6-1-1957

Social and Political Thinking in the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod from 1920-1955

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SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THINKING IN THE LUTHERAN CHURCH--MISSOURI SYNOD FROM 1920 TO 1955

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Historical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

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June 1957

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POLITICAL THOUGHT IN MISSOURI SYNOD

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of this thesis is to give a description of the social and political thinking within The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod during the years 1920 to 1955. Obviously the purpose is more than that, however, since few people are interested in describing simply for description's sake. The implication is that such a description has to do with a crucial area in the theology and life of the Church. This in turn implies that even a description can serve the useful purpose of giving a better understanding of what has been thought and why it has been thought, and can, therefore, help to indicate a direction for thinking and acting in the future.

The thesis title indicates that the years between 1920 and 1955 are under consideration. While this is true, it does not completely describe the full extent of the paper. The first chapter deals with background material that touches briefly upon several important emphases of Luther and subsequent Lutheranism. Then it concerns itself chiefly with the thought of Missouri Synod in its earlier stages. For this latter purpose the writer has limited himself to C. F. W.

Walther's Communismus und Socialismus, as well as notes from classroom lectures on Walther's theology by Prof. Jaroslav Pelikan. Then the writer has traced the thinking of Synod as it is reflected in the Theological Quarterly from its beginning in 1897 up to 1920. This particular chapter does not pretend to be comprehensive, yet it is probably helpful for an understanding of the rest of the essay.

Sources used in the main body of the paper include the Theological Monthly and its continuation, the Concordia Theological Monthly; The Lutheran Witness; Der Lutheraner; and the Lutheran School Journal and its continuation, Lutheran Education. In addition to these periodicals the writer checked all district essays that were available in the Concordia Historical Institute, which has the most complete file of these papers, and in one case an essay of a Synodical Conference gathering. He also made use of all accessible monographs published by Concordia Publishing House that dealt with the thesis topic. These sources included the years 1920-1955; Der Lutheraner was ignored from 1940 on because previous years indicated very little material on the thesis topic, and by 1940 this magazine was probably not as influential a voice in the Missouri Synod as it was decades prior to that time.

These sources indicate a deliberately restricted research program. A more intensive study would have taken into account such non-official publications as the American Lutheran and The Cresset. It would also have attempted to

reach into the popular piety of Missouri Lutherans, and here an examination of the preaching would be important.

However going through even this limited selection of material carefully is quite a project, and yielded a great many more articles and items related to the thesis than could be indicated in the essay itself. This posed the problem of selecting material. Unquestionably it is true that one's own theological and political inclinations influence what he regards as significant and therefore determine, at least in part, his choice of content. The best way to avoid this danger of "stacking the evidence" might seem to be to reflect in as exact a proportion as possible views found in the sources. Yet this would have involved a great amount of wearying repetition, and it is furthermore to be questioned whether sheer repetition of old expressions deserves as prominent a place as more creative material. At any rate, this writer reminded himself throughout the essay to give an accurate description and not to furnish too much evidence of his own bias. He, therefore, has saved as much of this bias as possible for the concluding chapter. The reader might find it profitable to consult the same before beginning the rest of the essay.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

The medieval world perpetuated a type of religious dualism, a dualism that consisted in a sharp division between clergy and laity. Life in a monastery was elevated far above ordinary secular pursuits, which meant that monks were more holy than farmers. The Reformation undercut this distinction. It gave the common people a new and noble status in the eyes of God and man, and in effect turned the world into a monastery.

Luther's idea of the secular calling "changed the whole emphasis of Christian ethics, and gave a new start to the history of Europe."[1] But it is also true that Luther thought of the secular calling within the medieval pattern of life, hence largely in terms of passive acceptance of one's station in life and obedience within it. In this particular respect his doctrine could be called "quietistic."

Calvin's idea of the calling should not be over-simplified in comparing it with that of Luther. Nevertheless it is probably fair to say that, relative to Luther's theology, the theology of Calvin had a tendency to produce a more activistic

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[1] W. R. Forrester, Christian Vocation (London: Lutterworth Press, 1951), p. 154.

attitude toward one's calling. This tendency received greater stress in subsequent Calvinistic orthodoxy with its emphasis on the doctrine of predestination and the role of personal morality under God's sovereign rule. Stern devotion to duty in carrying out God's will was the job of the elect. Since God rewards the elect also in this life, many Calvinists tended to look for evidence of their election in terms of personal prosperity, which spurred them on to greater diligence and industry.[2] This sort of individualism not only was suited to the development of Capitalism, but probably helped to encourage it.

In any event, whether for theological, geographical or other reasons, Lutherans were inclined to consecrate the virtue of obedience, while Calvinists tended to honor ambition. However within both Lutheranism and Calvinism there was a strong disposition to view the sole function of government as the coercive prevention of evil-doing. The promotion of social justice beyond this point has been slighted.

As Capitalism in an industrial society pushed forward largely unhampered by the restraints of government, social

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[2]This is a neat and useful inversion, one easily arrived at. "If I am virtuous, God will reward me," becomes "God has rewarded me, therefore I am virtuous." There are, it seems to this writer, strong traces of such an inversion in public life today, as evidenced in any assumption that America's prosperity is a sign of her virtue. This has the added advantage--one quite as sinister as it is subtle--of enabling a nation to posit an a priori righteousness in asserting its foreign policy.

injustices multiplied. This "free market" economy was often defended by Christian and non-Christian alike as part of divine law, though it fitted perfectly the Deistic doctrine of pre-ordained harmony and had little affinity with the Christian doctrine of sin. By and large the Church had either associated itself with the interests of the middle and upper classes, or had accepted capitalistic, free-market economy as a necessity and concerned itself with the souls of people. Often riches were sanctioned as a sign of virtue, and poverty was likewise welcomed as a blessing which would preserve people from the temptations of the world. But people who saw their own lives or the lives of others reduced to misery by the evils of industrialism dismissed as hypocritical or irrelevant a theology which didn't care.[3] The failure of the Church to grapple realistically with this situation was in part responsible for the advent of Karl Marx and other social radicals. This failure greatly encouraged the spirit of naturalism by causing people to look away from the Church and turn to the world for solutions.

In America, where many of the early settlers were strict Calvinists, the almost limitless opportunities for pioneer expansion and development helped to alleviate the injustices of the industrial age, but at the same time promoted the ideal of rugged individualism. This combination of strict or

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[3]Reinhold Niebuhr, An Interpretation of Christian Ethics (New York: Meridian Books, 1956 reprint), p. 128.

modified Calvinism and rugged individualism did much to promote a popularly accepted view of the free economic market as part of God's design, and government interference as morally reprehensible. (This view still receives its classic expression in periodicals such as Christian Economics, and frequently recurs in modified form within conservative ranks of both political parties.)

In America, too, the apparent failure of the Church to deal successfully with social abuses reacted negatively upon a large segment of the abused and of the morally sensitive. But in America there was a stronger inclination for this reaction to express itself in a religious frame of reference, and that fact was at least partially responsible for the emergence of the "social gospel." People tried to reduce the Christian faith to the simple sayings of Jesus and grind out an earthly heaven on the basis of them. Two world wars and a depression did much to puncture this theological optimism, and historically, both the "social gospel" and the gospel which failed to care about society had been judged.

Lutheran Background

Luther's attitude toward political and economic life was positive, but only within the framework of society as he knew it. His idea of the secular calling was revolutionary. He opposed the medieval political and ecclesiastical ideal (along with that of the "sects"), and in this sense there was

a sharp break with the past. But Luther was no prophet. He simply felt that it was up to the individual prince to conduct the affairs of government for the welfare of the people. According to Jaroslav Pelikan,

> the close alliance between the Church of the Reformation and the princes meant that the political ideologies advanced by teachers and writers had to conform to the existing political situation. Especially after the peasant uprisings of the twenties, leaders of Church and State were agreed that there was need for a political and social ethic which would prevent the recurrence of such revolutionary outbursts.
>
> In the face of such a situation the Lutheran Church of the sixteenth century was compelled to address itself to the problem of constructing a political ethic.[4]

For Luther this was a function of natural law, and the job of constructing such an ethic was left to Melanchthon.

> Since Luther believed that the ordering of society was a function of the human reason and since, moreover, Melanchthon regarded the philosophy of Aristotle as one of the finest products of the human reason, it need not be surprising that Lutheran political philosophy took on a distinctly Aristotelian cast under Melanchthon's direction.[5]

Pelikan says "the theoretical aspects of Melanchthon's political speculation are almost directly dependent upon Aristotle's political theory," and that this greatly strengthened Aristotle's prestige in Lutheran circles.

> That prestige received further support when Melanchthon's Apology of the Augsburg Confession declared that "Aristotle wrote concerning civil morals so learnedly that

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[4]Jaroslav Pelikan, From Luther to Kierkegaard (St. Louis: Concordia, 1950), p. 36.

[5]Ibid., p. 37.

> nothing further concerning this need be demanded," thus virtually equating the political conduct of the Christian with that of any rational pagan. The ethical consequences of such an equation were grave, and the ethical indifference of much of German Lutheranism in political matters should perhaps be traced to this, rather than to Luther's political views.[6]

Others have observed the blossoming of "quietism" several generations after Luther during the period of Orthodoxy. But in any case, Walther and the Missouri Lutheran pioneers were orthodox, German Lutherans, and as such carried with them an ethic which had not produced the so-called "economic man" of Calvinism, but which basically was consigned to the status quo. This ethic saw its fulfillment in obedience and had deep roots in classical philosophy as well as Christian theology.

C. F. W. Walther

Walther followed the pattern of the medieval Church and Luther by condemning usury.[7] Luther conceded that taking interest is sometimes permissible. The Orthodox theologians were divided on this. Walther said taking interest was wrong, but conceded that if it were voluntarily offered it might be

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[6] Ibid., p. 38.

[7] From classroom notes based upon lectures by Prof. Jaroslav Pelikan delivered in the summer of 1954 at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Graduate School, on "Problems in Walther's Theology" (Course number 364.3). These notes were taken by Harold Scheibert, and a copy is in the possession of this writer. The citation here is on page six.

accepted. He viewed borrowing as an emergency measure, therefore requiring Christian mercy. This is different, however, from borrowing in a capitalistic economy, so practice soon eliminated the theology. Walther likewise opposed buying life insurance (such as it was in his day) on the grounds that it indicated a lack of trust in God.[8]

On the slavery question the Lutheran Church was divided and feelings ran strong. There was no counter-part in Lutheran history to which Walther could turn. The closest thing to a parallel were the serfs and peasants in Germany. At any rate, Walther was pro-Confederate and saw no Christian violation in slavery. Since Walther viewed the character of the American republic as a "state's righter," he cited this interpretation, as well as the book of Philemon, in validating his position.[9]

On Church and State, Lutheran tradition is ambiguous and Walther himself is not consistent. Many of his sermons describe the relationship of a Christian to the State in terms of obedience to the Law. Walther consistently opposed the right of revolution.[10]

In his lectures on Walther, Jaroslav Pelikan pointed out that the Church's ethic has always served as a rallying point

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[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid., p. 7.

for winning people to the Church. Walther asserted that because of the Church's involvements, it often has not been able to do this.[11]

Walther's monograph on Communismus und Socialismus was a product of pastoral concern rather than scholarly research. The book is a stenographic report of a series of four lectures delivered by Walther to a Lutheran congregation in St. Louis. It must also be understood in the context of that time. In 1878 Karl Marx was still living. The labor movement in the United States was in a primitive stage and considered a highly dangerous innovation. Throughout the monograph Walther made clear his deep sympathy for the working people, pointing out that most Lutherans are oppressed with the troubles of the laboring man. He conceded that many injustices have been done, that the Church has often been guilty of placing itself in opposition to the working class.

> Wir wissen auch recht gut, dass die schreckliche Noth, welche ueber die Arbeiter, namentlich jetzt, gekommen ist, keineswegs ihren Grund allein in einer Naturnothwendigkeit hat, dass vielmehr zu einem Theil, ja wohl zum groessten Theil, die Quelle dieser Noth in dem Eigennutz, im Geiz, in der Selbstsucht, in der Grausamkeit, in der Herzlosigkeit, ja, dass ich's nur gerade heraussage, in der Blutsaugerei und Schinderei der Reichen liegt. . . . Wenn wir lesen, welch' herzzerreissende Scenen sich jetzt taeglich, namentlich in den grossen Staedten, in den Huetten der Arbeiter abspielen, so blutet uns wahrlich das Herz, und wir sind willig und bereit, das Unsere, so wenig es auch sein mag, dazu beizutragen, dass des armen Arbeiters Loss ein besseres werden moege. . . .

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[11] Ibid.

> Ach, meine Brueder, was waeren wir, wenn wir auf Seiten der Blutsauger sein wollten und nicht auf Seiten der Unterdrueckten? . . . Ist es doch die Heilige Schrift, welche, dass ich mich so ausdruecke, Zeter schreit ueber die ungerechten Reichen, welche ein tausendfaches Wehe ueber diejenigen herabruft, die ihren Reichtum nur haben, um ihn zu vermehren, ... Von ihnen sagen wir uns los, und wenn jetzt der Socialismus und Communismus ihnen Angst und Noth macht, so haben sie nichts Besseres verdient. Die Socialisten werden die Gottesgeissel fuer sie sein.[12]

Regarding labor unions, Walther implicitly made it a matter of conscience to keep out of them.

> Und wenn die Arbeitervereine im Grunde nichts Anderes waeren, als was in Deutchland die Innungen, Gilden, Gewerkschaften und Zuenfte waren, --wer koennte dann jemanden ein Gewissen daraus machen, einer solchen Gesellschaft sich anzuschliessen?[13]

Walther raises the questions: Why should no Christian participate in the efforts of Communists and Socialists? And he answers, because this is opposed to (1) reason, nature and experience and (2) Christianity.

His first reason for opposition is that people are <u>not</u> equal in natural capacity, achievement, sex, etc.[14] Pay, therefore, ought to be given according to the work done, and

> Sobald aber die Menschen in eine solche Gesellschaft treten, in welcher der Erwerb der gemeinsamen Arbeit Allen gehoert, so hoert auch die rechte Gleichheit auf, welche die Gerechtigkeit erfordert.[15]

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[12] C. F. W. Walther, <u>Communismus und Socialismus</u> (St. Louis: Druckerei der Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten, 1878), pp. 24-25.

[13] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 6.

[14] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 14.

[15] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 44.

In addition, the notion of equality is

> entgegen dem in der Schrift bestaetigten Unterschied unter den Menschen, und zwar nicht nur zwischen Eltern und Kindern, Mann und Weib, Herr und Knecht, Hausvater und Tageloehner oder Arbeiter, sondern auch zwischen Arm und Reich.[16]

Secondly, men are naturally selfish.

> es ist Tatsache, dass die Menschen von Natur selbstsuechtig sind, und auch damit ist es bewiesen, dass es eine Narrheit ist, durch aeusserliche Gleichmachung der menschlichen Gesellschaft helfen zu wollen. Will man ihr helfen, so schaffe man die Selbstsucht weg.[17]

Thirdly, happiness does not consist in external advantages.

This is in accordance with both reason and Scripture, because

> der Mensch sein Glueck nicht in dieser Welt, sondern in Gott und in der Hoffnung auf eine Vergeltung und Ausgleichung jenseits und auf ein ewiges Leben suchen soll.[18]

> Wenn der Arme denkt: Nun, ich bin arm, ich kann es nicht haben, wie der Reiche; doch will ich nicht sorgen, sondern mich drein ergeben, wenn ich nur ehrlich durch die Welt komme, --ein solcher ist ein ganz gluecklicher Mensch, so duertig er sein mag.[19]

> Das Wahre Glueck kann nur das Wort Gottes geben.[20]

Another reason--one which Walther takes many pages to explain and document--is that communism has not worked.

These reasons were all grouped under the category of

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[16] Ibid., p. 51.

[17] Ibid., p. 18.

[18] Ibid., p. 52.

[19] Ibid., p. 20.

[20] Ibid., p. 21.

"reason, nature and experience," but Walther freely reached into Scriptural argumentation from time to time. And in the second category, which deals specifically with Biblical evidence, he inserted material which can only be classified under "reason and experience."

In his Scriptural argumentation Walther refered to the fifth, sixth and seventh commandments. It is against the seventh commandment because this presupposes private property. "Soll mir niemand etwas nahmen, so ist vorausgesetzt, dass ich etwas habe, dass ich persoenlich etwas besitze."[21] And it is opposed to the doctrine that man shall eat bread in the sweat of his face.[22]

Against the charge that Christianity has proved incapable of improving the miserable conditions of the poor, Walther wrote:

> Und es ist wahr, meine Brueder: durch das Christenthum ist in der That des alte System der Unterdrueckung nicht aufgehoben worden. Durch das Christenthum ist nicht nur das natuerliche Uebel in der Welt nicht beseitigt worden, sondern die Welt hat, seitdem Christus in die Welt kam, in ihrer Bosheit fortgefahren. Aber kann man denn von einer Religion diese Wirkung fordern und erwarten? Ist die Religion nicht dazu da, das rechte Verhaeltniss des Menschen zu Gott und zu einem andern Leben zu zeigen und herzustellen? . . .
>
> Dazu kommt zweitens: wo die wahre christliche Religion sich wirklich eines Menschenherzens bemaechtigt, da veraendert sie allerdings das Verhaeltniss des Menschen

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[21] Ibid., p. 50.

[22] Ibid., p. 51.

> zum Menschen, und zwar bessert sie es. Da verbessert sich allerdings das Verhaeltniss der Reichen zum Armen, der Regierer zum Regierten, der Arbeitgeber zum Arbeitnehmer, der Hoeheren zum Niedrigen.[23]

Walther said, let the Communists become Christians, and then they will see a real change. He warned that their dream is an illusion, and concluded that Christians should aim for some other object--their heavenly calling in Christ.[24]

Walther spent more time on non-theological argumentation than on theological. And some of his "Scripture proofs" were in reality based upon natural law, e.g., private property, inequality. Pelikan asserts that Walther's clinching arguments were based on natural law.[25] When he did argue from the Christian faith, Walther tended to use a quantitative "proof passage" approach rather than discovering and pursuing a few decisive criticisms.

It is probably fair to say that Walther did not really understand the changes that were rocking the world--but then few did. As a result he was more competent to criticize than to suggest an alternative course. Hence he displayed what will appear to some as a strain of naivete--in his argument on selfishness, for example. Attempting to improve society without removing selfishness is folly, said Walther.

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[23] Ibid., p. 58.

[24] Ibid., p. 51.

[25] Jaroslav Pelikan, op. cit., p. 7.

This is true, of course, in an ultimate sense, but it also represents a partial retreat from the world. Perhaps it would have been more realistic to assert that because of natural selfishness, steps should be taken to equalize the gross disparity between rich and poor, and to help create a balance of power between employer and employee. Walther acknowledged that the number of poor was constantly increasing.[26]

Parallel to this was his repeated admonition that happiness should be sought not in this world, but in the next. Again, from the standpoint of the Christian faith, this is surely a basic judgment. However as it stands it is only one side of the coin. It does not successfully represent Christian love in action as it seeks to feed the hungry and clothe the naked in order to alleviate misery, if only in a provisional sense. In this respect Walther's deep sympathy was apparent, but he had little conception of using government or civic action as a means for adjusting extreme disparities in society. In this Walther proved himself to be a child of his times.

The Missouri Synod Until 1920

The review of political and social thinking during the period following Walther and prior to 1920 is based upon the Theological Quarterly, the synodical English theological

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[26] Walther, op. cit., p. 39.

journal which made its initial appearance in 1897. The first seven years of this journal furnished some of the most extensive material to be found during any period of our Synodical history, and in this writer's judgment devoted a relatively higher proportion of space to discussion and comment on social and political questions than can be found in any comparable period in the theological periodicals under consideration. This is almost entirely to the credit of Prof. August L. Graebner who evidenced keen interest and a considerable degree of proficiency in relating such questions to the Christian faith. His death put an end to this prolific period. The decades that followed were strikingly barren in comparison.

A concise, carefully worded reflection of Missouri Synod thinking was contained in "A Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod," written by Franz Pieper in 1897. The section entitled "Of Church and State" is the final part of the document. Pieper said, "Although both Church and State are ordinances of God, they must not be mingled into one another. Church and State have entirely different aims."[27] The aim of the State is to serve the temporal welfare of man; the aim of the Church is man's

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[27]F[ranz] Pieper, "A Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod," translated from the German by W. H. T. D., The Theological Quarterly, VIII (January, 1904), 24.

eternal welfare, one which concerns his relation to God.

> Accordingly, we reject with all our heart the practice of those who desire to see the power of the State employed "in the interest of the Church," and who thus make the Church a secular kingdom, to the great detriment of the Church. We likewise reject the foolish attempts of those who would make the State a church by striving to govern the State by the Word of God, instead of ruling it by external, civil laws, when it is known that only Christians can be governed by the Word of God.[28]

In 1899 A. L. Graebner published two articles, totaling nearly one hundred pages, on "Anthropology" and subtitled, "Ethics." The essay is divided into four parts: (1) The Moral Law; (2) Conscience; (3) The Moral Spheres; and (4) The Moral Virtues. The third part comprises well over half of the total, and it is divided into religious, domestic and civil "spheres."

Regarding the "civil sphere" Graebner began by quoting Genesis 9:1-7 in its entirety--regarding the blessing of God upon Noah and his sons, which includes the well-known warning, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." "Here," said Graebner, "we have the great divine Bill of Rights for all mankind."[29] It is not at all clear whether this "great divine Bill of rights" is a part of natural or revealed theology. In a later context he spoke of "the great Charter of Rights recorded in the book of Genesis and

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[28] Ibid.

[29] August Graebner, "Anthropology," The Theological Quarterly, III (October, 1899), 421.

corroborated by the moral law . . ." which would indicate that he regarded it as both. He would seem to be suggesting that knowledge of this "Bill of Rights" is in the main available to natural man on the basis of the moral law. At any rate the implication is religious liberty. "The right of being, under this blessing, what God made us, also includes the right of religious liberty and freedom of conscience." This is so because "Religion is a relation between God and man. . . . Hence, in matters of religion and conscience no man is free to dictate to his fellow-man."[30]

Graebner said that the idea of State is not to be identified with the idea of government.

> A State is a community of persons jointly occupying a definite territory and permanently organized under acknowledged laws administered by an established government endowed with or supported by sovereign authority and power to protect the rights of such community and of all its members. The notions of state and civil government are not identical. Governments are the organs of states for the authoritative performance of the various functions of a state. These functions are legislative, judicial, and executive, all of which have in common the great cardinal purpose of statehood and civil government, the protection of the civic rights of the members of the state, or the subjects of the government, that they may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, or, that they may securely be what God made them and own what God gave them. The proper province of civil government is not the religious sphere, nor the domestic sphere, but the civic sphere. Its purpose is . . . the protection of civic rights as such.[31]

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[30] Ibid., p. 427.

[31] Ibid., p. 430.

This distinction between the religious and the civic spheres is closely associated with a similar distinction between moral law and political law. The two were not even the same for Moses, e.g., divorce. "There never was nor can be a civil court capable of judging according to the moral law, which requires an omniscient judge, before whom every evil thought and desire is manifested."[32]

Also embedded in the quotation from Graebner is an implicit view of government in an almost exclusively negative sense, an emphasis which becomes quite explicit in the following passage.

> Civil governments, though organs of the state and established by men, are of divine institution, and their authority is of God, just as in the religious sphere the ministers of the gospel, though organs of the church and called by the congregations, are ministers of Christ. But while the power of the latter is that of the word, civil rulers are entrusted with the sword. Their proper task is to mete out vindictive justice, as revengers to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. The purpose of the punitive power of government is not properly and primarily or ultimately the reformation of the criminal, but primarily the vindication of the law by the revenger of the crime committed, and ultimately the protection of the community and its members, as by executing wrath magistrates and rulers are a terror to the evil, so that, being afraid of the power, they may abstain from evil-doing and do that which is good.[33]

Graebner's italics plainly indicate his emphasis.

He also took pains to assert the right of private property--a feature evident in Walther, and one which was due

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[32] Ibid., pp. 434-35.

[33] Ibid., p. 431.

to recur for decades to follow. This right was implied in a statement noted previously, which said that government is to protect its subjects so that "they may securely be what God made them and own what God gave them." Graebner again refered to "the great Charter of Rights" in Genesis and said that the possession of the earth is assigned to man and everything on it is to minister to his wants.

> All this implies a division and distribution of these gifts of the Creator. For as all men cannot occupy the same dwelling place and cannot take nourishment from the same cow, or eat the fruit of the same tree, there must be either a continued contest for every square foot of land and every chicken and egg, or there must be some basis of peaceable division and distribution, some criterion whereby a man may demonstrate his right to be in a certain place and to enjoy the undisputed possession and use of certain things. This is the right of owning what God gave us, or, the right of private property.[34]

The problem of insurance was another matter with which the writer felt compelled to deal. Property insurance, he concluded, is permissible because it is simply a contract to cover loss.

> In this property insurance differs essentially from life insurance, which is an aleatory device, a series of wagers between the insurer and the insured, with chances of gain amounting to the difference between the premium and the insurance benefit or sum insured. . . . The life insured simply takes the place of the dice game of chance or the wheel in a lottery, . . ."[35]

A widow who receives money this way has "ill-gotten wealth."

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[34] Ibid., p. 438.

[35] Ibid., p. 442.

"Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his!"[36]

The rise of organized labor posed "one of the burning issues of the day." Graebner indicated that he had studied the problem considerably for two decades, and in 1900 he published the results of his study in two extended articles.[37]

In examining a social problem such as organized labor, he operated with "the maxim that what comes nearest to full conformity with the moral law is also most conducive to the temporal welfare of human society and its individual members."[38] The chief fundamental principles upon which a study of the labor problem must be based are justice and charity. Graebner examined labor first in the light of justice, then in the light of charity.

In his discussion of labor in the light of justice, Graebner began by quite frankly stating his own bias.

