

What may be expected now of Moravia? What direction is his mind likely to take? My own impression, for what it is worth, is that that passing remark on Buddhism, quoted above, may be a pointer: it seems likely that Moravia is now moving towards a 'mystical' view of reality—which, however, need not in the least imply religion in the sense of a conscious submission to God. To become religious in *this* way Moravia must first, I believe, overcome a deep-rooted prejudice against assent to a personal God, the prejudice that affects most intellectuals today, more or less, and which Teilhard de Chardin called 'l'illusion spatiale' and defined as 'l'idée que le Tout, même ramené à la forme de l'Esprit, ne saurait être qu'impersonnel'. But if this 'idea' is really only a 'spatial illusion', then at bottom it is a product of imagination and not of intelligence; and since Moravia is nothing if not intelligent, we may hope that sooner or later he will see through it.

## Ecumenical Survey

### NEW DELHI — FAITH AND ORDER — BIBLIOGRAPHY

We must wait till the summer for the full Report of the New Delhi assembly of the World Council of Churches, held from November 18th to December 5th, 1961, and consequently for a complete assessment of its accomplishment. Meanwhile however we have two excellent paper-backs (S.C.M. Press) to go on with; *New Delhi Speaks*—the official Message of the assembly, and *Despatch from New Delhi*, a vivid and sympathetic eyewitness description and comment on the day-to-day events of its sessions by the Revd Kenneth Slack, general secretary of the British Council of Churches.

The most notable event of New Delhi was the accession to membership of the Russian Orthodox Church, together with three Eastern European Orthodox Churches, the Bulgarian, the Rumanian and the Polish. There was of course opposition to the acceptance of the Russians, arising from the obvious fear that they would use the Council as a platform for political manoeuvre. But the Russian leader, the youthful Archbishop Nikodim, made a great impression as a Christian leader, and in the end there were only three adverse votes and four recorded abstentions, with 142 churches voting in favour. Dr Oliver Tompkins, Bishop of Bristol, who had been present at New Delhi, and who is of course

widely experienced in things ecumenical, told an audience of the St John Chrysostom Society in London, in answer to a question on the political aspect, that the impression made by the Russian delegation was favourable. He considered that the general opinion was that their political reticence was dictated by a genuine desire to remain permanently associated with the all-round aims of the World Council. The Russian application for membership stated that there were thirty thousand priests and seventy-three bishoprics within the U.S.S.R.; twenty thousand parishes, forty monasteries and six theological schools. In Moscow, fifty-five churches.

As a footnote to the account of the new accessions to the World Council, it is of interest that two small Chilean Pentecostal Churches were accepted for membership. Pentecostals are of the 'revivalist' stream in Protestantism and their astonishing growth has taken place largely in areas of Latin America, of course predominantly Catholic, though allegiance may often be minimal. The Catholic Church is not alone in being embarrassed by the proselytism of these revivalist Churches. The more mature Churches of Protestantism have problems of religious pluralism to deal with, and as a writer in the American *Commonweal* remarks, the spectacular success of the zeal of the Pentecostalist lay apostolate, within what these Churches have hitherto considered their own bailiwicks is too often painfully reminiscent of the apostolic Church of the New Testament.

The absorption of the International Missionary Council into the World Council, which was also an event of New Delhi, adds emphasis to the fact that the Ecumenical Movement has never been solely preoccupied with unity, but is also, rightly, considering its nature, concerned with *renewal* of life within the individual Churches, and in consequence with the growth within each of missionary zeal. Pope John XXIII has also been not slow to emphasize this within the true Church itself. If, as is clearly his mind, we are to engage in ecumenical contact and effort, we must face the problem of religious pluralism squarely in its theological implications; the problem summed up in the question, Is it better, things being as they are, to be a Pentecostalist, or indeed any other kind of Christian, fully committed to Christ, than a Catholic whose commitment is virtually non-existent?

The great Inter-communication service of Holy Communion, which took place during the Sessions at New Delhi, is described by Kenneth Slack in moving words; they touch the heart even when basic faith tells us that this is not the right approach. The official Message of the World Council sets out very frankly how deep is the divergence on this issue among its members. It says:

For some Christians the Lord's own command 'Do this' is an imperative which over-rides all our divisions. If Holy Communion is the sovereign means of grace for the forgiveness and conquest of sin, then that is true of the sin of division as well. Thus it is intolerable and incomprehensible that a common love of God should not be expressed and deepened by common participation in the Holy Communion which he offers. For some Christians, the

essence of the Christian life is incorporation into the Body of Christ, realized as a fellowship in an organic and transcendent unity of faith, life and love, made visible in a pattern of ministry and sacraments which is indivisible. Then it is intolerable and incomprehensible that those who do not share the organic life should expect to share in its eucharistic expression. (*Message*, page 64).

