from East London's tough Poplar district, said that the Christian-Marxist exchange had already proved helpful in his fight against racism and poverty.<sup>24</sup> In Paris, Protestants and Orthodox have been meeting with Marxists for discussions in connection with the 400th anniversary of John Calvin's death. In Prague a similar anniversary discussion was held commemorating the 550th anniversary of the martyrdom of John Hus.<sup>25</sup>

Of the Communist satellites, Czechoslovakia occupies the most advanced stage of dialogic progress. For several years, weekly public seminars have been conducted at the Comenius Seminary in Prague and at nearby Charles University. The seminars at Charles University are led by Professor Milan Machovec and are followed by an open question and answer period.<sup>26</sup>

Usually Christian-Marxist discussions revolve around the same general themes: (1) The common humanism presupposed by the Bible and the writings of Marx and Engels; (2) man's alienation from himself and God in a technological society; (3) eschatology in the historical process--the Moltmann-Bloch axis--and the eschatological hope presented by Christianity

and Communism; (4) the role of the Church in society.<sup>27</sup>

In the final three chapters of the paper, we shall examine the central issue of the dialogue, the problem of man.

Beginning with a study of Karl Marx's humanism, the presentation will follow the general structure of the topics outlined above.

## CHAPTER III

### THE HUMANISM OF KARL MARX

#### Man as Worker

In most discussions of Marxist humanism scholars tend to limit their comments to the "early" Marx.<sup>1</sup> Before he reached his high level of economic and political sophistication, Marx wrote more about the problem of human existence. This paper, however, will not observe that qualitative difference between "early" and "late" Marx. Rather I will regard the humanistic concern of the early Marx, evidenced in his Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,<sup>2</sup> as a basic presupposition of the Communist Manifesto and Capital.

If we are to enlarge upon the brief definition of humanism given earlier in the paper,<sup>3</sup> we will need to investigate Marx's idea of the nature of man. Marx rebelled against the Hegelian notion of human history as the "history of thought on its way to self-development." Hegel was too preoccupied with the formulation of ideas to suit Marx. Marx, instead, boldly shifted Hegel's evolution of ideas to the evolution of material conditions, which, in turn, shape, not humanity, but concrete men.<sup>4</sup> For Marx, existence always precedes essence<sup>5</sup>, but, unlike the existentialists, the spark of freedom is totally lacking.

The poverty of what man is in the world makes the drive for self-realization exist in him as a deterministic, "inner-necessity, as need."<sup>6</sup> In Marx's day the natural sciences served as the only available model for this need.<sup>7</sup> The portrayal of this inherent need for self-realization also identifies Marx as a child of his age, in that he presupposes the 19th-century doctrine of human progress, of the "principle of movement," propelling man forward.<sup>8</sup>

Mastery over the earth in the form of work ultimately distinguishes man from the animals and defines the degree of his humanity.<sup>9</sup> Man humanizes himself through work by making the object of his activity, nature, useful to him. By defining the activity of man as the determinative factor in his process of humanization, he transcends crude, atomistic materialism:

The chief defect of all materialism up to now (including Feurbach's) is that the object, reality, what we apprehend through our senses, is understood only in the form of the object or contemplation; but not as sensuous human activity, as practice; not subjectively.<sup>10</sup>

His analysis of human work is a materialist's analysis; he steadfastly refuses to reduce human activity to spiritual activity in the manner of the idealist philosophers.<sup>11</sup>

The centrality of work in the humanization of man leads to the necessity of social cooperation. Man, the worker, soon becomes man, the co-worker:

...Human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations.<sup>12</sup>

His social relations do not depend upon his own will but upon the stage of development reached by the material forces of production.<sup>13</sup> Marx wrote in The German Ideology,

There exists a materialistic connection of men... which is determined by their needs and their mode of production and which is...independent of any political or religious non-sense.<sup>14</sup>

The production forces, therefore, which actually control man's consciousness and his community with other men, must work toward his well-being. The goal of Marxist humanism is a world without domination or exploitation of man by man, of class by class. Positively, this humanism calls for freedom to realize ones truest capabilities as a worker in a society of workers. No ultimate goal exists in the writings of Marx, be it state or God, that lies outside man. He wrote,

Theory is capable of getting hold of men once it demonstrates its truth with regard to man, once it becomes radical. To be radical is to grasp something at its roots. But for man the root is man himself.<sup>15</sup>

### Alienation

Marx articulates this radical humanism in the context of man's alienation. Man's goal of self-realization, or increased humanization through work, is crippled by self-estrangement as expressed in his alienation from the fellow members of his society. Marx borrowed the idea of alienation from Hegel, who had constructed a spiritual dialectic

consisting of man's self-expression, his refusal to recognize his own spirituality, and finally, a return to himself through the transcendent medium, God.<sup>16</sup>

Marx's concept of self-expression is not man's thinking but his working; work is important because it brings with it in each case its own superstructures of law, ethics and cultural forms, which are the driving forces of historical development.<sup>17</sup> Man is estranged from this basic form of self-expression when he is deprived of its product, the fruit of his labor. The capitalistic order of society which forces man to work for wages takes away the result of his labor so that his own labor now confronts him as another's property.<sup>18</sup> The harder he works, the more is taken away from his being; he becomes a spiritually and physically dehumanized being. Aiding the capitalist in the dehumanizing process is the spectre of the machine. Today we tend to think of the machine as an appendage of man; cybernation and automation are seen as liberators, freeing man for more useful and creative work. But in Marx's day the reverse held true:

Owing to the extensive use of machinery and to division of labor, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and consequently all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine....<sup>19</sup>

The worker, therefore, according to Marx, can only be himself outside his work. He is "at home" only when he is not working. The wages he earns serve only to satisfy external necessities.<sup>20</sup> Finally, since the worker's activity be-



longs to another, the bourgeois capitalist, he is forced to watch the buying and selling of his own self."The Bourgeoisie has resolved personal worth into exchange value....Laborers must sell themselves piecemeal...like every other article of commerce."<sup>21</sup>

Marx did not analyze the conditions of the working man as a theorist. Rather he worked as a brilliant tactician. He was acquainted with the inhuman working conditions of 19th-century England and sympathized with the children who worked fourteen hours a day in London sweat shops.<sup>22</sup> If Capital does not explicitly state the humanistic concerns of Marx's early work, it does portray in economic terms the hand-to-hand combat occurring between man and machine. With the introduction of large-scale industrial machinery, man loses one of his natural characteristics. He has ceased to produce; he merely works.<sup>23</sup>

In summary, Marx and Engels direct four arguments against the division of labor: (1) It separates the individual from the communal interests. (2) In production, it separates the mental from the manual activities. (3) It transforms personal powers into material powers and personal worth into exchange value. (4) The specialization imposed upon man stunts his creative potentialities.<sup>24</sup>

The alienation resulting from man's occupational frustrations necessarily affects his life in society. In fact,

the common man's self-extrangement is expressible only in his relations with others. The responsibility for this lies with the capitalist who has maintained "the fetishism of commodities," in which "having replaces being." 25 Capitalism creates in the worker a competitive drive to invent new needs in others, to goad his fellow worker into wanting more things. The vicious cycle perpetuates itself because the more things one possesses, the less human he becomes until a human being accomplishes the ultimate perversion: Persons are reduced to things, while the thing called money becomes "for me, the other person." 26 Thus the only true community the proletariat has seems to be a negative one, a brotherhood of suffering which leads to animal competition for survival.