> There is a difference, . . . between incidental injustice in practice and injustice by principle. Employers of labor have been and are in many cases unjust in practice, taking undue advantage of their laborers, and they have their judgment in such dicta as Jer. 22,13 and James 5,4. But the Trade Unions of our day must be charged with injustice by principle, and by practice in accordance with false doctrine.[39]

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[36] Ibid.

[37] August L. Graebner, "The Pastor and the Labor Question," The Theological Quarterly, IV (January, 1900), 84-107.

[38] Ibid., p. 89.

[39] Ibid., p. 90.

Graebner asserted that the great watchword of organized labor is that labor is the creator of all wealth, and to this he took sharp exception. In a brief excursion into the field of economic theory, Graebner said that labor is only one cause of wealth, in addition to which must be added nature, the blessing of God, and, finally, capital as a secondary or intermediate cause.[40] Graebner's reason for debunking the idea of labor as the creator of all wealth is plain enough. For if this is true, "then it is a matter of course that labor should decide all industrial questions and form the standard of all industrial interests."[41] In the old days it used to be different. A worker ran his own shop, owned his own tools, did his own work and dealt with his own customers.

> Nowadays, the employer furnishes the shop, the material, the tools and machinery; he must see that he finds a market for the product of manufacture, and suffer the loss if the goods remain on his hands or payment is withheld or inadequate. But even in the face of all this, the employees of a shoe factory will play the part of creators of all wealth, will dictate to the employers whom they shall employ in their factory, put at their machines and to handling their materials, what wages they shall pay, how many hours their machinery shall run, and if their demands are not complied with, they will not only refuse to work themselves, but do what is in their power to prevent others from working in an establishment over which they have no rightful control and in which they have no interest save one, the opportunity of

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[40] Ibid., pp. 93-94.

[41] Ibid., p. 98.

> securing the greatest amount of wages for the least amount of labor.[42]

Graebner then cited numerous jurists to show that everyone has a legal right to dispose of his own labor or his own capital as he sees fit; no one may hinder the free choice of workmen in the disposal of their time and talents, and no one may intimidate employers regarding the choice of persons whom they wish to hire or fire. He also refered to several court decisions that deal with the boycott, and finds, in agreement with these decisions, that the boycott "is a conspiracy at common law, and the means by which it is in general sought to be accomplished are not only unlawful, but in some degree criminal."[43]

The implications of this for the Christian were boldly exposed.

> And now we ask, is it right for a Christian to identify himself with principles and practices which are so many blows into the face of right and justice before God and man alike? Is it consistent that a Christian should pray to his Father which is in heaven, "Give us this day our daily bread," and at the same time endeavor to secure his daily bread on a principle and by methods based upon a principle which must inevitably lead to the curtailment or exclusion and denial of the rightful claims of others? Woe unto him that increaseth that which is not his! . . . Is it right for a Christian to be with those who in industrial life know of no interests but their own and utterly and by principle disregard the rights

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[42] Ibid., p. 100.

[43] Ibid., p. 103.

> and law-ful interests of others? There can be but one answer to these questions, and that is an emphatic No![44]

The second article measured labor by the standard of charity, and by this process the writer arrived at a position identical to that noted above. But this time "free enterprise" was quite severely taken to task.

It was Graebner's conviction that the acts of violence often associated with labor troubles are not simply "incidental" concomitants, but are symptoms of a hostility which is at the bottom of conflicting interests, a hostility which has a deep and permanent character.[45] The official assertion of self-interest on the part of organized labor, together with the coercive measures of strikes and boycotts,

> are thoroughly and radically immoral, utterly disregarding every principle of charity, the fundamental duty underlying all the legitimate relations between man and man. Even if all the claims of Labor against Capital were just, it would be immoral for the claimants to say to the other party: "Give us what we demand, or we will damage or ruin you."[46]

Graebner quoted "an authority of high standing" to show the fallacious logic of saying that the increase of wages following strikes has been the effect of the strikes.[47]

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[44] Ibid., p. 107.

[45] August L. Graebner, "The Pastor and the Labor Question," IV (April, 1900), 204.

[46] Ibid., p. 216.

[47] Ibid., p. 224.

Regarding free enterprise, Graebner was explicitly critical of Adam Smith. He said,

> free competition on the principle that every man is the best judge of his own interests leaves the parties to settle the questions between themselves, each looking to his own interest and endeavoring to wrest from the other as much as he can. This is one of the motives which leads employees to band together as individuals with a common party interest against the other party, that of employers.[48]

Graebner made it quite clear that the critical flaw in the theory of free competition is that it ignores the true nature of man as it is expressed in the Christian doctrine of sin. For in criticizing a union exponent who said it would be foolish to believe that employers would give the full wages to which their workers were entitled unless forced to do so, Graebner observes:

> Here we have again, the animus that pervades the industrial classes or parties of to-day. If charity prevailed, the distribution of the emoluments of production would be reached by way of amicable agreement adjusted to the circumstances of the case, and free competition would afford both parties the advantage of free scope for considerate adjustment. But it is not in depraved human nature to be charitable. Natural man is selfish, and free competition in the purusit of his own interests signifies to him unrestricted license to fight every one whose interests clash with his own.[49]

Graebner struck the crux of the problem by way of illustration.

If Anderson were the only teamster and Miss Miller

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[48] Ibid., p. 211.

[49] Ibid., p. 212.

> the only typewriter girl to be had, they might dictate their terms. But now they have competitors, other men and women who are able and willing to perform the same work, and as they too are free to offer their services, and the employers are free to accept them, the wages question is easily settled. The employers will engage the competitors who will give them the best service for the least wages. If free competition pure and simple is to prevail, then the employer will dismiss Anderson and Miss Miller and employ others in their places, if others will give them the same service for lower wages. But Anderson has a wife and six children to care for, and Miss Miller is the only support of an invalid mother and a consumptive brother. Charitable consideration would, of course, recommend that they be retained in their positions even at higher wages than those for which their competitors, a single man and an unencumbered girl, would be willing to fill their places. . . . It is a pleasure to say that instances of such generous use of the privilege of free competition are not entirely unheard of. . . . As a rule, however, competition works the other way. Employers will engage Labor at the lowest terms obtainable, and Labor will compete with Labor regardless of the condition of those whom competition crowds to where they can no longer keep the wolf from their door. Not the laborer, the person, with his human personality, his individual wants and duties, but labor, the thing, is in the market, which is regulated by the law of supply and demand.[50]

Graebner concluded that an industrial system of free competition has proved to be a failure. It has indeed acted as a powerful stimulus for energetic action of both body and mind of man in promoting industrial life. But as a golden highway to temporal happiness, it is a failure.

> And the endeavors of Trade Unions to put down free competition between Capital and Labor and between Labor and Labor, and thus to enhance the condition and secure the welfare of the laboring classes have also proved a failure.[51]

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[50] Ibid., pp. 218-19.

[51] Ibid., pp. 225-26.

And so in organized Labor we are confronted with a picture of brother warring against brother, of hatred and open defiance of the law.

> And all this in the face of the divine law and precept, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself! Such is the burden of sin and guilt for which Trade Unionism will have to answer on the day of reckoning. Should any Christian be willing to share that guilt? And should any Christian pastor refuse or neglect to warn his people and open their eyes to these unfruitful works of darkness, lest they fellowship with these things, because of which the wrath of God will surely come upon the children of disobedience?[52]

Some may protest that since their occupation unavoidably places them within the ranks of industrialized and organized labor, they are bound to conform to the regulations of the same; and that Trade Unions have come to be such a part of the industrial system that even civil legislation recognizes their operation as legitimate. But to these it must be said that all the rules and legislation in the world cannot rescind a single commandment of God. Divorce is legalized by the law of the state, but may be damnable in the sight of God.[53]

Others may object that they would gladly do without the union, but unless they join a union they are unable to find employment. And since they are obligated to support families, they must find employment through the union. These, said Graebner, should be encouraged to find employment

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[52] Ibid., pp. 226-27.

[53] Ibid., p. 227.

somewhere else, even if they have to learn another trade or move from the city to the country. They may do it trusting that God is greater than the world and will provide for them.[54]

Other articles during this period by Graebner included an extensive review of Lyman Abbott's Christianity and Social Problems in which Graebner found himself admiring Abbott as a sociologist, but deploring any attempt to make a social reformer out of Jesus.[55]

Writing on "Leo XIII and the American Liberties," Graebner struck a note that had already been sounded in Missouri, and was due to resound for many decades to come. It consisted largely in quotations from various Roman Catholics and Pope Leo XIII in particular. His purpose was to prove that the Roman system is anti-American and that Rome is already a power in this country. The italicized words apparently represented Graebner's own emphasis. He quoted Pope Leo:

> "If, because of peculiar political circumstances it is expedient that the Church should acquiesce in certain modern liberties, not because she herself so preferred, but because she deems it expedient to permit them she will, if times have changed for the better, make use of her freedom and by advice, exhortation, and obsecration,

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[54] Ibid., p. 228.

[55] August L. Graebner, a review of Christianity and Social Problems by Lyman Abbott, Theological Quarterly, I (January, 1897), 98-111.

> strive, as it behooves her, to perform the duty God has assigned her, to care for the eternal salvation of men. This, however, is at all times true, that the freedom of all things granted to all promiscuously is, as we have often said, not in itself to be desired, because it is repugnant to reason that falsehood and truth should enjoy equal rights."[56]

Graebner displayed some depth of background in recounting some oft-forgotten aspects of religious liberty in early American history. He used source documentation in pointing out the limited extent to which religious liberty obtained, and the fact that where this liberty was more inclusive, it was repeatedly described as an experiment. Regarding colony charters and our own Constitution, Graebner says:

> A perusal and comparison of these extracts from the Charters and Constitutions will have served to convince the reader that there was by no means an agreement among the several States concerning the relation of church and state. The equality of all citizens before the law irrespective of their religious creeds or forms of worship was far from being generally recognized or conceded. In fact, there is no regular process of evolution toward the general recognition of religious liberty discernible in the various fundamental laws or drafts thereof submitted prior to the federal Constitution. It is significant that this document did not contain in its body what was afterwards added in the first Amendment. And even that Amendment and Art.VI did not prohibit an establishment of religion and religious tests in the several states, but Art. VI referred only to offices and public trusts "under the United States," and the First Amendment put a restriction only on the legislative power of Congress, leaving the several States and their legislatures free to deal with matters of religion and conscience as they might choose. In some quarters the limitation of the power of Congress was even

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[56] August L. Graebner, "Leo XIII and the American Liberties," Theological Quarterly, I (April, 1897), 169.

> looked upon as a guarantee against the interference of the federal government with the discriminations for or against certain churches in the States by State legislation. The present letter and spirit of constitutional law throughout the United States as to liberty of conscience and religion must be accounted for by causes which had hardly begun to work when the federal Constitution became the law of the nation.[57]

Writing on the "school question"[58] Graebner found himself in a period in which public schools were growing rapidly, while parochial schools frequently found themselves on the defensive. The effort to introduce the Bible into the public school is an attempt to right one wrong by another wrong, Graebner believed. The solution to the school problem is for each denomination to set up its own schools. This would give the Church an opportunity to minister to poor children and to the unchurched. In districts where people wish their children to receive a secular training, they may build their own private, secular schools. In areas where the churches are too few or too weak, the state would have to set up public schools, but these would not have to be nearly as widespread as at the present time. This is a radical cure, but palliatives such as the Sunday School or the Bible in public school are not the answer, said Graebner.

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[57] August L. Graebner, "Religious Liberty in the Charters and Earlier Constitutions," Theological Quarterly, I (October, 1897), 447.

[58] August L. Graebner, "Paragraphs on the School Question," Theological Quarterly, VII (April, 1903), 121 ff.

On the ethics of war,[59] Graebner asserted the protective function of government, and the duty of obedience in time of war. He made a distinction, however, between a just and an unjust war--a distinction which was to re-appear with regularity in later decades.

In a short essay on the temperance question Graebner observed that the term "temperance" is an abuse of the language, "much as, owing to false notions of marriage and sexual purity, chastity, by an abuse of the term, was made to stand for celibacy."[60]

Two articles on eschatology had nothing to say regarding ethical implications for the Christian now.[61] In this respect Graebner left himself open to the criticism of "other-worldliness."

During this period few besides Graebner attempted to say anything on social and political questions. One contributor had an exegetical exposition and homily I Peter 2:11-20, which in reference to Christian citizenship, failed

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[59]August L. Graebner, "Paragraphs on the Ethics of War," Theological Quarterly, II (July, 1898), 278-80.

[60]August L. Graebner, "Paragraphs on the Temperance Question," Theological Quarterly, IV (April, 1900), 152.

[61]August L. Graebner, "Eschatology," Theolotical Quarterly, VI (April and July, 1902), 65-79; 129-47.

to go beyond the idea of obedience.[62] Another was a sermon on the proposed constitutional amendment which would acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord, and the Bible as the basis of our legislation. The writer called this a "modern movement which aims to dethrone Christ by placing Him upon the throne of a worldly ruler, . . ."[63] F. Bente wrote on "State and Church in the American Colonies." His object was frankly to put the Lutherans in a favorable light. The spirit and principles of Lutheranism are in perfect harmony with the American idea of liberty, he said. "The Reformed and Calvinistic spirit has always been, and is to this very day, foreign and inimical to the complete separation of State and Church."[64] And again: "A consistent Calvinist and Reformedist may imagine that he is a true American; in reality, he is a foreigner in the land of liberty and religious equality."[65]

One lengthy, unsigned article appeared in 1904 on "Lutheranism and Americanism." It was in the main an extension

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[62] L. W., "An Apostolic Lesson in Christian Ethics," Theological Quarterly, IV (January, 1900), 67-83.

[63] H. S., "Sermon on the Christian Amendment Question," Theological Quarterly, I (April, 1897), 256.

[64] F[riedrich G.] Bente, "State and Church in American Colonies," Theological Quarterly, VI (July, 1902), 151.

[65] Ibid., p. 152

of the idea which Bente had expressed before, but with Roman Catholicism, in addition to Calvinism, compared quite unfavorably to Lutheranism in this regard. A Calvinist, a Presbyterian, an Episcopalian, a Reformedist, a Roman Catholic, must suspend some of his religious tenets when he becomes an American citizen. Lutheranism, with its spiritual liberty, is not dependent upon Americanism; but "Americanism is hardly conceivable without Lutheranism. Without the Lutheran Reformation there would be an America, indeed, but no free America."[66] The emphasis probably exhibited at least a degree of defensiveness.

The death of August Graebner in December, 1904, left an unfortunate gap in synodical thinking on social and political matters. The next sixteen years of the Theological Quarterly produced nothing that reflects serious thought on the subject. The little material that is available is chiefly in the form of small miscellaneous items that comment on various happenings. Apparently no one with any degree of competence was prepared to assume the role that Graebner had played. The inference may fairly be drawn that lack of thought reflected a lack of concern, and probably false confidence in a theological frame of reference which discouraged any probing or self-examination.

This was a period of growth and expansion for the

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[66] "Lutheranism and Americanism," Theological Quarterly, VIII (January, 1904), 61.

Missouri Synod--which was still pretty much a "German" denomination, but becoming slowly aware of an inevitable Americanization. The War tended to hasten this process in a sometimes painful manner. At the same time it was a period of growth for the public schools, and this had unavoidable repercussions on the status of parochial schools. This was especially true immediately following the War with the wave of excited patriotism that at times seemed to threaten the very existence of Missouri Synod parochial schools, as the fight in Nebraska adequately demonstrated.

Of the small amount of writing devoted to comment on social and political thought during these years, a surprisingly high percentage of this material dealt with Roman Catholicism. The year 1909 touched off a volley of shots at Rome, all of which were aimed at alleged political designs which the hierarchy cherished. The first blast was occasioned by a visit of a Papal delegate to Washington, D. C. during which he is quoted as remarking that "Rome sent Christianity to America, just as she received it from Jerusalem, so that the world is encircled by the great chain connecting Jerusalem, Rome, and Washington."[67] A second and more vigorous blast was set off by a solemn high mass held on Thanksgiving Day, 1908, at St. Patrick's

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[67]"Jerusalem, Rome, and Washington," Theological Quarterly, XIII (January, 1909) 2-3.

Cathedral in Washington. For the first time in history representatives of every independent nation in the western hemisphere assisted at this high pontifical mass. Cardinal Gibbons was there. So was President Taft. The speaker at this occasion made some remarks about this nation and international peace. One writer was severely critical of the occasion, the sermon and the presence of the President:

> Rome is building up power and prestige out of just such events. Rome has begun to play a powerful role in American diplomacy since we acquired the Philippine Islands and Porto Rico. Shall there be more "American dependencies" in which Roman influence is dominant? Is the crumbling power of Rome in Central and South America to be supported by the strong arm of the North American Republic, and by Rome's influence in our government? There is not a single church in our country whose members, as Christians, can have any interest in the Pan-American idea of the Romanists.[68]

A third shot was occasioned by a letter which Theodore Roosevelt had written in which he said it was "unwarranted bigotry" for anyone to refuse to vote for a man because of his religion, and he suggested the possibility that some day a Roman Catholic would become President. Two Missouri Synod pastors from Manhattan, representing a New York pastoral conference, wrote a reply in which they pointed out that this would be true unless a man's faith committed him to an opposite principle than that which would make such tolerance possible. Paper encyclicals and Cardinal Gibbons

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[68]"Miscellany. Pan Americanism, Cardinal Gibbons, and President Taft," Theological Quarterly, XIII (January, 1909), 44.

are cited to show that religious liberty in the American tradition is simply tolerated by Roman Catholics, who have a prior commitment to a different position should this become attainable at any time. The letter was printed in the New York Times and apparently was commented on extensively elsewhere.[69] W. Dallmann in an article on "Church and State" used the same letter by Roosevelt as a starting-point to describe Roman intentions for religious supremacy.[70]

Two years later this item appeared in the Theological Quarterly:

> June 6, 1911, will be remembered as the date of a tragedy without a parallel in the annals of our country. On that day the heads of our government had gone to Baltimore to pay homage to the Church of Rome. The occasion was the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Cardinal Gibbons' initiation into the priesthood of his church. . . . An attempt was made to divest the presence of President Taft, Vice-President Sherman, Speaker Cannon, Senator Root, Governor Crothers, Mayor Pressley, Ambassador Bryce, and Ex-President Roosevelt at the Cardinal's jubilee of all official meaning. But if these gentlemen think that they have convinced the intelligent citizens of the North American Republic that politics had nothing to do with their participation in the honors conferred on a Roman priest, they give their fellow-citizens credit for very little critical judgment and independence of thought.[71]

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[69]"Miscellany. A Lutheran Letter to President Roosevelt with Comment," Theological Quarterly, XIII (January, 1909), 50 ff.

[70]W. Dallmann, "Church and State," Theological Quarterly, XIII (January, 1909), 19-33.

[71]"June 6, 1911," Theological Quarterly, XV (July, 1911), 178.

"Religious Toleration in Maryland Colony" was the title of another article whose purpose was to "show that Maryland was founded for economic reasons above all things, and that economic and political reasons alone prompted the Calverts to grant religious toleration in their colony."[72]

In 1914 two letters by Lutheran pastors sent to President Wilson were printed. The first protested a reported military mass in Texas at which six thousand soldiers and civilians were present. The adjutant-general replied that it was not official, not many soldiers attended and those who did, did so in a private capacity. The second letter asked Wilson not to attend the Pan-American Thanksgiving Day mass. The article also noted with regret that he did anyway.[73]

Next to the Roman Catholic issue, public and parochial schools compelled the greatest attention. Curiously enough, here the Missouri Synod found itself in general agreement with the Roman Catholic Church.

Missouri Synod men took a dim view of attempts to introduce religion into the public schools. Any sort of released-time instruction or Sunday School promotion was regarded as inadequate by one anonymous writer, who felt

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[72]F. J. L., "Religious Toleration in Maryland Colony," Theological Quarterly, XVII (April, 1913), 88.

[73]In the Theological Quarterly, XVIII (January, 1914), 32.

that the real solution lay in parochial schools.[74] Another contributor noted how the Bible had gradually slipped out of usage in public schools, but that now the worry of secularism was giving it some aggressive advocates. He noted also that Roman Catholics are opposed to the idea, since they regard the Authorized Version as a sectarian book.

> In the view of the Lutheran Church both public schools and parochial schools are necessary. The Bible and religion in the public schools would violate the principle of separation of Church and State, which is our guarantee of religious liberty.[75]

The shadow of suspicion which the war cast upon German groups also affected the Missouri Synod and its parochial schools. In 1916 the Theological Quarterly reprinted a speech given by a pastor before a Parent-Teacher Association gathering which asserted that Missouri Synod Lutherans have schools, but are also promoters of the public school, gladly pay taxes and are for strict separation of Church and State.[76] In 1919 an article appeared with a strongly defensive note regarding the patriotism furthered in synodical schools and churches. The writer here cited the purchase of bonds during the war as proof of patriotism. Then he went

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[74] A review of Religious Education and the Public School. An American Problem by George V. Wenner, Theological Quarterly, XI (October, 1907) 245 ff.

[75] O. A. Tingelstad, "The Controversy about the Bible in our Public Schools," Theological Quarterly, XX (January, 1916), 63 ff.

[76] Theodore Walz, in the Theological Quarterly, XX (July, 1916), 174 ff.

on to point out that the real danger is not lack of patriotism on the part of Americans, but giving patriotism a religious value. Guilty of this are politicians who like to make grand-stand plays, educators, and a majority of Protestant pastors.[77]

Luther was remembered on several occasions. Writing on "Luther and Liberty," C. F. Drewes relied chiefly on laudatory quotations by non-Lutheran historians. Drewes himself said of Luther:

> He also stood for total separation of Church and State, for a free and independent Church and a free and independent State, for freedom of conscience and worship, and against all external force and violence in matters religious.
>
> Under the providence of God the work of Luther in behalf of Christian and religious liberty has also became the source of secular and religious freedom. . . . We may safely assert that there would be no free America with its free institutions, if Luther had not lived.[78]

An unsigned review of Luther Hess Waring's, The Political Theories of Martin Luther, found the book wholly favorable to Luther, though the reviewer took exception to speaking about Luther's "theories," since not theories, but faith was the basis for his views. Among quotations which the reviewer presented--which caused no questioning about where Luther

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[77]F. W. Herzberger, "Perverted Democracy and Religious Education," Theological Quarterly, XXIII (July, 1919), 129 ff.

[78]C. F. Drewes, "Luther and Liberty," Theological Quarterly, XIII (January, 1911), 56.

stood on absolute separation of Church and State--is this partial summary of Luther's position:

> "It is the duty of the state to educate its youth not only in the secular field of learning, but also along moral and religious lines. It should care for its poor, protect its subjects against monopolies, extortion, gambling, and public immorality."[79]

Other contributors during this period spoke out against the social gospel,[80] against jingoism,[81] and for a better attempt to understand the problems of the laboring man.[82]

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[79]"The Political Theories of Martin Luther," Theological Quarterly, XV (January, 1911), 56.

[80]A review of The Gospel of Jesus and the Problems of Democracy by Henry C. Vedder, Theological Quarterly, XIX (January, 1915) 57.

[81]"The Government Printing Office at Washington," Theological Quarterly, XVIII (January, 1914), 58.

[82]"Christianity and the Labor Movement," Theological Quarterly, XVII (January, 1913), 61.

CHAPTER III

THE 1920's

The decade of the 1920's marked great changes in the world, and growth and change within the Missouri Synod. An extended editorial in a 1926 Lutheran Witness,[1] "The First Quarter of the Twentieth Century," found the world in a swirl from the aftermath of the war, peace movements, economic tussles, etc., and national politics experiencing such things as growing centralization and woman suffrage. The car, the plane and the radio were suddenly becoming important. Industrialization continued to produce bigger and bigger cities, and with them, expanding tenement districts. More and better educational opportunities flourished, but so did (alas!) movies, short stories and the like. All in all these things reflected a world dizzy with commercialism.

Looking at the religious picture, the same editorial found modernism and union movements popular, and judged that fundamentalism, as a reaction, was incapable of coping with the problem. Mergers or merger negotiations were the order of the day in Lutheran bodies, too, and the Synodical Conference was no exception. Missouri had remained theologically conservative, was accepting the transition from German to

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[1] J[ohn] H. C. F[ritz], "The First Quarter of the Twentieth Century," The Lutheran Witness, VL (February 9, 1926), 33-34.

English, fought for its parochial schools, founded the Lutheran Layman's League, purchased Valparaiso University, collected five million dollars for a building expansion fund, and marked numerous tangible milestones that made it quite conscious of becoming a kind of corporate, religious Horatio Alger.

As this awkward adolescent faced a swirly world and spoke to it and about it, he found himself highly critical of Romanism, Masonry, hyper-Americanism in any form, religion in public schools, prohibition, immodest dress, movies, the "movie novel," dancing, evolution, birth control, the Federal Council of Churches, the League of Nations; pleasantly skeptical about woman suffrage;[2] and vocally favoring theological confessionalism, parochial schools, moderate patriotism, diplomatic isolationism, foreign missions, overseas relief and separation of Church and State.

Civil Government

As a confessional Lutheran body, the Missouri Synod found the Augsburg Confession basic to its thinking. A 1928 district essay explicitly indicated this allegiance in

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[2][W. H. T.] Dau, "Woman Suffrage," Theological Monthly, IV (November, 1924), p. 337. "The experiment is still an experiment. We know no more to-day about woman's fitness to administer the affairs of a nation or of the world . . . than we did before the Nineteenth Amendment was passed. We never will. Neither the Eighteenth Amendment nor the Nineteenth Amendment has the backing of the Creator."

developing the thesis: "Alle Obrigkeit in der Welt ist von Gott und daher gute Ordnung Gottes."[3] It cited Article XVI of the Augsburg Confession:

> Of Civil Affairs they teach that lawful civil ordinances are good works of God, and that it is right for Christians to bear civil office, to sit as judges, to judge matters by the Imperial and other existing laws, to award just punishments, to engage in just wars, to serve as soldiers, to make legal contracts, to hold property, to make oath when required by the magistrates, to marry a wife, to be given in marriage.
>
> They condemn also those who do not place evangelical perfection in the fear of God and in faith, but in forsaking civil offices; for the Gospel teaches an eternal righteousness of the heart. Meanwhile, it does not destroy the State or the family, but very much requires that they be preserved as ordinances of God, and that charity be practised in such ordinances. Therefore, Christians are necessarily bound to obey their own magistrates and laws, save only when commanded to sin; for then they ought to obey God rather than men. Acts 5,29.[4]

This essay relied heavily on Romans 13:1-7 and I Peter 2:13-14, particularly the former, and in this respect it typified almost any treatment of government at any period in synodical history.