The attendance of six Roman Catholic observers at the assembly, two of them Indian priests officially appointed by the Holy See, is noted with a warm welcome in the *Despatch*. It also notes the change of atmosphere that their presence brought about. At Evanston in 1954 Cardinal Stritch, Archbishop of Chicago, forbade any Roman Catholics to enter the assembly under pain of ex communication, unless a job in connection with it necessitated their presence. Father Edward Duff S.J., and the five observers of whom he was leader, had wisely sworn a self-denying vow to refuse all press interviews and any action which would draw the limelight onto themselves. They felt it would be a discourtesy to their hosts. But their assessment of the New Delhi assembly will be of the greatest value to Catholic Ecumenism and the Secretariate in Rome which promotes it.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of New Delhi was the hammering out of a definition of the Church, which all members of the World Council could accept, without prejudice to the necessity of further qualification on the part of each. This was the work of the Faith and Order Commission. It runs as follows:

'We believe that the unity which is both God's will and his gift to his Church is being made visible as all in each place who are baptized into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed fellowship, holding the one apostolic faith, preaching the one Gospel, breaking the one bread, joining in common prayer, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all; and who at the same time are united with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages in such wise that ministry and members are accepted by all, and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls his people'. (*Message*, page 55).

Of course there are words here that have to bear the burden of the radical differences, which divide us; 'the one apostolic faith', 'the one Gospel', 'breaking one bread', 'ministry', and the word 'Church'. But it is an enormous gain, unimaginable fifty years ago, that world Christendom as a whole now possesses an ideal of unity, embodied in a movement of evolution under the power of the Holy Spirit, which is orientated to the incorporation of all that is good, all that is true, all that is of God's ordinance, all that is consonant with true Christian devotion, into the organic unity of the Body of Christ; a unity which we Catholics believe to be already in existence in the Church, but which, we must acknowledge, fails and has failed of full achievement, in this way, partly at least through the human failure of us its members to measure up to the full-

ness of the stature of Christ in his Body the Church. The road to that achievement is a long and difficult one, beset with intractable difficulties. Unity among Christians is by no means just round the corner, nor is it in the least likely that any of us will see its attainment in our lifetime. But the movement has started and is going forward, and for it we must prepare patiently the road along which it must go, each by our own particular contribution.

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Friendly approach and contact, with a deep respect for each other's consciences and convictions; that is the first step. But friendliness alone is not enough, in addition to it is needed the dialogue of understanding; first of all at a deep theological level and thence with a wider scope at the level of sound instruction in our own faith and receptiveness to the ideas, outlook and idiom of our separated brethren. Primarily it is work for priests and theologically educated laity, for which training and experience are needed, and contact with theologians of other allegiances. This is essential work, upon which the wider unity-apostolate of the laity must be grounded if it is to proceed with due safeguards.

It is here that the work of the Faith and Order Commission is of great value. *The Old and New in the Church* (S.C.M. Press, 7s.) contains much thought provoking material. Specially valuable perhaps is the Report included in it of a double committee of study, American and European, appointed in 1954, on *Tradition*. This was presented after six years work on this subject as an interim Report to the Faith and Order Commission which met at St Andrews in August 1960. It will be completed in final form by 1963. It is enough to say here that in this Report is supplied the ground work for a study of Tradition, from the Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox viewpoints. It contains an accurate analysis and appreciation, by the Danish Lutheran, Professor K. E. Skydsgaard, of the latest movements of theological thought within the Catholic Church, concerning the relation of Tradition to the Scriptures, and reveals a marked movement in certain quarters within Lutheranism towards a more Catholic conception of Tradition and consequently of ecclesiology.

In Germany a considerable stir has been made by the publication in 1957 of Professor Hans Küng's essay on the doctrine of Justification in Karl Barth and the Council of Trent, *Rechtfertigung, die lehre Karl Barth's und eine Katholische Bessinnung*. Professor Küng is Dr Karl Adam's successor in the Chair of Catholic theology at Tübingen. This important work of his is not yet translated into English. Karl Barth himself has written an introductory letter to it in which he says: 'If what you develop as the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church is actually her doctrine, then I must admit that my own doctrine of justification is indeed in agreement with that of the Church of Rome'.

A critical assessment of Küng's *Rechtfertigung* was made in a lecture on the Third Programme last January by a Presbyterian scholar Dr R. T. Erlich of Edinburgh. In this lecture he gave it as his opinion that the future of any *rapprochement* between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism lies undoubtedly, on

the Roman side, with men of Küng's theological approach, because it goes far to establish a genuine partnership between Protestants and Roman Catholics in their common search for reconciliation in truth by way of the ecumenical dialogue.