Such alienation, according to Marx, extends into family life and disrupts its harmony and humanity. For parents are usually forced to exploit the fruit of their love, their own children, by "selling" their labor as a commodity in order to help keep food in the cupboard.<sup>27</sup>

Marx understands religious alienation as analogous to the worker's estrangement from his own labor. Religious self-alienation is exemplified in the relation between laity and priest, that is, between laity and a mediator. In the real world of practice this self-alienation can only be expressed in the real, practical relation of man to his fellow-men. In religion he alienates his own activity by

bestowing upon a stranger, the priest, an activity which the layman himself should be performing.<sup>28</sup> Religious alienation as such occurs only in the sphere of consciousness, in the inner life of man, but economic alienation is that of real life. The cessation of the latter will necessarily affect all, including religious, aspects of human life.

Communism begins where atheism begins..., but atheism is at the outset still far from being communism; indeed it is still for the most part an abstraction. Thus the philanthropy of atheism is a force only in abstract philosophical philanthropy, whereas that of communism is at once real and oriented towards action.<sup>29</sup>

Marx, then, defines his atheism as a stage along the way toward a concrete, action-oriented humanism, which, in the context of this quotation, might legitimately be called a religion of man. This form of atheism, at least at its written source, does not lead to the Nietzschean cult of the superman or to Faustian self-indulgence. Marx presents his atheism, not as an end in itself, but as an indispensable contribution toward the liberation of man from the superstitions of the Church. Marx believed that every reform movement had at one time fought the binding constriction of the Church on behalf of man.<sup>30</sup> In Marx's view, religion works as an inhibiting factor in man's quest for inner freedom. He echoes Feurbach's hope of changing the "friends of God into friends of man,...worshippers into workers, Christians into whole men."<sup>31</sup> The following passage, containing Marx's most famous critique of religion,

is taken from his Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's  
Philosophy of Right:

Man who looked for a superman in the fantastic reality of heaven and found nothing there but the reflexion of himself, will no longer be disposed to find but the semblance of himself, the non-human (Unmensch) where he seeks and must seek his true reality....Man makes religion.

. . . . .  
Man is the world of man, the state, society. Religion ...is the fantastic realization of the human essence because the human essence has no true reality. The struggle against religion is therefore mediately the fight against the other world, of which religion is the spiritual aroma. Religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress and the protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people.... The demand to give up the illusions about its condition is the demand to give up a condition which needs illusions. 32

Marx's humanistic argument against religion also took into account man's (especially the 19th-century worker's) life in society. In this area he could cite historical examples from Augustine through Luther and on to the 19th-century Church's opposition to workers' movements as proof of the Church's alliance with the status quo. The Church, he felt, used its power as a weapon to reinforce the dominance of one class over another. Religion appears as an ideology of explanation and justification of the existing social order. He quotes St. Augustine in The City of God: "God introduced slavery in the world as a punishment of sin. It would be therefore to stand against

his will to suppress it."<sup>33</sup> Marx expanded on this theme as editor of the controversial Rheinischer Beobachter:

The social principles of Christianity have now had eighteen hundred years to develop and need no further development by Prussian consistorial councillors. The social principles of Christianity justified the slavery of Antiquity, glorified the serfdom of the Middle Ages and equally know, when necessary, how to defend the oppression of the proletariat,<sup>34</sup> although they make a pitiful face over it.

Marx hated the Christian Bourgeoisie who used the contemptus mundi formula with regard to inconsequential matters, such as Sunday trading laws and other London blue laws which robbed the worker of his last vestiges of pleasure.<sup>35</sup> At the same time the Bourgeoisie, according to Marx, reveled in the world's goods in a grotesque imitation of the deteriorated nobility while contributing nothing toward the elevation of the masses.<sup>36</sup>

### The New Man in the New Society

In the most famous of his "Theses on Feurbach," Marx wrote, "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it." <sup>37</sup> In his flat rejection of token improvements for the workers, such as charity, shorter working hours, or higher wages,<sup>38</sup> Marx draws an indelible line between all liberal reformism and his radical revolutionism. In the end, con-

ditions will not only be altered around man, but man himself will undergo a qualitative change. Man will inevitably attempt to overcome his self-alienation through the restoration of the products of his labor.<sup>39</sup> Here the humanism of Karl Marx begins logically to evolve from a theory of man to a strategy of revolution. Any step toward the cessation of human exploitation, if it is to be a significant one, entails the rehabilitation of society and the creation of new institutions.<sup>40</sup> The new man in the new society will become a reality only when action transcends enlightenment. Through the forcible seizure of power and the planned collectivization of all the means of production, man will transform himself into a fully humanized, social being.<sup>41</sup> Marx wrote in his Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,

Communism is the positive abolition of private property, of human self-alienation, and thus the real appropriation of human nature through and for man. It is, therefore, the return of man himself as a social, i.e. really human, being, a complete and conscious return which assimilates all the wealth of previous development. Communism as a fully-developed naturalism is humanism and as a fully developed humanism is naturalism. It is the definitive resolution of the antagonism between man and nature, and between man and man.<sup>42</sup>

In the words of Roger Garaudy, this fully developed humanism is "the methodology of historical initiative for the realization of the total man."<sup>43</sup> In utopian terms we may speak of the Marxist goal as the yet unrealized "no-place" in which the individual will be indistinguishable from

the ideal social being, living in community with men of all countries.<sup>44</sup> And, in that final fixed stage of history, the negative brotherhood of the proletariat, based on competition and mutual distrust, will transform itself into a positive community of the classless society.<sup>45</sup>

## CHAPTER IV

### CONTEMPORARY MARXIST HUMANISM IN DIALOGUE WITH CHRISTIANITY

#### Humanism as a Basis of Dialogue

Professor Milan Machovec of the University of Prague typifies a new movement within Marxism which has attached itself to the personalistic humanism of the young Karl Marx. He has eloquently urged his fellow Communists to discard the crude materialism which views man as an inanimate cog in the machine of natural forces and social and economic structures. He says that Protestants are more likely to serve a humanist cause than Marxists who remain shackled to the ideological shibboleths of the past. This kind of Marxist, he believes, is truly inhuman. Machovec wishes to deliver Marxism from the inhumanity of its system and, ultimately, from the danger of losing its own soul. He concludes his book, Marxismus und Dialektische Theologie, with this paean to man:

I believe in man, I believe in his human feeling and his love, I believe in his happiness and his pain, I believe in the future unity and brotherhood of man....I do not only know, I believe, too; for I am not the sum of my information and knowledge, but I am a man. <sup>1</sup>