Worldly authority, said the essayist, not only finds a parallel in the family, but really grows out of this more fundamental structure of society. He accepted Luther's

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[3]Emil F. Mueller, "Der sechzehnte Artikel der Augsburgischen Konfession," from the Proceedings of the Fourteenth Convention of the Central Illinois District, 1928, in the Central Illinois District Lutheran, III (November-December, 1928), 14.

[4]Ibid., pp. 11-12. Quoted here in English from the Book of Concord: The Symbols of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia, 1950), p. 14.

words:

> "Von den Eltern kommt das Regiment auf weltliche Oberkeit. Denn, wie die Eltern daheim im Hause Gewalt haben ueber ihre Kinder und Hausgesinde: also hat die Oberkeit Gewalt ueber eine ganze Gemeine. Die Eltern schaffen Recht und Friede im Hause: die Oberkeit schafft Friede und Recht in einer ganzen Gemein und an allen Orten." Erl. Ausg. 36, 121.[5]

And the essayist quoted Melanchton: "'Die letzte Quelle der Ordnungsgewalt is der Eltern Ansehen. Nach diesem Bilde ist spaeter die Gewalt den Obrigkeiten gegeben, welche das ganze Gemeinwesen regieren und verteidigen.' (De lege Dei, Chemn. Loci.)"[6] Since authority is rooted in parenthood, it follows that the moral condition of the state and civil authority depends in a basic way upon moral integrity of the family. So parents can do the state no greater favor than to train their children to fear God.[7]

The basis for civil legislation is not, as many erroneously assert, that it is constructed upon the moral law as such. The Ten Commandments, which embrace the entire moral law, comprehend matters with which the state has nothing to do. The entire first table of the Law, for example, is beyond the scope of civil legislation.[8]

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[5] Ibid., p. 21.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid., pp. 22-23.

[8] Ibid., p. 27.

> Nein, der Grund auf dem sich die Staatsgesetze nach Gottes Willen aufbauen sollen, kann nur das Naturgesetz sein, und zwar nur der Teil des Naturgesetzes, der jedem unveraeusserliche Rechte zusichert, also Sachen, die das buergerliche Wohl eines Staates betreffen. Auf diesem Boden schaltet und waltet die menschliche Vernunft und macht Gesetze, so viel sie will, um das buergerliche Wohlergehen sicher zu stellen und zu befoerdern. Alle Gesetze, die auf diesem Boden entstehen, die das buergerliche Wohl im Auge haben und die Bosheit der Menschen, soweit dadurch in Mittleidenschaft gezogen werden, eindaemmen und bestrafen, die irgendwie in Beruehrung treten mit dem buergerlichen Wohlbefinden und Wohlergehen eines Volkes, alle diese Gesetze sind eo ipso von Gott geschaffen und eingesetzt, und sind als solche fuer die Christen verbindlich um des Gewissen willen.[9]

The maxim, "Salus populi suprema lex esto," is a standard for all laws. And "entsprechen die Staatsgesetze diesem Grundsatz, dann sind sie von Gott geschaffen und gesetzt," also when this has to do with laws, such as divorce, which do not coincide with the moral law.[10] Or, to put it another way, "was immer die Vernunft aus dem natuerlichen Gesetz schoepft und zum Staatsgesetz macht, das sind Gesetze, die Gott selbst geschaffen und eingesetzt hat," and the Christian is obedient for the sake of conscience.[11] The concepts of natural law and reason, as with Melanchthon, here carry great weight.

This obedience for the sake of conscience extends even to wicked, incompetent tyrants who abuse their position.

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid., p. 28.

[11] Ibid., p. 29.

For the Christian holds that it is God who allows such men to assume office, and he does so in order to chastise.[12]

The essayist found basic evidence for the purpose of worldly authority in Romans 13:4, "They bear not the sword in vain." And he came up with positive functions which the state is properly to assume--an infrequent emphasis during this period of Synod.

> Nach diesen Worten ist es Aufgabe der Obrigkeit, den boesen Menschen den Arm zu halten, und ihre Uebergriffe mit dem Schwert zu bestrafen, auf irgen eine Weise unschaedlich zu machen, sei es durch Einkerkerung oder durch Hinrichtung. Indem die Obrigkeit das tut, wirft sie eine Schutzmauer um ihre Untertanen, und erhaelt wenigstens einigermassen Zucht und Ordnung im Staate. Hierher gehoert auch die Pflicht und Aufgabe der Obrigkeit, den Landesfrieden zu erhalten. Sie hat etwaigen Aufruhr niederzukaempfen und auswaertige Feinde zu bekriegen zum Schutz der Buerger und Wiederherstellung des Friedens. Auch viele andere Funktionen der Obrigkeit koennten hier angefuehrt werden, deren Ausuebung die Wohlfahrt der Buerger sichert und befoerdert. So waeren hier zu nennen, die Taetigkeit des Staates auf dem Gebiete der Gesundheitsplege, die Ueberwachung der Nahrungsmittel vor Verfaelschung, die Versorgung der Arbeitsunfaehigen, die Beschaffung und Regelung der Verkehrmittel und die zeitweilige Ernaehrung solcher, die durch grosse Unglucksfaelle in Hungersnot geraten sind, weil durch hungernde Menschen die Sicherheit des Lebens und Eigentums anderer gefaehrdet wuerde. Alle diese Dinge zeigen, welche eine gute Ordnung die Obrigkeit ist. Obenan steht freilich die Aufgabe der Obrigkeit, das Boese zu bestrafen und dadurch die Guten zu schuetzen.[13]

A writing of a similar sort appeared in a series of three issues of Der Lutheraner in 1920 under the title,

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[12] Ibid., p. 25.

[13] Ibid., pp. 29-30.

"Vom weltlichen Regiment." Here, too, the writer based his position chiefly on Romans 13 and I Peter 2. He began with the idea of God as "Weltregent" who has established the orders of authority. God's rule here embraces all men and, as elsewhere, God achieves His purpose through "Mittelspersonen." A strong emphasis is given the concept of obedience, obedience even in the face of injustice and oppression on the part of those who rule.[14]

Why has God established civil authority? Not for the salvation of people, since this rule embraces the just and unjust alike. But rather to obtain peace and quiet, to retain order in society so that subjects may live under good circumstances. The "Obrigkeit" is to judge and punish those who get out of bounds. Luther is quoted as saying:

> "nach dem Evangelium oder geistlichen Amt ist auf Erden kein besser Kleinod, kein groesserer Schatz, kein reicher Almosen, kein schoener Stift, kein feiner Gut denn Obrigkeit, die das Recht schafft und haelt; dieselbigen heissen billig Goetter."[15]

Now the question arises, what is "die Richtschnur, an die sich die weltliche Obrigkeit in ihren Gesetzen und in ihrer Regierung zu halten hat, um Anerkennung finden und Gehorsam fordern zu koennen?" And the answer is: "Vernunft." "Die Vernunft is also die anerkannte Beraterin auf dem Gebiete des natuerlichen, buergerlichen Lebens." This explains why

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[14] J. S., "Vom weltliche Regiment," Der Lutheraner, LXXVI (April 20, 1920), 129-30.

[15] Ibid., p. 130.

it is that in the hands of a "rechtlich denkenden Unchristen" religious freedom may be better preserved than in the hands of a confused Christian. Thomas Jefferson, for example, had a deeper understanding of religious freedom than orthodox Christian pastors of our land who would like to acknowledge Jesus Christ in our Constitution.[16]

> Man hat von einem "christlichen Staat" geredet, auch hierzulande. In dieser Bezeichnung hat man in unklarer Vorstellung unvereinbare Dinge zusammenzuschweissen versucht. Der Staat tritt mit Gesetzen von aussen an seine Untertanen heran und dringt mit Zwang und Gewalt auf Gehorsam; "christliche" aber weist auf eine innere Verfassung, eine Gesinnung, da aus dem Gesetz der Liebe von innen heraus freiwillig und ungezwungen die erforderlichen Werke fliessen. Macht man mit der Bezeichnung "Staat" Ernst, so schwindet der Begriff "christlich"; macht man aber mit der Bezeichnung "christlich" Ernst, so schwindet der Begriff "Staat."[17]

The third article of the series has to do with obedience, which is conceived of largely in terms of submission. But Luther is quoted in his Hauspostille in which he makes a more than interesting distinction between a proper authority and a tyrannical rule:

> "Wiewohl auch im Zeitlichen, soviel es den Leib, Geld und Gut betrifft, ein Mass gehalten werden soll. Denn es soll je ein Unterschied zwischen weltlicher Obrigkeit und einem tyrannischen Regiment bleiben. Ein Tyrann nimmt von den Untertannen, solang er etwas findet. Das will der Herr hier (Matth. 22,22) nicht einraeumen, sondern weil er den Untertanen befiehlt: 'Gebet dem Kaiser, was des Kaisers ist!' damit will

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[16] U. S., "Vom weltliche Regiment," Der Lutheraner, LXXVI (May 4, 1920), 146-47.

[17] Ibid., p. 147.

> er dem Kaiser oder der Obrigkeit auch zu verstehen geben, sie sollen nicht mehr fordern oder nehmen, denn was ihr ist; macht also einen Unterschied zwischen dem, was dein, und dem, was du von dem Deinen der Obrigkeit geben sollst. Denn die Regimente sind nicht darum eingesetzt, dass man eitel Bettler machen und niemand nichts behalten soll."[18]

This was evidently intended to show the responsibility which a public official assumes. The writer continued by making clear that Christians are to obey even the overbearing. It is only when rulers set themselves against God's Word that they are to be disobeyed. In that case they cease to be God's servants and representatives and become instead his enemies.[19]

Church and Society

Close to the question of civil government was the relation of Church, as bearer of things eternal, to a time-bound society. In this respect a district essay by P. E. Kretzmann in 1921 on "Die moderne Diesseitigkeitstheologie"[20] indicated the great caution which the social gospel thrust upon Missouri Synod men as they attempted to relate theology to society. The writer criticized a theology which sees the Church suddenly placed into the position of redeeming not only men,

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[18] J. S., "Vom weltliche Regiment," Der Lutheraner, LXXVI (May 18, 1920), 163.

[19] Ibid., p. 164.

[20] Paul E. Kretzmann, "Die moderne Diesseitigkeitstheologie," Dreiundzwanzigster Synodal-Bericht des Kansas Distrikts, (St. Louis: Concordia, 1922), pp. 12-60.

but the whole world--the city as well as the citizens. It is the social mission of the church to do what Jesus envisioned: bring the Kingdom of God to bear upon problems of capital and labor, poverty and international relations, and so make the earth a holy temple for men to live in. Against such a faith Kretzmann submitted four theses, after having traced the roots of this theology through Kant, Schleirmacher and Ritschl, and having deplored the fact that prominent seminaries in America were devoting courses to the theology of these men.

Thesis One: "Die moderne Diesseitigkeitsreligion verwift die Schrift als das unfehlbare Gotteswort."[21] This is followed by a detailed defense of verbal inspiration. Thesis Two maintained that this modern theology "leugnet die stellvertretende Genugtuung Christi."[22] This theology distorts the Biblical concept of sin into a social taint that is not guilt before God. Hence atonement is replaced by morality and salvation which concerns itself chiefly with "souls" is regarded as a partial salvation. Likewise it denies "die andern Grundwahrheiten der Schrift," as Thesis Three asserted.[23] These truths include the six-day creation, doctrines of God, Christ, Satan, the Sacraments and

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[21] Ibid., pp. 22ff.

[22] Ibid., pp. 31ff.

[23] Ibid., pp. 41ff.

the Church. The final thesis said that this theology "naehrt falsche, fleischliche Hoffnungen und gefaehrdet daher das ganze Leben der Kirche."[24] The solution is to reject this "Diesseitigkeitstheologie" for a "Jenseitigkeitstheologie."[25]

Since a church--even a church with a "Jenseitigkeits-theologie"--is still very much in the world, it is forced to grapple with concrete issues. The Missouri Synod was no exception, and one of the guiding principles to which its theologians took recourse was the idea of "separation of Church and State"--a concept which tended to be identified with Luther's idea of the "two realms," despite certain evident differences.

> Our Church stands for the separation of Church and State. We pray for the liberties which our Constitution guarantees to all its citizens. We do not ask these liberties for ourselves only, we ask them also for others. It is on this account that we oppose religious instruction and Bible-reading in our public schools. It was for this purpose that we supported our own chaplains in the army for our own soldiers.[26]

This position was probably over-extended at times as an instrument for criticizing those with whom the Missouri Synod had more basic differences. Synod's attitude toward the Federal Council of Churches furnished at least one good case-in-point.

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[24] Ibid., pp. 51ff.

[25] Ibid., pp. 58ff.

[26] [Martin S.] S[ommer], "America's Religious Liberty," The Lutheran Witness, XLI (January 3, 1922), 5.

The June, 1924, Theological Monthly printed an exchange of correspondence between Charles S. Mcfarland, General Secretary for the Federal Council of Churches, and a Representative from Massachusetts, George Tinkham.[27] On behalf of the administrative committee of the Federal Council of Churches Mcfarland had written to each congressman opposing a proposed new restrictive immigration bill that would, among other things, abrogate this country's "gentlemen's agreement" with Japan. Representative Tinkham sent an indignant and emotionally-charged reply in which he talked about "complete separation of the Church and the State" and asserted that he had not a drop of blood in his veins "which has not been three hundred years in America, and my ancestors, as Separatists, came to this country upon the Mayflower." And so, Tinkham said, he inherited "their complete resentment of interference by the Church in affairs of the State."(!) Tinkham then implies that the Federal Council of Churches was connected with the Anti-Saloon League. In Mcfarland's reply he asked:

> Is not the real question as to the content of the term "secular"? The Federal Council does not consider any question involving principles of right and justice as being secular. Such questions are regarded as moral and therefore inherently religious and coming under Christian ethics. The measure in question surely involves questions of right and justice.[28]

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[27]"An Interesting Page from the Congressional Record," Theological Monthly, IV (June, 1924), 168-74.

[28]Ibid., p. 171.

An introductory note by W. H. T. Dau to this exchange explains that the correspondence is inserted because it "sheds considerable light on the aims and methods of the Federal Council of Churches."[29] From a Lutheran standpoint there were some unhealthy tendencies apparent in the Federal Council of Churches emphasis, but the alternative suggested in this instance was unquestionably a misrepresentation.

As a rule, however, Missouri opposition to the Federal Council centered around honest differences of opinion. When a Federal Council Bulletin urged that it was insufficient for the Church to merely set down principles regarding political and social issues because people need concrete moral guidance, an item appeared in The Lutheran Witness. "The writer in the Bulletin fails to see--and this is his fundamental error--that the Church's duty is to preach the Word of God, the whole Word, and nothing but the Word."[30]

Subconsciously, perhaps, there was still an uncomfortable feeling that the issue was not to be resolved quite so simply, and there were at least some tangible signs of an inadequacy somewhere. J. Frederic Wenchel, in his "Washington Letter" column that appeared from time to time for several decades, reflected:

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[29] Ibid., p. 168.

[30] [William] A[rndt], "To What Extent Must the Church Enter the Domain of Sociology and Politics," The Lutheran Witness, XLV (August 10, 1926), 263.

> We have been thinking of late how few men of the Synodical Conference have attained to high office in the national government; in recent years, only one. This is strange when we consider their number, and that many have reached a prominent place in the industrial, manufacturing, business, and professional world and stand high in their community. Is this due merely to backwardness, or to indifference to their civic duties, or to an absorption in their own personal affairs? We recently heard the charge made by some Puritan relatives in an Indiana community, where our Lutherans are in the majority that there is a lack of interest in civic and public affairs on their part.[31]

However deliberate efforts to explain that Missouri's position did not imply "that political activity is incompatible with sincere Christianity, or that a Christian should not take a deep interest in the affairs of the government . . ."[32] were extremely rare. The promotion of office-seeking or active participation of any sort had little place in Missouri thinking.

Missouri continued to be most vocal in deploring any attempt to Christianize the political order, or to make the narrow way of salvation broad and easy. When statistics came out in 1921 on the number of unchurched, someone suggested with sarcasm that any hundred-percent American was in duty bound to denounce the figures because the government had just passed the Prohibition amendment and the Volstead Act, and had "immensely raised the moral character of our

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[31] J. Frederic Wenchel, "Washington Letter," The Lutheran Witness, XXXIX (October 12, 1920), 330.

[32] [Martin S.] S[ommer], "Christians and the Government," The Lutheran Witness, XLIII (January 29, 1924), 40.

politics and public life by decreeing Woman Suffrage."[33]

Of crucial concern was the church's attitude toward organized labor. The voices heard were by no means uniform. Some were frankly negative and in agreement with a 1921 article in Der Lutheraner.

> Die Parole der heutigen, zumeist unglaeubigen und weltlichen Arbeiterschaft, lautet bekanntlich: Weniger Arbeit, ein kuerzerer Arbeitstag und mehr Verdienst! Diese Parole bezeichnet ein Blatt als die Wurzel der Hauptuebel unserer Zeit auf sozialem und wirtschaftlichem Gebiet, und zwar wegen der darin ausgesprochenen falschen und vernunftwidrigen Gesinnung.[34]

This, said the writer, becomes all the more evident in view of a statement by Thomas Edison on his 73rd birthday. Edison is quoted wondering what he would have accomplished had he been convinced for the past fifty years that he should work no more than eight hours a day. Edison, the writer said, thinks it will be a sorry day when the standards of lazy men determine the working hours for the diligent.[35]

Writing from Washington, J. Frederic Wenchel took quite a different view.

> Labor is frightened at the turn of affairs. During the war, President Gompers of the Federation of Labor sat at the same table with President Wilson, the Morgans, and the Schwabs. His voice was listened to.

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[33] [W. H. T.] D[au], "Our 'Christian Nation'," Theological Monthly, I (July, 1921), 219.

[34] J[ohn] T[heodore] M[ueller], "Der Christ und seine Tagesarbeit," Der Lutheraner, LXXVII (April 19, 1921), 125.

[35] Ibid.

> Today he receives no more such invitations and is out in the cold. There is concerted action on the part of capital to break the power of labor organization. This power was attained through collective bargaining and the closed shop. It is against these that capital is aiming its attack. It is rather hypocritical when this class professes that it is doing this in defense of the personal liberty of their employees, and to give union workers and non-union workers an equal chance. Capital poses as an angel of humanity and patriotism. Since official Washington adopted this style, it has become the vogue to clothe the most selfish and sordid purposes in high ideals and noble sentiments. This fight for the open shop is being waged not for the rights of the employee, but for the greater profits of the employer.[36]

But the most representative and frequently expressed view settled somewhere in between. This view simply urged both capital and labor to be kind to each other. A Lutheran Witness editorial in 1921 noted the struggle between these factions, especially over the closed shop, and noted further that the Federal Council of Churches had produced a pro-labor statement, which in turn had been vigorously denounced by an employer paper. The editorial writer then said he had a word of admonition for both parties: Servants, be obedient; and masters, forbear threatening. "Do we dodge the issue?" the editorial asked. "Does God dodge the issue?--" The writer suggested that the factions pray for one another, and concluded:

> And if all employers and employees would accept these admonitions and instructions in the same spirit in which they are given, the problem between capital and labor would be easy of solution and would at all

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[36]J. Frederic Wenchel, "Washington Letter," The Lutheran Witness, XL (January 18, 1921), 26.

events be settled without war and bloodshed.[37]

A concern of an entirely different nature was Roman Catholicism, which appeared as a threat to religious liberty in the eyes of Missouri observers. Occasionally an honest concern gave way to a less than judicious presentation. In one Lutheran Witness, for example, a Senator Heflin of Alabama is quoted. He used rather abusive language in reference to the Roman Church, but the writer apparently approved and called Heflin "an intelligent American, who certainly is somewhat acquainted with conditions and affairs in the United States, ..."[38]

The nomination of Al Smith to the Presidency touched off a number of pointed comments. Long before the election The Lutheran Witness carried a full-page lead editorial which ended:

> If, therefore, Lutherans oppose the election of a Roman Catholic to the Presidency, it is not because we wish to introduce a religious test for our Presidents or any other political office, but because we know that the Jesuits and the Roman hierarchy will exploit every advantage to diminish as best they can the political and religious freedom and liberty which God has granted us.[39]

Previously the editorial had deplored those who shout about

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[37] [Martin S.] S[ommer], "Labor and Capital and the Churches," The Lutheran Witness, XL (March 1, 1921), 71.

[38] [Martin S.] S[ommer], "Rome Attacked in the United States Senate," The Lutheran Witness, XLVI (April 19, 1927), 142.

[39] [Martin S.] S[ommer], "Our Catholic Fellow-Citizens," The Lutheran Witness, XLVII (March 20, 1928), 111.

Roman Catholicism just before election time. This magazine, however, cannot be accused of following such a policy, it said. "We do not wait for a political campaign before we say something on popery." After the election another lengthy editorial called it "the nastiest, most vicious, and in every way most absurd campaign within the memory of living men. . . ."[40] But the editorial also added that it was wrong to apply the word bigotry to those who recognized the political aims of Romanism and said what they knew.

During the first part of the decade a reason for fearing Roman Catholicism was an alleged connection between the League of Nations and the Vatican. This fear was either caused or aggravated by the fact that a majority of member nations were nominally Roman Catholic, by the suggestion of some Germans that the Pope be chosen official arbitrator of the League,[41] and by Senator Sherman of Illinois who warned "that the League of Nations may end the separation of Church and State and bring the civilized world under the dominance of the Vatican."[42]

War, Peace and Patriotism

The shape of world affairs, too, bore down upon the

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[40] [Theodore] G[raebner], "The Political Campaign," The Lutheran Witness, XLVII (November 13, 1928), 379-82.

[41] [William H. T.] Dau, "Control of the League of Nations," Theological Monthly, V (February, 1925), 55.

[42] Theodore Graebner, "The Vatican and Diplomatic Relationships," Theological Monthly, I (August-September, 1921), 231.

Missouri Synod. The problems of war and peace produced a concerned skepticism regarding the prospects for a better world. This skepticism revealed its weakness in a tendency to promote national withdrawal. But it also revealed great strength by critically judging international piety as wishful and dangerous thinking. Writers observed that the great war for the liberation of the world, which was preached from American pulpits during the war, had developed into something less glorious. Distribution of territory by the conquerors was hardly designed to bring about international brotherhood.[43] Ominous signs of resurgent nationalism, coupled with military preparations, seemed to corroborate this opinion.[44] The United States, too, it was noted, is preparing for the next war, and it is "foolish to speak as if the spirit of aggression was limited to Germany."[45]

> Finally, we are confirmed in our estimate of the term "Christian nations," so frequently employed by the unthinking. Back of these armaments there is the lust of dominion and power, selfishness that will be satisfied no matter what the suffering entailed for others.[46]

In accord with this another writer expressed misgivings about an armaments limitation conference. He noted that it

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[43] [Theodore] G[raebner], "The War for Democracy," The Lutheran Witness, XLV (April 20, 1926), 128-29.

[44] [Theodore] G[raebner], "'The Wisdom of This World!'," The Lutheran Witness, XLIII (January 1, 1924), 1-3.

[45] [Theodore] G[raebner], "Is It Peace, or Is It an Armistice?" The Lutheran Witness, XL (January 4, 1921, 8.

[46] Ibid.

is not the case, as some have proposed, that the meeting is opened with prayer and--presto!--the Lord Jesus Himself takes part in the conference. Rather it is a matter of tradesmen bargaining with each other to secure the best advantage. "No doubt there will be a limitation of armaments; . . . But whatever is done will not be done because of any high humanitarian motives, but only from dire necessity."[47]

This realism caused particular criticism of pacifists who a few years before had spoken in terms of a religious war. These "radicals in 1918 made of a purely political war a religious crusade," and now incite active resistance against the powers that, by divine ordinance, have the right to declare war.

> Our Lutheran Confessions explicitly lay down the principle that there are just wars, that Christians may engage in these, and that all who would prohibit this are prohibiting "a work commanded of God" and are uttering unchristian teachings condemned by Scriptures.[48]

And if President Wilson was unduly taken to task in another editorial, a decisive insight was nevertheless evident.

> The Calvinistic trend of President Wilson's religion was partly responsible for his policy during the war. It is a principle of Calvinism, which John Calvin himself carried into practice in Geneva, that the state shall be governed by the teachings of the Church (as

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[47] J. Frederic Wenchel, "Washington Letter," The Lutheran Witness, XLI (January 17, 1922), 24.

[48] [Theodore] G[raebner], "Peace Plans and Pacifists," The Lutheran Witness, XLIII (January 29, 1924), 44.

> defined by Calvin). And thus we had a war "for righteousness," a phrase immediately appropriated by the Reformed clergy. We were fighting, then, not on account of violations of international law, but to "establish righteousness," to "build the kingdom of God." Hence our soldiers were called "crusaders," and the war was specifically called a "religious war." "Christianity" was at stake. And the League of Nations was held to be a Holy Alliance, which was to safeguard the principles of Jesus Christ in the relation of nations to each other. The outcome of the war was to be a "regenerated humanity."[49]

Another editorial commented on "the enthusiasm of clergymen and social uplifters for the League of Nations," and observed that this voice of morality was inaudible on "the administration's private wars in Russia," and "its part in the blockade of Russia, which is still costing the lives of unnumbered thousands of men and women and little children."[50]

A statement by Henry Ford on the cause of war and his plan for stopping war received high praise. Writing in the Dearborn Independent, Ford had discussed the part of propaganda. People must be lied to to get them into a mood for war. He maintained that there are a relatively small number of people who own and control most of the raw material consumed in war, and who control key industries and most of the money of the world. They need an occasional war to use up the surplus. So, Ford suggested, if about fifty or sixty

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[49] [Theodore] G[raebner], "Lenin and Wilson," The Lutheran Witness, XLIII (February 12, 1924), 59.