Dr Erlich's assessment of Küng's approach would have been even more appreciative than it actually was had it not been marred by his misunderstanding of Küng's terminology in regard to baptism by desire. He takes this to mean that a non-Catholic's baptism, in the Catholic view, does not confer genuine belief but only the desire to believe. Since non-Catholics are held by Catholics only to desire belief, he infers that in actual fact and objectively in the eyes of Catholics they do *not* believe. This is a radical misconception. Professor Küng is saying that the belief of non-Catholics is genuine faith; it differs from the faith of Catholics not specifically, but only in its extension; it does not embrace the fullness of God's revelation of truth, though as regards its central affirmation of faith in Christ it is identical with that of Catholics. This well illustrates the need for the ecumenical dialogue.

In this connection a useful summary of the doctrine of grace viewed ecumenically is *The Theology of Grace and the Ecumenical Movement* by C. Moeller and G. Phillips (Mowbray, 7s. 6d.). This is a digest of a series of discussions between Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant theologians held at the monastery of Chevotogne.

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We propose in the paragraph which follows to make a short bibliography of ecumenical literature lately published which may help those priests or lay people anxious to undertake a serious study of the ecumenical approach to non-Catholics and its implications.

The best book for information about the history of the Ecumenical Movement, its organization, technique of approach and its opportunity for Catholics is *The Churches and the Church* by Bernard Leeming S.J. (Darton, Longman and Todd; 1960). Two shorter books: *Catholicism and the Ecumenical Movement* by J. M. Todd (Longman, 1956, 6s. 6d.); *The Ecumenical Movement—A Catholic Approach*, by G. Weigel, S.J. (Geoffrey Chapman, 6s.).

There are several good books on the history of General Councils, which show the coming Council in relation to its predecessors: *The Church in Council* by E. I. Watkin (Darton, Longman and Todd, 1960, 18s. 6d.); *The General Councils of the Church* by Francis Dvornik (Burns Oates, Faith and Fact, 8s. 6d.); and *Ecumenical Councils* by Hubert Jedin (Nelson, 1960).

A good background book is *Twentieth Century Christianity*, edited by Stephen Neill (Collins, 1961) by different authors—Catholic, Orthodox, Free Church and Anglican. It covers the American scene and is excellent for the Ecumenical Movement itself. A small book on Anglicanism *The Church of England* by E. W. Watson (O.U.P., Home University Library) is a well balanced survey with a good bibliography.

An introduction to the dialogue: *Catholics and Protestants, Separated Brothers*,

by Leon Cristiani and Jean Rilliet (Sands, 1960), in dialogue form between a Priest and a Pastor; *The Unfinished Reformation*, by Hans Asmussen and others (Fowler Wright Books, 40s.), a series of essays by Lutheran writers giving an insight into Protestant ecumenical thinking.

*The Council and Reunion* by Hans Küng (Sheed & Ward, Stagbooks, 11s. 6d.). This is a quite remarkable book and will repay concentrated study and much thought. Professor Hans Küng is a forward looking theologian and is recommended as such in prefatory messages printed at the beginning of the book, from two Cardinals, French and German. This book has been criticized for dwelling too heavily on abuses and anomalies on the human side of the Church. Professor Küng is insistent on the need of the Church continually to reform itself in accordance with its own teaching, the teaching of Christ, who is its head. He is pleading for a renewal of the life of the Church, for which the Holy Father himself has been asking in prayer and action since the beginning of his pontificate.

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## Heard and Seen

### WALKING THE TIGHTROPE

To those of us who occasionally feel, with some impatience, that a good deal of the energy expended on detecting latent communist threats could be more constructively employed in observing the dashing, elegant and effective fashion in which the Poles walk their tightrope of co-existence, a glance at the Polish cinema today can be quite illuminating. And with two new Polish films appearing for commercial runs on the London screens in less than a month, a Polish Film Week last autumn, and the odd Polish film turning up at sporadic intervals all over the place in the last year or so, there really is sufficient evidence available on which to base a reasonable assessment of the spirit and output of the Polish studios.

The first thing that strikes one is the difference between Polish films and those from Russia or indeed even from other satellite states. Sophisticated intelligent, unimpressed, gay sometimes to the point of frivolity, often tragic but almost never portentous, mannered perhaps but seldom sentimental, the dominant note is far more off-French than near-Marxist. The Polish sense of the ridiculous, the inconsequent, crops up in the most surprising contexts, and this ability to draw a pungent comment largely through the opposition of incongruities is what saves Polish films from that ponderous solemnity which is the bane of so much cinematic 'commitment'.