This renewed interest in man, rooted in the humanism of Karl Marx (see chapter three) has been carefully scrutinized and answered by several prominent theologians. Representative of the Christian critique of Marxist humanism offered in the current dialogue has been the recent work



of the Jesuit theologian, Karl Rahner. For Rahner, Christianity and humanism constitute a unity. "Genuine humanism when it has completely come into its own is nothing less than Christianity."<sup>2</sup> At the heart of Christianity stands the God-man, Jesus Christ. The religion based on his death and Resurrection ascribes to each individual man absolute significance and validity which no pre-Christian or non-Christian religion or modern ideology ever dare imitate. Love and concern for one's neighbor must be so radical, so absolute that it is only possible when coming from an Absolute beyond ourselves, who grants it to us as his very own love. An indissoluble unity exists between love of God and love of neighbor. That love of the neighbor never reaches its fulfillment unless it occurs as love of God; conversely, love of God is hardly expressible outside of love for one's neighbor.<sup>3</sup>

Rahner also recognizes the political nature of man's existence. He therefore includes political action in the strategy of love. Then, in a direct challenge to Marxists, he asks in what way this radical Christian humanism can be conceived of as the opium of the people. He asks why we cannot "without wasting too much theoretical dialectic on each other, let the actual practice and the future decide on which side were the ones who loved with more power... and which theory was corroborated by practice."<sup>4</sup> Rahner then concludes that a humanistic dialogue must be based

on "political" action and not just theory. But most important from a Christian perspective, humanism is never rooted in abstract theory about man, but in the concrete reality of Jesus Christ. Thus the Church never identifies any form of humanism with the Kingdom of God but is willing to revise its human values and standards. All humanisms exist and are evaluated in the context of God's open future. Rahner holds that only the humanism which denies man's point of reference to the inscrutable One may truly be called inhuman. A Christian humanism always lives in the future in the pending Kingdom of God. Christianity never makes one form of humanism absolute, but it always obliges Christians to choose a form in which to execute the concrete Christianity. The Church, therefore, is never bound to any culture or any one form of humanism but should remain open to the many humanisms in its future.<sup>5</sup>

#### A Christian Critique of 'Alienation'

With regard to the Marxist description of alienation, Christian theologians have characterized man's self-estrangement as a symptom of his estrangement from God. Whereas most Marxists focus on economic and societal alienation, Christian theologians have questioned the sufficiency of a goal restricted to these forms of alienation. All realize that nowhere has socialism come near the fully evolved,

Marxist-Communist, ideal state--or non-state. But even if it does, will not the old personal sins of deceit, greed, thirst for power, and vanity continue to plague man? These problems, according to Czech theologian, Josef Hromadka, must be countered with grace, forgiveness, and reconciliation--even if these terms are, according to some, remnants of the "old" vocabulary of the Church. Even in the collectivized, classless society, inter-personal relationships will need the balm of forgiveness offered through the Gospel.<sup>6</sup> Some Communists have recognized a similar need. V. Gardovsky, Professor of Marxism at the Military Academy at Brno, Czechoslovakia, has stressed the need for private "repentance" among Communists for the decades of Stalinist atrocities. In an interesting exchange with Pastor Lubomir Mirejowsky, of Tabor, Czechoslovakia, Gardovsky insisted that even if the individual Communist had not condoned the atrocities, he must accept the guilt for them. A socialist country cannot grow morally beyond a certain esprit Communism until guilt is accepted and rehabilitation takes place. In the past the Communist ignored repentance because he believed that history would ultimately justify him. But today, moral shock, followed by governmental rehabilitation is needed on an individual basis to absolve contrite Communists and to free them for the future. Gardovsky attempted to draw an analogy between the pain of guilt the Marxist freely bears and the sacrifice the Christian makes when he forgives in the

name of Jesus. The pastor applauded the Marxist's willingness to recognize and accept guilt, but he challenged the source and efficacy of Marxist forgiveness, that is, government announcements of rehabilitation.<sup>7</sup>

Other theologians have shown that the alienation of modern man has by no means been overcome by the socialist structure of society. The existential Angst of Sartre, Camus, and Kafka lives on in all men.<sup>8</sup> The ordinary laborer in the socialist country is faced with a new kind of alienation. Now, according to Czech Communist intellectual Julius Tomin, membership in the Party has become a new criterion for true participation in society.<sup>9</sup> Socialist countries, such as the Soviet Union, have abolished private enterprise, not in favor of a classless society, but in favor of state capitalism. The state has become the abstract capitalist, and the people own only in name without power of distribution or decision.<sup>10</sup> Instead of creating a classless society founded upon the positive community of the proletariat, new forms of competition have been instituted. These new, alienating classes consist of Party officials, managers, military commanders, technologists, and professors. The new classes receive higher wages and special prerogatives and, in general, prolong the un-Marxian distinction between managers and the managed, between the state and society.<sup>11</sup> The doctrinaire Marxist would undoubtedly explain the con-

tinued injustices and heightened forms of political repression as necessary means to the Communist end described by Marx in near-utopian language.<sup>12</sup> Such an explanation, however, fails to take seriously the permanence of sin in all human relationships, regardless of the evolving nature of these relationships. Should it be willing to recognize this problem, Marxism has given little evidence that it would be able to deal with it effectively. A second Christian objection to Communist methodology comes from Karl Rahner, Reinhold Niebuhr and a host of others in the form of a simple question: Can lasting justice spring from injustice? <sup>13</sup> Marx once stated that Christianity had had its epoch of opportunity to prove itself to the world and had failed. Today, theologians are pointing to a similar failure in Marxism. They are emphasizing the basic contradiction which exists between the goal of liberating humanity and the repressive concentration of power for the perpetuation of Communism as a system.<sup>14</sup>

#### The New Man in the Future

Despite the apparent permanence of alienation, or perhaps because of it, Christians and Marxists have trained their sights on the future of man. In chapter III I outlined Marx's hope for the perfection of communal man. In the Marxist "eschatology" this just community will be established through economic forces operating with inexorable

logic in human history. The Marxist may see in this description a philosophy or even a science of history, but what he has is an apocalyptic vision. Confident prophecy is never more than that.<sup>15</sup>

To make the degradation of the proletarian the cause of his ultimate exaltation, to find in the very disaster of his social defeat the harbinger of his final victory, and to see in his loss of all property the future of a civilization in which no one will have privileges of property, this is to snatch victory out of defeat in the style of great drama and classical religion....It is not the meek but the weak who are given the promise of inheriting the earth. If the Christian poor hoped that spiritual forces would ultimately endow meekness with strength, these modern poor believe that historical, "materialistic" forces will automatically rob the strong and give to the weak.<sup>16</sup>