[50] [William H. T.] D[au], "Reverend Promoters of Peace and War," Theological Monthly, I (February, 1921), 55-57.

of these men could be locked behind prison walls, there would be no more wars. But these questions are not permissible, said Ford, and therefore the League of Nations will amount to nothing.

> Henry Ford, then, is of the opinion that the most dangerous members of society are not the inhabitants of our slums, not the proletarians of cities, not the scum of society who land in prisons, live in asylums, or die in gang feuds, but that the most dangerous, the most destructive element of our population consists of men of culture, education, and wealth. We are convinced that Mr. Ford is right.[51]

But the most encouraging aspect of the international unrest was the flowering of a genuine concern for conditions in other parts of the world, especially as this related to the Church. An example was the confiscation of German mission stations and the internment of many missionaries by the allies which brought particularly indignant reactions in Missouri circles.[52]

The wave of patriotic ferver which the war had generated made Missouri unusually sensitive about any inferences, hidden or revealed, that might cast reflections on its loyalty. So the 1920's produced articles designed to (1) assert her genuine Americanism; and (2) blast those who wanted to give patriotism a religious value and so distorted it. As a result editorial titles such as, "Is the

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[51][Martin S.] S[ommer], "Henry Ford's Plan," The Lutheran Witness, XLIII (March 11, 1924), 121.

[52][William H. T.] Dau, "A Cry of Distress and a Plea for Justice," Theological Quarterly, XXIV (July, 1920), 129-44.

Lutheran Church a Foreign Church?"[53] were not unique.

In October, 1920, an article, "Puritanism--Past and Present,"[54] began a series of five articles specifically designed to ward off an expected flood of literature on the tercentenary of the landing of the Pilgrims. The fear was that English, Puritan strains would be elevated to a type of super-Americanism at the expense of other ethnic and religious groups. Another article was intended "to bring into the clear light of the truth the fact that America owes her freedom to the Reformation wrought through Luther."[55] And another, to show that "In the last analysis American religious liberty is the fruit of Lutheranism."[56] Still another demonstrated that "Modernism, . . . is unwittingly undermining the foundations of our free institutions."[57]

Several articles in the Lutheran School Journal dealt with an alleged "injection of British propaganda into the

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[53][Martin S.] S[ommer], "Is the Lutheran Church a Foreign Church?" The Lutheran Witness, XLIII (May 20, 1924), 197.

[54][Theodore] G[raebner], "Puritanism--Past and Present," The Lutheran Witness, XXXIX (October 12, 1920), 323-25.

[55]W. C. Kohn, "America's Debt to True Lutheranism," Lutheran School Journal, LVII (May, 1928), 144.

[56]Paul F. Bente, "Lutheranism and the Constitution," The Lutheran Witness, XLVII (July 24, 1928), 249-50.

[57]William Arndt, "The Sesquicentennial of Our Independence," Theological Monthly, VI (September, 1926), 261.

American history text-books. . . ."[58] A letter by Senator Borah to a man who proposed to write an American-English history disapproved of the idea on the grounds that Americans need more pride in and devotion to their own institutions. "'I want a truly American history--one which will help us build up our common country and give us an American mind, an American purpose, and American ideals.'"[59] Another time a June 4, 1923, Associated Press news release in the Chicago Daily News was reprinted.[60] It reported that the New York City Commissioner of Accounts had charged eight text-books and authors with disseminating anti-American and pro-British propaganda. Among the examples cited were teaching that the Magna Charta is the real source of American liberties rather than the Declaration of Independence, that the Constitution is largely borrowed from England, as are most of this country's institutions, that the Mexican War was a grab of territory, and that the War of 1812 was a mistake.[61] Such items were exceptional, however.

Hyper-Americanism was the object of frequent barbs. One editorial attacked what the America First group called,

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[58] W. C. Kohn, "Are Our New Histories American?" Lutheran School Journal, LVII (July, 1922), 225.

[59] Ibid., p. 227.

[60] "Eight Schoolbooks Pronounced Un-American," Lutheran School Journal, LVIII (October, 1923), 314.

[61] Ibid., p. 316.

"'Our Trinity of One Flag, One Loyalty, and One Language.'"[62] But the Ku Klux Klan received the sharpest criticism. One writer made unfortunate and embarrassing concessions.

> It has been said that the Ku Klux Klan was born and is actuated in its operations by the conviction that the morals of our country are corrupt; that sexual vice, bootlegging, and gambling flourish; and that Jews, negroes, Roman Catholics, and alien-born are a menace to American institutions, and that it is necessary therefore to counteract their pernicious influence. Who will deny that there is much truth in these assertions?
>
> But why adopt such methods as does the Ku Klux Klan?[63]

Another suggested that the Klan is to be condemned, but that the Pope has the greater sin, since he arouses ill-informed citizens.[64] Ordinarily, however, there was no sympathy for the Klan and its purposes. The American Legion was criticized from time to time as an exponent of one hundred per cent Americanism.[65] Anti-semitism was deplored by a writer who wondered why Jews should be international scapegoats.[66] And the same writer called the new (1924)

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[62] [Theodore] G[raebner], "'One Flag, One Language'," The Lutheran Witness, XL (January 18, 1921), 24.

[63] H. J. C. Fritz, "The Ku Klux Klan a Greater Evil than Those which it Tries to Correct," Theological Monthly, II (December, 1922), 374.

[64] [Martin S.] S[ommer], "Who is to Blame for the K.K.K. Movement?" The Lutheran Witness, XLII (August 28, 1923), 280.

[65] [W. H. T.] D[au], "The American Legion," Theological Monthly, III (January, 1923), 21.

[66] W. H. T. Dau, "The International Scapegoat," Theological Monthly, III (April, 1923), 97-101.

Immigration Law a gigantic national experiment in applied eugenics.[67]

Schulkampf

A most crucial part of Synod's battle against super-patriotism was the fight to keep the legal status of its parochial schools. For a time these schools appeared to be in genuine danger. This danger was reflected in a January, 1923 Theological Monthly article, "The Worst is Yet to Come," which called attention to the fact that in Oregon parochial schools had been declared illegal (to take effect beginning in 1926), that the Ku Klux Klan was organized in Washington for similar purposes, and that there was great agitation in Michigan and elsewhere.[68] At the same time a court battle was shaping up against a Nebraska law which was aimed at virtually excluding any language but English from the schools. The United States Supreme Court decision in favor of Robert T. Meyer, a Missouri Synod parochial school teacher, and against the State of Nebraska was a harbinger of a more significant court fight.[69] That was the United States Supreme Court ruling against the Oregon

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[67] [W. H. T.] Dau , "Glimpses from the Observer's Window," Theological Monthly, IV (October 24, 1924), 315.

[68] [W. H. T.] D[au], "The Worst is Yet to Come," Theological Monthly, III (January, 1923), 12-13.

[69] "Meyer vs. Nebraska," Theological Monthly, III (August-September, 1923) 256-57.

School Law.[70] The Masonic interest in a single, uniform school system had been scored during this tussle,[71] as well as any proposal to achieve spiritual homogeneity of democracy through the public schools.[72]

The fight to maintain parochial schools led Missouri into a rather critical examination of the public school system, an approach that has characterized Missouri's thinking almost from its inception. Since the public schools could hardly be considered to be under the influence of Roman Catholicism, and since the truly Lutheran approach was to maintain parochial schools, it was only natural that Calvinistic influences would be anticipated and traced. One writer found eight characteristics of John Calvin's theology which were allegedly influencial in the public school system, and of these eight, seven were negative influences.[73] If this represented a slightly exaggerated

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[70] W. C. Kohn, "Oregon Lost in Supreme Court," Lutheran School Journal, LX (July, 1925), 254-56.

[71] A. C. Stellhorn, "Outlawing the Private School," Lutheran School Journal, LVII (December, 1922), 380-84.

[72] [John Theodore] Mueller, a review of A National System of Education, by Walter Scott Athearn, Theological Monthly, I (April, 1921), 126-27.

[73] John Theodore Mueller, "The Influence of Calvinism on Our American System of Education," Theological Monthly, V (July and August, 1925), 202-05; 227-35.

interpretation, one of the real influences which produced a wariness in Missouri was a tendency to ignore proper distinctions in the function of Church and State, as well as a lack, at times, of confessional seriousness. And the inadequacy of the public school for religious instruction was always considered a clinching argument for the necessity of parochial schools.[74]

"Putting the Bible In and Taking Christianity Out,"[75] was a characteristic attitude toward the matter of religion in public schools. One objection asserted was its constitutionality, since, legally, the Bible is a sectarian book, and since, in any case, this was felt to violate the intention of the first amendment. To violate separation of Church and State, therefore, would be harmful to democracy. Even more important, Christianity would suffer from being taught in the schools, since the almost impossible task of teaching religion in a manner compatible with the varieties of faith would reduce it to a veneer of morality, it was felt.

> If the Christian Church would now unload the burden of its neglect upon the State, it would cause trouble, mingle Church and State, create disturbances among Christian and non-Christian people, eviscerate the Bible, emasculate Christianity, and in the end put

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[74] [John Theodore] Mueller, "Alarming Conditions in our Public Schools," Theological Monthly, IV (May, 1924), 155.

[75] John Theodore Mueller, "Putting the Bible in and Taking Christianity Out," Theological Monthly, III (June, 1923), 161-74.

> true Christianity out of the Church and out of the hearts of men.[76]

In line with this there was an expression of disapproval when the University of Iowa announced the organization of a School of Religion,[77] and an uneasiness on the part of some writers over the new released-time religious instruction plan,[78] though it was noted that such a plan had been upheld by a higher court in the State of New York.[79]

During the 20's attempts were made repeatedly to pass an Education Bill, and in regard to this writers in various publications were outspokenly opposed to any such measure. The bills would have established a Department of Education with Cabinet status and furnished the possibility for Federal aid to the states. Most of the arguments used against such legislation was based on the political conviction that a Federal department or Federal aid would ultimately result in Federal control. Behind this was probably the fear that eventually the existence of parochial schools might in some

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[76] Ibid., p. 174.

[77] [Theodore] G[raebner], "'A State University Teaches Religion'," The Lutheran Witness, XLVII (August 21, 1928), 286.

[78] "Opinion of the Attorney-General of Illinois on the Constitutionality of Week-Day Religious Instruction," Lutheran School Journal, LXII (May, 1927), 177-85.

[79] "School Religious Instruction Upheld," Lutheran School Journal, LXII (August, 1927), 319.

way be threatened.[80] There at least appeared to be some basis in this shadowy threat by the very fact that its supporters included many of those who had led the fight against parochial schools. One educational leader of Synod suggested that since the Masons were for it, and at times explicitly predicted the end of parochial schools while supporting this measure, no one could expect anything different from the National Education Association, 80 per cent of whose members were said to be Masons.[81]

Less news-worthy, but of probably deeper significance for the shaping of a social ethic, was the content of instruction in Missouri Synod parochial schools. In general this content, as it appeared by way of suggestion in Lutheran School Journal outlines, seemed to reflect the thought of its theologians, with a heavy emphasis on obedience in a passive sense. However, the necessity of cultivating an appreciation for active participation in community life and of understanding the complexities of society was strongly expressed by at least some, and this augured well for the future.[82]

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[80] B. M. Holt, "Smith-Towner Bill and Masonry," Lutheran School Journal, LVII (October, 1922), 308-10.

[81] A. C. Stellhorn, "The Education Bill in Congress," The Lutheran Witness, XLVII (March 20, 1928), 108-09.

[82] O. E. Schroeter, "The General Curriculum," Lutheran School Journal, LXII (June, 1927), 201-04.

CHAPTER IV

FROM DEPRESSION TO WAR

As the 1920's bowed out, Missouri faced a nation that had been talking about chickens and automobiles, but which suddenly found itself thinking in terms of more grim and humble realities--soup and employment. It was a period of painful adjustment, of social and political innovation, and more important, a period which ended with a world at war.

The Missouri Synod found itself unavoidably caught in the stream, remaining staunchly conservative, but speaking with greater frequency in trying to relate itself to a socially and politically sick world. The speech did not always come easily or convincingly because its theologians were, by and large, not accustomed to fluency in such matters. So sometimes what they said was simply comment prompted by the thinking of others.[1] At other times there was embarrassing silence.[2] But Missouri never lost grip on its realistic view of human nature, and there were encouraging signs of freshness and vigor.

Editorials continued to find frequent fault with birth

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[1]Theodore Graebner, "The Modern Church Looks at Society," Concordia Theological Monthly, II (May, 1931), 336-43. This deals with a report of the Lambeth Conference of 1930.

[2]P[aul] E. K[retzmann], "Topics for Conference Papers," Concordia Theological Monthly, VIII (July, 1937), 335ff.

control, evolution, Ghandi, Clarence Darrow, Harry Fosdick, Roman Catholicism, the Federal Council of Churches, and churchmen in general who dabbled in politics at the expense of theology.[3] Essays continued to reflect the theology and ethic of Lutheran orthodoxy. Without displaying a particular gift for creative thinking or application, some of them nevertheless indicated a depth that was uncommon in most Protestant circles in this country.[4]

One such essay was "Was lehrt die Schrift ueber die iustitia civilis?"[5]

> Einmal hat Gott den Ehestand, den er schon im Paradiese gestiftet hatte, nach dem Suendenfall weiter bestaetigt. Sodann hat er das Amt der weltlichen Obrigkeit aufgerichtet. Familie, Staat und Gesellschaft sind nicht menschliche Erfindungen, sind nicht das Produkt einer natuerlichen Evolution, wie viele Leute jetzt behaupten, sondern sind vielmehr Ordnungen Gottes. . . . Luther schreibt hierueber: "Diese goettlichen Staende und Ordnungen sind dazu von Gott geordnet, dass in der Walt ein bestaendig, ordentlich, friedlich Wesen sei und das Recht erhalten werde.

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[3]Items on evolution appeared in almost every issue of The Lutheran Witness. Regarding birth-control, one writer summed up the attitude when he said, "the Word of God settles the matter for us. We know that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God and the very 'foolishness of God is wiser than men,' I Cor.1:25." [Martin S.] S[ommer], "Birth Control," The Lutheran Witness, LII (September 6, 1938), 299.

[4]This was the period immediately following Walter Rauschenbusch, when a large part of Protestantism considered many of the traditional theological concerns antique. A pragmatic emphasis among churchmen also tended to minimize the importance of theology.

[5]G. Huebner, "Was lehrt die Schrift ueber die iustitia civilis?" Concordia Theological Monthly, IX (October, 1938), 728-35.

> Darum nennt er es hier (Ps. 111,3) Gottes Gerechtigkeit, die bestaendig ist und bleibt immer fuer und fuer, welches die Juristen nennen das natuerliche Recht. Denn wo Gott diese Staende nicht selbst haette gestiftet und taeglich als sein Werk erhielte, da koennte kein Funke Rechts bleiben einen Augenblick, sondern ein jeglicher Knecht wollte Herr sein, Magd wollte Frau sein, Bauer wollte Fuerst sein, Sohn wollte ueber Vater und Mutter sein. Summa, es wuerde unter den Menschen aerger zugehen denn unter den wilden Tieren, da immer eines das andere frisst." (V, 1076)[6]

God has not only created these orders, but has given to sinful, fallen man the power, the impulses in his heart and the necessary wisdom to bind himself to these orders and to make laws which serve these godly orders. Included in these impulses which God has implanted into the heart of man is natural love. This is purely a creaturely love. "Selbstverstaendlich verdient sich der Mensch bei Gott nichts mit seiner natuerlichen Liebe und seinem natuerlichen Ehrfuehl."[7]

God has revealed Himself also to heathen. Man has a natural knowledge of God, and the voice of his conscience witnesses to the law written in his heart. The fear of punishment after death holds the "old adam" in restraint, as does the fear of repirsal in this life--especially as this reprisal relates to one's honor. Millions refrain from lying, stealing and adultery because they do not wish to lose respect. Thus many people commit suicide when they seem to

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[6] Ibid., p. 730.

[7] Ibid., p. 731.

have lost their standing in an irreparable way. What is true of a single person is also true collectively of a people in a state.

> Unter iustitia civilis verstehen wir also dies, dass kraft gewisser Ordnungen Gottes und gewisser Triebe, die Gott von Natur in das Herz eines jeden Menschen gepflanzt hat, und auf Grund der natuerlichen Gotteserkenntnis und der sich im Gewissen kundtuenden Kenntnis des Moralgesetzes das menschliche Geschlecht hier auf Erden auch nach dem suendenfall miteinander lebt und fuereinander arbeitet und so selber dafuer sorgt, dass aeusserlich Anstand und gute Sitte gewahrt werde.[8]

All this, of course, has nothing to do with how a man may stand righteous before God. It is not even a step on the way to conversion, but pertains only to this life. When the eyes of Adam and Eve were opened and they saw that they were naked, they sewed leaves together. So after the fall and before repentance they had a knowledge of what was outwardly proper and made aprons to cover their nakedness. After the fall Adam had "die geistige Faehigkeit, zwischen gut und boese zu unterscheiden. Auch der natuerliche Mensch hat eine, wenn auch geschwaechte, Erkenntnis von dem, was recht und unrecht ist."[9]

After the flood God made a covenant with Noah and his descendants. The human tribe should multiply and have rule over all creatures. Man "soll ein Gemeinschaftsleben zu fuehren imstande sein." Whoever sheds the blood of man, by

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[8] Ibid., p. 732.

[9] Ibid., pp. 732-33.

man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in His own image, Genesis 9:9.

> Warum soll es erlaubt sein, Tiere zu Toeten und zu schlachten, aber verboten sein, Menschblut zu vergiessen? Der Mensch ist durch den Fall nicht zum Tier geworden. Er ist trotz der Suende ein Mensch geblieben. Gott begruendet sein Verbot, Menschenblut zu vergiessen, mit den Worten: "Denn Gott hat den Menschen zu seinem Bilde gemacht."[10]

This consciousness of the unique position of man is known to all men, for God has inscribed it upon their consciences.

> Auch noch nach dem Fall ist der Mensch die vornehmste Kreatur, die Krone der ganzen Schoepfung, ein Wesen begabt mit einer vernuenftigen Seele. Er kann denken und reden. Im Gegensatz zu den Tieren und Teufeln hat der gefallene Mensch die capacitas convertendi, die freilich keine capacitas activa, sondern passiva ist.[11]

In the Church the Word of Christ obtains: One is your Master and you are all brothers; and the statement of Paul: Here there cannot be Greek and Jew. But in civil life distinctions of rank are a part of the order.

The locus classicus for worldly rule is Romans 13:1-7. I Peter 2:13-18 is also basic. By the passage in Romans it is known that "jede weltliche Obrigkeit, und wenn sie aus reinen Heiden besteht, kann und soll darueber entscheiden, was auf natuerlichem Gebiet recht und unrecht, gut und boese ist."[12] Luther cites the example of the gentile

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[10] Ibid., p. 734.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

Jethro giving advice to Moses, who was full of the Holy Spirit, and says this shows "'wie Gott das Weltreich in die Vernunft gefasset habe;'" and that therefore one should not seek advice on this matter from Scripture, since God has spread this gift of "Vernunft" also among the heathen. Here it is, Luther is quoted as saying, that the children of the world are wiser than children of Light.[13]

The Depression

In facing a world of concrete problems with this ethic of Lutheran orthodoxy, it was the depression which cast a social, economic and political shadow over the decade of the 30's. Synodical periodicals during most of this decade reflected a great concern about economic conditions, particularly as these conditions affected the Church. Congregations were reminded repeatedly of the Christian meaning of suffering, and of their stewardship obligations even in the midst of poverty. Occasionally they had to be encouraged to faithfulness in salarying their pastors.[14] All in all, Synod found itself greatly pressed financially. As a result, by 1937 some 300 ministerial candidates had found it impossible to obtain placement.

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[13] Ibid., p. 735.

[14] [Theodore] G[raebner], "The Depression and Some Prophecies," The Lutheran Witness, LI (February 2, 1932), 41-42.

Missouri saw God's hand in the depression. It was a completely deserved judgment, a call for both Christian and non-Christian to repent.[15] A district essay appeared in 1933 on "The Present-Day Economic Depression in the Light of God's Word."[16] The parts of this essay were rather sermonic, rich in Scriptural illustration. Part one, "There Shall Be Famines," made some historical observations, drawn chiefly from the Old Testament.[17] "Thou hast Set Our Iniquities before Thee, Our Secret Sins in the Light of Thy Countenance," part two investigated the causes of depression and finds that while business cycles and nature are causal in a certain sense, the real and underlying cause is sin.[18] The third part, "Be Still and Know that I Am God," sounded the call to repentance.[19] And part four, "We Know that all Things Work Together for Good to Them that Love God," presented the comfort and consolation of God in times

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[15] Carl A. Gieseler, "Hard Times--Why?" The Lutheran Witness, LII (January 17, 1933), 17-18.

[16] P. Fretthold, "The Present-Day Economic Depression in the Light of God's Word," Proceedings of the Fifty-Seventh Convention of the Eastern District, 1933 (St. Louis: Concordia, 1933), pp. 12-45.

[17] Ibid., pp. 13ff.

[18] Ibid., pp. 21ff.

[19] Ibid., pp. 30ff.

of depression.[20]

Sometimes the difficult task of being relevant seemed to be unsurmountably difficult. One writer in 1932 posed the problem of unstable times--post-war hysteria, depression, loss of confidence and the craze for luxuries. Should this, rather than Holy Scripture, influence Synod's church work? There are three facts to keep in mind--and these items are then developed in the article: (1) that "the individual Christian is the unit of the congregations"; (2) that "the congregation is the unit of synod"; (3) that "every movement which does not . . . at least effectively touch, . . . the lowest unit lacks power for efficient aggregate work." Conclusion: "What we need is regular and systematic instruction of all the members of our congregations by every pastor of our Synod," more Gospel preaching and more prayer.[21]

Church and Society--Traditional

"Social Problems and the Gospel" was the title of an essay presented to a 1938 gathering of the Synodical Conference.[22] The essay is divided into three sections. The

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[20] Ibid., pp. 38ff.

[21] Paul E. Kretzmann, "Have We Lost Our Balance?" Concordia Theological Monthly, III (July, 1932) 515-18.

[22] E. E. Kowalke, "Social Problems and the Gospel," Proceedings of the Thirty-Sixth Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America, 1938 (St. Louis: Concordia, 1938), pp. 50-65.

first part asserted that the cause of social problems is sin, and finds these ills predicted in the curse of the ground after the fall.[23] Part two maintained that since sin is the real problem, the solution is the Gospel, a spiritual solution. It concerns the Kingdom of God, which is not to be confused with a worldly kingdom.[24] The last section said that while the Gospel was not given to solve social problems, nevertheless it does effect them in three ways: (1) It makes out of sinners new creatures who refrain from creating conditions that others might suffer from; (2) it fills the Christian with the Holy Spirit, who engenders a humility which is willing to turn the other cheek and bear patiently whatever cross of social problems God sees fit to impose; and (3) it affects social problems "by the fact that it alone of all the forces and powers at work in the world has the power to make of sinners sons of God," since God preserves the world for the sake of his children.[25]

"The Church and Social Problems" in the February, 1940, Concordia Theological Monthly served as an introduction to a

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[23] Ibid. pp. 50-55. Interestingly, the writer groups together "such movements as Humanism, Feminism, Prohibition, Trade Unionism, Marxism, Fascism, New Deal, Share-the-Wealth, Christian Science, Evolution, Pacifism, and many more" as movements are striving for a more abundant life and attacking the problem raised by Genesis 3:17 pp. 53-54.

[24] Ibid., pp. 55-61.

[25] Ibid., p. 65.

series of articles which appeared that year. The writer expressed the view that it would be tragic if Missouri Synod pastors devoted themselves to sociological debate rather than to the preaching of the Word; but that nevertheless social issues are made the subject of religious discussion and Christians, who are affected by them, are looking to the clergy for counsel. So it is the duty of pastors to tell what the Word of God has to say about social questions.

> This, then, is the thesis I submit: We must carefully differentiate between the functions of a congregation as such and those of the individual Christian. If this distinction between the duties of a local congregation and those of the individual Christian is observed, the confusion which reigns quite universally concerning the proper attitude toward social problems will end. It will be recognized that the Church, as such, has no obligations beyond the preaching of the Word, as mentioned above, but that the individual members of the church indeed have a full share of responsibility in this regard.[26]

The first two of the series deal with "The Prophets and Political and Social Problems." In an introductory observation the writer said that any one who even casually reads the prophetic books "will see at once that the prophets took a very active interest in the social problems of their day and pointed out a way to their solution."[27] However one must not infer from this that they had any social reform

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[26]William Arndt, "The Church and Social Problems," Concordia Theological Monthly, XI (February, 1940), p. 117.

[27]Theodore Laetsch, "The Prophets and Political and Social Problems," Concordia Theological Monthly, XI (April, 1940), 241.

of their own.

> The prophets did not look upon themselves as social reformers. They did not take it upon themselves to advise in matters pertaining to politics, economics, sociology, etc. They had no social or economic program of their own. Not once does any prophet demand the enactment by the state, and obedience on the part of the people, with reference to any scheme of reform, any plan of social welfare, any system of politics or economics that God Himself had not already made obligatory in His Holy Law, ..."[28]

The prophets painted lurid pictures of the social conditions of their times, and this was the first step "in the effort of the prophets to reestablish the social order which God demanded of his people."

> The prophets were not satisfied with a merely negative denunciation and condemnation of existing social evils. Their proclamation was at the same time a constructive one, declaring very clear and well-defined principles, which were to guide their people in their social relations, and offering a very definite plan, which would enable Israel to carry them out.[29]

The prophets then "laid down God's social code" as well as a "plan whereby this code could be made operative," namely, "sanctification, the indispensable prerequisite to social justice and mercy as demanded by God, possible through justification of the sinner by the atoning blood of the promised Messiah."[30] The social order deteriorated or improved as the people heard and accepted this.

