

suggesting that this bias has produced 'the impression that the development of Christian doctrine is far more erratic and fitful than it has in fact been' (p. 49) is, perhaps, open to question. However, I would strongly agree with him that one of the merits of Newman's *Essay* is precisely the emphasis which it places on the 'total life of the Christian community' as the 'matrix' of doctrinal development (cf. p. 144).

Only a few years ago, the 'status quaestionis' of the problem of doctrinal development was such that so generous and scholarly an intervention by a Protestant theologian in a debate largely conducted amongst Catholics would

have been an important ecumenical event. If, now, this little book disappoints, it is because the whole framework of the discussion is rapidly shifting. Some of the questions which most seriously need to be put to this book are not directly questions about Christian doctrine, but rather about that conception of *historical* method which underlies the discussion of the crucial issue of 'the interrelation between history and theology' (pp. 33-6). For a fuller discussion of these problems one looks forward with considerable interest to Professor Pelikan's promised 'multivolume' study of the history of the development of Christian doctrine (cf. p. 146).

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originally published in *Johannesburg Sunday Times* of 18th January, 1970, and signed by 70 leading South African Reformed, Protestant and Roman Catholic churchmen and laymen in view of the General Election to be held in South Africa on 22nd April.

Twelve statements for the consideration of all Christian voters in the Republic of South Africa

"Every Christian has an inescapable political responsibility, especially he who has the vote.

Politics concerns itself with the arrangement of society and therefore most intimately affects the lives of people created in the image of God.

It is the Christian's duty to contribute by his vote towards the establishment of a government which shall promote law and order, and shall work for the welfare of the whole community over which it is appointed, in accordance with the Biblical commandments of truth, justice and love.

Any arrangement of a people's life which is not in accordance with the commandments of truth, justice and love opposes the common good, endangers law and order, conflicts with the will of God and therefore leads to the downfall of such a people.

In His acts of creation and of salvation, God reveals that He is deeply concerned about human society as well as about the life and fate of every individual. This is why the Christian recognises the intrinsic value of society and the dignity of every individual.

The Christian shares in the responsibility for the arrangement of society in accordance with the revealed commandments and promises of God. Hence, in his political witness and action, he should be obedient to the revealed will of God and reject anything which conflicts with it.