Marxist philosophers and theologians, currently engaged in dialogue, are looking to a future beyond the establishment of the classless society. This future is implied in the hope that resides in all men. Such hope shapes, not only our prayers, day-dreams, and projects, but also the concrete policies of social change. The most notable participants in this aspect of the conversation have been the "Hope theologians," J.B. Metz and Jürgen Moltmann and the neo-Marxist philosopher, Ernst Bloch. Bloch is the spokesman of a movement within Marxism that goes beyond the limits of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin and returns to the Judeo-Christian sources of Western civilization. According to Bloch, the telos be-

yond the realization of the classless society is the dynamic pull of the future, which he calls the "thermal current" in Marxism.<sup>17</sup>

Like Wolfhart Pannenberg, Bloch finds a phenomenological longing for a future built into the psychological structure of man.<sup>18</sup> Man is not for Bloch principally a product of his past either individually or as a race. Man is not to be described as "thinker" or "symbol-maker" or "tool-maker" or even as "worker." Man is the "hope-er," he who hopes. The "not-yet" for which man hopes remains undefined.<sup>19</sup> In a dialectical relationship with the world, the man (Ich) becomes immersed in the world (Welt). New possibilities begin to open for man from the correspondence between the subjective moment (Ich) and the objective, historical situation (Welt). Man in this relationship with Welt is in a process of becoming (Noch-nicht-sein); in this relationship man best actualizes himself in Marxist social revolution.<sup>20</sup> Bloch refuses to hypostatize this "not-yet" in which man hopes into an idea of heaven. He sees the universal messianism and the inclusive eschatology of Christianity as the religious expression par excellence of the hopeladen, dissatisfaction which spurs man toward the future. Bloch believes that Christianity's greatest gift was the introduction of the 'principle of hope' into the world, for this hope provides a way of viewing things from the perspective of the future.<sup>21</sup>

Christianity, though a religion of hope, opposes the

humanistic basis of Bloch's system. In using his Judaic heritage, Bloch takes God as cause and man, such as that exemplary "not-yet," Jesus Christ, as the effect. He then turns the effect, that is, man, into the cause.<sup>22</sup> It is the old Aristotelian longing of matter for the entelechy of form, the Platonic and Neoplatonic eros driving toward the eidos, the Christian hope in the divine promise of God--yet without any presupposed entelechy of form, without the presupposed eidos or God. The ground of matter's longing must then lie in form-creating matter itself, the ground of the eidos must then lie in the eros itself, the ground of hope in hope itself.<sup>23</sup>

Despite these cogent criticisms, many theologians feel that Bloch's "thermal current" provides a perfect model for liberating Christianity from a static picture of God "up there" in favor of the dynamic "I will be who I will be."<sup>24</sup> Rahner has noted that both Christians and Marxists are obligated to the future rather than the past. The Christian, however, wills his future as the vehicle of God's absolute future.<sup>25</sup> Man's absolute future, bound up as it is in God, is able to transcend every earthly project.<sup>26</sup> But the eschatological resurrection, the goal which is proleptically revealed in Jesus Christ, does not preclude a sense of social responsibility. Rather, according to J.B. Metz and Jurgen Moltmann, it intensifies this



responsibility. The coming of Christ and the promise of his Second Coming stamp all actions in life in a special way. Man now realizes that he exists from something on the way toward something.<sup>27</sup> Moltmann asserts that in Christ the believer is enabled to see all things from the perspective of the end time. Since this is done proleptically in Christ, the Christian may anticipate the end through faithful deeds, including political and social action, in his station on earth. The Resurrection of Christ and the Resurrection of the Dead signifies for Moltmann the truest protest against all the human afflictions and sins experienced by Christ on the cross. Thus the cross and, especially, the unique protest of the Resurrection motivate a political strategy of faith active in love.<sup>28</sup> Finally, this hope is never canonized into a doctrine of optimism, for, if it were, it would lose its identity as hope.<sup>29</sup>

At the Salzburg Dialogue in 1965, J.B. Metz addressed a series of insightful questions to the Marxists concerning the future of man in a Communist society: (1) Even when the Marxist total man is achieved, will he have answers to all human questions? If he does, will he not be less human, for he will have lost his capacity for an ever-expanding future.<sup>30</sup> Roger Garaudy replied that the fully developed, Marxist man will be a questioner, for that future will be filled with questions which transcend anything we can now ask about the future. He reminded the conference that

Communism is not the end of history but the end of a pre-history which has been characterized by jungle-like encounters between the classes.<sup>31</sup> (2) Metz's next question dealt with Marxist "negative capability" which he insisted draws on a reality behind and before the question. Metz said that Marxism harbors a desire for "more-being" which surpasses the possibilities and empirical reality of any given project.<sup>32</sup> In his answer Garaudy first declared, "My thirst does not prove the existence of the spring." He went on to define the "negative capability" of Marxism as absence and exigency rather than the Christian ideas of presence and promise.<sup>33</sup> (3) In his last criticism, Metz claimed that the Marxist hope of emancipation is but a project of alienated men and not a future with its own redemptive power (in Christian language, God) surging toward man. To the final question, Garaudy maintained his previous position, that both Christians and Marxists are attracted to a dynamic transcendent future. He sees that future as a point of integration around which Christians and Communists may come to greater understanding, but, as a Marxist, he can not name the power of his future.<sup>35</sup>

## CHAPTER V

### THE CHURCH'S ROLE IN SOCIETY

#### Two Marxist Approaches

Marxists are uniformly critical of the past role the Church has played in society. Konrad Farner has provided a convenient summary of ecclesiastical vices as seen from a current Communist perspective. After cataloguing the ill-effects which developed from doctrines of blood redemption, hell, martyrdom, sexual repression, censorship and anti-scientism, he turns to the Church's position overagainst land reform. Farner claims that in the middle of the 19th century Leo XIII was still defending feudalism and, further, that only as recently as 1961 in John XXIII's Mater et Magistra did the Church withdraw approval of the corporate state that had been compromised by the fascists. The key words "land reform" did not appear either in the encyclicals Rerum Novarum or in Quadrogesimo Anno or even in Mater et Magistra. Is it not, Farner asks, in the last analysis, the huge land holdings of the Catholic Church that present the real obstacle? In West Germany the Church owns 35 million acres, in France, 50 million acres, and in the United States, over 100 million acres, not to speak of Italy, Spain, Portugal and Latin America. Furthermore, there is nothing in the social encyclicals, according to Farner,

that has not already been embodied in the legislation of numerous cultural states. This justifies the question posed by the German pastor, Helmut Gollwitzer,

In the social encyclical Mater et Magistra, capitalism was called an economic system that was perverse to its very roots--but in which of the countries, in which Catholicism is the prevailing world view, has the Catholic Church so striven for the realization of its social teachings as Marxism has with its teachings in the countries where it rules? .... It is not only . . . a remiss inadequacy, but the economic necessity of the Constantinian Church that causes Catholic social teaching to lag. <sup>1</sup>

Farner has little better to say about the Protestant churches. Protestantism has made few attempts to formulate a significant social concern outside the "religious socialists," who have always been on the margin of church life. He also scores the considerable land holdings of the Anglican Church and state subsidies and tax collections for Land Churches in West Germany, Switzerland, Scandinavia, and the Netherlands. Farner concludes that Luther's reproach of the "Babylonian whore" is, if properly understood, timeless. "The so-called 'Church'--meaning concrete Christianity--has up to now gone to bed with every overlord in every moment of history." <sup>2</sup>

In general, Farner encourages Christians to embrace the Bonhoeffer-idea--or so he interprets Bonhoeffer--of the love of neighbor, which is the result of a religionless Christianity, unmarred by the religious act.<sup>3</sup>

The Communists who encourage dialogue with Christians

have grown to recognize the contributions of Christianity to Western culture and the potential influence Christianity may still wield in building a better socialist state.