Within its own midst the Church must seek to establish

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[28] Ibid., p. 258.

[29] Ibid., (May, 1940), p. 341.

[30] Ibid., p. 343.

> and maintain a social code in exact conformity with God's revealed will, and from all its members it must demand strict and conscientious observance of, and obedience to, all its principles without exception.[31]

The Church, like the prophets, has a message for those without the pale, too. It is to teach the world the best solution to the social problems, as Christ commanded this, also, in Matthew 28. However, "the Church must never forget that, before the world can actually live up to the requirements of this code, it must be discipled."[32] But the world does not want to hear such a message. Undismayed by popular ridicule the Church will go on simply preaching the Gospel.

> The Church can make no better contribution towards improvement of the social order than loyally fulfilling this commission. . . . Loyalty in preaching the Gospel pure and unadulterated is loyalty to God, to the Church, to the State.[33]

The majority of space in these two articles was devoted to a criticism of modernism and the social gospel, and particular reference was made regarding the critical approach to the Old Testament.

The same was true of the last article of the series on "The Social Implications in the Gospel and in the Book of

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[31] Ibid., p. 345.

[32] Ibid., p. 346.

[33] Ibid., p. 351.

Acts."[34] Almost in its entirety this was directed against the social gospel. The writer added that the Missouri Synod, too, has a social emphasis, but always it is the individual Christian doing works of love and the Church in her works of charity, and the cause is the Word of truth. "It may take some years or decades, for education is a slow process, but the final results will both justify and repay the efforts made."[35] The same writer had sounded a slightly more positive note several years previously in encouraging congregations to participate in social welfare work, and in encouraging youth groups to discuss topics such as unemployment, peace, the machine age, crime, newspapers, etc.[36]

With critical reservations writers sometimes applauded conservative thinking in other circles.[37] This was true even when there were points with which they felt compelled to clash.

> We wish to say that we are in sympathy with everybody who tries to clarify his thinking and that of other people with respect to the question how Christian

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[34] P. E. Kretzmann, "The Social Implications in the Gospels and in the Book of Acts," Concordia Theological Monthly, XI (June, 1940), 401-08.

[35] Ibid., p. 408.

[36] P. E. Kretzmann, "The Church and Social Problems," Concordia Theological Monthly, VIII (September, 1937), 666-73.

[37] [William] A[rndt], "The Attitude of the Lutheran Church Toward Social Questions," Concordia Theological Monthly, VI (May, 1935), 384-86.

> principles can be applied in the solution of our vexing social problems. . . . In the declaration of attitude . . . where the concrete application of the principles is undertaken, we naturally enter a territory bristling with difficulties.[38]

But when, for example, a United Lutheran Sunday School convention passed resolutions regarding proposed legislation that had to do with the commercialization of Sunday, it was promptly chided.[39] And when a famous politician like Senator Borah[40] or a jurist like Charles Evans Hughes[41] advised the Church to keep out of politics and stick to religion, they were forthwith applauded.

Church and Society--Transitional

The preceding section concerned itself with "traditional" views within the Missouri Synod. However the distinction between "traditional" and "transitional" thought is by no means a clear-cut one. It is not intended to indicate two separate schools of thought. It merely projects differing emphases.

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[38][William] A[rndt], "The Church and Social Problems," Concordia Theological Monthly, X (February, 1939), 142-44.

[39][William] A[rndt], "Wrong View Held in the U.L.C. on the Relation between Church and State," Concordia Theological Monthly, II (November, 1931), 858-60.

[40][William] A[rndt], "Meddling with Politics Condemned," Concordia Theological Monthly, III (June, 1932), 464.

[41][Theodore] E[ngelder], "The Church and the Social Problem," Concordia Theological Monthly, XI (April, 1940), 306-07.

And if the writings are admittedly not so easily or neatly categorized as this division would seem to imply, the fact remains that differences are to be found, and they are important differences.

Even Der Lutheraner exhibited a relatively positive attitude in an editorial as early as 1932.

> Wie steht es aber mit der sogenannten Politik? Darf ein Christ sich mit Politik abgeben, ein politisches Amt bekleiden? Leider steht es so, dass vielfach die Politik einen ueblen Ruf hat und dass der Name Politiker schon haeufig einen Schatten auf den Charakter eines Menschen wirft. Das sollte nicht sein. Das Wort Politik stammt urspruenglich aus der griechischen Sprache und haengt mit der griechischen Bezeichnung fuer das deutsche Wort Stadt zusammen. Politik heisst eigentlich das, was die Stadt angeht, was zu ihrer Wohlfahrt dient.[42]

Especially in this country is one's political responsibility great.

> Wir leben hier ja in einer Republik, unter einer Volksregierung, einer Regierung des Volkes durch das Volk zum Besten des Volkes, Erfuellt das Volk seine Buergerpflichten nicht, so ist es seine Schuld, wenn die Regierung zu einer Misswirtschaft herabsinkt.[43]

Therefore a Christian has the right to join one party or another and support and defend the political and economic aims of that party.[44]

In 1933 Theodore Graebner, a son of A. L. Graebner, transmitted the views of a Missouri Synod professor of law

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[42] T. L., "Der Christ und die Politik," Der Lutheraner, LXXXVIII (May 17, 1932), 167.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid., p. 168.

on the legal sense in which our nation can be called "Christian."[45] This professor noted that all but two of the thirteen colonies had an established church. He cites court decisions which refer to the influence of Christianity in humanizing this country's laws and determining to a great extent the social duties of its citizens. "Indeed, we are compelled, in the opinion of Mr. Zollmann, to accept some kind of religious guarantees for the power of the State--a thought in perfect agreement with the teachings of Romans 13."[46] This study, Graebner felt, pointed up serious questions such as, What is the American doctrine of religious freedom? and the American principle of separation of Church and State?[47]

Several years later Graebner editorialized that "we go beyond the Scriptural (and American) principle when we deny to the State any right to grant any favor to religious organizations."[48] Tax-exemption and the chaplaincy program were cited as cases-in-point. "Government may even favor the religious principle as an ingredient of knowledge which

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[45] Theodore Graebner, "Separation of Church and State," Concordia Theological Monthly, IV (April, 1933), 349-55. Graebner comments on the introductory chapters of Carl Zollmann's, American Church Law.

[46] Ibid., pp. 252-53.

[47] Ibid., p. 255.

[48] [Theodore] G[raebner], "The Separation of Church and State," The Lutheran Witness, LV (February 25, 1936), 50.

every citizen should have, and therefore permit the Bible to be used in the schools." Synod's pastors have taken different positions on this questions, he said, "but to introduce, as is sometimes done, the principle of separation of Church and State into their discussion is not correct."

A few months later the same writer criticized an attitude which would curtail the civic rights of ministers. "It is preposterous to demand of a minister that he give no expression to his political views whatever other citizens are permitted to express them." He added this pointed comment:

> Separation of Church and State is one thing. Because it is commanded in the Bible, we do not treat purely political questions in the pulpit or in the official church-paper. Isolation from the world is another thing and is a thing contrary to the principles of Christianity, I Corinthians 5,10.[49]

One of the genuinely significant contributions of this period was an essay by Theodore Graebner on "Christian Citizenship."[50] Graebner pointed out that the Church has a stake in the kind of citizenship that is fostered, purely from the standpoint of its own survival and growth. It is not true, he said, that the Church can prosper under any kind of government. The Christian should therefore take an interest in citizenship, negatively, to see that wicked men

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[49] [Theodore] G[raebner], "A Curtailment of Civic Rights," The Lutheran Witness, LV (November 17, 1936), 386.

[50] Theodore Graebner, "Christian Citizenship," Proceedings of the Seventeenth Convention of the English District, 1937, (St. Louis: Concordia, 1937), pp. 11-27.

are not allowed to take advantage of the law.[51] But positively, Christian citizenship has great contributions to make.

> It will advance the cause of those movements which tend to strengthen the guarantees of order and law. And since ignorance is the worst foe of human happiness, however defined, the Church will be of true service to the State by making her influence felt in the direction of popular enlightenment and culture. This has been her achievement from the beginning, no less notable and outstanding because it is outside her essential spiritual program.[52]

By culture Graebner was refering to anything that tends to improve mind, morals or taste, or contributes to enlightenment or civilization--including such things as animal breeding. This is proof of man's expanding dominion of the creation, of which he is the crown. So

> the Christian will lend the power of his mind and training to research in the fields and help make contributions to the stock of human knowledge. More than that, he will supply from Christian viewpoints the right interpretation of natural law and also in this field will find new opportunities for Christian confession.[53]

It was Graebner's opinion that the Missouri Synod has largely failed in its potential ministry to the upper strata of society and the intelligentsia.

> The Church has missed its opportunity to a large extent by failing to train our rich in the right conception of stewardship. They have all too often been horrible examples of ingrown souls, hard and critical in their expressions on the floor of the voters' meeting, ultra-conservative in their

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[51] Ibid., pp. 11-12.

[52] Ibid., p. 12.

[53] Ibid.

> attitude towards employees, and known for their lack of interest in civic affairs, also in the works of public charity. And we have failed to a large extent in training our members for the higher influence of educators by taking a negative attitude towards their entrance upon a college career, at best warning them against the seductions of modern philosophy, but only in rare cases encouraging them towards such a career with the thought of the service one in such positions can render his Church and his Master.[54]

Specifically, said Graebner, Missouri Lutherans have failed to place leaders in the educational world. He believed that the failure to accept a fair proportion of the positions in grammar and high schools "is the chief reason why our Church has made proportionately so small a contribution to American life."[55]

It is a mistake to maintain that this is not the purpose of the Church. It is a question of whether Christians shall bear an equal share in fashioning the character of the American community, of whether or not, for example, to leave a crucial field like journalism to the policies and influences of men with purely material interests, or whether the Christian shall permeate this field and use the potent influence of journalism to mold public opinion. The same is true of other professions.

> And for the same reason our Church has an interest in the field of local and national politics. It has been sufficiently emphasized that our Church is not indeed in politics. Today the emphasis must be laid upon the

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[54] Ibid., p. 13.

[55] Ibid., p. 14.

obverse side of the medal.[56]

You cannot absolve the Christian from the duty of serving under the guidance of a sanctified conscience as a voting citizen and as an office-holder. One should not forget that in this country the citizen is the ruler. It is quite correct to speak, as does the New Testament, of the allegiance and obedience citizens owe the government.

> Yet we cannot forget that the power which these officers wield is delegated to them under a constitution by the citizens. We elect our rulers, and we elect our lawgivers, and we consider this privilege of the American citizen one of the greatest temporal gifts. This gives peculiar meaning to the texts which describe rulers as they ought to be. If government is to be righteous, is to protect and foster the good, restrain the evil, and make life and property secure; if it is to guard peace and order and give no unrighteous cause for war; if through it the Moral Law is to be applied without fear or favor; I say, if the Scriptures make these demands upon temporal government, they place them squarely upon the conscience of the Christian as an American citizen, since according to our Constitution it is the citizen in whom all political power ultimately resides. There is therefore as much reason for the Christian voter to consider himself an agency of God for righteousness as under another form of government our Church has placed this duty upon the conscience of kings and princes and of the magistrates who owed their fealty to the ruling house.[57]

Graebner quotes Werner Elert's summation of Luther's sociology thus: "'Obedience toward God implies that we are free towards Him; freedom towards men implies that we are obedient to them.'"[58] Sanctification, then, is not simply a

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[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid., p. 15.

[58] Ibid.

cultivation of virtues which concern one's spiritual relation, but must also affect attitudes towards social, cultural and political affairs. Such service to the State is a "divine service" and involves works that are to be done "in faith." Graebner further asserted that

> Luther encourages the Christians to prepare for service in the State and recommends for this the study and practice of law. Even the poor man's son, he says, should have access to the highest offices. "It will never be different--your and my boy, the children of the common people, must rule the world, whether in State or Church." Again: "Magistrates, jurists, and office-holders must go to the top, must advise government; they are indeed the lords of the earth, though they are not of high rank by birth." We are amazed at the vision of this churchman Martin Luther, who pictured a democracy even at a time when princes still ruled by right of birth.
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> It has been said that Luther consistently kept out of politics and simply preached the Gospel. This is not stating the matter fairly, nor is it, strictly speaking, true. It is not a fair statement because it assumes that the office of preaching the Gospel limits to that sphere the activity of all who have received ordination. And it is not a true statement--because Luther actively influenced politics from the time that he first addressed the German nation in his great reformatory writings of 1520. He not only discussed government and politics in the abstract, but took a very direct part in establishing its jurisdiction. He gave his blessing to communities while they were creating their new systems of law. When these reforms developed revolutionary tendencies and the mob threatened to rule, he asked for a general reorganization on the part of the state. He addressed countless letters and tracts to rulers and people. He gave advice in many details of organization and administration. During the political revolt he appeared in person at the focal points of the disturbance, midst the hooting of mobs and at the risk of his life.[59]

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[59] Ibid., p. 16.

The implications of all this for the Missouri Synod, is, among other things, that it actively encourages its members to enter political professions.

> Until the day has come that the entire United States connects with the name Lutheran, as inseparable from its meaning, the idea of religious education, of citizenship based on a conscience governed by Christian morality; until the words Lutheran, civic righteousness, and the moral training of youth have become very closely associated in the public mind, we have been lacking in the performance of duty. In this sense let the Lutheran Church be the conscience of the nation. Let it be an emblem of civic righteousness as it has long been a symbol of Bible-teaching. In this respect, too, will each individual assert himself and all collectively assert themselves in bearing witness to that righteousness which exalteth a nation. Far more than has been the case in the past should our teaching in Sunday-and parochial school bring out the social implications of being a Christian and a church-member.[60]

Another essay that reached beyond the usual and the anticipated was A. C. Piepkorn's, "St. Paul on Social Relationships."[61] He observed that for St. Paul the order of civil government is of divine institution. Its purpose is to repress evil and to encourage good. According to Piepkorn, St. Chrysostom emphasized that St. Paul does not say that there is no ruler but of God; but that there is no power but of God.[62]

St. Paul's line of argument on the authority of the

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[60] Ibid., p. 24.

[61] A[rthur] C[arl] Piepkorn, "St. Paul on Social Relationships," Concordia Theological Monthly, XI (October, 1940), 721-52.

[62] Ibid., p. 736.

> State can be simply stated as follows: De iure and in abstracto all power comes from God, who is the Creator of society and therefore the Founder of authority, which is an essential part of the idea of society. The concrete authorities ("the powers that be"), marked by their ability to preserve law and order, are therefore truly, really, constituted, sanctioned and willed by God. It may be further noted that only normal circumstances are contemplated and that cases of casuistry--involving doubtful, contested, usurped, and illegitimate authority--are not here considered.[63]

Piepkorn said that for St. Paul there is no Church and State question, but rather the issue involves the relationship between the Christian and the State.[64]

"While social reconstruction is not the aim of the Church," he said, "it is by no means to be despised as a valuable by-product of its ministry." Piepkorn cited Ernst Troeltsch who said that the Church can never have an unconditionally conservative social outlook because by the very nature of its faith it contains an inner radicalism that stands in judgment upon all temporal conditions and it presses beyond all national and other forms of unity to a spiritual unity.[65] The task of transforming society, however, does not simply mean putting Christians into places of authority, but rather refers in a much broader way to the extent to which their influence permeates society.

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[63] Ibid., p. 737.

[64] Ibid., p. 738.

[65] Ibid., p. 750.

Here lies a responsibility, for "the Church must mold the social attitudes of her membership, instead of letting the world usurp this function."[66]

> In a democracy the duties of citizenship are not discharged merely by obeying, praying and paying; the intelligent use of the francise and of political office is quite as obligatory. We may not ask for daily bread unless we are prepared to work for it; we may not ask for a pious spouse unless we are prepared to espouse a pious person; we may not ask for pious servants unless we engage pious persons as our employees; we may not ask for discipline in this community unless we contribute to it by disciplining ourselves; and we may not in a republic or a democracy ask for pious and faithful rulers unless we are prepared to deposit our vote to elect them or for good government unless we are prepared to do those things that experience shows are essential to getting it.[67]

In addition a monograph by Alfred M. Rehwinkel deserves mention.[68] The first part of The World Today concerns "The Political and International World." Dealing with the revolutionary nature of the international scene, Rehwinkel reached graphically into history to talk about matters, many of which, to the knowledge of this writer, were totally ignored in other synodical publications. The Church was asked to face modern world imperialism along with its roots in such phenomena as Great Britain's part in the slave trade and her Opium War with China. The Versailles Treaty,

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[66] Ibid., p. 751.

[67] Ibid., p. 752.

[68] Alfred W. Rehwinkel, The World Today (St. Louis: Concordia, 1940).

industrial injustice, nationalism and the armaments race were other offenses, all of which manifested a world in ferment.

Part two, the "Social and Economic World," labored chiefly with the intensifying battle between Capitalism and Communism. Rehwinkel saw dangerous signs in this country--a great concentration of wealth, labor unrest, unemployment, concentrated power in the President[69] and racial friction. He called the idea of a "just" war into question, at least in any absolute sense, and noted that this country's wars with Mexico and Spain could hardly be considered "just."[70] And he warned that the Church is becoming a respectable, middle-class Church. A third chapter dealt with the religious world. The book was obviously written to arouse Christians to face the world they live in and stir them to action, including positive participation in social and political affairs.

An article on "Miracles and Social Work" also achieved a sort of uniqueness.

> Sound Biblical interpretation. . . would lead us to believe that preaching and teaching and healing all worked toward one end or goal, namely, human welfare,

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[69] Ibid., p. 52. "And finally consider the growing concentration of power in the office of the President of our country, the authority of which even now is . . . second only to that of Stalin and Hitler in dictatorial absolutism."

[70] Ibid., p. 61.

> health of body, mind, and soul, the health of the whole man. Jesus' ministry was one, and teaching and preaching and healing were but various phases of it; they all combined to raise life to its highest level, the level of the regenerated personality, the integration of a reborn soul. Thus by means of miracles Jesus restored man to his highest potentialities and made it possible for him to go out into society and to face the challenges of daily life with health of body, strength of mind, and peace of heart and soul.[71]

The Church, it said, has a two-fold ministry--a ministry of word and deed.

Protestant Activism

In keeping with its biblically oriented ethic the Missouri Synod continued during these depression years to assert itself vocally against any tinge of modernism or any form of the social gospel. Harry Emerson Fosdick, E. Stanley Jones, Kagawa and the Christian Century came in for repeated criticism.[72] And when the latter complained of a gulf between clergy and laity in the matter of religious thought and its social application, this was regarded as a vindication of Missouri's position and a sign that the "gulf" had been a creation of the social gospel.[73] The Universal

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[71]Virtus Gloe, "Miracles and Social Work," The Lutheran Witness, LX (September 2, 1941), 300-01.

[72][Theodore] E[ngelder], "Economic Cooperation, Modernism's Newest Substitute for the Gospel," Concordia Theological Monthly, VII (August, 1936), 608-10.

[73][William] A[rndt], "Laymen and the Preaching of the Social Gospel," Concordia Theological Monthly, VII (November, 1936), 867.

Christian Council on Life and Work was taken to task for issuing a program which seemed to place the social gospel "altogether in the foreground."[74] After the Northern Baptist Convention announced that it was sponsoring a series of conferences on matters such as birth control, industrial relations, the race question, temperance, internationalism, etc., one writer commented:

> If the present trend continues, it may soon be difficult to find Christian denominations in our country which are not expending their energy chiefly on the discussion of social and economic problems.

Other denominations, he said, "are navigating on the same ocean of social ethics. Will it be long before the Rock of Ages will entirely be lost to view?"[75]

About the same time the Concordia Theological Monthly reprinted a letter sent to the President by pastors of the Seward (Nebraska) Regional Conference in reply to what apparently had been a solicitation of information and counsel from pastors on social security legislation. The pastors reply:

> Let our Hon. President and all his governmental officials perform their duties of office according to the sound reasoning of good common sense, not according to the desires of any particular religious denomination.

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[74] [William] A[rndt], "Plans of the Universal Christian Council on Life and Work," Concordia Theological Monthly, VII (December, 1936), 942.

[75] [William] A[rndt], "The Social Gospel in Baptist Churches," Concordia Theological Monthly, VI (May, 1935), 382.

> We are convinced that it is not in the province of any clergyman to venture any more specific counsel. Clergymen should be experts in the spiritual sphere, but are mere laymen in matters of State. As spiritual advisors we must not bring our high calling into disrepute by mixing into politics. We would deem it extremely dangerous to seek advice from governmental officials in matters pertaining to Church. We deem it equally dangerous as clergymen to permit ourselves to become advisors on State.[76]

When it came to criticizing the social gospel, perhaps the biggest target was the Federal Council of Churches. The Federal Council of Churches seemed to be synonymous with the very worst element in Protestant thought. It is in this light that the following curious incident must be understood.

In January, 1939, Theodore Graebner reported that he had testified before the House Un-American Activities Committee (Dies Committee) and charged the Federal Council of Churches with meddling "incessantly in political affairs, invariably sponsoring the ideals of radical groups."[77] This testimony was carried over news broadcasts, reached Buffalo, New York, where the Federal Council of Churches was in session and provoked an emphatic denial of the charges. Shortly afterwards a Christian Century editorial challenged him to name a single religious leader "'infected with

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[76]"Answer to the President's Letter," Concordia Theological Monthly, VII (February, 1936), 151-52.

[77][Theodore] G[raebner], "The Federal Council of Churches," The Lutheran Witness, LVIII (January 24, 1939), 22.

Bolshevistic Communism.'" Graebner, in the article, then cited instances of the Federal Council of Churches being politically aggressive, and one of these concerned the League of Nations.

> The world did not know ten and fifteen years ago what a record of dismal failures were in store for the World Court and the League of Nations. No one could then foresee the danger to our independence which any tie-up with the politically, financially, and morally rotten states of Europe would have meant for the United States.[78]

Four weeks later the first of two articles on "The Federal Federal Council of Churches Trek to Moscow" appeared.[79] The same writer called the Federal Council of Churches "an ally of Communism." As evidence he quoted a Federal Council of Churches statement of December 9, 1938, which said that

> "the Church as now constituted is inextricably involved in this capitalistic economic system. . . . The Church should read the handwriting on the wall and set its house in order. If it does not do so, then mighty processes over which it has no control will compel the issue, the conclusion of which is that organized religion as it now exists will pass with the passing of the capitalistic system unless it separates itself from this partnership and declares for an economic morality that is better qualified to interpret the spiritual values."[80]

The writer then answered the challenge of the Christian Century to "name names" by citing two theological professors at

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[78] Ibid., p. 23.

[79] [Theodore] G[raebner], "The FCC Trek to Moscow," The Lutheran Witness, LVII (February 21, 1939), 56.

[80] Ibid.

Union Seminary, Harry F. Ward and Reinhold Niebuhr. The second of the two articles maintained that the charge of political radicalism against the Federal Council of Churches rests on three counts: (1) its advocacy of Socialism; (2) its direct support of Marxian Communist ideals; and (3) its affiliation with "fellow-travelers" who have loyalties in Moscow. He quoted a Labor Sunday message of 1933 which called for "'social planning and control of the credit and monetary systems'," and E. Stanley Jones who had called Socialism a more or less imperfect approximation of the kingdom of God. Again Niebuhr was named, and as evidence of his communism, membership in an organization and his book Moral Man and Immoral Society were named.[81]

School Issues

The public and parochial schools again provided another test-stone of attitudes. In the late 30's there was great agitation for Federal aid to education, and this provoked comment, but no agreement in Missouri circles. A. C. Stellhorn, writing in The Lutheran Witness, opposed it on the basis that this nation's present school system is under local initiative and control. The one who pays the bill should have control, and "untrammeled and unhindered local rights and freedom are a heritage and a power that the

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[81] Ibid., LVIII (March 7, 1939), pp. 77-78.

American people should refuse to sacrifice. . . ."[82] Another reason he gave was the high national debt. John W. Boehne, Jr., writing in the Lutheran School Journal, opposed the Bill largely on the same grounds, but added that his biggest reason lay in his staunch support of the parochial school, and he feared Federal encroachment of individual rights and the implications this might have for the parish school.[83]

The next issue of the same magazine printed an article which attempted to present both sides of the issue without expressing preference.[84] But the large amount of space devoted to the argument for Federal aid seemed to be an indication of the writer's sympathies. He maintained that the role of the Federal Government is clearly limited, and that control is clearly in the hands of the States. These, he said, will probably assume even more control in the future. Pointing to past laws and actions, he concluded: "Whether or not the Federal Government should participate in education is hardly the point any longer, because the fact

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[82]A. C. Stellhorn, "The Federal Aid-to-Education Bill," The Lutheran Witness, LIX (February 6, 1940), 40-41.

[83]John W. Boehne, Jr., "Analysis of Federal Aid to Education Bill," Lutheran School Journal, LXXIV (May, 1939), 407-10.

[84]Eldor C. Sieving, "Federal Aid for Education," Lutheran School Journal, LXXIV (June, 1939), 438-43.

is that it does."[85] Education, he said, is a national concern. The same issue reprinted an article from Educational Trends entitled, "The 'Bogey' of Federal Control."[86]

In 1934 a series of editorials attacked a Child Labor Amendment that proposed to give Congress power to regulate, limit or prohibit the labor of persons under the age of eighteen. This was viewed as another attempt to take education away from the parent and Church and hand it over to the state.[87] The amendment was also attacked on the basis of its alleged drafting by some communistic women.[88]

On the other hand, a Lutheran Witness article commented in an unexpected way on the United States Supreme Court decision of June 30, 1940, which declared that the public school has a right to compel children of Jehovah's Witnesses to salute the flag. The writer said there can be "no doubt about the correctness" of this decision. Any other view would "tend to take the control of the public-school system out of the hands of the constituted authorities and place it into the hands of the various denominations," whose

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[85] Ibid., p. 440.

[86] "The 'Bogey' of Federal Control," Lutheran School Journal, LXXIV (June, 1939), 458ff.

[87] [Theodore] G[raebner], "The Federal Youth Control Amendment," The Lutheran Witness, LIII (March 13, 1939), 105.

[88] A. C. Stellhorn, "Watch the Child-Labor Amendment," Lutheran School Journal, LXIX (February, 1934), 269-70.

differences might become a source of embarrassment. He added that "Religious convictions do not exempt individuals from the performance of political responsibilities."[89]

In 1938 an Albany District pastoral conference protested a revision of the New York State Constitution which would provide bus transportation and social-welfare services for parochial schools. The basis of the protest was "clean and clear separation of Church and State," which is "distinctly American," but "also Scriptural."[90] In March, 1939, an item noted that the "Catholics won their fight for State aid for parochial schools in New York."[91] But in May an editorial in the Lutheran School Journal pointed out some arguments in favor of the idea.

> We Lutherans who maintain and cherish our own schools are vitally interested in this controversy and the magnitude which it assumes. In the past we have taken our stand with opponents to State subsidy for all non-public schools. However, opinions are expressed which show a changed point of view in our circles.[92]

Several articles appeared in the same journal regarding the importance of social studies and the proper

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[89]Carl Zollmann, "The Flag Salute in the Courts," The Lutheran Witness, LIX (August 6, 1940), 273-74.

[90]"Statement in Connection with the Revised Constitution of the New York State Constitutional Convention," Concordia Theological Monthly, IX (October, 1938), 940-42.

[91]T[heodore] H[oyer], "State Aid for Parochial Schools," Concordia Theological Monthly, X (March, 1939), 220.

[92]"Government Subsidy for Private Schools," Lutheran School Journal, LXXIV (May, 1939), 388-89.

emphasis of the same. One emphasized the need to treat history as evidence of God's participation in the world.[93] Another stressed the duties of Christian citizenship, though largely in terms of obedience.[94]

War

As the decade of the 30's drew to a close, the threat of war began to assume a position of priority as a concrete test-stone of Missouri's ethic. The Missouri Synod's position on war was basically this: A part of government's innate function is to bear the sword. This includes the obligation of protecting the land, and for which purpose a government might find it necessary to wage war. In such a crisis the government has a right to rally the support of its citizens and may demand that they bear arms. Christians, too, must bear the sword when called upon, and this for conscience' sake. A distinction was made between a "just" and an "unjust" war. If the government is waging an unjust war, a Christian must refuse to bear arms, choosing to obey God rather than man. The Church as such may not decide whether or not a war is just or unjust, but only the individual

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[93] Paul H. Hoffmeyer, "The Lutheran Teacher's Opportunity in Teaching the Social Studies," Lutheran School Journal, LXVIII (October, 1932) 58-60.

[94] Theodore Kuehnert, "Objectives in the Social Studies for the Lutheran Elementary School," Lutheran School Journal, LXVIII (June, 1933), 455-61.

Christian, who must square the matter with his own conscience. There may, indeed, be serious doubts as to whether or not a war must be considered just or unjust. In such a case, a Christian is not to act upon the basis of a doubting conscience, but is to base his decision upon something certain, namely, that government is instituted by God and Christians are to obey. In addition the Christian is obligated at all times to exercise his duty as a citizen so that the government will have proper policies and make wise decisions.[95] These views found frequent expression.

Accompanying this theology was an invariably deep-seated bias against war, a bias that found popular expression in this Lutheraner item:

> Der Wolf sprach eines Tages zur Hyaene: "Eigentlich sind wir doch die friedlichsten Tiere von der Welt." "Ja," sagte die Hyaene, "ich habe noch nie in meinem Leben einen Loewen umgebracht." "Und ich habe noch keinem Tiger etwas zuleide getan", entgegnete der Wolf. Da gruendeten sie den Bund zur Errichtung des Weltfriedens. Gleich darauf lief ihnen ein Schaf in den Weg. "Wie kannst du dir erlauben, uns, die Vertreter des Friedens, in unsern Plaenen zu stoeren?" rief der Wolf. "Verzeihung!" wollte das Schaf sagen, aber da hatten sie es schon zerrissen. Dann lachten beide und sagten: "Der Friede ist gerettet!"[96]

With the rise of Hitler and the growing uneasiness over Germany, attempts were made by both pro- and anti-Fascists

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[95] Louis J. Roehm, "The Christian's Attitude towards His Government and on War," Concordia Theological Monthly, XII (May, 1941) 321-39.

[96] "Zur Erhaltung des Weltfriedens," Der Lutheraner, XC (November 27, 1934) 387.

to show that the real father of modern dictatorship was Martin Luther, and against such attempts several competent apologies for Luther appeared.[97]

Embarrassing from the vantage point of later years was an evaluation of the Church and State situation in Germany by one of the leaders of the Lutheran Free Church in Germany in a February, 1938, issue of The Lutheran Witness. Writing from England, he claimed to have gotten an intimate and carefully balanced opinion by close contacts with leaders of both contending parties in the German Church conflict. He said that Hitler was attempting to separate Church and State in Germany, that the National-Socialist utterances proved it to be tolerant and precluded setting up its "ism" as a super-religion, that Hitler "acknowledges the importance of dogma for the Church." He also disagreed with the proposition, "Germania contra mundum," and asserted that rather Germany was restoring a balance in Europe, so making a valuable contribution.[98]

This was not a representative opinion, however. As a rule Hitler's rise was regarded with severe misgivings and the "Confessing Church" became the object of synodical

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[97]Theodore Buenger, "A Defense of Luther against Edgar A. Mowrer," Concordia Theological Monthly, V (April, 1934), 295-306.

[98]W. M. Oesch, "Church and State in Germany," The Lutheran Witness, LII (February 8, 1939), 40.

sympathy.[99]

Missouri rejected pacifism as neither realistic nor biblical. When the shouting for disarmament grew, one editorial suggested that the tragedy of war could not be eliminated by such a policy. It noted that no one was suggesting that the nation do away with city police forces. And as to the possibility of reducing armaments, that is a matter for the government, not the Church, to decide.[100] But when the United States Supreme Court in 1931 by a 5-4 decision denied citizenship to a Canadian professor of Yale Divinity School because he had said that in a war which he considered unjust he would not bear arms, someone expressed approval of a Christian Century editorial which saw a "'panoply of a nationalistic God, before whom all must bow in reverence.'"[101] And when in 1937 the Augustana Synod voted to petition Congress to submit a constitutional amendment which would require a nation-wide referendum before war could be declared by Congress, except in the event of an invasion, this was called, "surely a mixing of Church and

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[99] J. Frederic Wenchel, "Nazi Germany and the Church," The Lutheran Witness, LVI (November 16, 1937), 390.

[100] [Martin S.] S[ommer], "Again, What about Disarmament?" The Lutheran Witness, LII (March 14, 1933), 91.

[101] [William] A[rndt], "The Macintosh Decision of the Supreme Court," Concordia Theological Monthly, II (August, 1931), 618-19.

State."[102] A later editorial expressed agreement with President Roosevelt when he opposed such an amendment, and added that the proposal was a bad one because it assumed that the general mass of citizens could be so well informed on international issues as to cast an intelligent ballot.[103]

As threat of war blossomed, Missouri, along with the rest of the country, hoped for non-involvement. This attitude was suggested in an article which reported that the Federal Council of Church at a Madras International Missionary Council had suggested some sort of world authority.[104] And it achieved more distinct expression in an editorial which said:

> There is conclusive evidence in the hands of a committee of our Government to the effect that tremendous efforts are being made to rob our people of rational thought, to inflame their minds with passion, and to plunge our country into war.[105]

The committee in question was the Dies Committee which attempted to show the influence of foreign agents and governments in propagandizing our country. Other editorials

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[102] [Theodore] G[raebner], "Swedish Synod Asks War Amendment," The Lutheran Witness, LVI (August 10, 1937), 263.

[103] [Theodore] G[raebner], "The President Is Right," The Lutheran Witness, LVII (January 11, 1938), 4.

[104] J[ohn] T[heodore] M[ueller], "The Federal Council Planning a World-State," Concordia Theological Monthly, X (August, 1939), 625-26.

[105] [Theodore] G[raebner], "Another World War?" The Lutheran Witness, LVIII (September 5, 1939), 303-04.

described the degenerative effects of war, urged prayer for peace, and hoped that Christians would make their influence felt in the nation's capital.[106] But by 1941 the world admittedly made a "gloomy picture,"[107] and the same year for the first time an entire issue of The Lutheran Witness was devoted to servicemen.[108]

The Papacy received periodic jabs as a result of world conditions. When the Pope and Mussolini were on good terms, and again when they were on bad terms with oneanother, the relationship was suspect.[109] Reinhold Niebuhr's charge in the Christian Century that the Catholic Church had cast its lot with Fascistic politics drew applause.[110] The appointment of a personal ambassador to the Vatican drew outraged protests.[111] The growth of "Catholic Action" appeared as an attempt of the hierarchy to enlist lay help to restore the

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[106]A. M. Rehwinkel, "War or Peace, What Shall It Be?" The Lutheran Witness, LVIII (May 2, 1939), 153-54.

[107][Theodore] G[raebner], "What War Does to Christianity," The Lutheran Witness, LX (January 7, 1941), 3.

[108]The Lutheran Witness, LX (April 29, 1941).

[109][Theodore] G[raebner], "Pope and Dictator Lock Horns," The Lutheran Witness, L (August 4, 1931), 265-66.

[110][William] A[rndt], "The Roman Catholic Church and Fascism," Concordia Theological Monthly, IX (March, 1938), 216-17.

[111]"Vatican Appointment Draws Protestant Fire," Concordia Theological Monthly, XI (March, 1940), 209-10, reprinted from the Christian Century, January 17, 1940.

world to the politics of the Middle Ages.[112]

Conspicuously absent during this period was any forthright treatment of the race question as it applied concretely to Missouri Synod congregations. Racial friction was occasionally, but not frequently, deplored. Once it was noted that the Episcopalians had a delicate problem regarding integration on their hands.[113] The progress of Negro missions made the news from time to time. But this period reflected little profound concern over the tradition of having white congregations in changed or changing communities. In this respect the Missouri Synod attitude was probably representative of its cultural milieu.

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[112]Alex Wm. C. Guebert, "Catholic Action," Concordia Theological Monthly, X (February, 1939), 128-31

[113][William] A[rndt], "The Race Problem in the Episcopal Church," Concordia Theological Monthly, IV (January, 1933), 52-53.

CHAPTER V

FROM PEARL HARBOR TO 1955

This period of approximately fourteen years saw the United States pushed irrevocably into the rampaging events of world history. The explosion of World War II, the unimaginably difficult task of forging out a tenuous peace, Korea, relief and rehabilitation for millions of impoverished and homeless--all of these combined with great economic and social tensions in this country to produce some sobering and hectic years.

Such happenings were bound to influence the way in which the Missouri Synod thought and spoke. Perhaps it was symptomatic of this influence that criticism of Roman Catholicism took a decided turn away from a political emphasis to more strictly theological matters, though the prospect of a new personal ambassador to the Vatican instigated harsh protests.[1] But more important from a theological point of view, these years forded Synod to take another look at the rest of the Christian world. This look was necessarily intensified by the statement of the "44" which challenged from within Missouri's position on inter-church relationships. The advent of the Lutheran World Federation and the World

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[1]"Ambassador to the Vatican," The Lutheran Witness, LXX (November 13, 1951), 376.

Council of Churches probably had an even greater impact upon Synod. One writer believed that "the emphasis which is today placed on the ecumenical movement compels us to re-evaluate our place in the visible Christian Church."[2] In addition a "Common Confession" was drawn up between Missouri and the American Lutheran Church, another indication that the strongly polemic attitude characteristic of previous decades toward other Lutheran bodies was finding a more positive direction.

Social and political thinking likewise found fresh expression. Traditional patterns of thought recurred with frequency, to be sure, but not at all with the same calculated monotony. Much more was said and much more of what was said was new. There also appeared to be a healthy tendency to avoid treating the Church-State issue in abstract language. As someone observed at the end of the period in question, the Missouri Synod was facing the fact that its members had not exercised a proportionate share of influence in political, social and cultural America. "There may have been a time when The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod could afford to keep itself aloof from its American environment.

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[2]F[red] E. M[ayer], "Ecumenicity and Its Challenge to the Missouri Synod," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVIII (January, 1947), 458-59.

That day has passed."[3] Even The Common Confession, as compared with A Brief Statement, reflected greater awareness of the Church relating itself to its surroundings. Sections on "The Church and Vocation" and "The Church and Government" called upon Christian men and women not only to pray and work for good government, but encouraged them to hold public office.[4]

The War

The Missouri Synod, along with the rest of the country, already had faced squarely the possibility of war. Its young men were being drafted and its pastors were serving as chaplains.

Following Pearl Harbor the editors of The Lutheran Witness featured an article on "War--a Duty and an Opportunity" which said:

> No, the Church is not at war, but every single man, woman, and child in and outside the Church is today at war with Japan, Germany, and Italy. Let them not only loyally perform what the Government asks of them, but let them hold high the ensign of HOPE which belongs to the Church through her almighty risen Lord.[5]

Another article in the same issue prayed for a peace with honor and justice, but observed that peace is a temporal

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[3]Martin H. Scharlemann, "The Lutheran Church and Its American Environment," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVI (August, 1955), 597-602.

[4]"The Committee on Doctrinal Unity Reports," The Lutheran Witness, LXXI (April 15, 1952), 6, 7, 10.

[5]"War--a Duty and an Opportunity," The Lutheran Witness, LX (December 23, 1941), 437.

blessing, prayed with the condition, "If Thou wilt."[6] And a third article indicated the horrors of war and termed war a call from God to repentance.[7]

As the war progressed Missouri's theologians looked for other things to learn from it. One of them posed the question: How does war fit into the assertion of faith that all things work together for good? He found that war (1) illustrated the folly of man and the folly of trusting in man's wisdom and ways; (2) confirmed what the Bible says concerning the last days; (3) was a law sermon; and (4) drew many people to the Church.[8]

In a book review one writer criticized the editor of The Christian Century, C. C. Morrison, for having taken a pacifist position before the war and then supporting the war, but denying that any war could be adjudged righteous--which, said the writer, would make a Christian militarist out of Augustine for drawing a distinction between a just and an unjust war.[9] But later someone else wrote that

we cannot escape a certain responsibility for the

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[6][Theodore] G[raebner], "--for Peace with Honor and Justice," The Lutheran Witness, LX (December 23, 1941), 431-32.

[7]Martin S. Sommer, "War--a Call to Repentance," The Lutheran Witness, LX (December 23, 1941), 436.

[8][Martin S.] S[ommer], "Good Effects of the War," The Lutheran Witness, LXI (March 17, 1942), 88.

[9][Theodore] E[ngelder], a review of The Christian and the War, by Charles Clayton Morrison, Concordia Theological Monthly, XIV (March, 1943), 234-36.

> horrible butchery and indescribable suffering affecting a great part of mankind today. No one of us can view the great tragedies of Europe and the Pacific with feelings of self-righteousness. With penitent and humble hearts and with feelings of deepest sympathy for the sufferers in the war area we ought to approach the day when the news of final victory for our arms will be proclaimed.[10]

Following the war attention focused immediately upon the need for helping war victims. The need seemed so great that there was no hesitation about a direct appeal to the Federal government to take action. After a half-hour visit with President Truman during which he reported on his visit to Europe, John W. Behnken delivered a written statement to the President which included the following:

> Mr. President, I realize that the formulation of just and equitable policies for the extremely difficult work of occupation presents some very delicate and complicated problems. However, the pathetic situation in Europe and elsewhere in the world today demands a truly humanitarian policy. Upon America, touched least of all by the ravages of war, it will depend whether or not millions of refugees will become victims of winter. I am convinced that America's Christians desire to do their part, even at great personal sacrifices, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and to provide shelter for the homeless. . . . America's Christians will petition you and Congress to open channels for effective work of charity.[11]

From then on, frequent articles appeared describing conditions in Europe and elsewhere, explaining where the church's

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[10] [William] A[rndt], "Our Share in the War Guilt," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVI (January, 1945), 419-20.

[11] J. W. Behnken, "Appeal to the President," The Lutheran Witness, LXV (January 1, 1946), 6-7.

relief money was going and what it was doing, and appealing for additional help.

Besides taking an active role in world relief, not much was said about the problems of peace beyond the frequently expressed hope that peace would last. Universal Military Training drew occasional comment. Grave misgivings were balanced by an acknowledgment that technical as well as moral issues were involved, and that therefore Christians might find themselves in disagreement.[12] One writer voiced the fear that the Potsdam agreement was unjust,[13] and several years later an editorial indicated that the insistence on unconditional surrender may have been the greatest blunder of the war. "It cost us dearly in lives and time. Because of our mistakes we lost Eastern and Central Europe. And, it may be added, probably set the stage for World War III."[14] The ethical dilemma presented by atomic power received no extensive treatment, but the grave concern which scientists expressed was regarded as a challenge to the Church's and the Christian's responsibility.[15]

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[12][William] A[rndt], "Is the Church to Speak on the Peacetime Conscription Issue?" Concordia Theological Monthly, XVI (September, 1945), 643-44.

[13][William] A[rndt], "The Potsdam Agreement Declared Inhumane," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVII (February, 1946), 144-45.

[14]"War Blunders," The Lutheran Witness, LXIX (March 21, 1950), 86-87.

[15][Theodore] G[raebner], "Atomic Scientists Appeal to Relition," The Lutheran Witness, LXV (March 12, 1946), 83-84.

Attitudes Re-asserted

Throughout these years traditional emphases continued to achieve considerable attention. One of the doctrinal essays of the "Centennial Series" in The Abiding Word exemplified this attitude. The duties of civil government are, according to this essay, "to promote the general welfare of its people by protecting the individuals and groups in their civil rights and to defend the state against dangers from within and without."[16] The coercive function of government receives great emphasis. Government is to promote the general welfare by protecting and defending. The reason for this is evident.

> For where law and order, peace and quiet prevail, there the members of the body politic individually as well as collectively may fulfill their duties toward each of the three divinely ordained institutions, Church, home, and state, and thus the entire commonwealth may prosper.[17]

In carrying out its functions, government must follow the Natural Law and the dictates of reason, experience and common sense.[18] Obedience and honor were also emphasized.

> What a lesson for Christian citizens! It is not always an easy matter to render due honor to officials, judges,

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[16] P. F. Siegel, "Civil Government," The Abiding Word, Vol. I, edited by Theodore Laetsch, (St. Louis: Concordia, 1953), 511.

[17] Ibid., p. 512.

[18] Ibid., p. 516.

> legislators, whom we know to be disreputable men, companions of gangsters, dishonest, venal. Yet, however, wicked and dishonorable his character, being one of the authorities that be, he has been honored by God to be His minister. This honor is his due, and God demands that we render to him his dues, honor to whom honor is due.[19]

Duties of service include voting, serving to promote public welfare and holding public office.

The essay dealt with fundamental principles, but these were abstractly treated for the most part. The essay indicated a heavy reliance upon the writings of August L. Graebner in the old Theological Quarterly, which were quoted a number of times.

An article on "Church and State" in the Lutheran Cyclopedia said that the "idea of strict separation of the church from the state, and vice versa, though clearly taught in the Scriptures, has been realized only in extremely modern times." Martin Luther, it maintained, "clearly upheld the theory that church and state should be separate."[20] An article on "Civil Government"[21] in the same book condensed and referred to the essay in The Abiding Word mentioned above.

One writer took issue with a Christian Century article

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[19] Ibid., p. 518.

[20] W[illiam] G. P[olack], "Church and State," Lutheran Cyclopedia, edited by Erwin L. Luecker, (St. Louis: Concordia, 1954), 231.

[21] "Civil Government," Lutheran Cyclopedia, edited by Erwin L. Luecker, p. 236.

on "Orthodoxy, Too, Has Its Social Gospel," which he quoted in part and then added,

> whenever one conceives of Christian orthodoxy in the Lutheran, and let us be bold enough to add, the Biblical sense, then we must maintain that orthodoxy has no social gospel. . . . The Christian Church, however, has by command of its Lord, a more important task to perform than to clean out gutters, improve down-and-out housing districts, and the like. It must save sinners from eternal damnation.[22]

The Church always begins by creating a congregation of saints and this group will assert itself in its civic sphere in all manner of social relationships. The writer added that perhaps "in this respect our Lutheran orthodoxy in our country has failed in the past."[23]

When the Board for Social Missions of the United Lutheran Church held institutes and presented a program of action for individual congregations, it spoke about the evangelism of the social order, which produced a proper concern on the part of one person who commented:

> We are in full sympathy with every legitimate effort to combat social evils. But it must not be forgotten that the Church's business is to preach the Gospel. How tragic if the Church should come to be regarded as an agency for social betterment! It would mean that a by-product would be elevated to the position of chief objective.[24]

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[22] J[ohn] T[heodore] M[ueller], "Orthodoxy, Too, Has Its Social Gospel," Concordia Theological Monthly, XV (June, 1944), 421.

[23] Ibid.

[24] [William] A[rndt], "'Social Action' by Congregation," Concordia Theological Monthly, XV (November, 1944), 773-74.

Another writer, in encouraging Christians to take an active interest in political, social and economic questions rather than simply grumbling, added this interpretive comment: "The Christian citizen who carefully studies present-day trends knows that our country is threatened with two evils: totalitarianism and Romanism."[25]

The Economic Order

During this period the Missouri Synod found itself relating frequently to the economic sphere of society. Writing on "The Church and the Economic Order," one person expressed what was perhaps a representative point of view. He said that the problem of economics is within the realm of reason and that it is not the function of the Church to solve mankind's social problems. Nevertheless as a member of society and as a sanctified person, the Christian has a grave responsibility in solving society's problems.

> We must carefully distinguish between the modern social gospel, which is virtually a rational approach to the social problems, and the social implications of the Gospel which lie in the field of sanctification. Only the Gospel can produce the new life and God-pleasing social relations. Therefore the Christian Church can speak on social problems only to those who are members of Christ's kingdom.[26]

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[25] J[ohn] H. C. F[ritz], "What is Demanded by Good Citizenship?" The Lutheran Witness, LXIV (June 19, 1945), 195.

[26] F[red] E. M[ayer], "The Church and the Economic Order," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVIII (May, 1947), 387-88.

The Calvinistic approach, he said, is "that the Church has been appointed by God as the instrument to establish the sovereignty of God in all areas of human life according to the code laid down in the Bible."[27]

Attitudes were frequently most explicit when stated in reference to that to which writers took exception. When someone maintained in the America magazine that government could best improve the people by letting capital find its most lucrative course, commodities their fair prices, industry and intelligence their natural reward and idleness and folly their natural punishment, he was promptly scolded.

> For the Bible Christian the issues can be put in these three questions: Does the Bible, our sacred rule for doctrine and life, tell us whether the principle of free competition should be defended or opposed? Does it say whether freedom of contract on the part of the employer and the individual employee must be upheld or condemned? Does it teach that the State may pass special legislation for the benefit of the less privileged classes, or does it state that such a course would be unethical? The answer is obvious.[28]

Another item was a review of Wilbur M. Smith's The Increasing Peril, published by Moody Press. The book's major premise, according to the reviewer, is that America must remain godly if it is to prosper. His minor premise is that the United States is a Christian nation. His concern, then, is that the nation beware of legislation favoring atheism--and

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[27] Ibid., p. 388.

[28] [William] A[rndt], "Economics and Religion," Concordia Theological Monthly, XV, (July, 1944), 492.

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization falls into this category because it is without religious content and is headed by an atheist, and, therefore the United States should stop supporting it. The reviewer said that the author tried to register a useful warning, but did so by confusing tools of Church and State.

> If today, in the national and international sphere, men are seeking for philosophies of life other than the Christian one to restore happiness to the world, this is due to an unfortunate degree to the fact that Christians themselves have not lived by their own philosophy and thus have not recommended it as unique and essential. This fact is not merely theory. It is the judgment of the Word of God. . . .[29]

Perhaps akin to such an attitude was the favorable report of Lord Keynes shortly after his death. Keynes was quoted a number of times. The report then said that the helplesness of capitalism during the depression was as much due to hoarding by the rich as it was to reduced consuming power of the poor. So Keynes urged that the idle funds of the rich be taxed and borrowed by governments and spent on public works. He was also for reduced interest rates for easier borrowing and expansion of private industry, the report continued. A modern economy does not enrich itself by piling up money with people out of work. The medieval policy of enforcing usury laws to keep the interest low and encouraging holidays

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[29]Richard R. Caemmerer, a review of The Increasing Peril, by Wilbur M. Smith, Concordia Theological Monthly, XVIII (July, 1947), 553.

and public works was more sensible than the capitalistic custom of accumulating wealth.[30]

One of the most vigorous criticisms of capitalism appeared in a 1945 Concordia Theological Monthly. The writer traced some of the modern developments of capitalism and observed that

> it soon developed that the new system, which quite generally came to be called capitalism, did not guarantee economic justice and the well-being of society. Economic freedom meant in too many cases freedom for the wealthy but practically slavery for the masses. The employers had all the advantage. Since they also controlled governments, they could have laws passed in their own interests, and low wages and sweatshops were the result for the workers. The lust for profits led to unscrupulous competition and inhuman practices, the race for new markets and raw materials, and even to imperialistic wars between nations.[31]

Because of this, he said, many are condemning capitalism as un-Christian.

> Also within our own circles similar voices are being heard. In an essay read before the Professors' Conference at River Forest, Dr. Haentzschel writes: "There is evidently an inherent clash of interest between profits and human welfare." And again: "The capitalistic system as it has arisen out of laissez faire contains no spiritual values but is hostile to them in its nature. Its heart and soul are profits; it is purely materialistic. . . . That the modern economic system is intrinsically the incarnation of selfishness, without benefit of higher motives, soon became, as we have seen, painfully evident in its workings. It exalted

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[30] [William] A[rndt], "The Relation Between Economics and Morals," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVII (July, 1946), 539-40.

[31] Arnold Guebert, "Trends and Tendencies of the Times," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVI (November, 1945), 727.