Roger Garaudy and especially Palmiro Togliatti have been spokesmen of this view. Before his death, Togliatti consistently interpreted Marxist opposition to religion historically in view of the 19th-century Church's opposition to labor movements.<sup>4</sup> In Togliatti's last official act as head of the Italian Communist Party, he wrote a letter to Soviet Union Premier Khrushchev, encouraging him to pay more attention to the positive aspects of the Church's role in a socialist society.<sup>5</sup>

### Crisis Theology

In the Christian task of constructing a viable theology in a Communist country, Czech Lutheran theologian Josef Hromadka has warned against transforming the message of Christ into a "weltanschauliche" power-front or a religio-political weapon against Communism.<sup>6</sup> He decries the West's self-righteous attitude toward atheistic Communism--an attitude that glosses over free-world Christianity's temptations of disbelief and indifference.<sup>7</sup> His fellow countryman, Milan Opocensky, also opposes the idea of a ghetto-church separated from the world. He proudly proclaims, "We change the world as salt changes the taste

of a meal."<sup>8</sup> The Christian activity and influence may begin outside the Church. The Church surely has other spheres of influence besides church-related hospitals, schools and nursing homes. This influence must be organized around new forms of ministry to collectivized man. Opocensky does not advocate a return to the Romantic preoccupation with the individual but simply to a recognition of the dignity and uniqueness of human life. Such recognition will lead to a desire for freedom, which will ultimately prove to be a blessing to the socialist state.<sup>9</sup> Since the old, personal sins will survive, even in a classless society, the Church has the responsibility of witnessing in the areas of industrial ethics, sexual ethics, family life and in all the new situations in which collectivized man finds himself.<sup>10</sup> Hromadka believes that the application of the Gospel will enable collectivized man to meet his problems; thus, the training of children in the Gospel will in the last analysis aid in the building of a healthy socialist society.<sup>11</sup>

Hromadka's crisis theology shows absolutely no interest in a pseudo-synthesis of Christianity and Communism on the basis of liberal theology.<sup>12</sup> On three major points Hromadka says "No!" to the Communist system:

- (1) There can be no unlimited loyalty to the state;
- (2) Man's ultimate value is never anchored in himself;

(3) The Christ who addresses himself to troubled humanity remains necessary in all societies, for the root of man's misery is man, himself. <sup>13</sup>

Hromadka takes a positive position toward Communism. The key to his crisis theology is the Christian's involvement in Christ's world. He advocates the preaching of the Gospel as an honest critique of society; Christians are admonished to pray for the society in which they live. <sup>14</sup> He also stresses the intercessory role of the Church as well as its self-identification as the suffering servant of society. Finally, the Church's willingness to suffer and to endure will offer the most meaningful witness to society and the world. <sup>15</sup>

#### Cooperative Humanism in Action

By referring to the growing number of formal conferences and dialogues between Christians and Communists, I have already indicated one vast area of cooperation between Christians and Marxists. Before practical cooperation begins, Christians and Marxists have entered into cooperative intellectual labor. They have sponsored conferences together, such as the conference in Marienbad, sponsored by the Paulusgesellschaft and the Czech

Sociological Institute. The Institute has now erased many of the distinctions between Communist and Christian researchers, and recently it sponsored a cooperative study of the Church's influence in society.<sup>16</sup> Christians and Communists have also published books cooperatively and they have toured foreign lands together and shared the same podium.

In crisis situations Christians and Communists have, on occasion, fought toward the same goals. During World War II many Christians and Communists joined in resistance movements. They shared cells and awaited death together. One Czech pastor reports that Communists could not comprehend the Christians' need of prayer, and Christians failed to understand the altruism of atheists who sang "The Internationale" while awaiting execution.<sup>17</sup>

Czech humanist V. Gardovsky points to the early 1950's, at the height of the cold war with its constant threat of atomic holocaust, as the first time in human history when civilized man was forced to begin trying to formulate a mutually acceptable answer to the question "What is Man?"<sup>18</sup> In an effort to answer this question the Christian Peace Conference was organized under the direction of Josef Hromadka in Prague in 1956. The Conference's eccumenical stance is enhanced by the



inclusion of lawyers, economists, historians, sociologists and scientists. The theologians from the Eastern European countries aim at bringing the Christian doctrine of peace to the contemporary world. In this endeavor, the theologians at all times seek penetration into other disciplines, sometimes by using the language of Marxism in their critique of the existing social, political and economic structures. The central doctrine of the Christian Peace Conference is that God's solidarity with sinful man presents an indirect criterion of man's greatness. The Conference's statements reflect not only a desire for co-existence with the socialist structures, but a positive, leavening force which we might label "pro-existence."<sup>19</sup>

Crisis situations in many countries have brought Christians and Communists together. Spanish opposition to Franco fascism and revolutionary movements in Latin America and South America are concrete examples of this. The most recent example of a Marxist-Christian coalition occurred in Czechoslovakia in response to the crisis of late August, 1968. The Soviet invasion forces were unable to effectively govern the country due, in part, to a coalition of humanists, Czech Communists, Roman Catholics and Protestants. For the first time in four and one half centuries, Roman Catholics and Protestants issued a joint ecumenical statement--in support of Communist reforms!<sup>20</sup> The Western press, totally unfamiliar with the humanistic tenets of Marxism, interpreted the altruistic humanism of Chairman

Dubcek and his many reforms as simple imitations of Western policies.

In Italy the degree of cooperation between Christians and Communists has fluctuated. The Church has retained a position of strength, exemplified by the excommunication of all Communists and Communist sympathizers by Pope Pius XII. Since Post-Fascist times, the Communist Party and the Christian Democratic Party have worked together on selected issues. Communists have generally avoided a direct clash with the Church, even on such controversial matters as birth control.<sup>21</sup> The Catholic position of strength has dictated a policy of dealing with Communist individuals while refusing extended working agreements with political groups.<sup>22</sup>

Throughout Europe small groups of Christians have sought and received practical cooperation with Communists in areas of social concern. Excellent examples of this are the Gossner Mission and the Weissensee Circle in East Berlin. The Christians involved in these organizations toil with industrial workers and common laborers and enter into dialogue with atheists of all political persuasions. University chaplains and youth leaders direct small groups in theological and literary study. They also explore new avenues of the Christian witness and work at developing new forms of worship.<sup>23</sup>

In England Christian members of the New Left have

rallied around a bi-monthly journal entitled Slant. Originally a publication of Cambridge undergraduates, the Slant manifesto may be summarized as follows: Christians can never label themselves as conservative or liberal or even right-wing socialist; they must always fight capitalism in its every form as evil. To this end, they must align themselves with the traditional enemies of the Church, the left-wing socialists and atheistic Marxists.<sup>24</sup> According to this organ of the issue-oriented New Left, the Christian task lies in the creating of human community. Capitalist or welfare states have not as yet overcome the alienation described by the young Marx. The Church is to take part in the struggle against alienation by becoming the "sacrament of a socialist society." Sacramental presence for this group entails the abolition of geographical parishes and separate religious schools. The editors of Slant also favor the democratization of the clergy, including the disappearance of the priesthood as a specialized occupation.