> profits and property rights above human rights (and property rights above human rights) and generated glaring social injustices and ills.[32]

The writer felt that it was going too far to condemn capitalism per se, since the root of the trouble is human nature which abuses the freedom of such a system. He then examined critically some of the basic tenets of socialism, but pointed out that these criticisms cannot be validated by using the Bible to prove them. It is not true, therefore, to say that a Christian cannot be a socialist. The government of New Zealand, he said, is socialistic without bowing to anti-Christian communism. He concluded:

> What is obviously being worked out in North America today is a compromise between capitalism and socialism. If this can be accomplished, the two extremes--unregulated capitalism and complete socialism--will be avoided. In our opinion this would be the best solution of the problem with which we are faced today.[33]

Labor and Management problems began to receive more attention, and Labor appeared to receive more sympathetic response than previously. A 1946 Concordia Theological Monthly reprinted an editorial from America which, in reference to a strike at General Motors, took Management to task for refusing to recognize the legitimate claims of Labor.[34] Again in 1952 a steel strike occasioned an article--one of

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[32] Ibid., p. 729.

[33] Ibid., p. 730.

[34] [William] A [rndt], "Concerning the Present Strike Situation," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVII (March, 1946), 215-16.

several--by a pastor from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. This pastor pointed out that behind the orderly discussions of the strikers were four heavy burdens: (1) insecurity; (2) the feeling of being excluded from certain social groups; (3) a sense of insignificance or uselessness; and (4) the absense of a sense of vocation. Strikes, he said, are symptomatic of deeper problems, and denunciation is not enough. Diagnosis and treatment are needed. "Patent answers and glib applications of Christian truth are not easily made in strike situations. . . ." Unfortunately, he said, a "quietistic attitude has characterized large areas of Christendom" on vital life problems such as this.[35]

Another article which would have found itself quite out of context even in the 1930's was an editorial which called attention to an address by Ralph Bunche in which he singled out the miserable existence of people in Asia, Africa and elsewhere, and said that the world was in ferment not, in the first instance, over ideologies, but simply over intolerable conditions of life. The Witness editorial then pointed out the clear responsibility of Christians to do something about this also by encouraging government to use its resources. "The state may inaugurate programs of help in a manner and on a scale impossible to the church. It

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[35]John Daniel, "Labor and You in 1952," The Lutheran Witness, LXXI (June 24, 1952), 4-5.

gave implicit but clear approval of such programs as Point-Four and technical assistance. Then it also included this judgment: "There is danger in both wealth and poverty. The State can help the rich and the poor by taking some of the wealth of the former, in order to help the latter."[36]

During this period a scholarly examination of communism on the occasion of the Communist Manifesto's centennial was printed.[37] The study was based upon this document. Some years later, however, a list of suggested titles on communism appeared in the same journal.[38] The contributor of this list did not sign his name, but the titles had been recommended by the American Legion.

A Social Ethic

In struggling for a more relevant social ethic, some of the Missouri Synod theologians--often prompted by the results of European theology--were taking another look at the base of Lutheranism. One such attempt was "The Social Ethic of Martin Luther" in which the writer concluded that

Luther held to the new ideal that poverty should be

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[36]"Our World Responsibilities," The Lutheran Witness, LXXI (June 24, 1952), 9.

[37]Paul M. Bretscher, "The Communist Manifesto," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVII (October, 1946), 742-69.

[38]"A suggested Bibliography on Communism," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXIII (August, 1952), 614.

> entirely removed and that the forgotten people should be reclaimed to become decent and self-respecting members of society. The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the bond of brotherhood among them impelled this view. The high point of Luther's social program in respect to relief was reached when he had the courage to suggest--and this was a bold step in a day of guild-controlled orders--that relief be extended not only to the sick and weak but also to the straitened business man and the ambitious youth who aspires to a profession. He felt that general taxation should provide the funds for such needs. There is on record a lengthy document in which Luther opens to view for the first time his idea of a community chest under the administration of cities. His suggestions for the community chest in Wittenberg and Leisnig expressly called for loans to be extended to the farmer and the little businessman.[39]

He quoted Luther as saying:

> "I have often contended that the world cannot be ruled with the Gospel and the power of Christian love, but by rigid laws and discipline and authority, for the world is against the Gospel and is not ruled by Christian love."[40]

It was apparently this realism, then, that prompted Luther to suggest taxation and relief and the like. "The very spirit of capitalism seemed to Luther to be incompatible with the Christian life."[41]

Luther's doctrine of the "two realms" was examined by Fritz Heidler in the Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung and occasioned some comment by F. E. Mayer, who said:

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[39]Carl Walter Berner, "The Social Ethic of Martin Luther," Concordia Theological Monthly, XIV (March, 1943), 175-76.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Ibid., p. 177.

> Both areas deal with justice and righteousness. However, the Church deals with the justified man, and it is the office of the Church to proclaim the righteousness which avails before God. The secular State deals with just conditions. The State proclaims the righteousness of life and establishes such human interrelations as guarantee social justice. Both are true and genuine righteousnesses, and as Luther says, both are divine things. Nevertheless, they are as completely different from each other as heaven and earth are separate. The Lutheran Church--including our own Synod--has frequently maintained that since each operates in an entirely different area, the Church has nothing to do with social justice. However, it is becoming increasingly evident that such a tight compartmentalization is not the answer to the problem of the "two realms" and that the shibboleth of "absolute separation of Church and State" is no way out from the tremendous obligations of this question.[42]

American Lutheran theology must earnestly examine itself, he said, to see whether it has kept in mind the extent of its social message."[43]

> Pastor Heidler therefore continues his article to point out that Church and State are closely tied together by a bond from below and from above. The bond from below consists in this, that the Christian can never operate in an area outside the secular realm. He is always a member of both realms. The spiritual and secular are united also by a bond from above, for the same God who created the many orders to govern the secular realm has sent His Son Jesus Christ into the world. God is the Lord of both realms. But God uses a different mode in each realm: the Church is the "realm of the Word," and here man sees God's open face in Christ; but in the ordinances of the world God covers His face behind the mask of political, economic, and social institutions.[44]

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[42] F. E. Mayer, "The Church and Social Righteousness," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXIV (May, 1953), 449.

[43] Ibid., p. 451.

[44] Ibid., p. 449.

Another German contribution which drew attention was an attempt by Adolph Koeberle to draw a social ethic from the Augsburg Confession. The writer said that Koeberle began by taking the creation with complete seriousness. God is possessor and man merely holds in trust.

> It is from this truth that the Church must draw the courage to pronounce a severe, earnest judgment upon many shocking capitalistic abuses in our time, where Mammon has taken the place of God and set aside the First Commandment because money is loved and sought above all things for itself alone.[45]

Depravity of man makes Christians repentant and sympathetic as they regard their fellow men. Justification makes Christians learn to look upon people as brothers and sisters for whom Christ died. Here also comes an ethic of action, because Christ redeemed the world not only from the guilt of sin, but from the power of sin as well. Christians are to heal the wounded, protect the sound and bear burdens. The Church must protest against intolerable living conditions that drive people into sin and to despair of God. The Christian hope for future life, or the consummation of creation, is not opposed to creation, but rather the consummation of creation is opposed to the world of sin.[46]

Frequent references were made throughout this period

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[45][William] A[rndt], "Dr. Koeberle on the Social Teaching of the Augsburg Confession," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVII (January, 1946), 64-65.

[46]Ibid., pp. 65-67.

which indicated a modified interpretation of just what was involved in the matter of "separation" of Church and State. One such reference appeared in The Lutheran Witness as an article on "The Lutheran Church and the State," that pointed to instances in which the prerogatives and spheres of Government and Church came into close contact--the chaplaincy, for example. Because there seems to be an overlapping of duties, the Lutheran Church does not withdraw and let its members perish spiritually simply because it refuses to accept assistance from the Government. Lutheran schools in British territories receive "grants in aid"--direct subsidies--for their support. And in Scandinavia a state-Church exists, and simply because this may not be ideal, the Lutheran Church does not cease its work. "In short, the Lutheran Church accomodates itself to external conditions."[47]

One writer who attempted to do some basic thinking on government was Alfred Rehwinkel. In May, 1950 the first of three articles on "The Christian and Government" appeared.[48] He began by asserting that the Christian has especially great stakes in good government, because for him it is not primarily for physical well-being, but for carrying out God's purpose of salvation. In distinction to naturalistic

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[47]Martin Sommer, "The Lutheran Church and the State," The Lutheran Witness, LXI (September 18, 1942), 305.

[48]Alfred W. Rehwinkel, "The Christian and Government," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXI (May, 1950), 332-46.

theories regarding the origin of government the Christian asserts that God has ordained it. And God has established government for man, not man for Government.

> In order that man could and would live in community with his fellow men, God implanted in his very nature the law of government. This law implanted in him becomes the social imperative.[49]

Rehwinkel cited Eugene Wengert's The Lutheran Idea of the State as his authority for saying that exousia in Greek ideology never contained the idea of individual power of the person, but that it carried with it the idea of the supernatural, the ordering power in nature. This was true in popular understanding as well as in Stoic-Pantheism. The Greek idea of nature was synonymous with the idea of the supernatural cosmological force, which was never arbitrary.[50]

Therefore

> Government by nature grows out of a people, because it is there that God placed it in the creation order; government cannot be superimposed. The exousia, or sovereign right and authority, belongs to man in community, just as the Office of the Keys belongs to Christians in community, i.e., in the Church.[51]

Jerome translated exousia as potestas and the Authorized Version called it "power." But it should not be forgotten that James I was in a struggle with Parliament at the time,

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[49] Ibid., p. 341.

[50] Ibid., p. 340.

[51] Ibid., p. 341.

and theologians of the established Church generally supported him against the Puritans, he said.

Government, said Rehwinkel, is not static, but dynamic. As a social institution it must accomodate itself to changed social conditions.[52]

Besides the primary functions of government--functions upon which the existence of the State depends--there are non-essential functions. These include economic, physical, moral and cultural interests, and the government may assume activity in these areas because they are advantageous to the people and if left in private hands would be performed unsatisfactorily or not at all.[53] Wisdom determines the extent of such activity.

> But experience has shown that as the industrial society develops and increases in complexity, the social interests will become more numerous and important and conditions demand that the individual interest be more and more subordinated to the general welfare.[54]

Regarding morality and government, Rehwinkel saw a close affinity:

> Government is not above the Moral Law, but subject to it. In fact, government exists for the maintenance of the moral order. "For he is the minister of God to thee for good; but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid" (Rom. 13:4). Government cannot abrogate the Moral Law nor any of the Commandments of the Decalog. The legislation and administration of law must be in

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[52] Ibid., p. 343.

[53] Ibid., p. 343-44.

[54] Ibid., P. 344.

> harmony with the Moral Law. . . . Morals, though based on religion, cannot be separate from the State.[55]

He raised the question, therefore, whether the government has the duty or the right to tolerate atheism. He found that "atheism is fundamentally immoral and therefore fundamentally subversive of the security of society."[56]

Rehwinkel deplored economic imperialism as a flagrant violation of justice.[57] And in this country he saw a threat in "an ominous tendency to expand the sphere and increase the power of government. . . ," for he feels the "process begins with social security, grows into the welfare state, and ends up in some form of totalitarian government."[58]

In his book Communism and the Church, a popularly styled monograph, Rehwinkel deplored the exploitation of poor laborers at the time of Karl Marx,[59] as well as the silence of the Church.[60] Today, too, "We are drifting more and more into a society of the very rich and the poor," he

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[55] Ibid. (June, 1950), p. 429.

[56] Ibid., p. 437.

[57] Ibid., p. 439.

[58] Ibid., p. 433.

[59] Alfred Martin Rehwinkel, Communism and the Church (St. Louis: Concordia, 1948), 12.

[60] Ibid., p. 122.

warned,[61] and today, too, the Church is greatly influenced by the wealthy class.[62] The growing cleavage between rich and poor is all the more ominous because "Years of depression and unemployment lie ahead."[63] What is the solution to the world and national dilemmas?

> The most effective defensive weapon of the Church against Communism and all other enemies is the godly life of the individual Christian in the world today.[64]

How is a Christian to function as a bulwark against Communism and other enemies of the faith? By being a salt and a light in the world, by loving neighbor as self, and even loving enemies.

> This is the simple program of Jesus for human society. It is so simple that even a child can understand it; but, though simple, it is the only plan that can save society and the Church from disintegration and destruction.[65]

What appeared to this writer to be a basic contribution in Missouri Synod thought was Richard R. Caemmerer's "Training the Parish for Christian Citizenship."[66] One possibility for

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[61] Ibid., p. 123.

[62] Ibid., pp. 122, 124.

[63] Ibid., p. 128.

[64] Ibid., p. 129.

[65] Ibid., p. 134.

[66] Richard R. Caemmerer, "Training the Parish for Christian Citizenship," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXIV (October 1953), 740-48.

the local church is to do nothing--simply preach the Word that prepares people for life beyond the grave. The trouble with this, said Caemmerer, is that it does not do what it claims. It does teach citizenship. It may be a citizenship of quietism that asks Christians to withdraw from the world. Or it may breed the positively unchristian citizenship of suggesting that the believer shuttle back and forth between a life of worship with Christian motives, and a life under government with motives such as fear of punishment or desire for security.[67]

The basic problem in training for citizenship does not have to do with the imparting of information.

> Rather is it the bringing of each of its members to confront his own place in community and society under government and to find the best resources of the Spirit of God for overcoming the prejudices which turn him away from people and for participating in the common labors of love which are Christian citizenship.[68]

Basic theology for citizenship operates with the New Testament, since, in contrast to the Old Testament, the situation is comparable to our own day. I Timothy 2:1-6 is the most complete picture of a Christian's life under government, said Caemmerer. Christians are to be concerned about government's activities to the point of fervent prayer. Order and peace is for the purpose that all men come to a knowledge of the truth.

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[67] Ibid., p. 740.

[68] Ibid., p. 741.

> The point of this passage is that witness functions as people live together in the orderly pursuit of their tasks in business and family, and government needs to do its work to the end that this witness will be so facilitated.[69]

Romans 13 emphasizes the "minister of God" repeatedly. This is undoubtedly intentional, therefore significant. According to verse seven, Christians not only do not resist the power, but actively contribute to its work. Paul, of course, could only place before the Roman Christians the options which were open to them, but today there are many more. "For conscience' sake" is also mentioned twice. This is the Christian motive. Government achieves its ends by penalizing people, or implicitly offering them rewards. The Christian acts for conscience' sake, prompted by the life of God to love his neighbor. So under government the Christian finds his opportunities to contribute to the welfare of his neighbor, an opportunity that climaxes in his witness to him of the Gospel. Parallel to Romans, I Peter 2:11-17 strikes the motive when it says, "for the Lord's sake."

Caemmerer suggested that the best ways to promote this are through group discussions and classes. One may preach to the goal of good citizenship and uncover the malady of bad citizenship, which is selfishness and lack of love. But the choice here is not preaching either citizenship or Gospel. The former is a goal, one of many. The latter is

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[69] Ibid., p. 744.

the power by which the Christian moves toward the goal.

School Issues

School issues continued to serve as a point upon which attitudes toward the relation of Church and state could be focused. The 1940's introduced new inclinations regarding Missouri Synod's disposition to Federal aid for public schools. The tendency was to favor such aid, or at least to concede its legitimacy.

The view dominant in the 20's and 30's still found expression, however.

> One thing is certain: whatever the State subsidizes, it controls. And the control of the schools in the various States by some Washington Board or official is repugnant to the American idea of democracy. It is the perfect tool for the collectivist or socialistic agitator. It will inevitably prescribe standards and textbooks for all schools, including the parish school, which graduates pupils into the public high schools.[70]

A Lutheran School Journal article, on the other hand, had said that "Federal assistance to the States for educational purposes is nothing new."[71] It mentioned land grants, money grants for agricultural and mechanical arts colleges. It said that there were weighty arguments in favor of the

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[70] [Theodore] G[raebner], "Senate Bill Gives Collectivist Control of Education," The Lutheran Witness, LXII (October 26, 1934), 351.

[71] T[heodore] K[uehnert], "Federal Aid to Education," Lutheran School Journal, LXXVIII (November, 1942), 98.

present bill before Congress, for it would give all children, regardless of place and circumstances of birth educational opportunities according to their need and capacity. On the other side, it said, is the danger of federalization. So the issue deserves careful thought.[72] Several years later in the same journal, the same writer said:

> If we sense correctly the trend which the philosophy of government is taking in our country today, it seems that extension of Federal aid to education is inevitable. Instead of making futile attempts to stem the rising tide, it, therefore, seems advisable that we prepare to accommodate ourselves to a situation which is bound to develop. This point of view will not be construed as a defeatest attitude if the reader is conscious of the great social and economic changes which our present generation has witnessed. A tightening of the Federal reins also on our education systems is being invited by existing economic conditions, which, at least in part, have been brought about by the former exploits of our rugged individualism.[73]

Still later a Lutheran Witness article came up with a related opinion regarding aid to private schools in comment on a stand taken by a Jesuit magazine.

> America scores a point when it points out that Senator Taft himself favors State aid for private hospitals because they save expense to the State, help to keep the entire hospital system from becoming public, and are an outlet for charity; and that the same reasons "support and justify a program of Federal aid to non-public schools." We may question the fact which America is trying to prove, but we cannot question that it proves Senator Taft's logic vulnerable.
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> Much more important, however, is America's assertion

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[72] Ibid., p. 98-100.

[73] T[heodore] K[uehnert], "Federal Aid for Schools," Lutheran School Journal, LXXX (April, 1945), 339.

> that Senator Taft rejects Federal aid to private schools because "the State has undertaken to educate every child."
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> That means one thing when it signifies that the State provides instruction for every child, so that no child need go uneducated.
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> It means something else when it signifies that the basis for Federal aid to public schools is that ideally every child should be trained in a public school, and hence Federal support of private schools violates the democratic ideal of education.

The idea of private schools being out of step with the democratic ideal was always sure to draw sensitive criticism from Missouri circles. Conrad Moehlman's book, School and Church: The American Way, which carried this idea to its logical extreme and made the public school in affect the established church, drew pointed rebuttals.[74] Some years later the International Council of Religious Education said:

> "We do not believe that parochial schools are the Protestant answer. We are sure that if that proposal were universal or even widely adopted it would constitute a serious threat to public education and to our democracy."[75]

This, too, was greeted with something less than joy. James Conant drew fire on several occasions, once for asserting that parochial schools are a threat to democratic unity, and again when he published his book, Education and Liberty, and

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[74] O. C. Rupprecht, " Review of Moehlman's School and Church: The American Way," Concordia Theological Monthly, XV (December, 1944), 815-28.

[75] William D. Streng, "Parish Schools and Democracy," Lutheran Education, LXXXV (November, 1949), 102.

said:

> "The greater the proportion of our youth who fail to attend our public schools and who receive their education elsewhere, the greater the threat to our democratic unity. To use tax-payers' money to assist private schools is to suggest that American society use its own hands to destroy itself.[76]

Against such declarations these questions were raised:

> It is undemocratic for the Christian to set up a school in which his faith is the determining principle of the curriculum? Does Dr. Conant demand the leveling of all religious principles for the sake of democracy?[77]

When totalitarianism takes root, the editorial observed, it reaches for the schools. But one article asked that parochial school teachers examine their program for possible divisive factors, especially those that set up false class, race or religious barriers.[78]

Two decisions by the United States Supreme Court made quite an impact upon Missouri Lutherans. The first was a 1947 decision which upheld a New Jersey law permitting the use of tax money for transporting children to parochial schools. It was a 5-4 decision, the majority opinion distinguishing between "instructional" and "welfare" purposes. One article noted that three years previously Synod had

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[76] J[ohn] F. C[hoitz], "Con on Conant," Lutheran Education, LXXXVIII (April, 1953), 370.

[77] "Is Totalitarianism Democracy?" The Lutheran Witness, LXXI (May 27, 1952), 8.

[78] Victor Streufert, "The Lutheran School--A Divisive Community Factor?" Lutheran Education, LXXXIX (December, 1953), 190-93.

adopted a statement which made a similar distinction.

> Our schools have availed themselves of the lunches and of transportation provided by the state because we believe that these things belong to the social welfare program and, if granted to one group, should be granted to all groups without discrimination. We believe, therefore, that the distinction which Mr. Justice Black makes between the social welfare program and the instructional program is a valid one. If the distinction is valid, the argument of the dissenting Judges lose their force. There has been no violation of the Constitution. The use of tax-raised funds to promote a social welfare program for all children attending public and parochial schools does not infringe upon the religious liberty of anyone.[79]

More controversial was the McCollum decision of 1948. This case, which involved the use of school premises for religious instruction, drew a variety of responses in Missouri periodicals. A Lutheran Witness editorial said "the decision will be welcomed by all foes of Christianity and by all atheists."[80] A different view expressed the conviction that this decision was consistent with the one of 1947. It noted that the four dissenters complained that the line between "instructional" and "welfare" aids was becoming indistinguishable, and it felt that the McCollum decision would help clarify the distinction.

> For our Church, this court decision can be very helpful in clearing up some fuzzy thinking. . . . We have in various communities participated in released-time

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[79] A. C. Mueller, "Supreme Court Decision on Bus Issue," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVIII (May, 1947), 378.

[80] W[illiam] G. P[olack], "Religion and the Public Schools," The Lutheran Witness, LXVII (April 6, 1948), 111.

programs without conceding that we had entered Caesar's domain.[81]

An opposite position cited the First Amendment and said the Court decision read more into the first clause ("Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion,") than it contains, and questioned whether it read the second clause ("or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.") at all. In 1791, it said, all schools taught religion and had the intention of this amendment been to delete religious instruction, the measure would never have passed. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which set aside every 16th section of each township in the territory for educational purposes read: "Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." In contrast to this the McCollum decision violates the second phrase of the First Amendment by putting an option on irreligion, it was said.[82]

A number of editorials in Lutheran Education showed sober concern for civic responsibility. One cautioned against newspaper headlines of a glaringly critical nature

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[81]A. G. Huegli, "Court Rules on Religious Education," Lutheran Education, LXXXIII (May, 1948), 514.

[82]Martin P. Simon, "Shall America Establish Irreligion?" Lutheran Education, LXXXIV (September, 1948), 11-16.

in respect to national leadership.[83] Another rejected the idea that teachers can withdraw from civic responsibilities.

> Not so! Teachers, who are ordinarily better trained in civic affairs than most members of a community, have responsibilities outside the classroom in direct ratio to their abilities.[84]

But if a healthy concern regarding Christian citizenship was taking root in Missouri's educational circles, some felt that a lot still needed to be done.

> Our schools, however, need to do still more in training for a witness which is not merely the repeating of words, but which is the taking up of the responsibilities of life on every level. That so tiny a proportion of the graduates of parish day schools has become active in community leadership, in social welfare, and in distinguished service in other areas of professional life, is a dismaying commentary on the effectiveness with which the Word of God has been communicated in the past.[85]

Race Relations

Probably one of the more significant developments in Missouri Synod thought during this period was the new interest it took in regard to the race question. In contrast to previous periods, when little was said about race relations, this question received comparatively much attention during

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[83] "'Bless All Who Are in Authority'," Lutheran Education, LXXXVI (February, 1951), 257.

[84] H[erbert H.] G[ross], "The Teacher Is a Citizen," Lutheran Education, LXXXIII (November, 1947), 130.

[85] Richard R. Caemmerer, The Church in the World, (St. Louis: Concordia, 1949), 99.

the 1940's and early 1950's. And even this short span of time witnessed an obvious change in attitude.

One essay before the Mission Board of the Synodical Conference in 1943 on "The Spiritual, Not the Social Gospel in the Church" was subtitled, "With Special Reference to the Race Relations Problem."[86] The essayist noted great injustice to the Negro race and asserted that Christians must do something about it. He scolded the Federal Council of Churches for making social gospel out of the issue. The Church, he said, has business only to preach the Gospel, and whatever happens regarding racial problems must come about as a fruit of faith. Nothing was said about integration in congregations. Less than a year later the same writer stated that

> frequently in our publications the view that "the Bible has put a curse upon the Negro race" has been expressed and defended. But to do so, means to make a declaration without having clear and firm and unmistakable Scripture proof upon which to rest one's assertion.[87]

An editorial that appeared in The Lutheran Witness in 1943 spoke against race conflicts. Galatians 3:28, it said, was clear regarding the position of Christians on this matter. The editorial made no reference, however, to the race

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[86]John Theodore Mueller, "The Spiritual, Not the Social Gospel in the Church," Concordia Theological Monthly, XIV (October, 1943), 682-93.

[87]J[ohn] T[heodore] M[ueller], "Has the Bible Placed a Curse upon the Negro Race," Concordia Theological Monthly, XV (May, 1944), 346.

question as it might be faced on a congregational level.[88]

In 1947 someone wrote on "Evangelical Integration of Color."[89] He said that

> the Bible nowhere makes the discrimination between races mandatory except to keep from religious syncretism. Rather we find that the Old Testament reports favorably on integration of races whenever the assimilation of the true worship of Jehovah is involved. Thus Ruth said: "Thy people shall be my people and thy God my God," Ruth 1:16.[90]

He quoted a Synodical Conference resolution of 1946 committing the Church to continue preaching the Gospel, which, "'when properly and consistently preached and accepted, will produce the wholesome fruit of God-fearing relationships.'"[91] Or, in other words, the writer said, "it went on record for evangelical integration of color, and it encouraged us to study the matter in its practical aspects."[92] By "evangelical" he meant that you cannot lay down any rules, but the Gospel of redemption in Christ will be the Christian's motivating force."[93]

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[88][Martin] S[ommer], "The Race Problem," The Lutheran Witness, LXII (August 17, 1943), 271.

[89]Carl M. Zorn, "Evangelical Integration of Color," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVIII (June, 1947), 430-38.

[90]Ibid., p. 430.

[91]Ibid., p. 432.

[92]Ibid.

[93]Ibid., p. 433.