The Slant manifesto offers a good example of Christian-Marxist dialogue bogged down in intellectual gymnastics. One critic has noted that most Slant proposals grow out of English and Continental literature and that only two of every two hundred pages contain positive practical proposals of any sort. In its official editorial policy, Slant draws a parallel between radical Christianity and radical socialism, and then proceeds to announce a merger

of the two. Given such an organic connection between Christianity and socialism, Slant takes the liberty of equating key terms, such as sin and alienation, salvation and emancipation, socialist community and koinonia and many others. This results in an uncritical, unsophisticated blending of Christianity and socialism, a synthetic conglomerate called Christian Socialism. <sup>26</sup>

In France, the worker-priest movement has operated with a methodology totally different than that of the editors of Slant. In France an emphasis on deeds has relegated journalistic flamboyance to the background. The worker-priest movement there began in 1943 when Abbe Godin and Abbe Daniel wrote France: Country of Mission. This book spoke eloquently of the wall between the Church and the blue collar worker due to the worker's inability to find acceptance in bourgeois Roman Catholic churches. In 1944 Cardinal Suhard founded Mission du Paris, a group of priests interested in understanding the proletarian situation and demonstrating the love of Christ in the world. <sup>27</sup> Never were more than one hundred of the fifty thousand French priests involved in this project. <sup>28</sup> These 100 did not live in a presbytery or monastery, nor were they responsible for parochial work. They lived only by the wages earned as full-time factory workers. Their true identities were unknown to most of their coworkers and employers. <sup>28</sup>

In some instances priests found it difficult to avoid

membership in the Communist unions and soon were holding positions of leadership in them. Some joined in political demonstrations organized by the Communist party. <sup>29</sup>

In 1951 Pius XII warned against clergy collaboration with Communists and in 1953 the order came for the withdrawal of worker-priests. Cardinal Feltin stated, "Rome must account for the fact that hereafter the Church will appear to the workers as definitely allied to capitalism." <sup>30</sup> Through the intercessions of three bishops Pius XII eased his prohibitions to allow four hours of work per day. Most of the workers rejected this, but one bishop, Bishop Ancil of Lyons, accepted this and was for many years a "bishop-worker." <sup>31</sup> The movement withered under obtuse theological analyses of men like Cardinal Pizzardo: "It is indeed difficult to understand how there can be completely dechristianized masses when such a great number have received the sacred and indelible character of baptism." <sup>32</sup> The movement dwindled considerably until its rehabilitation by Vatican II. Different kinds of selection and training methods were employed. After a hard day's labor the worker-priest now returns to a religious community. His union activities are limited to simple membership, excluding positions of leadership and all political

activities.<sup>33</sup> Despite these restrictions, this method of dialogue through Christian presence has endured in France and now exists in England in seed form among Anglican priests and their wives.<sup>34</sup>

### Conclusion

If we were able to peer into the future of the Christian-Marxist dialogue, it seems that we would see either an explosion of cooperative good will or the complete absence of dialogue. Already the participants in the formal discussions have expressed impatience with their intellectualizing of the problems. As necessary as a sound theological and philosophical substructure may be, the dialogue will need to evolve into praxis if the good will generated so far is to be maintained.

The problems of practical cooperation multiply according to the political fluctuations in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The fact that political affairs, including the progress of a war, do affect a discussion between Marxist philosophers and Christian theologians indicates how closely the Church is identified with its cultural and political setting. For the Church to participate in the life of the society, it must give evidence that it has begun to disengage itself from every system and institution which is not specifically Christian. In this dis-

engagement the Church will redefine with pre-Constantinian purity the essential elements of its faith. When the Church gets around to beginning this process, the greatest opportunities for cooperation and witnessing will be achieved.

The greatest dangers in the dialogue will continue to be a mutual fear and distrust. Hopefully the Church leaders will not continue to simplify all the issues and to characterize Marxism as a Christian heresy. This is the easy way of presenting a complex problem to the laity. If this method persists, the leaders will finally be trapped into abstaining from expanded dialogue. The fear and prejudice of the laity may be the determining factors in that obstruction. Therefore, for its own benefit, the Church would do well to educate itself in the philosophical, ideological and political thought of Marxism. Once Christians recognize Marxism as an ideology and not a heresy whose only tenet is atheistic materialism, the dialogue will proceed in an atmosphere discharged of emotional extremism.

The Christian calling, however, not only entails the harmlessness of doves, but also the wisdom of serpents. The Christian's sound education in the issues will avert prejudice and the second of the deadly dangers inherent in dialogue: naiveté. Even on the theoretical level of discussion, the Christian will remain a constant observer of the political scene and will cultivate a keen eye for the dialogue's political ripples. In some of the dialogues

the Church has been overmatched philosophically and politically--not because the Church does not have able men--but because the best men are not coming forth to assume this latest and most challenging burden. Although proselytism is not the dialogue's primary goal, every Christian-Marxist dialogue has produced an inevitable witness to Christ and a renewal of the Church's apologetic tradition.



## APPENDIX

### Summary of a Christian-Marxist Dialogue

On October 18-20, 1968 a Christian-Marxist dialogue was held at the Thompson Retreat House in Ladue, Missouri. The number of those attending was restricted to fifty people. The dialogue was led by four Czechs who came to the United States under the auspices of the Office of Student World Relations of the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations (COEMAR) of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. The leaders of the dialogue were Prof. Vitezslav Gardovsky, Professor of Marxism at the Military Academy in Brno, Czechoslovakia, and the author of God Is Not Yet Dead; Julius Tomin, Assistant Professor of Marxism at the University of Prague; Pastor Lubomir Mirejowsky, Senior of the Church and pastor of a congregation in Tabor; Dan Drapal, a theological student at the Comenius Seminary in Prague.

At the opening session the four leaders offered some definitions and presuppositions concerning the art of dialogue. Prof. Gardovsky called for a dialogue that is able to maintain itself in the worst of political crises. He saw in dialogue the only hope for Marxists and Christians of effecting a qualitative change in the world. He requested that this conference be radical in the original sense of that word, that is, that the conference return to the roots of Marxism and Christianity and to work from there.

Dr. Tomin, in decrying the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, pointed to the Russians' inability to govern a united people as one of the fruits of dialogue. He called for a secular faith in some ultimate meaning or result the dialogue might produce. Pastor Mirejowsky gave an informal sketch of the grass-roots origin of the dialogue. He said that the first Christians and Marxists who held discussions together were looked upon with suspicion. He spoke of a gradual political thaw that is taking place in Czechoslovakia between Christians and Marxists. The Marxist doctrine of the inevitability of the Christian disappearance from a Socialist society has been proven false, for in a pluralistic society both forces will draw upon one another's strengths; he believes Czechoslovakia is moving in that direction.

Throughout the next two days the participants divided into small groups with each group meeting with one of the Czech dialogue leaders. The participants gathered for informal discussions over meals and at the end of both days. A plenary session was held Sunday morning to summarize the main strands of thought. In that session the following points were isolated as topics which had been discussed throughout the weekend: (1) The varieties of humanism, including the use of power in a human way; (2) Christian and Marxist commitment to radical change; (3) Sin, repentance and forgiveness (cf. Supra, pp. 31-32); (4) Problems of political la-

bels; (5) Christian and Marxist ideas of justice; (6) Redemption; (7) The problem of trust between dialogic participants; (8) The future of the dialogue.

## FOOTNOTES

### Chapter 1

<sup>1</sup>Roger Garaudy, From Anathema to Dialogue, translated by Luke O'Neill (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), p. 14.

<sup>2</sup>Seven Great Encyclicals (Glen Rock, N.J. : Paulist Press, 1963), p. 323.

<sup>3</sup>In a Christian-Marxist Dialogue held in Ladue, Missouri, October 18-20, Czech Marxist philosopher Vitezslav Gardovsky likened this process to the spreading rings which appear when a stone is thrown into a quiet pool of water. A full account of the dialogue, which the author attended, is given in an appendix. Hereafter the proceedings of this dialogue will be referred to as Ladue Proceedings.

<sup>4</sup>"Christians and Marxists at Herrenchiemsee," Herder Correspondence, III (August 1966), 246.

<sup>5</sup>Peter Steinfelds, "Oh, What a Lovely Dialogue," Commonweal, LXXXV (January 13, 1967), 397. The following is an excellent parody on a fashionable Christian-Marxist dialogue:

"All right, Steinfelds," began Mahoney at lunch last week, "how about a little Catholic-Marxist dialogue?"

"Well, okay," I replied, stabbing a dill pickle, who'll be the Marxist?"

"Your turn," he said, "I did it last time." I was doubtful. "You know I'm not strong on economics. Exploitation, sure. But falling rate of profit and labor theory of value? As for sociology and class relations, I've barely even cut my teeth..."

"Come off it, Steinfelds. That's the old Marx. Just alienation, humanism, that sort of thing..."

"Okay, I'll give it a try."

"You lead off," ordered Mahoney, taking a deep breath. I led off: "Classless society."

"Kingdom of God," he replied.

"Alienation," I said.

"Sin," he shot back.

"Reification."

"Idolotry."

"Socialist solidarity."

"Liturgical community." (We were really going into it now).

"Division of labor."

"The Fall." (p. 397)

<sup>6</sup>Harvey Cox, "The Christian-Marxist Dialogue; What Next?," Dialog, VII (Winter 1968), 22.

<sup>7</sup>Herbert Marcuse and Harvey Wheeler, "Varieties of Humanism," The Center Magazine, I (July 1968), 15.

<sup>8</sup>Hiley H. Ward, God and Marx Today (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968), 119.

<sup>9</sup>Pastor Lubomir Mirejowsky, Senior (Dean) and pastor of a church in Tabor, Czechoslovakia reported that he began dialoging in a government prison camp for clergymen fifteen years ago. (Ladue Proceedings)

<sup>10</sup>Jacques Maritain, True Humanism (London: The Centenary Press, 1938), p. xii.

<sup>11</sup>Ward, p. 55.

## Chapter 2

<sup>1</sup>In most socialist countries, the dialogue began on a grass-roots level among factory workers and between clergymen and professors. (Ladue Proceedings)

<sup>2</sup>Cox, 21.

<sup>3</sup>Garaudy, p. 84.

<sup>4</sup>Cox, 21.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ward, p. 50.

<sup>7</sup>Cox, 22.

<sup>8</sup>Markus Barth, "Developing Dialogue between Marxists and Christians," Journal of Ecumenical Studies, IV (Summer 1967), 385.

<sup>9</sup>Cox, 21.

<sup>10</sup>Seven Great Encyclicals, p. 322.

<sup>11</sup>Ward, p. 40.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

- <sup>15</sup>From the Warsaw Slowo Powszechne, quoted in Ward, p. 46.
- <sup>16</sup>Ward, pp. 41-42.
- <sup>17</sup>"Christians in the Technical and Social Revolution of Our Time," Official Report of the World Conference on Church and Society (Geneva: The World Council of Churches, 1966), p. 49.
- <sup>18</sup>"Statement of the Christian-Marxist Dialogue in Geneva," The Ecumenical Review, XX (July 1968), 302.
- <sup>19</sup>Pastor Mirejowsky reports a five-hour public dialogue held in Prague that did not end until 1 A.M. 3,000 people had to be sent home. (Ladue Proceedings)
- <sup>20</sup>"Dialogue between Catholics and Communists," Herder Correspondence, II (September-October 1965), 325-330.
- <sup>21</sup>"Christians and Marxists at Herrenchiemsee," Herder Correspondence, III (August 1966), 243-247.
- <sup>22</sup>Ward, p. 52.
- <sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 59.
- <sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 60.
- <sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 59.
- <sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 60.
- <sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

### Chapter 3

- <sup>1</sup>Where necessary the writings of Marx will be differentiated from those of Engels.
- <sup>2</sup>The problem connected with this is that the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts were not published in English until 1959.
- <sup>3</sup>cf. Supra, p. 5.
- <sup>4</sup>Henry J. Koren, Marx and the Authentic Man (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1967), pp. 25-27.
- <sup>5</sup>Garaudy, p. 74.

<sup>6</sup>Koren, p. 30.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>8</sup>Erich Fromm, Marx's Concept of Man with the text of Marx's Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts translated by T.B. Bottomore (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1961), p. 126. Hereafter references to Fromm's introductory essay will be cited "Fromm." References from Marx's Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts will be cited "MSS."

<sup>9</sup>Koren, p. 30.

<sup>10</sup>Garaudy, pp. 70-72. (Garaudy's translation)

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>12</sup>Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, On Religion, "Theses on Feuerbach," no. VI, edited by Reinhold Niebuhr (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), p. 71.

<sup>13</sup>Koren, p. 34.

<sup>14</sup>From Marx's German Ideology quoted in Koren, p. 37.

<sup>15</sup>From "Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law. Critique of Religion," in Fromm, p. 220 (Italics his).

<sup>16</sup>Fromm, p. 45.

<sup>17</sup>Marcel Reding, "Marxism Without Atheism," Commonweal, LXXXII (May 7, 1965), 217.

<sup>18</sup>MSS., p. 95.