> But the Church's program of evangelical integration has far more commitments than just to recognize the Negro Lutheran as a member of the invisible Church, the communion of saints. . . . The fellowship in the invisible Church must and will manifest itself in the visible Church as a corporate, tangible, and visible--a concrete--relationship which is permeated by the consciousness of membership in the Body of Christ.[94]

Regarding how this is to operate, said the writer, Christians have nothing more specific than the law of love. Before the Civil War many devout men of God preached to Negroes who were in third-floor church balconies. If they were living today under present sociological trends, they would certainly preach under an even fuller integration policy.

> How fast, and to what extent, evangelical integration will take place in our churches will depend to some extent on the sociological tendencies in our secular society. But the Church would only harm its Gospel opportunities if it ignored or even refused to study the trends of the times as they affect the welfare of the Gospel. Least of all can the Church maintain a sociological position which prevailed of old. The Synodical Conference has, in effect, stated that our Church would be anachronistic if it insisted absolutely on segregation of color.[95]

But to quote Galatians 3:28 in support of evangelical integration, he said, is an abuse of Scripture, because the context indicates that the Gospel changes nothing in the domain of the world and natural life. Slaves remain slaves and males and females remain males and females.

A 1946 editorial in the Lutheran School Journal was

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[94] Ibid., p. 434.

[95] Ibid., p. 436.

quite direct.

> The race problem presents an issue which cannot be sidestepped by the Christian school. The course for meeting it is clearly charted for the Christian teacher. The love of God in Christ Jesus embraces all classes and races of men. . . . Since the prejudices against other nationalities and races did not only characterize Nazism, but are also deeply rooted in our curriculum of our schools. Our Lutheran schools must be torch-bearers in the efforts toward the solution of our race problem. . . . The cause is worthy of it. It involves a fundamental Christian principle.[96]

"Race Relations Issue Must Be Faced," a 1950 Lutheran Witness editorial, pointed remarks at integrating congregations and was bold enough to criticize a synodical resolution in the process. Among other things it said:

> Synod recognized the urgency of greater effort among the Negroes of our land when its delegates resolved at Milwaukee to encourage the Districts to survey their Negro concentrations and establish new areas of work. But what of the Negro more or less isolated in a community where no separate church for him is possible? Is he to be overlooked, or will the nearest congregation rejoice to welcome him into fellowship? Many of the 13,000,000 Negroes of the United States could be drawn into our churches, especially in areas where the population is in a state of racial transition. Opportunities among the high percentage of unchurched Negroes are being recognized by special efforts to win them among other churches--and by the Communists, who parade their "tolerance" as powerful bait.
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> The synodical resolution is to be commended so far as it goes. However, compare it with another adopted at the same time relative to our mission work among the Jews in the United States. After many decades Synod has become convinced that results have been meager because of the impossibility of organizing them in separate congregations, and it is now recommending that Jewish converts to our faith be absorbed into

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[96] T[heodore] K[uehnert], "The Race Problem," Lutheran School Journal, LXXXI (April, 1946), 341.

> our already existing Lutheran congregations. The synodical resolution on Negro congregations, on the other hand, tends to preserve the pattern of segregation which Synod found impractical for the Jewish minority and which other churches and public agencies have recognized as detrimental in interracial areas.[97]

It also mentioned favorably the action of a Race Relations Institute at Valparaiso University--concerning which a separate article appeared in the same issue of this magazine.

A more comprehensive study was "Race Relations--The Christian directive" which appeared in 1952.[98]

> The New Testament recognizes that differences between people exist. But it does assert that the heart, the inner attitude of the Christian, is not to be swayed by these differences to regard one person as higher or lower, more or less deserving of respect and concern, than the other. The New Testament is not a handbook of sociology, but it is very much an attack upon the human heart. It classifies people and recognizes their distinctions, but only to help men be aware that these distinctions play no part in Christian relations or in the structure of the Christian Church.[99]

The New Testament, this writer said, specifies concern for one relation: the weak and the strong. The Christian is never exclusively weak or strong. The flesh is always trying to give the world a greater foothold, and so the world invades also Christians in a majority group. Here the outstanding characteristic is prejudice. And here it is where

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[97] "Race Relations Issue Must Be Faced," The Lutheran Witness, LXIX (August 22, 1950), 265.

[98] Richard R. Caemmerer, "Race Relations--The Christian Directive," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXIII (March, 1952), 176-92.

[99] Ibid., p. 179.

the strong have to bear the burdens of the weak. This does not mean yielding, however, but helping a brother overcome a weakness. Conversely, Christians in a minority group face special difficulties of the flesh. It is imperative that each Christian learn to diagnose the fault first in himself. For Christians are to grow up together around the Word and Sacrament to receive the life of God and to defeat the forces of world and flesh--which includes prejudice.

> We are talking about a process in which we take hold of the high voltage of God's own grace in Christ. . . . The disaster of interracial hostilities and apathies within the Church . . . involves lives. Human beings are drowning in their own flesh; they are ceasing to breathe the Spirit of God. Hence Christians need to act promptly. The Good Samaritan acted now. The chief difficulty in solving any problems of race relations is that it seems so hard to make a beginning. Every program simmers down to a delaying action. The New Testament does not allow sluggishness at any task of edifying Christians. Our Lord is about to return. We do not have too much time: . . .[100]

The Christian is also concerned about non-Christians, and here the process of government is important as a tool to promote and enforce justice.

> There is . . . a process among men which directs them to thoughtfulness toward others and which enforces justice also without the drive of the Holy Spirit. That process is government. Government seeks to reason out what is just and necessary for the relations of men. It puts these judgments into laws and enforces these laws with penalties and rewards. The Christian supports these activities of his government because God Himself is thereby maintaining an order among men which is very important for God's purposes and the purposes

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[100] Ibid., p. 189.

of the Christians' faith (I Timothy 2:1-10).[101] It is noteworthy, the writer said, that within fifteen years Synod has over 23,000 members in Nigeria, while the total in America after nearly a century of work is 16,579. In both cases it is the same Gospel, but here barriers of injustice impede it.

District Essays

Symptomatic of the growing awareness of Missouri regarding the importance of a social and political ethic were the district essays which appeared.[102] An essay by W. Bouman in 1949 dealt with "The Relation of Church and State."[103] Much of his thought showed concern for religion and education as affected by then recent court decisions.

> If the children of our nation are not to be completely paganized by being exposed entirely to texts which are irreligious and perhaps even anti-religious then there must be an antidote. That antidote is the Bible. It certainly deserves a place on the curriculum of our schools as a text-book.[104]

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[101] Ibid., p. 191.

[102] With some exceptions these essays continued to deal with matters of a strictly doctrinal nature.

[103] W. Bouman, "The Relation of Church and State," Proceedings of the Sixty-Ninth Convention of the Central District, 1949, n.p., pp. 19-36.

[104] Ibid., p. 30.

Bouman pointed out that in 1870 and shortly thereafter a number of Synodical essays protested against attempts to crowd the Bible out of public schools.

Regarding State aid to parochial schools for welfare purposes he said, "To this day we have never heard of any epidemic ever being diagnosed as Lutheran measles or Catholic diphtheria."[105] This indicates that there are matters concerning which the interests of the Church and State overlap.

> The State knows from experience that moral standards can be maintained in the armed forces only by fostering religion among soldiers and sailors and fliers. It knows that remedial measures in our penal institutions are ineffective without the aid of religion. In the interest of the common welfare it employs chaplains and has recourse to religion. And the State does that without violating the principle of separation of Church and State.[106]

In the field of Labor and Management problems he advocated a modified withdrawal.

> Properly this entire matter belongs into the field of ethics. And until someone has produced a clear-cut formulation of Lutheran social ethics oriented in the New Testament and the Lutheran Confessions, the simple guidlines in the Table of Duties of our Catechism will have to suffice. The language of the Scriptures adduced there as proof is clear, concise, and to the point.[107]

Another essay on the same topic was presented the same

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[105] Ibid., p. 33.

[106] Ibid., p. 34.

[107] Ibid.

year by Carl. S. Mundinger.[108] He, too, dealt with the problem of "separation," and said, "if we think of the Church as separated from the state by a high wall of separation, we encounter another very great peril, and this is the peril of SECULARISM."[109] The Church, however, has certain functions to perform, as does the State. These functions must never be confused.

> We Lutherans find ourselves . . . trying to steer the craft of our citizenship between the Scylla of modern ecclesiastical influence on the one side and the Charybdis of naked secularism on the other side.[110]

Mundinger directed some pointed words at the founders of this federal government. They were largely exponents of the Enlightenment, he said. As such, they looked with distrust upon all organized religion. Men like Jefferson had little love for the Church. Their Church was the commonwealth. They saw a division of loyalty between citizenship and church, for to them "the great churches were unassimilable foreign matter in the body politic, rival organizations with spurious claims."[111] Hence the ever-present tendency to identify religion and partiotism, democracy and faith.

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[108] Carl. S. Mundinger, "The Relation between Church and State," a synodical essay presented before the Minnesota District Convention, August 20, 1949, mimeographed.

[109] Ibid., p. 3.

[110] Ibid., p. 4.

[111] Ibid., p. 3.

In contrast, Luther saw an inner affinity between citizenship and faith.

> The government is God's servant. There is nothing secular or profane about the Government in Luther's thinking. . . . We tend to put all religious activity into one compartment. . . . Luther is opposed to this departmentalization of life. His writings against monasticism indicate his opposition. The monks were called "religious" (Religiosi), and all other people were called "secular." The monks were holy; all other people "unholy."[112]

One of the more serious attempts to analyze and interpret the Lutheran political ethic was an essay by Eugene Wengert in 1949.[113] Wengert said that the Lutheran Church has "studiously shunned" social and political questions and in so doing has not been completely faithful to its historical origins. He said,

> We are completely aware of the distinction between the Kingdom of Grace and the kingdom of the world, as advocated by Luther and the Augsburg Confession. Reading article XVI, dealing with civil power, and article XXVIII, dealing with ecclesiastical power, one cannot avoid a certain degree of astonishment over the deviation from the theological premises and the actual practice in the political process. These annunciations were not a denial of the power of the State in matters of religion nor were they intended to posit a juridical theory of jurisdictional separation. On the contrary, the duty and right of the State to protect and support true religion were not only conceded, but positively demanded in the introduction to the Augustana. It was delivered to the Emperor, Charles V, and was a petition requesting him to convoke a general council of the Church under his jurisdiction. Today this procedure

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[112] Ibid., p. 6.

[113] Eugene Wengert, "The Interrelation of Church and State," The Northern Nebraska District Messenger, XXV (December, 1949), 18-48.

> would be equivalent to an address of the various Church bodies of America requesting the President of the United States to call an ecumenical council for consolidating the Churches and unifying their divergent doctrines.[114]

This, he said, at least calls into question the frequent assertion by Lutheran scholarship that the American constitutional theory of "separation" had its historical source in Luther and the Lutheran Symbols.[115]

> From the political and theological theory of "cuius regio eius religio" at the consummation of the Treaty of Augsburg, 1555, to the religious liberty of John Locke's "Civil Government" and "Letters on Toleration" was still a long and bloody road for society and the Church to travel. And the end of the road was not perceived by Churchmen of the period who were still confusing dichotomous man in the Church and State. It was the rationalistic and naturalistic philosophers of the later century who discovered the spheres of the two parallel institutions in the social order and recognized the legal antithesis between man in functional religion and man in the functional State. But even then our Lutheran Church fled from the social and political world and took refuge in theoretical separatism. This was especially true in America, where all diplomatic relations with the State were severed, and the Church was willing to concede to it the absolute right to regulate and control the social, political and economic relations without benefit of clergy.[116]

Regarding the origin and purpose of the State, Wengert believed that there is no valid basis in Scripture for the Patristic and Luther's view that the structure of society "is solely due to the disobedience of man and that the State

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[114] Ibid., p. 19.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Ibid., p. 20.

is the resultant instrumentality of his sin to maintain order and the observance of the law."[117]

The Church, he emphatically asserted, must maintain the authority and finality of its judgment on the place of Christian doctrine and ethics, and not "confuse the incidental with the substantial. . . . It must not rationalize its denunciation by a reference to the incidental." So, for example, it must denounce the atheism of Communism, just as it denounces the atheism of anything else; but it cannot, at least on this count, denounce the Marxian philosophy of collective ownership.[118] At a later place he does speak about the Church counteracting the social welfare theory and maintaining the right of the individual man.[119]

Regarding the McCollum decision Wengert felt that, while the immediate consequence was to deny children religious instrucion and appeared to be a victory for strict separation, the

> real essence of this decision in its ultimate logic is the absolute right of the State to the child with all that that implies for the Church and religion in the social drift towards the totalitarian conception of the State.[120]

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[117] Ibid., p. 22.

[118] Ibid., pp. 28-29.

[119] Ibid., p. 42.

[120] Ibid., p. 40.

Another essay was "Church and State--The Rule of Christ and the Rule of Men" by Richard R. Caemmerer in 1954.[121] He found a dilemma caused by the doctrine of separation of Church and State that "renders the Christian man himself plural."[122] The doctrine also augurs ill for future generations of Americans.

> As the wall between Church and State rises in our time, the way seems open for an increasing withdrawal of entire generations of American citizens from religious training. As sweeping and as intentional as was the secularizing of youth under the Hitler regime, or under Russian Communism, is the withdrawal of religious training from the vast majority of American youth.[123]

Caemmerer also warned against "the temptation to utilize government in a religious crusade." Early in our history, he said, the assumption became popular that an atheist was less dependable than an agnostic or a deist. But nothing could have been more atheistic than the government to which St. Paul counseled obedience and respect.[124] Obversly, Caemmerer specifically ruled out any quietism or withdrawal as an adequate Christian ethic.[125]

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[121] Richard R. Caemmerer, "Church and State--The Rule of Christ and the Rule of Men," Proceedings of the Twenty-Eighth Convention of the English District, 1954 (St. Louis: Concordia, 1954), 12-36.

[122] Ibid., p. 13.

[123] Ibid., p. 25.

[124] Ibid., p. 31.

[125] Ibid., p. 28.

Another essay deserving mention is a recent one on Christian vocation by Alfred Klausler. He saw an inner connection between vocation and citizenship.

> There is nothing more discouraging than to hear a group of Christians dismiss the actions of Congress as "sheer politics." It is not enough for a Christian to say that he will bear arms for his country should the need arise. It is of far greater importance that he understand why his party chairman in his township accepted the gift of a new Cadillac from a contractor. Is the party chairman dishonest? Whose fault is it that a Chicago alderman sells driveway permits? Does a Christian ever wonder why slot machines flourish in one ward but are not found in another? How can slums be permitted to stand when building inspector after building inspector condemns the wiring, the plumbing, the room subdivision? Or perhaps the Christian as a citizen ought not to meddle in these matters because he might become muddied in the process?[126]

Position and Direction

In the variety of expressions on political and social issues and ethics, what view, at the end of the period under consideration, is most representative of the thinking of the Missouri Synod, and what direction was indicated for future thinking? To say these questions are not easily answered is obvious enough. It appears to this writer, however, that a pre-Evanston prevue and a post-Evanston evaluation of the War Council of Churches' section on "Social Problems: the Responsible Society in a World Perspective," both of which

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[126] Alfred P. Klausler, "Your Christian Vocation," Proceedings of the Twenty-Ninth Convention of the English District, 1955 (St. Louis: Concordia, 1955), 40.

appeared in the Concordia Theological Monthly, at least offer fair reflections of large segments within Missouri. The first of these is by F. E. Mayer, who described the report.

> The presupposition is that Christians must provide a realistic hope for the world in grave trouble. But to do so the Christians must be aware of the complexities of the issues in the political, social and economic spheres. The relatively simple economic issues which confronted the Christian churches in the past have been replaced by issues which require decisions of tremendous complexities. The outcomes of these decisions are vital for millions of people. For that reason the Christian must become thoroughly acquainted with the complicated economic and social questions of our time. The churches dare not despair of fulfilling this task but must rather find an answer in order to help society in its great problems. . . . To all-the hungry, the poor, the bound, the socially disinherited--the Church must become the servant of the Lord who heals all manner of diseases and proclaims liberty to the captives. The churches must support every effort of people and individuals to still their hunger, gain the respect of their fellow men, and achieve the full stature of their manhood. The churches must struggle everywhere to achieve a free and "responsible society" in which the members acknowledge individual and common responsibility for one another. At the same time the churches must guard against the danger of making political programs gospel of final redemption.[127]

Mayer also noted that the term "responsible society" was being used in antithesis both to a laissez-faire capitalism and to totalitarian Communism.

> It seems to us that all these problems can be solved if the delegates find the correct answer to the question regarding the basis of Christ's lordship. Are the churches to proclaim the lordship of Christ in the Calvinistic sense of God's sovereign and absolute

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[127] F. E. Mayer, "Theological Issues at Evanston," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXV (July, 1954), 524-25.

> majesty or in accord with the Lutheran view, which sees Christ's lordship chiefly in His vicarious atonement?[128]

And again:

> It remains to be seen whether Evanston will commit itself to the social gospel, or whether the Evanston message in this area will be so ambiguous that either view may find its adherents.[129]

He did find it "a hopeful sign that the ecumenical movement is wrestling with real theological problems and that large segments of the churches are seeking to find a real Biblical theology."[130]

After Evanston William F. Arndt commented on the discussions on this section, and while he found nothing specifically that was beyond the scope of Scripture,

> yet one continually asks: Where is it written? . . . Has the church the right and the duty to enter the arena of political, economic, and sociological discussions? That the Bible is not entirely silent on these topics everybody has to admit.
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> It is, however, clear, too, that the Scriptures for many an area in this field merely enunciate general truths, leaving it to the disciples of Jesus Christ to make the application. The theology of Geneva has always favored aggressive, vigorous, definite action on the part of the church with respect to the question here involved while that of Wittenberg has been more inclined to content itself with the reiteration of the Bible principles, feeling convinced that what is chiefly needed is regeneration of the human heart and that after this has through God's grace been

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[128] Ibid., p. 528.

[129] Ibid., p. 533.

[130] Ibid.

> accomplished the general Bible principles pertaining to the ethical-social field will not only be accepted in theory, but be responded to in appropriate actions, and that it is not proper for the church to invade the domain of the legislator and statesman. The report in question breathes more the spirit of Reformed than of Lutheran thinking. There lurks the danger in all these matters of drifting into a channel which the WCC itself calls one of the afflictions of our era, that of secularism, of laying more stress on temporal than on spiritual blessings.[131]

It must be added that particularly this latter expression indicated a more cautious approach than any other writings already noted in this chapter.

As to the direction which Missouri thinking seemed to be taking, it was evident that more and more, concrete, positive statements were being aimed at the lay people to relate Christianity and citizenship. Indicative of this direction were the first two pamphlets of a new "round table" series. These dealt with the Christian and world conditions[132] and race relations.[133]

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[131] William F. Arndt, "Evanston in Retrospect," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVI (January, 1955), 24-25.

[132] John Strietelmeier, God in Our Confused World (St. Louis: Concordia, 1955).

[133] Osborn T. Smallwood, Martin H. Scharlemann and Philip A. Johnson, The Christian and Race (St. Louis: Concordia, 1955).

CHAPTER VI

EVALUATION

In 1949 Eugene Wengert made a judgment that appears to this writer to be largely substantiated by the political and social ethic predominant in the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. He said,

> objective opinion must concede that the Lutheran Church has not in the past made a very decisive contribution to the theory of the governmental process and to the solution of conflicts and tensions in the social order. On the contrary, it has studiously shunned every social and political attitude. The idea of "separation of Church and State" almost took on the certitude of an article of faith and the very thought of the "social gospel" raised a real phobia towards theological liberalism.[1]

Wengert, in tracing possible reasons for such a development, discovered at least one distinct theological emphasis in Lutheranism which carried with it the rist of ethical withdrawal.

> Indeed, the predominant emphasis of the Lutheran Church on the new relationship of the individual believer to God, faith and salvation created a sort of mystic quietism regarding the things of the world and the ethic of living in the social order.[2]

Calvinism had a different emphasis.

> The doctrine of predestination provided, in contrast to the Lutheran conception of grace, a plausible pretext,

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[1] Eugene Wengert, "The Interrelation of Church and State," The Northern Nebraska District Messenger, XXV (December, 1949), 19.

[2] Ibid.

> when occasion demanded, for forgetting about the things of the other world and concentrating on the things of this life.[3]

Lutheran quietism, however, has more in common with medieval thought than with Martin Luther. As one Lutheran theologian has pointed out, the Middle Ages regarded the "law of nature" as an impersonal function. Luther, however, by consistently viewing man as standing in relation to God, rooted natural law in God's sovereignty and

> overcame the dualism of the medieval position which divided the spiritual from the natural. But Lutheranism has not always escaped the dualism. Melanchthon relaid the basis for it by his use of jus naturale; and seventeenth century Lutherans carried on that unfortunate development. The effect has been that many have attempted to straddle the hiatus between religion and politics.[4]

The prospect of rooting one's social ethic entirely in natural "Vernunft," had some roots in Luther, but it was through the efforts of Melanchthon and subsequent orthodox Lutheranism that this idea became thoroughly established. The Missouri Synod carried on uniformly in this tradition until the past several decades when, under the impact of world events, it began to come under more critical scrutiny. Relegating political ethics to a non-spiritual "Vernunft" tended to re-introduce medieval dualism, and thereby one of the crucial advances of Martin Luther--his judgment of

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[3] Ibid.

[4] Carl Christian Rasmussen, "The Ethical Function of Government," mimeographed report prepared for a social ethics seminar at Valparaiso University, p. 2.

monasticism--was negated, for monasticism was thus allowed to enter the back door in another garb. This type of withdrawal is never complete, however, and insofar as it does keep at least a modicum of contact with the worldly order, it tends to identify the status quo of a particular form of that order with the most adequate form of order. This, too, seemed to partially characterize much of Missouri thinking, and to the extent that it did, this judgment of Wengert applies.

> The institutional Church is apt to adhere obstinately to an outmoded traditionalism, forget the universalism and transcendentalism of its divine purpose in the historical process and underrate the social forces contending for mastery. It confuses the eternalness of divine institutions with the transigiency of social systems. Moreover, frequently, it not only remains apathetic, but raises a vehment voice of disapproval against any new social movement or against a different political and economic philosophy as destructive of the very basis of the social order without any religious justification, much less without any rational and intelligent distinction between the divinely essential and the socially and politically expedient, as dictated by the necessities of a dynamic society.[5]

It seemed to this writer that one phrase which echoed and re-echoed over and over again indicated quite clearly the dualism which characterized much of Missouri's thinking, and that phrase was: It is the business of the Church to preach the Gospel and not to dabble in sociology or politics. This is, of course, essentially correct. But it leaves much unsaid. As many writers pointed out, particularly in later

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[5]Wengert, op. cit., p. 26.

Years, one's Christian life cannot simply be reduced to the preaching of and listening to the Gospel, for this too easily allows for a compartmentalized life, a life that regards citizenship and vocation apart from faith. The point has been emphasized with particular clarity by Richard R. Caemmerer.[6]

This vulnerable attitude is in close affinity with another viewpoint, which is, in fact, a logical consequence of the former. This viewpoint says that since it is the Church's job to preach only the Gospel, therefore the Church has nothing to say to the world; it can only speak to the sanctified man. Such an attitude left itself open to the popular interpretation: I as a Christian can not really do anything about the misery and tensions of the world, because the world is not sanctified. That viewpoint overlooked the fact that the Church has a great deal to say to and about the world and about the relationship of the sanctified man to the world. And it failed to do justice to the positive relationship between creation and redemption.

It seems to this writer that these vulnerable attitudes in reality have an extremely close affinity to one great insight with which Lutheran theology operates, and that insight is a realistic, biblical understanding of human nature. Luther expressed this insight--and it was retained

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[6] Supra, p. 135.

by Lutheran orthodoxy--when he emphasized that you cannot rule the world by love. Luther did not, however, go on to say with orthodoxy that, therefore, the Church cannot speak to the world, since love is comprehended only by the sanctified man. Rather, he said, when the Church relates itself to worldly rule, it must appeal to another principle--a principle which takes into account the fact that men need to be placed under the restrictive creative orders for the sake of justice, which includes justice for the individual as well as the community welfare.

A concrete example of how such an attitude might have led to greater realism in coping with changing conditions of an industrial world, is A. L. Graebner's approach to the Labor-Management problem. Graebner saw with clarity the perilous weakness of a capitalism in which the balance of power is almost wholly on the side of management, and as a result had great sympathy for the working man.[7] Since Graebner operated with an ethic that could only speak "to the sanctified man," the best he had to offer was admonitions, and therefore instances of kindliness on the part of management were tragically few and far between. It would appear to this writer to be both more consistent with Lutheran theology and more relevant to have concluded: Since human nature is endowed with innate selfishness, it is consistent

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[7] Supra, p. 26.

with God's purpose in the orders of creation to keep this selfishness in check; and a more equitable balance of power would help to do so, since selfishness with unbridled power tends to pervert justice to suit its own purposes.

Missouri Synod theology, in the estimation of this writer, could have operated to much greater advantage with this realistic view of human nature in working out a social ethic. It could have asserted a more positive relation between doctrines of creation and redemption instead of often positing a type of dualism. And it could have avoided a similar dualism by relating faith to citizenship in a more effective manner. The fact that Missouri often failed to emphasize these important factors is due not only to the tradition of Lutheran Orthodoxy from which it sprang, but also to a reaction against the tragic perversion of the social gospel, which directed itself to an opposite extreme and ended with a time-bound, moralistic theology.

In all fairness it must be added--and with intended emphasis--that despite apparent weaknesses in Missouri's ethic, its theology contained points of great strength. The description composing the main body of this essay testifies to that. Compared to the rest of Protestant America, Missouri's theological seriousness was surely a center of strength. Missouri never forgot the basic commitment of the Church or its basic task of proclaiming the evangel. It operated with a biblical and therefore a realistic view of man, which made it keenly aware of the provisional and sinful

nature of social and political institutions. There was no illusion that the kingdoms of the world could become the Kingdom of our God if people just tried hard enough. So Missouri avoided a sentimental and dangerous piety in its view of international affairs. It avoided secular idealism in any form and reacted against tendencies to give the American way of life religious value. Itnever lost sight of the eternal in its involvement with the temporal.

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