<sup>19</sup>Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, translated by Samuel Moore, edited by Friedrich Engels (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952), p. 422. Hereafter this work will be cited "Manifesto."

<sup>20</sup>Koren, pp. 62-63.

<sup>21</sup>Manifesto, p. 422.

<sup>22</sup>Marx also drew heavily on Engels' Condition of the Working Classes.

<sup>23</sup>Vernon Venable, Human Nature: The Marxian View (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), p. 135.

- <sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 123.
- <sup>25</sup>MSS., p. 168.
- <sup>26</sup>From MSS. quoted in Koren, p. 65.
- <sup>27</sup>Koren, p. 70.
- <sup>28</sup>MSS., p. 105.
- <sup>29</sup>Ibid., pp. 128-129.
- <sup>30</sup>Josef Hromadka, "On the Threshold of a Dialogue," Communio Viatorum, VII (1964), 128.
- <sup>31</sup>Quoted in Koren, p. 76.
- <sup>32</sup>"Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," in On Religion, pp. 41-42.
- <sup>33</sup>Roger Garaudy, "Christian-Marxist Dialogue," Journal of Ecumenical Studies, IV (Spring 1967), 209.
- <sup>34</sup>"The Communism of the Paper Rheinischer Beobachter," in On Religion, pp. 83-84.
- <sup>35</sup>"Anti-Church Movement Demonstrations in Hyde Park," in On Religion, p. 128.
- <sup>36</sup>Kenneth Heinitz, "The Theology of Hope according to Ernst Bloch," Dialog, VII (Winter 1968), 37.
- <sup>37</sup>"Theses on Feuerbach," no. XI in On Religion, p. 72.
- <sup>38</sup>Koren, pp. 63, 70.
- <sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 57.
- <sup>40</sup>Marcuse and Wheeler, p. 13.
- <sup>41</sup>Helmut Gollwitzer, Die Marxistische Religionskritik und der christliche Glaube (München und Hamburg: Siebenstern Taschenbuch Verlag, 1965), pp. 37-38.
- <sup>42</sup>MSS., p. 127.
- <sup>43</sup>Garaudy, p. 60, From Anathema to Dialogue.
- <sup>44</sup>Manifesto, p. 425.



<sup>45</sup>Koren, p. 120.

#### Chapter 4

<sup>1</sup>Quoted in M. Barth, 385-386.

<sup>2</sup>Karl Rahner, "Christian Humanism," Journal of Ecumenical Studies, IV (Summer 1967), 369.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 370.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 372.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 376-377.

<sup>6</sup>Hromadka, 143-144.

<sup>7</sup>Ladue Proceedings.

<sup>8</sup>Milan Opocensky, "A Christian Existence in Czechoslovakia Today," Communio Viatorum, VII (1964), 298.

<sup>9</sup>Ladue Proceedings.

<sup>10</sup>Koren, p. 138.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>12</sup>Josef Hromadka, "Gospel for Atheists," Risk, I (Spring 1965), 36.

<sup>13</sup>Reinhold Niebuhr, Moral Man and Immoral Society (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), p. 164.

<sup>14</sup>Helmut Gollwitzer, "The Christian Church and Communist Atheism," Ecumenical Review, XIV (October 1961), 77.

<sup>15</sup>Niebuhr, p. 156.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 154.

<sup>17</sup>Heinitz, 36.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Harvey Cox, "Ernst Bloch and 'The Pull of the Future,'" New Theology No. 5, edited by Martin E. Marty and Dean G. Peerman (New York: The Macmillian Co., 1968), p. 197.

- <sup>20</sup>Heinitz, 38.
- <sup>21</sup>Cox, "Ernst Bloch and 'The Pull of the Future,'" p. 198.
- <sup>22</sup>Heinitz, 40.
- <sup>23</sup>Jürgen Moltmann, "Hope and Confidence: A Conversation with Ernst Bloch," Dialog, VII (Winter 1968), 45.
- <sup>24</sup>Johannes B. Metz, "Creative Hope," New Theology No. 5, edited by Martin E. Marty and Dean G. Peerman (New York: The Macmillian Co., 1968), p. 137. So Metz translates  $\pi\uparrow\pi$ .
- <sup>25</sup>Rahner, 384.
- <sup>26</sup>Garaudy, p. 60, From Anathema to Dialogue.
- <sup>27</sup>Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope, translated by James W. Leitch (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 325.
- <sup>28</sup>Jürgen Moltmann, "Toward a Political Hermeneutic of the Gospel," Union Seminary Quarterly Review, XXIII (Summer 1968), 311-314.
- <sup>29</sup>Metz, p. 139.
- <sup>30</sup>Garaudy, p. 60, From Anathema to Dialogue.
- <sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 90.
- <sup>32</sup>Ibid., pp. 60-61.
- <sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 92.
- <sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 61.
- <sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 92.

## Chapter 5

- <sup>1</sup>Konrad Farner, "A Criticism of Christianity," Communio Viatorum, IX (1966), 33.
- <sup>2</sup>Ibid., 34.
- <sup>3</sup>Ibid.

- <sup>4</sup>Cox, "Christian-Marxist Dialogue," 20.
- <sup>5</sup>Norman Kogan, "Italian Communism, the Working Class, and Organized Catholicism," The Journal of Politics, XXVIII (August 1966), 546.
- <sup>6</sup>Opocensky, 300.
- <sup>7</sup>Hromadka, "Gospel for Atheists," 33.
- <sup>8</sup>Opocensky, 300.
- <sup>9</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup>Ibid., 298.
- <sup>11</sup>Hromadka, "On the Threshold of a Dialogue," 144.
- <sup>12</sup>Charles West, Communism and the Theologians (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958), p. 55.
- <sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 60.
- <sup>14</sup>Karl Barth takes a similar position in his famous letter to Pastor Johannes Hamel in How to Serve God in a Marxist Land.
- <sup>15</sup>West, p. 71.
- <sup>16</sup>Ladue Proceedings.
- <sup>17</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup>Emil Jelinek, "An Attempt at Christian Irenology," Communio Viatorum, IX (1965), 81-82.
- <sup>20</sup>Ladue Proceedings.
- <sup>21</sup>Kogan, 533.
- <sup>22</sup>Ibid., 554.
- <sup>23</sup>Markus Barth, "Church and Communism in East Germany," The Christian Century, LXXXIII (November 23, 1966), 1442.
- <sup>24</sup>Steinfels, 397.
- <sup>25</sup>Ibid., 398.
- <sup>26</sup>"The Slant Manifesto: Catholics and the New Left (review)," Herder Correspondence, IV (January 1967), 26.

<sup>27</sup>Robert Rouquette, "Working Priests in France," The Catholic World, CCIII (June 1966), 162.

<sup>28</sup>Gregor Siefert, The Church and Industrial Society, translated by Isabel and Florence McHugh (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1964), p. 318.

<sup>29</sup>Rouquette, 162.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 163.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 164.

<sup>34</sup>Ann Grubb, "English Worker Priests," Frontier, I (Spring 1960), 269.

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